

# Parking Meter Manheim

The parking meter situation in Kirkland Lake is far from ideal. We have sections of town with meters every four spaces. We have other areas with broken meters that no longer function or simply eat the coins we feed them.

The current state of the meters is not great for business; because the meters seem to frustrate the consumer before they even enter our stores. Our locals may be well aware of the meter situation in the community. However, out of town visitors are confused and frustrated about whether they should be parking at a broken meter or if they will find a ticket under their windshield wiper when they return to their vehicle.

The meter system we currently have is similar to a lottery, some days you may be lucky enough to get a spot with out a meter and other days you have to hand over a quarter or two. Please do not think I am complaining about paying a quarter to park. It is not about the quarter, because we can all afford to drop a quarter into the meter. Rather, it is about convenience: convenience for the consumer. It is about making our downtown as user friendly as possible.

I am not sure if everyone is aware that construction will begin on the main drag once again. Another section of Government Rd. will be torn up and replaced starting in mid July. In order to do the construction, the meters in this section will have to be removed. My question is should the town put them back in? Now is the time to think about this question because once the meters go back in they will be there permanently.

As business owners and consumers, it is up to us to direct council to act in the best interest of our community. The Retail and Business Committee of the Chamber of Commerce will be visiting local businesses to ask for opinions on the meters. If you want the meters to stay on the Mile of Gold say so. Or, if you want the parking meters removed voice your opinion. One way or another, make a point of telling the Retail and Business committee how you feel. In the next few days, think about the issue, discuss it with your staff, customers or friends and when the committee members visit you, express your opinions, tell them your concerns and take a few minutes of your time to fill out the questionnaire.

You might wonder what type of parking system would be implemented if the meters were taken out. There are several options that could be explored. Council could implement, one hour, or two hour parking regulations or they may even consider not

have any formal parking system and just police those who are parking illegally and in no parking zones.

However, I must stress to you that the parking spaces along Government Rd. should remain available to our clients and customers. The parking space in front of your business is a prime location and should always be made available to the consumer first and foremost. Convenience and accessibility is important in attracting and retaining business and that is why our customer's needs must come first. That includes their parking needs!

As a business community, it is time we collectively start focusing on issues that are important to our retail and commercial success. Retail and Business issues are and should be of the outmost importance to each and every one of us located on the Mile of Gold and even off of the Mile of Gold. It does not matter if you are nay or yeah on this issue. So be sure to express your opinions. Because, it does matter that we have a voice: A voice that has relevance and is strong enough to direct council to work in the best interest of our business community.