

# OPINION & EDITORIALS



## The CENTRAL NEWSPAPER

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### BBB Central Ontario Offers Tips for Consumers and Businesses Ahead of FIFA Events Major Sporting Events Bring Economic Opportunities—and Increased Scam Risks

Kitchener/Toronto, ON — As excitement builds around upcoming FIFA matches and related events across North America, BBB is encouraging both consumers and businesses to prepare for increased activity, heightened demand, and the rise in scams that too often accompany major global sporting events. Millions of fans are expected to purchase tickets, book travel, reserve lodging, buy merchandise, and attend watch parties and related events across North America. While these activities create significant economic opportunities for businesses, they also attract scammers seeking to exploit enthusiastic fans. "Major international sporting events like FIFA create tremendous excitement and economic benefits for local communities and businesses, but they also provide opportunities for scammers looking to take advantage of consumers," said Angela Dennis, President and CEO of BBB Central Ontario. "We encourage fans to take their time before making purchases, verify ticket sellers and travel providers, and use secure payment methods. Businesses should also remain vigilant against fraud attempts targeting event-related promotions, reservations, and payment transactions." Common FIFA-Related Scams

#### Consumers Should Watch For:

**Ticket Scams** - Fraudsters often create fake ticket websites, counterfeit tickets, and fraudulent social media listings. Consumers should purchase tickets only through official FIFA channels or verified ticket marketplaces.

**Vacation Rental and Lodging Scams** - Scammers may advertise non-existent hotels, short-term rentals, or vacation properties near event venues. Research accommodations carefully, verify addresses, and pay with a credit card whenever possible.

**Travel Booking Fraud** - Fake travel packages promising discounted airfare, hotel stays, and match tickets frequently emerge around major sporting events. Verify travel agencies and booking providers before paying.

**Merchandise Scams** - Counterfeit jerseys, memorabilia, and event merchandise are common. Purchase products from reputable retailers and authorized sellers.

**Phishing and Impersonation Scams** Consumers may receive emails, texts, or social media messages claiming to be from FIFA, sponsors, airlines, hotels, or ticket providers. Never click suspicious links or provide personal information without independently verifying the source.

**Social Media Marketplace Fraud** - Scammers often use social media platforms to advertise tickets, accommodations, and merchandise that do not exist or are never delivered.

**Advice for Businesses** - Businesses can also become targets during high-profile events.

#### BBB recommends businesses:

- Verify large or unusual orders before fulfillment.
- Be cautious of requests for wire transfers or alternative payment methods.
- Train employees to recognize phishing emails and business impersonation attempts.
- Monitor online reviews and social media accounts for fraudulent activity.
- Ensure websites and payment systems are secure and functioning properly during periods of increased traffic.
- Review cybersecurity protections and incident response plans.
- Be alert to vendor fraud and fake sponsorship opportunities.

#### Before You Buy BBB recommends consumers:

- Research businesses at BBB.org before making purchases.
  - Read reviews from multiple sources.
  - Use credit cards whenever possible for added purchase protections.
  - Avoid deals that seem too good to be true.
  - Confirm refund and cancellation policies before purchasing tickets, lodging, or travel packages.
  - Keep records of all transactions and communications. Reporting Scams
- Consumers and businesses that encounter suspected fraud or deceptive practices are encouraged to report scams to BBB Scam Tracker at BBB.org/ScamTracker.

Reports help alert others and provide valuable information about emerging scam trends.

## Letters To The Editor:

WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND? Send letters to newspaper@ocentral.com

#### Dear Editor:

Trump and Putin have removed 20 million barrels of oil from global consumers – every day – setting the stage for a full-blown global depression. Attacking Iran to stop the flow of oil through Hormuz was only an attempt to remove the blockades on oil coming out of Russia, to help Putin win the war with the Ukraine. Promoted by Trump and Putin's toxic relationships with that Epstein monster, and using Israel as an excuse to destroy Iran, they have effectively closed the flow of oil through the strait of Hormuz for a very long time. Three US carriers sitting on the waters just outside Hormuz stopped the flow of that precious oil. We have a lot of that oil, and we have to get it to a market that is becoming more desperate every day. Our colonial political system has become a safe haven for Reconciliation grifters and gangsters to destroy our country, and we don't have another ten years to resolve another long list of illegal blockades, while 'consulting' a small minority of the people who may still have traces of aboriginal blood in their veins. Billions of dollars will be required, and every single resource dollar must be dedicated to finance and build those pipelines, instead of filling the pockets of greedy Chiefs and their shameless lawyers. The Alberta and Quebec Premiers getting together to discuss resource development and transportation, combined with a pro-business Premier-in-waiting in BC is encouraging, and the time is long overdue for Carney to wake up to the fact it is more than three months ago the oil stopped flowing through the straits of Hormuz (Feb 28) creating a global oil supply emergency of disastrous proportion. Economies around the world are shutting down as they are running out of oil, while he is aspiring to become the global KING of AI, completely oblivious to the insane amount of energy and cooling water those super-sized data centers are consuming, only to provide consensus on issues that may have relatively little value. We also need to change the way we elect our politicians. We have to adopt and use a Proportional ballot, that will open the doors for the people who have what it takes to get that oil out of the ground, and into that pipe. We need that oil today. We can build refineries later.

Andy Thomsen

#### Dear Editor:

Dear Joe,  
 On behalf of the City of Pickering and all Members of Council, I extend our deepest condolences to the families, friends, colleagues, and loved ones of Ontario Provincial Police Constable Tarun Bali and Toronto Police Service Constable Marc Pinizzotto. As a mark of respect and remembrance, flags at City facilities will fly at half-mast in recognition of their service and sacrifice. Thank you,  
**Mayor Ashe'**  
 Pickering

#### Dear Editor:

Are we safe in our city? I feel not. You pick up this great newspaper and you read about all the crime that is happening. Guns, knives... assaults and the likes. I am afraid for my safety and that of my family. The other day my neighbour went downtown Oshawa and was assaulted. He tried calling the police and it took them three days to come out and take a statement. What has happened to Oshawa. I called the City and no one returns calls. It is as if City hall is some sort of municipal fortress. I tried calling my MP. It is not their jurisdiction. Promise to put me in contact with someone at the City and nothing. Few weeks back some strange car was driving up and down our street. I was afraid to go out in my own yard. Called the police and they told me that there was nothing they could do. To call back if they did anything criminal. Some response. What ever happened to coming out and checking out a suspicious vehicle. I do hope this election brings some positive change. I am tired of living in fear. It is not fair. I pay taxes I need to feel safe in my own City.  
**Andrew Lee.**  
 Oshawa

#### Dear Editor:

I strongly disagree with Council's decision and the unfair process that produced it. Months before any complaint was even filed, I sent formal cease-and-desist letters to HR and the Integrity Commissioner regarding unacceptable conduct directed at me. Instead of addressing those concerns, the City launched a one-sided investigation. When I was denied the right to representation, I chose not to participate. No one, not me, not Council, not the public, has ever seen the evidence or the investigation report. Today, in our in-camera meeting, I was not permitted to question the process, challenge the allegations, or defend myself in any way. The decision was based on material that was not my own words or actions. I have never threatened City staff. I have never encouraged violence. I have never directed anyone to act against any employee. What I have done is criticize government decisions, wasteful spending, policies, and the conduct of public officials. That is not harassment; it is democratic accountability. After 3 years of complaints from the CAO and the Mayor, pay suspensions, restrictions, and what I believe is a clear pattern of intimidation and unfair treatment, I remain committed to the job I was elected to do: asking the tough questions, holding government accountable, and speaking up for the residents of Pickering. I will not be intimidated into silence. I will continue to speak the truth on behalf of the people who elected me". -  
**Councillor Lisa Robinson**

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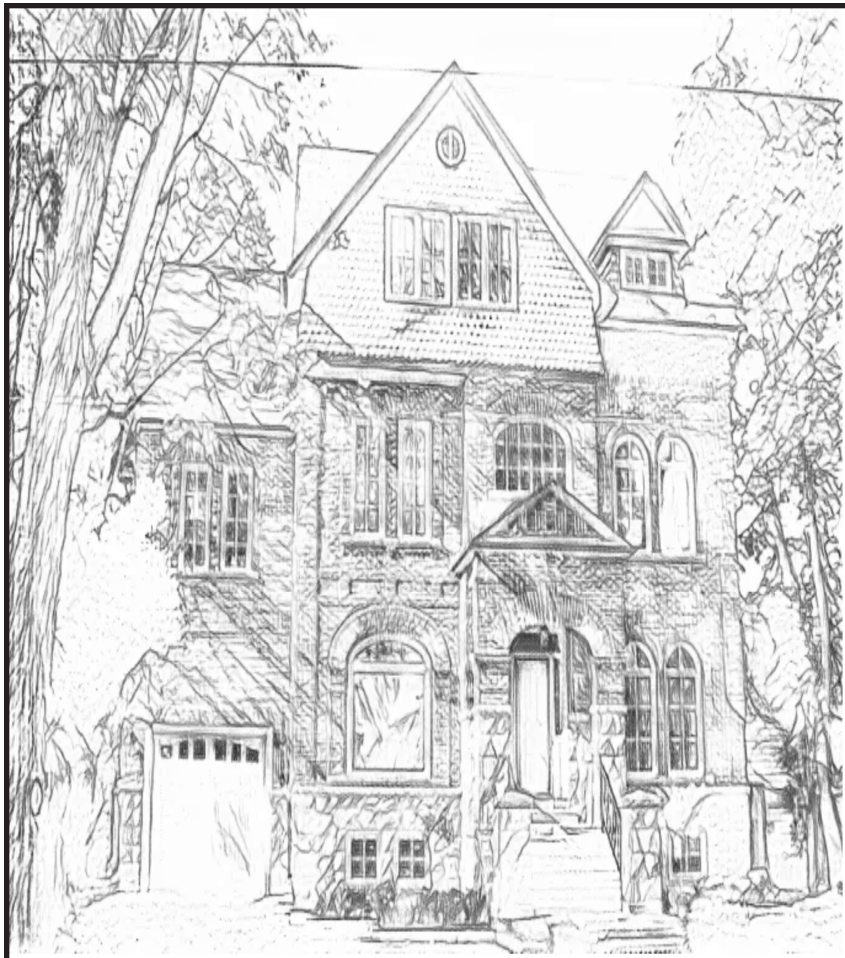
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