

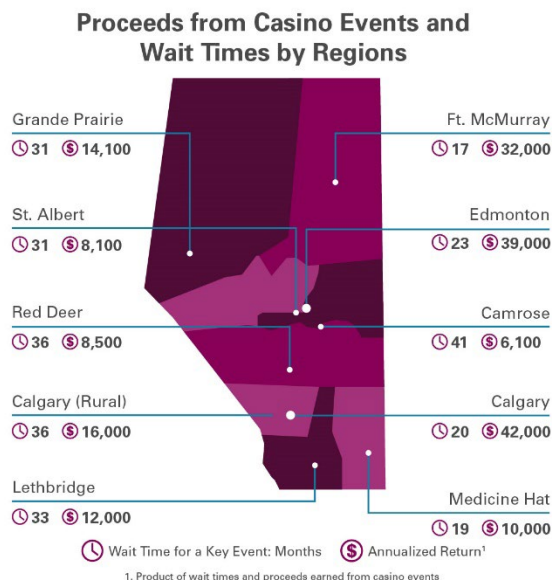


Alberta Rural Charities Set to Lose Out, Again

Edmonton – The Alberta Gaming, Liquor & Cannabis Commission (AGLC) has handed down a decision that will further shortchange rural charities. Already at a distinct disadvantage compared to their urban counterparts, rural charities are set to lose out once again thanks to the AGLC Board’s refusal to let the Camrose Resort Casino relocate to South Edmonton.

The disparity between urban and rural charitable event revenue is significant. It doesn’t matter if an event is held in a major urban centre or a rural community; the volunteers work the same number of hours. At the end of the night, however, a charitable event in the urban centre will bring in up to six times more revenue. What’s more, the average wait time for a gaming event is generally lower, too.

“AGLC’s unfair treatment of rural charities has been going on for decades, shortchanging rural communities hundreds of millions of dollars. Rural communities and their leaders should be alarmed by their mistreatment by AGLC and the failure by the AGLC Board to approve a relocation that would help to resolve this disparity,” said Jason Pechet, president of Capital City Casino, which owns the Camrose Resort Casino.



The proposed relocation would ensure revenues would continue to flow to rural charities. Given the pooling mechanism used by AGLC for the Camrose and St. Albert AGLC-defined regions, the proposed relocation would have benefitted hundreds of thousands of rural Albertans living in communities spanning from the B.C. border to the Saskatchewan border. According to AGLC’s own data, these two regions have the lowest revenues per gaming event (Camrose: \$6,100/event, St. Albert: \$8,100/event) and some of the highest event wait times (Camrose: 41 months, St. Albert: 31 months) in the entire province. By way of comparison, an event in Edmonton will generate \$39,000 in revenue and has a wait time of only 23 months.

“The AGLC Board’s decision is as frustrating as it is perplexing, especially given that AGLC management approved the relocation,” said Pechet. “One of the key recommendations that came out of AGLC’s extensive Charitable Gaming Model Review was to designate a casino in Edmonton to serve rural charities exclusively, just like Calgary has. We offered AGLC the perfect project – one that would create jobs, drive economic development, increase revenues for the province, and provide parity for rural charities. In a baffling move, the AGLC Board rejected our proposal citing concerns that its own management did not feel were issues.”

As the Camrose Resort Casino struggled to generate a sustainable amount of charitable revenues, AGLC made two decisions that effectively doomed the casino’s financial viability. In 2019, AGLC approved the relocation of the Century Mile Race Track Casino from Edmonton to just 60 km away from the Camrose Resort Casino. Then, in 2022, AGLC also green-lit the construction of a new Louis Bull First Nations Casino, which is just 55 km away. The local market isn’t large enough to support a single gaming facility, let alone three. What’s more, none of the revenue from the First Nations Casino or Race Track Casino will support rural charities in the Camrose and St. Albert regions.



The Camrose Resort Casino is asking Albertans upset with the unfair treatment of rural charities to let AGLC know they support the relocation of the Camrose Resort Casino.

275 Edmonton Charities wrote to AGLC to block the Camrose Casino relocation and deny rural charitable groups the opportunity to receive a fair and equal share of charitable gaming revenues.

Please send your message of support by calling or emailing AGLC at: 780-447-8847 / nadja.lacroix@aglc.ca.

Background Facts and Figures

- In June 2021, Capital City Casino hired HLT Advisory Inc., a consulting firm specializing in the gaming sector (and one that AGLC regularly uses), to review its relocation proposal. HLT Advisory Inc. determined relocating the Camrose Resort Casino would generate \$28 million of new, incremental AGLC revenue.
- AGLC estimates that relocating the Camrose Casino to South Edmonton would result in \$8.8 million in new, incremental revenues for charitable groups.
- St Albert and Camrose gaming regions are the only AGLC gaming regions in the province that pool revenues together. The relocation will increase the amount of charitable revenues for both the Camrose and the St Albert regions, improving parity with large urban charitable revenues. The relocation would improve the financial disparity issue for the two rural gaming regions, not just one.
- If the relocation application is unsuccessful, the Camrose Resort Casino will need to close its doors, and 650 regional charities will lose desperately needed revenues.
- In the event that the Camrose Casino relocated to Edmonton, AGLC estimates the decline in Edmonton Urban Charity revenue as \$8,438 per Urban Charity event, which is far less than if the Camrose Casino closed and all 650 regional charities were reallocated to Edmonton casinos, which would result in a decline of approximately \$14,000 per annualized event. In short, Edmonton Urban Charities have more to lose by opposing this relocation.