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EDITORIAL

Only in my backyard

The forthcoming expansion of Okanagan College's Penticton campus is something that will help all corners of the South Okanagan and not just the City of Penticton.

It's been well documented that the college expansion will bring much-needed jobs to the

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area, including many permanent jobs that pay well. Those are the kind of jobs we need. This will in turn lead to other economic spinoffs.

It will allow our area to benefit from some

world-class programs.

Most importantly, it will keep many young adults at home while they're going to school. If you've priced room and board lately (especially in locations close to a college or university), it's astronomical.

We could go on and on about what this college means to the area but anyone with common sense understands.

That's why we're extremely disappointed to see the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (RDOS) shoot down a request for a much needed \$2 million contribution.

The senior levels of government contributed most of the funding for the ambitious project but an independent fundraising committee is responsible for coming up with the remaining \$5 million. In today's challenging economic times, combined with so many other worthwhile projects out there, it's easier said than done.

With spinoff benefits to communities such as Oliver, Osoyoos, Naramata and Summerland from the college expansion, the RDOS seemed like a logical door to knock on.

Apparently not.

Never mind that college expansion is the most interesting and world leading project to come to the South Okanagan in over a generation. It's going to cost a few bucks.

This is another example of how the RDOS is not helping the City of Penticton in any way, shape or form. Only four RDOS directors supported the idea... and three were from Penticton. It's time for the city to consider an alternative to participating with the RDOS.

Naramata director Tom Chapman's comment of "lazy fundraising" was totally uncalled for. Perhaps he can spend the day with Jim Henderson to get a better idea of how much behind the scenes work goes on. Better still, maybe Chapman can volunteer to round up some money for the project.

Smaller communities can enjoy the benefits offered by larger centres yet never have to pay anything for the service. It doesn't seem right.

The attitude comes across loud and clear.

"I'm not voting yes unless it's for something in my backyard."