May 17th, 2016

To: Mayor Eisenberger and members of Council,

Re: Support for Light Rail Transit (LRT) in Hamilton

The North End Neighbours (NEN) wishes to affirm its support for LRT in Hamilton. We believe the province of Ontario's commitment to fund the east-west B-line LRT and a north-south spur to connect to the new West Harbour GO Station is a city-building opportunity that will help Hamilton move toward a healthier and more prosperous, sustainable future. We trust our Mayor and Council to seize this opportunity and take steps to ensure that to the fullest extent possible LRT benefits all Hamiltonians.

We realize the current LRT project, which is one piece of the larger, more comprehensive BLAST network plan, does not serve all of Hamilton directly as it only traverses Wards 1-4 in the Lower City. To receive maximum benefit from an east-west LRT in the King and Main corridor our city needs to make a serious commitment to a ridership growth strategy for the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR), which would necessarily have a wider impact.

Closer to home, NEN has a direct interest in supporting LRT as the "spur" connecting the east-west B-line to the new West Harbour GO Station is proposed, funds permitting, to continue on to the Waterfront along James Street North through our neighbourhood.

One of the eight planning principles enshrined in the West Harbour Secondary Plan (Setting Sail) is "promote a balanced transportation network" which acknowledges that "as the West Harbour waterfront attracts new development and more visitors, access by all modes of transportation will need to improve to effectively manage traffic."

For residents in the North End, particularly those nearest to James Street North, LRT construction will be noisy and disruptive, and the addition of LRT will further intensify development and affordability pressures already being felt following the construction of the West Harbour GO Station, but in the long-run our neighbourhood and the City will benefit.

Though care will be needed to manage the impact on existing businesses, LRT holds the promise of strengthening James Street North as our area's main street, while increasing connectivity. As important to our quality of life, LRT provides a way for people to get to-and-from Hamilton's waterfront that is less impactful to our neighbourhood than vehicular traffic. LRT also

holds the potential to reduce the amount of parking needed to accommodate the visitors and new residents that will come as the redevelopment of Piers 6-8 occurs.

By extension, taking the big view, we would like to leave you with a final reason to re-affirm your support for LRT: a successful downtown makes it less convenient to drive than take transit. If revitalization continues downtown, surface parking will gradually be transformed into buildings and more people will find it necessary to take transit for trips to-and-from the core.

This future won't please everyone. But there is a clear, widely shared benefit: not only do new buildings add residents and jobs to the core, contributing to its vibrancy and renewed urbanism, they pay a lot more in taxes than surface parking lots do.

We appreciate any consideration you might give to our thoughts on this matter.

North End Neighbours