

Subject: Lrt – CHERYL ST JAMES

**Who am I?**

- I am a strong supporter of improved public transportation who believes we need increased funding to enhance our transportation system.
- Thank you Mr Mayor for allowing me to speak today.
- Effective public transportation is key to the prosperity and well being of Hamilton and Hamiltonians.
- I am a Hamiltonian and co-owner of Weird Stuff.
- I am advocating for the best possible public transportation plan that \$1b can buy and the current plan does not seem to be it.
- The current LRT plan is a poor plan. We can do better.

**1. LRTs can be successful when connected to key destination points. Our current plan misses key destinations.**

- No GO No LRT! The Hamilton plan is very disconnected & and as a result we are burdened with an inconvenient transportation system.
- \$1b and the main LRT line does not even connect to the GO Station.
- We can't rely on promises for tomorrow we need the GO now.
- McMaster is a key destination point. The Queenston traffic circle is not.
- no planned parking

**2. Our plan is a streetcar plan.**

- Light Rapid Transit – “often operates on an exclusive right –way”
- Street car Plan – “a vehicle that travels on streets on metal tracks.
- Trains are not meant to share the roads with vehicles, that is a streetcar.
- LRTs should have dedicated stand alone routes like in Charlotte NC that Metrolinx likes to highlight as a success.
- Our plan even reduces the number of lanes which are already limited width streets, down to one lane, on our main thorough fairs. This will increase congestion and delay or completely eliminate emergency vehicles access
- Successful LRTs are found in cities where it is built on stand alone routes, not on roads.
- this would severely impede traffic flow by redirecting onto the secondary side streets causing added congestion & pollution
- bus lane project was an example

- **3. The current Plan will not increase ridership levels**

- The current plan simply replaces a bus ride for a train ride on Hamilton's most developed and efficient public transportation corridor.
- This is a missed opportunity to alleviate traffic congestion on the Linc, Redhill and 403 as it does not access the transit starved residents of the mountain and outlier communities.
- Same old route, same riders.
- This will not increase ridership despite what has been stated

**4. LRTs are less flexible than buses.**

- Bus routes can be changed, LRT routes are fixed.
- In the proposal there are 34 bus stops scheduled to be removed to be replaced by only 13 LRT stops. Would your grandmother be able to walk that extra distance?
- If an LRT breaks down or is in an accident the whole line is stopped. If a bus breaks down or is in an accident it can be replaced.
- Consider to improve our current HSR system so we can achieve a more efficient transportation system that meets the needs of all Hamiltonians at less cost, with more flexibility and state of the art green energy buses - less destructive, less invasive

**5. LRTs requires larger and high density populations for success**

- It is generally agreed that there is a certain ridership level where it makes sense to replace buses with trains.
- However, despite what Metrolinx claims, Hamilton does not have the population or the density level to properly support the LRT.
- Metrolinx likes to highlight the cities of both Charlotte NC and Calgary. Their populations are respectively about 800,000 and 1.2M. Compare that to Hamilton's 520,000.
- I think we can all agree that Hamilton with its population at 520,000 does not have the numbers to support it.

**6. Metrolinx wants to implement a transportation system with minimal information and a lack of verified studies.**

- There has been a lack of transparency and misrepresentation of the information that has been shared throughout this process
- For example, we do not know what the operating costs will be, what are the projected ridership levels, no traffic studies, who is being expropriated and what is the expropriation process

## **7. City Revenue Implications**

- many businesses affected either through reduced revenue or closures
- this would result in lost jobs, additional individuals forced to apply for UI/welfare or social assistance
- customers will avoid the downtown core for years because of time & convenience so other businesses will be impacted as well
  - any jobs created due to LRT construction would be temporary or outsourced completely, no local autonomy
- how will B line lost revenue be recouped

**8. A project of this magnitude that will impact the city for decades to come deserves to have the mandate of the people.**

- Yes approval to implement an LRT was voted on but the plan was not.
- Furthermore, the plan keeps changing.
- Nor has the public had much of an opportunity to speak to how an Lrt could work for them.
- Now that more information about the LRT plan has been made available people deserve to have input and their questions answered so that we can implement the best possible plan that \$1b can buy.
- The core should remain whole and never be divided.