

Pilon, Janet

Subject: LRT

From: ANNE
Sent: January-19-17 5:51 PM
To: Johnson, Aidan
Cc: Office of the Mayor
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Hi Aidan – I was interested in two articles this week – one in the Spectator on Monday where you advocate eliminating bike lanes on Dundurn to widen the road, and the second article from The Silhouette which appeared on Facebook today through the Ainslie Wood Community Association website. The two articles contradict each other and it is obvious that the plans for the LRT need far more consideration than already given.

As I have mentioned to you before, I am not a fan of this LRT project and I feel the money could be better spent improving the current HSR bus system. Just because Kathleen Wynne waves a \$1b cheque to the city, doesn't mean we have to accept it. If she is serious about improving transportation, then the same budget should be offered to increase the bus system.

The Spectator article goes to the very heart of the issue as to the reasons for the need of the LRT in the first place. If it is necessary to eliminate bike lanes on Dundurn to widen the road for the increased traffic in the west end due to the LRT, then this actually argues for cancelling the LRT. The LRT is supposedly designed to get cars off the road, and yet the planners already accept that it will increase traffic especially at the intersection of King and Dundurn. Obviously the LRT is not going to do the job. And while the city is anxious to promote the bicycle as an alternate means of transportation, you plan to eliminate one of their bike paths.

Then in the Silhouette article, you say you *have worked successfully for a \$1 billion investment to build light-rail transit (LRT) in Hamilton – a potent alternative to cars*. This is the exact opposite stand to the one taken in the Spectator article. So which is it to be?

If we really have to proceed with this ludicrous plan, why not build the LRT on Main Street or better still, elevate the entire system above ground? The latter would solve all the problems of road widening, increased traffic and tunnels under railroad crossings. If that is not possible, then Main Street is a much better alternative. It is a wider road and can afford to lose 2 lanes to an LRT system. At Main and Dundurn, the only issue would be traffic approaching from the Hwy 403 westbound ramp (which would not affect an LRT line on the south side of Main) and the eastbound traffic merge from Hwy 403 from Brantford. For the section over the 403, an additional bridge for the LRT could be constructed alongside the pedestrian bridge on the south side of the eastbound lanes of Main Street. With this plan, all the issues with King Street westbound through the city would be eliminated, and the area through the international village would be protected. And a Main Street LRT system would not affect as many businesses as a line through King Street. It would also make for easier access at the terminus at the Queenston Traffic Circle. Having said that, to end the LRT at the Queenston Traffic Circle is ludicrous – there is nothing there except a Tim Horton's and a car dealership, and passengers wanting to continue down Main Street or to Eastgate Square will have to transfer to a city bus anyway.

I personally visit my family regularly in the east end of Hamilton and I would be one of those people having to transfer if I used the LRT. I am not prepared to do that when I can drive directly there so I wouldn't be using the LRT to visit them. When returning from their house, I use Cannon Street all the way to Dundurn so the increase in traffic there is going to affect me also. If I took the LRT home, I would still have to transfer to a bus at McMaster. The same argument applies for my regular visits to Ottawa Street fabric alley – an LRT terminus on either Main or King would be a long walk to that area, and I can drive straight from Ottawa Street via Cannon to west Hamilton.

This entire plan needs a thorough reconsideration at the council level. First consideration is the cost to Hamilton taxpayers because as we all know, projects are not completed on time and always go over budget. Second consideration is to either elevate the LRT, or move it to Main Street. The best plan is to scrub the idea altogether and improve the HSR, not to mention the state of the roads in this city.

I know you are hell-bent on seeing this project to fruition but other considerations have to be taken into account and clearer heads must prevail before a shovel goes in the ground or any properties are expropriated. I look forward to your comments on the reasons for my objection to the LRT. I have copied the mayor on this email as I feel the taxpayers need to be heard on this issue and would like to hear his views on the subject.

Best regards,

Anne van Dyk

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