



KIRKENDALL
NEIGHBOURHOOD
ASSOCIATION

February 3, 2017

Dear Honourable Mayor, City Council and Hamilton LRT Office,

Re: LRT and the Kirkendall Neighbourhood

The Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association (KNA) wishes, first, to *re-affirm* its enthusiastic support for the Hamilton Light Rail Transit (LRT) project. We believe that LRT is an opportunity that our growing City cannot afford to lose. Having said that, the purpose of this letter is not to restate LRT's many fundamental benefits. Nor do we wish to comment here on issues relating to streetscaping or the integration of the Operations Maintenance Storage Facility (OMSF) into the west-end of our neighbourhood. We have already submitted detailed feedback on these issues which we hope your team found useful. Instead, the intent of this letter is to explore a few concerns that continue to be raised about the project and provide our comments on them as key stakeholders.

Traffic: We understand that both during and after construction, traffic patterns around the City will change and in some cases, congestion will increase. However, the fundamental purpose of the LRT project is to build a more sustainable future City of Hamilton – one in which the movement of people is multi-modal and *less* centered around single-occupancy vehicle use. As such, we *firmly* caution the City and Metrolinx against any attempt to maintain the status quo of traffic volumes at the expense of the sustainable future City which we are aiming for. We must not simply increase traffic volumes 'here' to replace a loss of volume 'there.' That would be missing the point. We must not make any roads faster, noisier and less safe in a knee-jerk attempt to mitigate the growing pains that will accompany LRT. In fact, the Metrolinx Business Case Analysis specifically points out that wide, fast streets and a hostile pedestrian/cycling environment will prevent LRT from reaching its potential.

Cycling Infrastructure: Cycling infrastructure should not be sacrificed for LRT – much less to accommodate the status quo of traffic volume displaced by LRT. Cyclists are already some of the most vulnerable road users and the City has fallen far behind in its obligations under its own Cycling Master Plan. Cycling, unlike driving, is symbiotic with LRT and transit use and should be encouraged, not discouraged within the scope of this project. Any existing or planned cycling infrastructure which *unavoidably* conflicts with LRT must be immediately replaced and such replacement should be used as an opportunity to consult with the cycling community so as to enhance and modernize Hamilton's struggling cycling infrastructure.

Main Street Two-Way: We support the Metrolinx Business Case Analysis recommendation to convert Main Street to two-way. The City's transportation system is the sum of its parts and Main/King are fundamentally linked today. With LRT, retaining Main Street in its current configuration as an eastbound high-flow traffic artery will create a fundamental imbalance in this system, which we believe will likely lead to westbound truck and vehicular traffic infiltration onto side streets in Kirkendall, Strathcona and Durand including Aberdeen Ave. As stated above, the intent of LRT is to be a catalyst for a more sustainable transportation system in Hamilton. Ignoring Main as part of the LRT project is a lost opportunity and we believe will create operational and safety problems for our neighbourhood in the future.

Construction Disruption: We acknowledge that construction is going to be hard for everyone. It's going to be loud, dirty and cause vibrations all along the proposed line. However, we firmly believe in the virtues of this project and we understand that building a better city takes a lot of, well... *building!* We wish to voice our willingness to endure the headaches that will undoubtedly accompany the construction of a project of this magnitude and importance. With respect to the OMSF, the construction of a sound barrier to the east of the development *before* construction starts will help mitigate disruption to neighbours.

Effects on Business: Construction will be hard on business and this issue deserves a great deal of attention and sensitivity. Construction must be undertaken in a way that minimizes disruption and we encourage you to consider loan or grant programs for small businesses which could help some stay afloat during construction. Additionally, we plan to encourage our residents to shop at businesses along the LRT route during construction.

Thank you for taking the time to review our letter. We look forward to a continuing dialogue with you and regarding these issues.

Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association