

1 | Re: People's Plan for Downtown comments APRIL 17, 2018

Hello to you all. I wanted to present in person but am unable to now. Take care, peace, S. J. Creer

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Accessible Hamilton was started to give voice to wider accessibility issues in the City. There are many. The City has made some progress but there is still so much to do. I believe that everyone has a disability; they are just not all visible. Accessible Hamilton wants to overcome the negative attitude as well. The motto 'Do Not Hold Us Back'.

**COMMENTS AND CONCERNS;** respectfully submitted.

Pg. 2

- e) *Downtown is healthy and safe.* Downtown neighbourhoods will be designed and built to provide a foundation for healthy living by promoting physical activity (connected streets, active transportation, mixed land uses, parks and open space), healthy diets (farmer's markets, community gardens), and supportive environments (places to gather, cultural spaces, architecture and public art). There are many ways the built environment can impact health and this Plan recognizes the importance of improving public health and preventing disease through built form and changes to the environment.

**Complete streets often mean that those with disabilities are left out by inaccessible road design and use.** By that I mean that the City allows restaurants to use metered parking spaces as extensions to their businesses. Citizens with disabled parking permits who need those spaces are discriminated against. And the City is considering giving a City parking lot to the Anglican Cathedral. That means that those citizens with disabled parking permits will have a City lot taken away from them to use on the busy James St. N. Another similar concern to the parking space restaurants is that the City allows the fish market on James St. N. to put boxes of produce on the sidewalk rendering the sidewalk impassable for those with mobility devices. This is wrong-headed and discriminatory. There are some photos at the end under 'References' which show some other concerns including a display stand and a garbage container on Main St. in Dundas which block the sidewalk for those with wheelchair/mobility devices and strollers, making people go on the street which is dangerous.

The new Ottawa St. BIA location; I am not sure if the new location is accessible. I phoned on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and emailed but have gotten no response as yet.

Pg. 4 item b: exactly what is 'affordable' housing and based on what criterion? How will the affordable housing be managed? To whom will they report?

Please do not sell the City parking lot behind the Anglican Cathedral to them for their pending development. There are not enough lots on James N. for citizens who use them in the area. I know the Chair and the Beasley Community group are concerned about the Cathedral's plans as well.

Pg. 5 a); Identify priority streets for specialized urban design treatment. What does that mean?

And pg. 5 d)

- d) Identify and integrate the key civic spaces through a public realm master planning process.

My comments as Accessible Hamilton char; the City does not have anyone with a disability/design experience on the 'Design review panel'. The Ottawa St. BIA has a new building but no one knows if it is accessible and/or has a public washroom as the former one did.

There also needs to be visitor parking with all new builds/condos. I have friends who work as visiting in-home physiotherapists and they are frustrated with apartment/condo units with no visitor parking.

Will there be any adapted units in the new Harbour condo/CHH buildings?

The City's Pier 8 design does not have disabled/trans washroom. The Pier 8 park design is not disability friendly.

Page 5. Pt. 6.1.3.5; MOBILITY AND COMPLETE STREETS;

I have issues with these for a few reasons; I use my vehicle for work and volunteering which has included the Good Food Box program of picking up and dropping off food boxes to friends/tenants I know. If the City does not have parking available near these sorts of agencies or businesses then it makes it will be too hard continuing to volunteer in that capacity.

I personally cannot cycle. I recycle, shop second-hand and do what I can to protect our environment. My Toastmaster club friends and I car share. I drive people to appointments/surgeries.

The City is not really disability friendly; that means when I hear about 'forcing people onto transit' I get concerned. Many folks with disabilities need their 'single occupant' vehicle as their wheelchair is in there as well. I know two people with wheelchairs whose job is to bring patients from the outpatient clinic in Simcoe to the outpatient programs at St. Joseph's and McMaster. If metered parking spaces are removed these volunteer drivers are also negatively affected. Hamilton is not a city unto itself and local decisions affect those outside our City.

A mobility issue; ever since the Charlton/Locke St. bike lanes were installed the lanes have confused drivers and taken space away from the churches in the area. Friends I know at one church are suffering spiritually since they cannot always get parked near their church. They also have friends who cycle and who agree those lanes are badly designed. The bike lane on Herkimer is dangerous for drivers, walkers, cyclists, etc. and that bad design gets in the way of the EMS vehicles.

The LRT is going to mess up DARTS drop-offs.

Establish an overall plan that appropriately allocates safe space for all users of the street including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, people with disabilities, and public transit users as well as goods delivery, service vehicles and emergency vehicles.

b) Prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit relative to private automobiles through the application of Complete, Livable, Better Streets Policy.

c) Reduce dependence on single occupant vehicles. **This attitude is what I called 'Able-ist' and is problematic for those with mobility issues and devices. And these folks need to get to appointments/clinics at the various hospitals as well.**

BIKE LANES; I have complained that the Cannon St. bike lane has huge heavy flower boxes that stick out into the driving lane which is dangerous. Nothing has been done so far.

Bay St. Bike lanes took 5 metered parking spots; discriminates against people with disabilities by doing that. Trying to turn left onto Bay St. from Wilson is dangerous now when driving and you get stuck in all 3 lanes of oncoming traffic. The City is looking at fining anyone who stops in a bike lane. That is wrong for those with disabilities who need to stop outside doctors' offices or medical buildings to drop off someone with a disability.

(<https://globalnews.ca/news/3866675/hamilton-bike-lanes-bylaws/>)

DANGEROUS BUILDS; the City is allowing developers to ruin malls. Centre Mall, Fiesta Mall, Mountain Plaza Mall, Ancaster near the Walmart, Stoney Creek Mountain, Waterdown are almost all boring same old, same old boring stores that are dangerous and not remotely pedestrian/child/disability friendly. I spoke to my councillor when Centre Mall got changed and he put me in touch with Councillor Merulla who admitted the City had done a bad job there. Regardless, the City keeps allowing developers to 'mangle malls' as I call it.

There are new retail mall stores on the east Mountain that have an automatic door at the front but not the washroom. Why is that allowed? There are offices about the Reitman's store in the Mountain Plaza Mall. There is an automatic door opener and an elevator to take people to the second floor. However, none of the many upstairs offices or washrooms have and automatic door openers on them. Why not?

Pg. 7/8 BUILDING HEIGHTS;

Personally I am absolutely not in favour of buildings that are too tall; we do not need to pander to Toronto developers. The CHCH building plan is awful as are others. Citizens need to see the escarpment to enjoy it and covering it up is awful.

Pg. 9. Social housing;

- b) an acceptable tenant relocation and assistance plan addressing the right to return to occupy the replacement housing at similar rents, the provision of alternative accommodation at similar rents, and other assistance to lessen the hardship, is provided.

How exactly will this be managed? City Housing Hamilton has an awful track record of keeping track of tenants, repairs, etc. There is no good system for making sure that tenants do not get forgotten about. I know one CHH building that has had three property managers (PM) in the last year and each PM asks the same questions and sends out the same forms. No new PM knows about the outstanding repairs, so you can see why I don't believe that CHH tenants will not get lost in a move.

Pg. 10; Building Heights; I do not like the idea of buildings over 30 storeys. Each new building must have at least two elevators plus a service elevator.

#### **High-Rise (Tall) Buildings; Why is the Connaught going to be 36 stories?**

6.1.4.18 The following policies shall apply to High-rise (tall) buildings:

- a) a tall building is any building that is greater than 12 storeys in height;
- b) new tall buildings shall be no greater than the height of the top of the Escarpment as measured between Queen Street and Victoria Avenue;
- c) a tall building is typically defined as having a *building base* component (also known as podium), a *tower* component and *tower top*, however, Policies B.6.1.4.18 through B.6.1.4.24 shall also apply to other typologies of a tall building;
- d) a *building base* is defined as the lower storeys of a tall building w

pg. 12. We need more playgrounds that are accessible. Accessible playgrounds should be the norm for any new build.

Pg. 14. BUILT FORM

The Anglican Cathedral is putting in condos that look like shipping containers. That design hardly fits the surrounding area or building. When I was at the first People's Plan for the Downtown Meeting there were eight of us at our table and everyone at the table had concerns about the design. They also

commented that the Anglican Cathedral has not been forthcoming with information and a lot of citizens are confused.

Pg. 14; 6.1.4.26 All *development* shall be oriented toward the surrounding streets and shall include direct pedestrian access, including barrier free access from grade level, to the principle entrances.

Too many new buildings only have one accessible entrance. All new buildings should have Rick Hanson Access4all inclusive design components. If we want **Senior's to 'age in place'** then there has to be visitor parking for in-home treatment providers who carry treatment beds with them (physiotherapist, chiropractor, massage therapist, live-in nurse/PSW, etc.). There also needs to be at least two elevators in every new building. The new Westmount Recreation Centre only has one elevator which breaks down almost every week. I know people who work there and they say that the City Recreation department has probably paid for the second elevator a few times over with the number of refunds to patrons with disabilities they have had to cancel when the elevator is broken. My Nanni used to call those decisions '...penny wise and pound foolish...'. Nanni lived through the Depression.

Please do not let designers build anything like the new Waterdown Library. It had a dreadful design and it hard on anyone with mobility issues. They should have put elevators there as it is 6 floors of walking upwards which is painful! The Seniors centre is down a long scary ramp and there is no washroom near the Centre.

**OTHER DESIGN ISSUES;** there needs to be visitor parking and room for DARTS vehicles.

**Pg. 16. Parking!!!!** – THESE REQUIREMENTS DISCRIMINATE AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES!!!! If a Senior has a disabled parking permit they are entitled to park at a meter on the street. If anyone with a disabled parking permit needs to use that retail/shop space in that building or do an event as I do, that is discriminatory. It is what I call 'Able-ist thinking'; not everyone can take transit, ride bikes or walk well. What if someone with a wheelchair van is going to the hospital or a doctor's appointment?

6.1.4.40 There shall be no vehicular surface parking along the street frontage.

6.1.4.41 Above-ground vehicular parking shall be fronted by permitted uses other than parking at street level and upper storeys shall be screened from view from the street.

6.1.4.42 Parking standards shall ensure that the re-use of *existing* buildings is not compromised.

6.1.4.43 Surface parking lots *existing* on the date of adoption shall be legal non-complying uses to the Downtown Hamilton Secondary Plan.

6.1.4.44 New surface parking lots shall not be permitted.

Pg. 18; DOWNTOWN MIXED USE DESIGNATION

Pg. 19. PEDESTRIAN STREET FOCUS

Pg. 20. PARKS, ETC.

parks and open spaces shall be designed to achieve the following:

- i) direct at-grade access to the streets, bicycle paths, trails or pedestrian routes on which they front with clearly identified pedestrian and cycling access points from surrounding areas;
- ii) continuity of design between the public spaces, the streets that surround them, and the buildings that face them; and,
- iii) on-site parking shall be discouraged.

**Again, these plans discriminates against those with disabilities by not allowing disabled parking, DARTS, other service vehicles, etc.** the City already has too many 'pay to view spaces' like the area falls, etc. Now you are telling the disability community they cannot go to the parks in their neighbourhood?

ALL THE HARBOUR/NORTH END/ANY CITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO HAVE DISABLED PARKING, visitor parking and DARTS spaces.

Plowing of sidewalks in Hamilton is so very bad. I know people whose children have service dogs. The children are having trouble getting out in bad weather when they need to.

Pg. 20; CIVIC SPACES; Citizens with disabilities are already disappointed and frustrated every time a big event happens at Hamilton Place. By that I mean all the event trucks/movie vans, etc. take up all the available metered parking spaces. When these spots are taken away that means that anyone with a disabled parking permit is forced to travel further to get where they need to go.

Pg. 20 Pt. about Civic spaces

- iii) on-site parking shall be discouraged.

**CONTINUING 'ABLE-IST' THINKING ABOUT HOW PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES USE THE DOWNTOWN SPACE.** What about DARTS, Driving Ms. Daisy vehicles, etc.?

pg. 21; pt. 8d

- i) be publicly accessible;

- ii) be designed for uses of all ages and abilities;

**REFER TO MY COMMENTS ABOUT CIVIC SPACES.**

Pg. 23 views...

Pg. 24; GENERAL TRANSPORTATION POLICIES;

6.1.12.3 The Downtown Transportation Master Plan is the primary policy document for multi-modal transportation in the Downtown. All plans and improvement programs for Downtown Streets, including street reconstruction and public improvements, must conform to this Plan and are subject to the Downtown Transportation Master Plan.

Pg. 25.

6.1.12.4 *Development* in the Downtown shall implement the approved parking strategy providing for the consolidation of parking opportunities in strategic locations.

**CONSOLIDATION OF PARKING SPACES; I am confused by the change here from pg. 20; my comments; These may be too difficult for those with disabilities/wheelchairs, etc.**

6.1.12.7 Provision of on-street parking shall be a priority in the Downtown. Designs for street improvements shall maximize opportunities for on-street parking. The requirements for public *transit* stops and the effect on *transit* route travel times shall be reviewed prior to establishing additional on-street parking.

6.1.12.8 Where residential uses abut a street, enhanced landscaped boulevards

Pg. 26. Need visitor parking for in-home treatment services (Physiotherapy, accident related treatments, DARTS, etc.)

Pg. 27. BIKE LANES; See my previous notes.

Pg. 28 LRT AND CIVIC SPACES:

6.1.12.22 In locations where the public right-of-way of streets intersect the *priority transit corridor* on King Street and where full vehicular access is maintained, the following design elements shall be considered:

a) **relocate curbs to maximize the pedestrian through-zone and plantings zone to accommodate street trees, where feasible; DARTS will be negatively affected. I know Mary Sinclair and others have LRT concerns.**

b) ensure that safe access to loading facilities are maintained;

a) **Comments;** the issue in the City is that in various Roundabouts in the City drivers cannot see through the centre of the roundabout to actually see what large vehicles or pedestrians are on the sidewalk or in the crosswalk. The roundabout near the Ancaster Fire Station on Wilson St. is terrible with awful sight lines. The roundabout at Stonechurch Rd. in the Meadowlands area is awful as it is not very wide and you cannot see any oncoming traffic, cyclists or pedestrians trying to cross. There is a school there as well which means safety is more important.

Pg. 31.

Pg. 33-34 BIKE LANES;

Pg. 36;

Main Street

- Widen public sidewalk where feasible
- Improve vehicular pedestrian separation through wider sidewalks, street tree plantings and parallel parking
- Strengthen pedestrian and cycling linkages to east-west streets and north-south streets, *transit* hubs
- Provision of additional on-street parking where feasible

**THIS IS GOOD.**

#### **OTHER ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES;**

LRT; the award winning Hamilton Wheelchair Square dancers are really concerned about the LRT as they rehearse downtown. The group has many volunteers who drive the dancers to different events, etc. They are also really concerned about DARTS issues and there will be more if the LRT goes ahead. The LRT stops are too far apart for those with mobility issues.

#### **RESTAURANTS IN METERED PARKING SPACES;**

When the City allows a restaurant to use a metered parking space as an extension of their dining space, they discriminate against those citizens with disabled parking permits. I consider the thinking behind that 'able-ist' which is frustrating. Permits can legally be issued when someone has trouble walking more than a certain amount, getting in/out of their vehicle, recovering from an accident or illness.

#### **MISC. ISSUES;**

The City also puts flower boxes on the sidewalk on Concession St. that are too close for anyone with a wheelchair to get it out.

Annoyed that City/Province are forcing riders onto transit. I cannot use transit for a few reasons but mostly as it does not go where I need it to and the hours are not reliable. The City/province are making it too hard for drivers who need to drive to do so (see 'Carmageddon article in references).

**CITY HEALTH PLANNING ISSUES;** Rob McIsaac is monetizing health care. McMaster needs to be full hospital again as do other closed hospitals. We do not need women's/children's Hospital near the General but full service hospitals everywhere in the City. Please allow for those institutions in the City plans.

I have already shared my concerns about pot legalization at the City Public Health committee.

From Susan Creer, Chair Accessible Hamilton

References;

Carmageddon'? Skyway bus lanes, car-free downtown Hamilton floated at transportation forum

Skyway the Hamilton Spectator By [Jon Wells](#)

'...Transportation is a complex, hot-button issue, and a few in the room were not all-in with the presentations. Advocates for accessible public transit were disappointed to hear no references from the panel about their concerns. "All this talk of walking and biking, what about those who cannot?" said Terri Wallis, who sat in a wheelchair. On that note, accessibility advocates Paula Kilburn and Mary Sinclair said they oppose the LRT plan. They say the line would inhibit DARTS vehicles that provide specialized transit service...'

Forcing citizens to use transit - some comments; some of my own activities outside work involve directing and producing plays in different community theatre groups in the area, including Waterdown where there is no public transit going anywhere I need. I work as an event planner and am a theatre professional to carry around set pieces/properties, etc. I have organized Environment Hamilton Good Food Box in my two building complex which means driving to a number of locations to drop off the money and pick up the orders.

I was a caregiver for my dad before he died in January 2014. My parents lived out in Greensville. There was no transit out there and many of his doctors were in different cities including Hamilton, Brantford and London.

Hamilton's big move plan seems to be telling me that I have to give up my van? There is a lady in my building who does not drive so I routinely take donations we have collected to the second hand stores – do you want me to take the bus for that? I volunteer on a charity board in Dundas (Routes Youth Centre) and routinely use my vehicle for fundraising activities and to buy Christmas party supplies – are you suggesting I give up my vehicle for that?

Bio; Susan J. Creer B.A. 01. Susan is a local gal with a strong interest in people as well as disability and poverty concerns. Susan has been volunteering since she was a teen and continues to do so. Susan's background includes professional and community theatre, event planning, administration, professional public speaking. Susan has a B.A. 01 (double major in Psychology and Theatre Arts) from Redeemer University College and also an Event and Conference Management Certificate from Mohawk College, '12.

Susan currently works part-time teaching acting to children/youth which she loves. Susan is involved with Accessible Hamilton (2017) the HRPR. 'Susan is also an Associate board member of the Routes Youth Centre in Dundas as

well as a Toastmaster International club member. Susan preaches and writes opinion/editorial pieces for the Spectator, LinkedIn and the Mohawk College alumni blog. Susan is an advocate from the pulpit, podium and in print.

Photos;



And;



And;



This one is awful as it is out in the heat and children play on it.

Lastly out in Ancaster.



My good friend Sandy W. who is in a wheelchair hates the Ancaster Mall. The City/developers are losing money with these outdoor malls as they are not accessible or safe.