

Good afternoon gentlemen and ladies. Thank you for your involvement in making changes to the truck route in Hamilton. It is an issue close to my heart.

My name is Heather Ohrt. Herman Ohrt is the name of my Dad. You may have heard his name because his life was taken by a heavy truck on a street in Hamilton last year, just minutes away from here. He was riding his bike and was run over by a cement mixing truck at the corner of Queen and King streets.

I don't know if that truck had to be in that spot because of a delivery, or if that truck was cutting through the city to save time and gas and make more money for its company.

But I do feel sure that there are many, many heavy trucks, loud trucks with poor visibility, trucks with one or two trailers, which are short cutting through the city daily. It is incredible to me how many heavy trucks are on our city streets.

My Dad was 77 years old when he died, but didn't seem his age. He was the healthiest and most fit person in our family. The coroner said that he had the body of someone in their 50's. My Dad is dearly loved and missed by our family and by friends. He was truly a wonderful, kind, caring, intelligent, wise, loving man.

My goal here today is mostly to speak to those of you who will have influence on the truck route through Hamilton, our city. When you have retired, will you look back and think about lives you improved and even possibly saved by limiting the trucks on our streets, or otherwise? These decisions are possibly a matter of life or death.

At another meeting which I attended here, I heard a City Councillor talk about Hamilton being "open for business". Hamilton's stated vision is "To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully". Are these pretty words that have been thrown onto the city's website, or are they actually a guiding force for the decisions that are made by the city's leaders? As was shown at the last truck route subcommittee meeting, the truck route in Hamilton looks like a spiderweb densely woven through the city. Does allowing heavy, long, loud, huge trucks through the city, through residential streets, to cut through as a favour, if they don't need to be going through the city, actually translate into the best place to raise a child and age successfully? Not at all.

I don't want anyone else to get hurt or worse. I pray for the safety of the people in this city. For all of us.

A friend of mine made a good point, that it is also not fair to the drivers of these huge heavy trucks, to put them in the position where they are putting people at risk.

Please prioritize safety for people, starting with the most vulnerable. It is your responsibility and duty to protect people. That is more important than being "open for business". Please create a system that forces trucks that are not needing to be in the city to go around it rather than through it.

Please listen to people at the meetings that will be held, instead of pretending to listen to them. Then please make the changes necessary for a transformed truck route that makes Hamilton a much safer, much more pleasant, place to live.

Thank you for your time and consideration.