

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** In support Aberdeen Traffic Calming - Sep 16, 2020 Council Meeting

**From:** Chris Ritsma

**Sent:** September 15, 2020 12:05 AM

**To:** Office of the Mayor <[mayor@hamilton.ca](mailto:mayor@hamilton.ca)>; Farr, Jason <[Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca](mailto:Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca)>; [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca)

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Hello,

My name is Chris Ritsma and I am a resident of Ward 2. I am send a concise email to voice my support for calming of Aberdeen.

While I do not live on or beside Aberdeen, I have walked, driven and cycled along Aberdeen multiple times. I support traffic calming measures because I support a balanced mode split for transportation in the city. People living in many parts of the city feel uncomfortable and unsafe walking and cycling while drivers are given all the space we have. The sidewalks in the city are hilariously thin beside what sometimes amounts to a urban highway. Aberdeen may not be seen my some to be a neighbourhood street, but I think that is a false way to think of areas in the lower city (neighbourhood street, arterial, et cetera). The lower city was designed well before cars, and as a result fitting cars into it and many other century old cities has been like trying to fit a round peg into a square hole.

This means that to have a successful city there must be discomfort with driving. This is a reality that many are afraid to spell out. In every single city designed for people, it is sometimes difficult to drive. People do not flock to New York, Chicago, Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Amsterdam, downtown Burlington and Oakville, Tokyo, Brussels, all for their great highways and lack of congestion. They do so because it is enjoyable to walk, and to get around and because they are lively and culture-filled. If Hamilton wants to be seen as a successful city, it needs to stop trying to be the highway capital of Canada.

One may think Aberdeen is not a street of culture, it is one with concrete and pavement, but when we think this way, rather than holistically about the entire city as one community and as a place to live, not speed, we fail ourselves.

When I cycle to a friends, or to work, or to get groceries, I don't always get to choose the most scenic routes. Sometimes going around a dangerous street means a 20 minute detour on a 25 minute ride. So I choose the dangerous path because I've got limited time in a day. If there are long stretches filling our city where people do not feel safe, and are not safe, people will choose to not cycle, walk, or take transit, and our roads will become more filled with cars, and people will avoid creating culture, livelihoods and families in these areas. Many do not have a choice in how they get around, such as seniors, children, people with disabilities and those who cannot afford the burden of a automobile. Cities are not about driving, they are about living. I didn't move to Hamilton to drive, I moved here to live, and no matter where you live, you should be and feel safe, no matter how you get around our city.

Regards,

Chris Ritsma.