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From: Lauren Stephen

Sent: March 25, 2021 12:40 PM

To: Farr, Jason <Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Written Delegation, March 29 GIC

Below is the text of my pre-recorded video delegation to the March 29 GIC. The hook into my argument has fuzziness. We are talking about expanding the designated urban area, not city boundaries.

That does not affect the reality of my argument. Hamiltonians have a higher carbon footprint built into the design of our city, which presents an ethical problem to people who want to build families or businesses here.

By failing to take meaningful action on climate change, the city is placing a terrible ethical burden on young Hamiltonians. Heavier carbon footprint means a less livable world for others. It will be a dispiriting thought for young people to understand that in their name and for their supposed benefit, their community and their family disregarded harm caused to others.

This is already a quality of life and mental health issue for many people. I do not know whether to envy or pity those who do not struggle with the ethical burden of our heavier climate footprint. We are seeing a viable future slip away.

Lauren Stephen

Members of City Council. Thank you for allowing my video delegation. I am working today, and cannot attend live.

Hamilton is a huge city, geographically. At 1138 km², Hamilton is 80% larger in size than the amalgamated City of Toronto, with just one sixth the population. Hamilton is about the same surface area as the cities of Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton combined. Those three cities have a combined population 4,300,000, with a total surface area of 1183 km².

Hamilton is inefficient in our use of space. We are disorganized and wasteful in our use of land. We have so much land, but somehow we need more.

Our population density is low. That translates into higher property taxes, more expensive delivery of city services. And it translates into a much higher carbon footprint for Hamilton families. Our sprawl is costly and inefficient. It is also unethical.

There is an ethical challenge facing families who want to live in Hamilton, buy homes in Hamilton, start a business, or raise children here.

How many people are likely to die this century because of climate change, if we do nothing to mitigate it. 25 million? 500 million? And how many will die next century if we do nothing. 250 million? 5 billion?

If Hamilton families continue to have a higher and growing carbon footprint than families in neighbouring cities, in peer cities... it means that Hamilton families will be responsible for more economic hardship, more environmental degradation, more disease, and more deaths due to climate change than in neighbouring and peer cities.

There is an ethical challenge facing people who want to live, work, buy homes, have children, start families in Hamilton. A heavier carbon footprint is built into our city design, our sprawl, our reliance on the automobile, our lack of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, our transit myopia. And we are not seeing enough movement in the right direction.

Council is forcing a terrible burden onto young Hamiltonians and Hamiltonians yet to be born. They are going to have to work that much harder to solve this climate crisis because we collectively have failed to take meaningful action in the last 20 years.

And they will face an ethical burden in the knowledge that their families are responsible for more economic hardship, more environmental degradation, more disease, and more deaths due to climate change than in our neighbour and peer cities. This is going to affect quality of life and mental health in deep, profound ways.

With Hamilton as massive as it already is--the size of Toronto, Mississauga, and Brampton combined--it seems greedy and irresponsible to gobble up more land and not even consider the possibility that we might have enough for our needs.

I urge Council to at least consider the possibility of freezing Hamilton's urban boundaries. Given our already huge geographical area, and low population density.