

June 1, 2021

Dear Members of the General Issues Committee,

The development of a local light-rail transit system (LRT) has been a controversial topic in Hamilton and has already had a lasting impact on businesses and residents along the proposed LRT route. Prior to the cancellation of the project the Hamilton Community Benefit Network was engaged in working with Metrolinx on a made-in-Hamilton community benefits agreement.

When the Federal and Provincial governments announced a 3.4 billion dollar commitment to resume the project they emphasized that job creation, Covid-19 recovery and Community Benefits including affordable housing were key priorities for the resumption of the project. This once in a generation infrastructure project will bring rapid transit to the city's busiest transit corridor, provide employment, local procurement opportunities, and infrastructure renewal. We must work together to maximize the benefits for the city of Hamilton by implementing a firm Community Benefits Agreement.

We at the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce envision Hamilton as an inclusive, thriving city in which all residents have equitable opportunities to contribute to building healthy communities and a prospering economy. Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) are a proven approach to achieve this vision.

A CBA will help ensure that a skilled workforce is ready and available for the completion of infrastructure projects by tapping into the capacity of Hamilton's diverse communities. A CBA will contribute to the establishment of a shared framework for workforce development that ties together community-based organizations, governments, colleges, training agencies, local unions, professional societies and subcontractors involved in the trades, professions, and ancillary industries. By contributing to the capacity of the training and workforce development system to work in a coordinated and collaborative manner today, CBA(s) will also foster a long-term commitment to workforce development through existing training delivery agencies and union training programs.

In early community conversations with residents, we heard that Community Benefits around the development of an LRT system should mean that Hamiltonians would have a direct say station Designs, green roofs, a 5-1 tree replacement and LEEDS standard construction. Some of the land procured for the project should be set aside for community use, including a Community HUB, parkland and community spaces along the corridor and in the Storage and Maintenance facility. The most important demand we heard from residents for a Community Benefit from the Hamilton LRT was the replacement of the lost affordable, and construction of new housing along the corridor.

As the City of Hamilton resumes construction on this \$3.4 billion dollar investment into our local community and transit system, we commit to once again engaging in meaningful engagement with residents, stakeholders, members of the Hamilton Community Benefits Network and bringing those requests to the City of Hamilton, Metrolinx and both levels of government. A made-in-Hamilton Community Benefits agreement must be resident driven, community based, and address as much inequality in the city as possible.

We eagerly await the opportunity to return to the table to work with Metrolinx, city staff, and both levels of government to develop our city's Community Benefits Agreement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keanin Loomis', with a stylized, cursive script.

Keanin Loomis
President & CEO
Hamilton Chamber of Commerce