

March 25, 2022

Truck Route Sub-Committee
City of Hamilton
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

Re: Item 8.1 – Truck Route Master Plan Update

Dear Members of the Truck Route Sub-Committee,

On behalf of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, I would like to thank the members of the Truck Route Sub-Committee for seeking our recommendations on the proposed Truck Route Master Plan (TRMP). Moreover, we would like to thank and recognize the contributions of City of Hamilton Staff in the Transportation Planning and Parking division for their enormous efforts to consult with the public and stakeholders to inform this work.

As Interim CEO of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Hamilton's oldest institution at 176 years old, I have the privilege of speaking for our 1,000+ members that employ over 75,000 people in our community. Decisions surrounding the design of the TRMP are not taken lightly as they not only impact the flow of goods and services movement through our City, but also reflect decisions about ensuring the health and safety of its residents.

Supply chain challenges are a critical issue facing the global economy and its impacts can be felt here in the City of Hamilton. Evaluating the City's own TRMP serves as an opportunity to assess opportunities to improve existing linkages, highlight shortcomings of the current network, and to facilitate a broader community conversation about goods movement within our community. Any decisions on the TRMP must take into consideration the variety of perspectives on an ideal network, but also maintain emphasis on the critical importance this network will provide for Hamilton-based businesses.

Based on the Chamber's historical participation in this process, our members are focused on ensuring that any network ensures safety for all road users, increases efficiencies, and preserves access to critical network linkages and thoroughfares.

With that said, it is important that any approved TRMP provides clearly defined access to large industrial yards and business parks, identifies clear routes for North-South and East-West access, and maintains linkages to critical transportation nodes including the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW), Highway 403, Red Hill Valley Parkway (RHVP), and the Lincoln M Alexander Parkway (the "Linc").

As currently presented, the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce is supportive of the staff recommendation for “Alternative 5 – A Ring Road Concept with Positive Guidance.” Whereas Alternative 5 delivers on providing clarity to businesses on shaping their own route planning for their staff by reducing the number of routes designated for trucks and allows for opportunities to augment those routes to optimize safety for all users, there is no western connection for to and from the regional transportation network, namely, Highway 403, for vehicles in excess of 4 axels.

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce recommends that the sub-committee proceed with Alternative 5 with the addition of studying the long-term possibility of including a western connection in some time-managed form for larger trucks to and from Highway 403 to maintain network efficiencies. Failing to provide clear options to drivers to access this critical highway link, may facilitate the risk that undesignated routes take on truck traffic that they cannot handle, clearly increasing a risk to the health and safety of our community.

Absent links for larger trucks to the 403, the closest alternate route would be over the Skyway Bridge, ultimately tripling the distance travelled, impacting time on the road, fuel costs, increasing greenhouse gas emissions, and unpredictability on delivery times, each of which negatively impact Bayfront businesses that the City of Hamilton is eager to court and retain. We must ensure that Hamilton’s dense employment nodes maintain long-term access to essential network linkages, including controlled and defined access to all major highways near Hamilton municipal boundaries. These implementations ought to be explored in a phased manner with attention being paid to economic, social and environmental impacts balanced with requisite enforcement applications to ensure compliance.

The Chamber also believes that the TRMP exercise has highlighted the experiences of all road users, not just trucks, and is supportive of additional safety measures on all routes including well-designed intersections with separated bike lanes, interior truck lanes to introduce distance between trucks and sidewalks, turning lanes for trucks, and access to better data about route choices that allows for specific actions to reduce unnecessary trips.

We thank the Sub-Committee for its consideration on the Chamber’s perspectives on the proposed TRMP. We are committed to working together with all stakeholders to ensure that the TRMP serves our collective community interests, including the safe and efficient flow of goods and services to, from and within the City of Hamilton.

We welcome additional opportunities to discuss further route optimizations and increased safety implementations with community stakeholders as the route network is re-evaluated in the coming years.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marie Nash". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marie Nash
Interim CEO