

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Next Planning Meeting submission - AEGD - Transportation Master Plan

From: Marie Covert

Sent: November 6, 2023 4:11 PM

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Subject: Next Planning Meeting submission - AEGD - Transportation Master Plan

Dear Mayor Horwath, and Honourable City Councillors,

When discussion of the updated AEGD - Transportation Master Plan occurs at the next Planning Committee meeting, please consider a delay in approving the TMP. Consider a pause, please, until the lands forced into the AEGD by the Urban Boundary Expansion are fully delineated and then removed. That is the only way to make an informed decision: to work with the most correct and current information. In this way, everyone - Planners, Growth Management, and yourselves - do the work only once and do it correctly. This is much more efficient than making interim decisions which then must be re-worked.

As you wait for updated maps with complete studies of streams, wetlands, thickets, and other natural features, perhaps you can consider different ways to approach the TMP.

1. Discover the most productive, least costly method of land use and development:
 - a. Rather than starting construction from the outermost perimeter of the Study Lands and working towards already completed spaces, consider expanding outwards from the areas already completed and closest to the working airport and cargo areas. This is certainly the fastest and most efficient way to access new lands and erect new buildings because of the already existing road work. By starting as close to existing warehouses, as close to runways as possible, expansion will occur only as it is needed and when/if it is needed. Please don't begin the major roadways, sidewalks, trails, bike paths, etc., at the extreme outer edge of the AEGD and then work inwards, destroying everything as you go.
2. Do the least harm:
 - a. From the perspective of climate change and all the protection which these lands will provide to Hamiltonians, please work around all the natural features: the streams (some yet to be mapped), the wetlands, the thickets, and hedgerows which provide habitat for our now endangered, threatened, and at-risk species. Acres of warehouses, pavement, asphalt roads, and cement stormwater management ponds provide NO deterrent from flooding, soil erosion, and landslides. In fact, the construction of them and their mere existent will exacerbate an already perilous situation. Please conduct the Environmental Impact Assessments **first, before drafting a Plan**. That is the only way to guarantee smart development, allowing generous

buffers, planning for safe corridors and tunnels for animals and water creatures – instead of tacking them on as an afterthought – “if it’s feasible”.

- b. Turtles have navigated this earth for 325,000 years but now, 7 of the 8 species of turtles found in Ontario are threatened, according to the Toronto Zoo. Seven out of eight, many of whom reside on the lands under study! After 325,000 years, whole species face annihilation.
- c. The AEGD is home to 4 different watersheds, the Ancaster watershed being the most powerful and significant for Hamilton. As the climate crisis escalates and every city/province faces unknown extreme weather events, the residents need assurance that all offices of the Municipal government are working together to ensure the best outcomes. By pausing any decision making, there will be time to include input from the Biodiversity Action Plan project, the Office of Climate Change, the Tree Canopy Program, and multiple other environmental groups whose experts understand the importance of maintaining as many natural features as possible. In fact, we should be restoring those areas which have become degraded and trying to create more habitat for birds and bats and bees. Hamilton and surrounding areas have been remarkably lucky, so far, in that we have not experienced winds and flooding such as seen in Europe. It is just luck. Now, without the oversight and guidance of the Conservation Authorities, whose powers have been stripped by the provincial government, the expert hydrologists, ecohydrologists, biologists, etc., are no longer on hand to ensure safe water management and safe construction practices. We have been ‘protected’ by the Conservation Authorities for 70 years, and now, when we need them most, they are not available. In the absence of their expertise, you must exercise extreme caution in decision-making as Hamilton residents face double jeopardy with respect to the safety of their homes and property.

3. Employment:

- a. While employment must be one of your main goals and consideration, please be wary of promises made by ambitious developers. Ontario has learned, to its detriment, that developers have only one objective and that is NOT the well-being of towns, residents, or even employees. While the promises are alluring, the reality may be very different and it will be too late to call the developers into account when warehouses populated by robots and managed by Artificial Intelligence (AI) engulf our landscape. Please look at this Image of an Amazon warehouse. [Amazon roles out robots to pack orders and replace jobs](#) There are no employees. Amazon proudly shows this kind of warehouse in their online marketing.
- b. The Star reported this week: https://www.thestar.com/business/more-than-a-third-of-ontario-job-vacancies-remained-unfilled-report-finds-and-sick-days/article_d48868a0-b704-590c-b728-ee0ae0781e6c.html



More than a third of Ontario job vacancies remained unfilled, report finds — and sick days are surging too. “Of all job vacancies in Ontario, 36.3 per cent remained unfilled for 90 days or more in the third quarter of 2022, according to the Financial Accountability Office’s report on the province’s labour market performance last year, released on Tuesday.” Jobs are available, but they are low-paying, with no prospect of promotion or advancement and do not allow families to pay their bills. More warehouse jobs will not change this sad scenario.

In closing, this TMP requires much more thought. It states that more land and funding will be required. "Many of the recommended projects are already captured in the Ten-Year Capital Forecast and the Development Charges Background Study, but will **need increased funding to support additional infrastructure to implement Complete Streets elements, wider ditches, additional land, and account for inflation.**" The obvious questions are how much more land? How much more funding? Clearly, the Planning and Economic Development Department is not in tune with Hamilton residents who cannot afford adequate shelter, food, or clothing yet who are asked at every turn to support Food Banks because the shelves are empty. This is a time for belt-tightening - not huge expenditures.

Please take the time to ask more questions, protect our natural features, and tread gently on this good Earth.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Covert
Dundas