

Pilon, Janet

Subject: In Support of Two-Way Conversion of Main Street

From: Stephanie Vegh
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 10:17 AM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: In Support of Two-Way Conversion of Main Street

To Members of Hamilton City Council,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support of the motion to be brought forward on Wednesday 11 May by Councillor Maureen Wilson and Councillor Nrinder Nann calling for immediate action to remediate the dangerous conditions that have been allowed to persist on Main Street in recent years, with especially devastating results and multiple deaths in recent weeks and months.

To be clear, these "accidents" and the resulting injuries and deaths cannot be called accidents - these are the sadly predictable results of widely documented and highly dangerous driving patterns and conditions that encourage speeding through timed lights (it's been called "the green wave" ever since my childhood growing up in this city), as well as the deplorable condition of pedestrian infrastructure along the major route, which provides zero protection to anyone unfortunate enough to find themselves traveling by means other than a speeding car. I cannot count the number of times a car or bus has ridden up on the sidewalk while I've attempted to walk on this street, and my experience using Main Street as a driver is no consolation prize.

Rather than take any meaningful action, this Council has repeatedly protected the interests of high-speed traffic through the heart of our city at the expense of safety, sanity and human lives. It has even been called our "competitive advantage" - a truly bone-chilling devotion to speed and convenience for some at the mortal peril of anyone who dares to live or work in this community.

Councillors Wilson and Nann are demonstrating the leadership that has been long overdue in our governance by calling for immediate actions to make Main Street safer for all road users, and I count myself among many residents who are eager to see the end of this six-lane death trap. This city cannot continue to sacrifice human lives for the sake of a few minutes shaved off a reckless driver's commute. And when LRT construction begins, the need for Main to serve as a functional two-way corridor - as it did before the widespread conversion to our streets to one-way at the whims of car-centric urban planners - will be greater than ever.

For context, I also recall driving the "green wave" southbound on James Street in my teenage years before it and John Street were converted to two-way roads. Far from being the disaster screamed about by opponents to two-way conversation, we can all recognize how James Street has flourished as the soul and pride of a new Hamilton since then. You have the opportunity here to make Main Street thrive in much the same way, and all the evidence in the world supports such a decision. Arguing otherwise in 2022 is simply wrong-headed, stubborn and frankly murderous to your constituents.

Frustration with this issue is reaching a fever pitch, and will no doubt shape many decisions at the ballot box this fall. I strongly encourage you to support this motion to put safety, the environment and human lives ahead of your misguided devotion to the car.

Regards,
Stephanie Vegh