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November 15th, 2024

Submitted VIA Email: angela.mcrae@hamilton.ca

Budget Committee
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main St West,
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Danko, and Budget Committee Members:

On behalf of the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA), I am pleased to submit comments for the City of Hamilton's 2025 budget. CAA is a not-for-profit auto club offering roadside services, automotive care, travel and insurance, and stays true to its origins as an advocacy organization for motorists and road users since 1903. CAA is committed to giving a voice or representing the voice of our 2.6 million Ontario members, including the approximately 140,000 Members who reside in Hamilton. Our advocacy team actively participates in discussions and efforts focused on enhancing road safety, improving infrastructure, and addressing transportation challenges.

With the rise of cost of living, residents of Hamilton need the continued support of the city government to prioritize road infrastructure and vulnerable road users. With the population expected to surpass 800,000 by 2051, the need for dedicated infrastructure funding is critical, as unmaintained roadways can cost taxpayers more money in the long run if not addressed and result in daily frustrations.

Infrastructure Funding

Like many urban communities, the City of Hamilton's traffic and road space demand has returned to pre-pandemic levels. In 2022, the City of Hamilton approved the Transportation Asset Management Plan, which identified a road network funding gap of \$86.6 million. The increase in the capital levy would provide the City with a road infrastructure budget of \$193.5 million by 2033, which would greatly assist the increasing cost of road maintenance and construction. **CAA would like the City of Hamilton to commit increased infrastructure revenues towards focused repair projects on the highly traveled main corridors that have significant road deterioration.**

Each year, CAA invites Ontarians, whether they are motorists, cyclists, transit users and/or pedestrians, to voice their concerns on which roads along their commute and local travels are causing hardship. Hamilton is no stranger to the campaign, with roads holding the number one spot on the Ontario top 10 list for the last three years. Barton Street East and Aberdeen Avenue which have held the number one spot, are roads familiar to Hamilton residents for travelling in and out of the City.

According to our 2024 survey of Ontario CAA Members, 64% of Members have experienced significant slowdowns due to road imperfections and have had to swerve to avoid potholes. Nearly half of respondents (42%) have experienced vehicle damage due to poor road



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conditions, resulting in additional personal expense when the cost of living is already high. The City of Hamilton should continue advocating for dedicated infrastructure funding from senior levels of government, with a prioritization on certain roadways that will serve as the foundation for the City's main transportation routes.

Vulnerable Road Users and Road Safety

As the City of Hamilton moves forward with its infrastructure plans, so does its need to implement and support other modes of transportation. As one of Canada's largest municipalities, proper road safety practices and attention to vulnerable road users are essential. CAA supports the City's initiative in implementing its Accelerated Active Transportation Implementation Plan, which is necessary to protect road users at a greater risk of serious injury from a collision with a motorist. The need for cycling infrastructure is one of the most significant concerns noted through the CAA Worst Roads campaign and other surveys CAA conducts.

According to a 2024 survey of 1,937 CAA South Central Ontario (CAA SCO) Members, 47% are cyclists, and half of the respondents wish they could ride more often. The top three reasons respondents cited as barriers to cycling were: 1) lack of time, 2) unsafe driving behaviours, and 3) lack of cycling infrastructure.

Road safety is an important focus for CAA. We continue to raise awareness and share educational resources for all road users, regardless of their chosen mode of transportation. CAA is ready to partner with the City of Hamilton to maximize investments in changing behaviours that minimize injuries and fatalities on Hamilton's roads each day.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the upcoming City budget. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide further information or be of assistance. CAA looks forward to continuing to collaborate with the City of Hamilton staff and elected officials to enhance the quality of life for our Members and Hamiltonians alike.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "bpirvu".

Brian Pirvu

Government Relations Consultant

CAA South Central Ontario

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cc: City Clerks Office (clerk@hamilton.ca)