

From: Lyn Folkes <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 12:25 PM
To: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: 2026 Tax Budget

Hello Mayor and Council members. These are my brief comments on Hamilton's 2026 Tax Budget.

I would like my taxes spent in our city on projects that address the global climate emergency as a top priority. I'm happy to see more electric vehicles at City Hall, trees being planted, our water quality and supply protected and bicycle lanes expanding. I would like to see more visible climate action in my neighbourhood still.

I'd like to see my taxes paying for ecological native forest plantings in our park, for example. There has always been a large area of expensively maintained lawn in our park that remains unused by residents and has no real purpose. The lawn mowers are too loud and pollute our air with GHG emissions for most of a day sometimes. So replacing these non-native lawns with lower maintenance native habitat-style vegetation would be a benefit to all. Asthma and allergy sufferers have an especially hard time during mowing seasons, so any reduction in mowing would help them as well as redirecting Hamilton's resources to where they create more benefit to taxpayers and their families. And of course, the birds and butterflies that need our help to ensure they have the proper resources for their long-term survival would also be better off. This would be an excellent climate mitigating project in all our parks.

I do not want my taxes spent on road expansion projects of any kind. We need to prioritize fixing our existing road surfaces which make it scary to drive on too many streets, like Aberdeen Ave. which still has large craters to avoid for fear of car damages. Also, it has been proven that new roads and road widenings do NOT improve traffic flow! I pay you to do the research but I learned this in university. More road lanes just attract more vehicles and population increases mean more vehicles will always be added to our streets, and why? Because Hamilton has no other safe or convenient mass public transport! That's what we really need!! The bike lanes help but if our city is ever to ease traffic congestion, and avoid Toronto's solid gridlocks, then we MUST have the best, fastest and most efficient mass public transit system possible. I want my taxes spent on that instead of useless road widenings or new roads, period.

I know my Councillor has goals of road widening as his top priority but as a resident of [REDACTED] I fully disagree and think this approach would not benefit us in the longrun. Road widening only destroys mature cooling and shading trees, but would take needed funds away from useful projects that would actually benefit taxpayers in the longrun.

So PLEASE, fix our existing roads, do not widen roads or build new roads, and spend our taxes where we need the most real help -- on an excellent mass transit system that will carry us both east-west and north-south through our main streets quickly! We have been waiting for decades -- more buses just add to the traffic volume, we need rapid transit as fast as possible. Only this would take enough drivers off our roads to actually help with the congestion.

I would use rapid mass transit for every trip downtown if we had it because parking is harder to find and getting more expensive. I do use buses but they are not always practical. As I age, I especially hope to be able to use a more efficient rapid mass transit system in Hamilton asap.

I'm glad that we hired more people to work in the new Climate Change Advisory dept too but I hope Council will also give that group enough power to get climate action done on the ground in Hamilton. We don't need more monitoring, we know what needs to be done. My Ward 8 has the lowest tree canopy in the City but I still don't see much action improving that. Our neighbourhood is bounded by major roads on all sides polluting our air with cancer-causing exhaust 24/7. We need more trees to help improve our air quality and we need them yesterday.

Please prioritize responsible climate action in our budgets. It is my family's top priority today and every such action would benefit all Hamilton taxpayers, our province, Canada and the world. That's a worthy expenditure.

Thank you,
Lyn Folkes

