

My Delegation Submission to the Public Works Committee
City of Hamilton, ON
9:30 a.m. Monday, September 17, 2012
Council Chambers, 2nd floor City Hall

Subject: The condition of city roads and streets:

Members of the Public Works Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak to you. I'll be brief.

This is my first time appearing before a municipal management group with a concern. I am not a complainer, but I am persistent if I see a problem that is not being addressed. Although I think the city is managed well, I do see the condition of Hamilton streets and roads as one such problem.

Among other things, I work call-in driving the public library's bookmobile. The job, as you can imagine, has taken me over many streets and roads in the Hamilton and greater Hamilton area. Due to the condition of these routes, I have great sympathy for the city's public transit workers.

I won't draw out this presentation by listing all the streets most in need of attention; you are far more familiar with the situation than I am. However, most east/west arteries are in terrible condition. I cannot possibly begin to add in the countless intersecting neighbourhood streets that tie in these main arteries, which are themselves in very bad condition.

Although I am reluctant to use this opportunity to serve my own interests, I draw your attention to my street—Homewood Ave. west of Dundurn. From the photos you can see that my street is little more than a rural wagon path complete with heaving bumps and wild grasses growing up through the cracks. Travelling up this street daily and feeling my car slowly disintegrating has motivated me to have this meeting with you today. I should also note that twice a day traffic is heavy on this part of Homewood Ave. due to the Earl of Kitchener school at the corner of Homewood and Dundern.

My larger concern, however, has to do with how the city is perceived by potential newcomers. I know that if I was considering this city today as a home for my family, or as a place to establish a business, I would wonder from the condition of the streets just how much the city is willing to maintain infrastructure. We all know that disintegrating infrastructure once it has gained momentum is almost impossible to reverse. That concerns me greatly. We need only consider recent traumas afflicting the Gardener Expressway to know how serious it can get.

A few months ago Mississauga's whirlwind mayor, Hazel McCallion, challenged Dalton McGuinty's Government to invest 10 billion dollars over 10 years in Mississauga's road infrastructure. Ms. McCallion is famous for her grand visions but she has a point. Without serious financial commitment, or commitment period, the job will never get done.

Realistic or not, Hazel McCallion has drawn attention to an issue in her city that will only worsen with the passage of time and inattention. I feel the city of Hamilton is facing a similar prospect, one that begs a serious response.

Thank you,
David Forsee
227 Homewood Ave. Hamilton, ON L8P 2M7 289-396-6907 dforsee@cogeco.ca

Homewood Ave West of Dundurn
Hamilton, ON



Photos taken by Sarah E. Truman Sunday, September 9, 2012