



April 8, 2024

RE: The Operation and Maintenance of the Upcoming Hamilton Light Rail Transit (LRT)

The Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion (HCCI) fully supports the Keep Transit Public Campaign. We are asking that Hamilton City Council maintain its commitment to a fully public transit system by ensuring that the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of the upcoming Hamilton Light Rail Transit (LRT) be kept public and operated and maintained by Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) and the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 107.

A publicly run transit system at all levels and across all modalities will lead to better connectivity, a more stable and accessible system of fares, the possibility of ensuring reduced and/or eliminating of fares, and better working conditions for transit workers.

We are concerned about privatization of transit across Ontario and the ongoing chronic underfunding of this and other public goods that further marginalizes residents, especially those on low incomes and who face accessibility and other barriers to using transit. Privatization can impact access to services, particularly for racialized, Black, and Indigenous residents who continue to face increased policing and scrutiny in public spaces. In the long run, it can limit the ability of cities like Hamilton to ensure that the needed equity lens (currently part of the LRT plan) remains central. Finally, the ability to move around the city is crucial for civic inclusion, and as we see more people pushed out of affordability in the city core and areas with highest access to social services, there is a strong case for expanding fare reductions to increase access. This conversation is easier to have if the system remains fully public and accountable to City Council.

We hope that City Council makes the right decision to ensure a strong and fully public transit option for Hamilton.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Caitlin Craven', written in a cursive style.

Caitlin Craven, Executive Director

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