

Hello,

Please find below the statement I would like to submit to the Public Participation Meeting on May 3rd, since I cannot be there in person. Thank you.

Dawna Perry

[Statement Begins]

I'm writing today to express my continued support for Rapid Transit in London. I have lived in London since 2006, and I have resided in Ward 4 for the past seven years. I love this city, and I have chosen to make my home here, but it has its problems; every city does.

In London, we struggle with urban sprawl and a painfully underfunded transit system. These two issues, combined with a gap between rich and poor that is growing throughout the world, make Rapid Transit a difficult topic. I understand that. But I find it deeply ironic and troubling that the most vocal critics of Rapid Transit that I have encountered seem to be those whose circumstances allow them the privilege of having a vehicle and therefore being able to remain blind to the plight of those less fortunate.

I am 30 years old next week. I have never owned a car, nor do I have the means or interest to purchase one. Everywhere I go in this city, I take the bus. As such, I see the day-to-day struggles of citizens who have no choice but to rely on what can be an unreliable service.

To those who put up DOWNSHIFT signs in their yard, I ask: Have you ever been on a bus that's behind schedule, and had to listen to every single person on that bus call their employer and explain the situation, begging their understanding, desperately hoping that they'll still have a job when they arrive? Have you ever seen a mother pushing a stroller, running frantically for a bus that will get her children to daycare on time? Have you ever flagged down a bus for someone in her situation? Have you ever hurried to help a man with a visual impairment find the correct bus in time before it pulls away from the curb?

I have. I've done all these things and more in eleven years of taking the bus, and I have little sympathy for critics of Rapid Transit who own cars and houses and yards, who claim that diverted traffic will "ruin their neighbourhood." It won't. Rapid Transit is the next step to make London a great city, one that is environmentally conscious and socially responsible to **all**. By reducing the number of vehicles on the road, Rapid Transit can both improve our city's environmental impact and provide a more reliable option for those who need, or choose, transit as their means of transportation.

I thank you for your time, and I hope that City Council will approve Rapid Transit and improve London as a whole.

[Statement Ends]