

From: Matthew Rowlinson
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2019 7:35 PM
To: SPPC <sppc@london.ca>; info@buildthiscity.ca
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Submission on proposed transportation project

Submission on proposed transportation projects:

I am an academic employed at Western; I have lived in London since 2002, after an early career in which I spent time in many cities and towns elsewhere in North America. London is the most car-centric place I have ever lived. There is nothing surprising in this; our city is in the centre of the Oshawa-Windsor corridor along which Canada's auto industry was built; many Londoners have worked or still work in the industry. Cars have enabled us to build a big, spread-out city where many privileged Londoners--including me and my family--enjoy living in detached homes with treed lots.

I travel our city on foot, by bike, using transit—but, above all for my commute to work and to run errands, I use a car. My 12km round trip to work takes twice as long by bus as it does to drive, and most days, I don't have the extra time. I am writing this letter on my own behalf and on behalf of other Londoners who want to change. I want to be able to get around our city quickly and easily, but I don't want to drive so much. Driving itself is getting slower because there are so many cars on the road, and we know that more roads or wider roads will just induce more traffic. Even to keep the cars moving, London needs to give its citizens transit options not currently available. And if we accept the science of climate change, and if we want to improve the quality of our air and the safety of our streets, we know we must do more than that; we must make our city less car-centred altogether.

To that end, I ask that council prioritize the construction of all four nodes of the bus rapid transit system that has been planned in the course of broad public consultation over the course of the last 10 years. The research I have seen shows that no other improvement to our transit will do as much to enable citizens to move rapidly around our city, or to densify future residential and commercial development as BRT. London Transit does wonders with the small public subsidy it receives per passenger mile, and our bus system must receive continued support and upgrades. But to make basic changes to how people get around our city, rapid transit should be part of the mix.

As councilors today, you face decisions that will shape our city for the next half-century. I know these decisions are hard. I beg you to act as leaders, to take the long view, and to do the right thing not just for today, but to help London thrive in the future.

Thank you for considering my submission, Matthew Rowlinson