



Manor Park
Community
Association

Association
Communautaire
de Manor Park

Hon. Mona Fortier, P.C., M.P.
Member of Parliament Ottawa-Vanier
Minister of Middle Class Prosperity and Associate Minister of Finance
Via e-mail: Mona.Fortier@Parl.gc.ca

June 29, 2020

Dear Minister:

The Manor Park Community Association (MPCA) applauds the NCC for its balanced and reasonable report, *Refresh of existing studies of potential corridors for additional National Capital Region crossing* (the "NCC report"), which was tabled at the NCC Board meeting of 25 June 2020. In light of the NCC Report, **the MPCA urges the federal cabinet to terminate activity related to the planning and construction of a sixth crossing for private vehicles in the National Capital Region, and to refocus on sustainable and effective solutions to transportation issues.**

MPCA notes the following points made in the NCC Report:

- Any next steps on a potential sixth crossing project must be directed from the federal government
- If further study of a sixth crossing is to proceed, it would be necessary to:
 - complete the Long-Term Interprovincial Crossings Plan
 - analyze the impact of COVID-19 on changing behaviours
 - undertake environmental assessments for multiple sixth crossing options
 - conduct comprehensive consultation and engagement of municipalities, provinces, the Algonquin nations of Quebec and Ontario, other stakeholders and the public.

In short, the NCC is saying that a further study of a sixth crossing would require a repeat of the lengthy and costly 2009–2013 exercise that found no suitable crossing corridor, resulted in prolonged and widespread opposition from the public, and which eventually was terminated at the insistence of the governments of Ontario and Quebec.

MPCA recognizes that real and serious interprovincial transportation issues exist in the National Capital Region. These relate to the movement of both people and goods. Many residents live in one province and work in the other. Transit and active transportation links are not well-integrated, causing congestion at peak hours as commuters cross the river in private vehicles. No adequate provision is made to provide a link for heavy trucks between Highway 417 in Ontario and Highways 5 and 50 in Quebec. As a result, the communities of Lowertown and Sandy Hill have for more than 50 years borne an unacceptable burden of in terms of noise, environmental pollution and road safety.

Rather than spending precious resources and time on yet another attempt to locate a sixth private vehicle crossing, it is time to take a more enlightened approach to addressing these transportation issues, taking into account the current realities of the climate crisis, Canada's Paris Accord

commitments, and the potential long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. No single solution can address the movement of both people and goods.

Movement of People

COVID-19 has shown us that many workers can operate effectively from home. Some firms, including Shopify, will re-orient their entire staff to work from home. In the public service, the Treasury Board is currently re-assessing its plans for the work location of public servants. While it is early days, the COVID-19 pandemic could result in substantial reduction in the need for interprovincial commuting. Moreover, private vehicle commuting is carbon-intensive and not sustainable. **MPCA urges the federal government to partner with other levels of government to focus on improvements to public transit and active transportation infrastructure**, a point made by the mayors of both Gatineau and Ottawa. Indeed, the STO has recently presented an innovative interprovincial LRT plan.

Movement of Goods (Trucks)

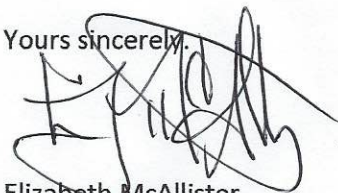
There is no suitable location for a new crossing that would not simply spread the existing heavy-truck degradation to additional residential neighbourhoods and also despoil green space. On the initiative of the City of Ottawa, an initial study funded by the federal government, Ontario and the City of Ottawa has shown that a tunnel for trucks linking Highway 417 and the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge is feasible. A downtown tunnel environmental assessment, which would provide an in-depth analysis, has not proceeded due to the refusal of the federal government to fund a one-third share of the environmental assessment's cost. **MPCA urges the federal government to come forward with its funding share to enable the downtown Ottawa tunnel environmental assessment to proceed.**

MPCA notes that:

- the mayors of both Gatineau and Ottawa are publicly opposed to the construction of a sixth private vehicle bridge
- there has been no statement of support for a bridge from either the Ontario or Quebec governments
- there has been no widespread public expression of support for such a bridge; the only vocal proponent of a sixth bridge appears to be the MP for Gatineau.

Now is the time for the federal government to abandon its support for a sixth private vehicle bridge. We urge the Government to shift its focus to improving low-carbon options and eliminating the harmful effects of heavy trucks on residential communities.

Yours sincerely,



Elizabeth McAllister
President

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