

August 31, 2009

The Honourable John Gerretsen
Minister of the Environment
12th floor, 135 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, ON
M4V 1P5

Re: Objection to Metrolinx Diesel Expansion on Georgetown South GO Rail Service & Union Station – Lester B. Pearson International Airport rail link

Dear Minister Gerretsen;

We fully support our Province of Ontario's efforts to improve the convenience, capacity, speed, and commuter options represented by the transit corridor connecting Georgetown, Lester B. Pearson International Airport, and downtown Toronto's Union Station.

However, it is with significant and increasing concern that we write to you today, with respect to any/all Metrolinx service expansion proposals which seek to continue and/or expand GO's current dependence upon diesel locomotion for its movement of people to and from downtown Toronto.

In short, we support service expansion to the Airport and along the Georgetown - Airport - Union Station GO corridor through electrification of the existing right-of-way.

We object to the use of diesel trains for said purposes.

Starting from the presumption that our Province seeks to prove itself to the world as a forward-thinking champion of innovation and liveability, any proposal to continue a status-quo reliance on fossil fuels is both short-sighted and contradictory.

With respect to the latter, we needn't look any further than the Clean Air website of our Province's own Ministry of Environment, which proclaims: "**Clean, safe air is essential in protecting the health of our people and our communities**" (today's screen shot is attached, or visit <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/air/airquality/clap.htm>).

As citizens, we entrust our elected officials to make informed decisions that reinforce - rather than endanger - the liveability of our communities.



**High Park
Residents' Association**



Jeff D. Derksen, Chair 416-533-6867 jdd@LittleLotOfLand.com

The lack of any “front page news” or specific targeting of pollutants affecting ‘Local Air Quality’ on the Ministry’s own Clean Air website since 2005 might have been one reason why the City of Toronto’s own Medical Officer of Health felt it necessary to suggest in writing what Metrolinx and/or the Province should concern themselves with (see an excerpt attached, or visit http://www.toronto.ca/health/moh/pdf/metrolinx_letter.pdf).

Where innovation is concerned, the pieces required to realize an environmentally responsible GO system aren’t dependent upon methodologies or technologies yet to be developed, tested, or implemented.

Electrified railways are found around the world, including India, Brazil, and Australia. Throughout Europe, electrified right-of-ways provide service between city centres with population densities far below those found within GO Rail’s service area.

Even Vancouver, a city (and region) with one quarter of (Greater) Toronto’s population and a shallower tax base, has recently opened its third major electrified transit right-of-way, between its downtown and its international airport.

We acknowledge that the initial capital budget for electrification might give our elected officials pause; bold decisions after long periods of inaction always require courage.

However, we’re certain that continued implementation of diesel-based solutions would only succeed in reducing the quality of life for those millions of Ontarians unfortunate enough to live in the vicinity of - and downwind from - GO Rail right-of-ways.

Being seen to provide fuel for significant and escalating future health care costs will never be considered by taxpayers or their children as worthy of support or celebration.

Contrast with your combined embrace of electrification and refusal to expand GO diesel locomotion, which would help put an end to outsider caricatures of Ontario espousing the benefits of clean air while delivering skies reminiscent of the Industrial Revolution.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff D. Derksen
Chair, High Park Residents’ Association
and those named below



**High Park
Residents’ Association**



The family of Jeff D. Derksen & Shelagh Henshaw
The family of Dr. Eddy Lau & Krista Keilty
Pat & Bill Dixon
George & Stephanie Bryant
John Tyerman
The family of Sarah Phillips
The family of Adam & Colleen Elltoft
Norm Greer
Deena Rasky
Philip Sohm
Kerri Murphy
Louis & Jessica Krushnisky
Isabel Blair
Patrick Parent
+ 25 who did not explicitly indicate that their names be published here

Electronic Distribution:

Gord Perks, Ward 14 (Parkdale – High Park) Councillor; City of Toronto
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Gerard Kennedy, Member of Parliament (Parkdale – High Park)
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Colleen Bell, General Manager, Community Relations & Initiatives; Metrolinx
Leslie Woo, General Manager, Transportation Policy & Planning; Metrolinx
Clean Train Coalition

The High Park Residents' Association (HPRA) solicits and represents the stated views of both HPRA members and non-member residents living in Toronto within an area bounded by Parkside Drive, High Park Boulevard, Roncesvalles Avenue & Dundas Street West, and Bloor Street West.



High Park Residents' Association





ONTARIO'S PLAN FOR CLEAN AIR

Clean, safe air is essential in protecting the health of our people and our communities. As part of its commitment to clean up Ontario's air, the McGuinty government has posted two new regulations that require industry to reduce their emissions of harmful air pollutants. Both of these regulations achieve commitments made in the government's *Five-Point Action Plan for Cleaner Air*, announced on June 21, 2004.

Regulation 194/05 Industry Emissions - Nitrogen Oxides and Sulphur Dioxide addresses points one and two of the five-point action plan:

- Applying tough nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and sulphur dioxide (SO₂) limits -- two of the most significant smog-causing pollutants -- to more industrial sectors than ever before.
- Making the NO_x and SO₂ limits even stricter in future years.

Regulation 419/05 Air Pollution - Local Air Quality with better provincial standards for harmful air pollutants addresses points three to five of the plan:

- Setting new air standards, in some cases for the first time, for many harmful pollutants, including carcinogens and toxins that could pose a threat to human health.
- Achieving a better picture of industrial emissions through updated technology.
- Introducing a faster, risk-based approach to implementing new air standards.

What's in this Section

Regulation 194/05 Industry Emissions - Nitrogen Oxides and Sulphur Dioxide

Regulation 419/05 Air Pollution - Local Air Quality

News

▪ **August 29, 2005**
Government Takes Action To Protect The Health of Ontarians

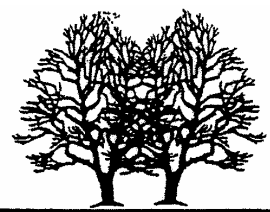
Media Backgrounder: **New Regulations Ensure Cleaner Air in Ontario**

▪ **June 21, 2004**
McGuinty Government Unveils Plan to Fight Smog in Ontario

Media Backgrounder:
Ontario's Five-Point Plan for Cleaner Air
Fact Sheet: **New and Updated Standards for 29 Air Pollutants**

"Ontario's Plan for Clean Air"

- August 31, 2009 screen shot from Ontario Ministry of Environment website
- <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/air/airquality/clap.htm>



High Park Residents' Association



Operation of the proposed new and expanded train services with diesel engines will result in adverse human health impacts in the adjacent communities. Metrolinx commissioned a human health risk assessment of the diesel expansion that was based on the results of the air quality assessment, which predicts increased risk of acute health effects, such as respiratory irritation, at every location assessed (44 residential areas, 37 schools, 40 child care centres and 4 long term care centres) during peak air pollution events. In addition, unacceptable leukemia risks are predicted for 16 of the residential locations assessed. However, the methods used in the health risk assessment result in an underestimate of risks. Actual risks, especially to the most vulnerable and most exposed individuals, would likely be considerably higher than Metrolinx' Environmental Project Report suggests.

Given these concerns, I am hereby submitting this objection to the proposed Georgetown South Service Expansion and Union-Pearson Rail Link using diesel trains. However, I do support a transit expansion based on electrification. I request that, as Minister of the Environment, you permit the project to proceed only under the following conditions:

1. That new train services and service expansions proceed only as electrified services;
2. That Metrolinx be required to conduct ambient air quality monitoring prior to implementation of new train services or service expansions, in order to establish an air quality baseline and concentration gradient. The chemicals to be measured are:
 - Combustion gases – carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide;
 - Particulate matter (ultrafine (PM_{0.1}), respirable (PM_{2.5}) and inhalable (PM₁₀);
 - Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) – formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, 1,3-butadiene, benzene and acrolein;
 - Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) – total and benzo(a)pyrene; and,
 - Greenhouse gases – carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide; and
3. That Metrolinx establish a community liaison committee to:
 - Deal with issues arising from the proposed construction;
 - Provide input on selection of mitigation strategies; and,
 - Provide input to the mobility hub planning process.

Both the need for public transit, and the need to protect our air quality and health are important issues. The Georgetown South Service Expansion and Union-Pearson Rail Link must be implemented in a way that is health protective. This project represents an opportunity to reduce air

“Toronto’s Medical Officer of Health Opposes Georgetown / Airport / Union Diesel”

- August 31, 2009 screen shot from City of Toronto website
- http://www.toronto.ca/health/moh/pdf/metrolinx_letter.pdf



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