

April 12, 2012

To: Public Works and Infrastructure Committee

Re: Environmental Assessment of the proposed widening of the CP railway bridge crossing St. Clair Avenue West,
between Keele Street and Old Weston Road

Dear Chair Minnan-Wong and Members of the Committee:

Background:

Streetcar service operating in a dedicated transit right-of-way was introduced in July 2010 on the westerly section of St. Clair Avenue West, between Lansdowne Avenue and the Gunns Road loop. To accommodate this exclusive transit right-of-way, traffic is reduced to a single through lane in each direction between Old Weston Road and Keele Street/Weston Road, including the section within the CP railway overpass between these two intersections.

Since the introduction of this streetcar service and the resulting reduction in traffic lanes, traffic movement on St. Clair Avenue West has become severely congested, particularly at the Old Weston Road and Keele Street/Weston Road intersections. This congestion has become an impediment to community revitalization and has introduced health and safety issues. Also, as a result of this congestion, drivers are using alternate routes and infiltrating through adjacent, stable residential neighbourhoods.

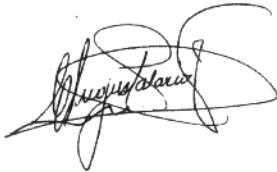
The local St. Clair Gardens BIA and thousands of local residents are extremely concerned and upset about this traffic congestion and want both immediate and long term solutions to these problems. The solutions I envision is the widening of the CP rail structure in order to maintain two lanes of traffic in each direction along this section of St. Clair Avenue West. This widening would have to be undertaken in conjunction with improvements at the two adjacent signalized intersections in order to achieve two continuous through traffic lanes in each direction along the entire length of this section of St. Clair Avenue West. I have been advised by city staff that in order to widen the bridge structure an Environmental Assessment must first be undertaken and approved. This action would be consistent and in keeping with my motions passed at the TTC, Etobicoke- York community Council and the wishes of the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) Direct the Acting General Manager, Transportation Services, to report back to the next (May 2012) Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting on the actions required to initiate an Environmental Assessment of possible measures in the area to improve traffic operations, safety and movements on St. Clair Avenue West, such measures to include, but not be limited to, the widening of the CP Rail bridge structure between the Old Weston Road and Keele Street/Weston Road intersections.

- (2) Furthermore, direct the Director of Real Estate Services to suspend the sale of any City owned property in the vicinity of St Clair Avenue West between Gunns Road to Osler Street until the completion of the St Clair Avenue West Environmental Assessment Study.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cesar Palacio', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Councillor Cesar Palacio
Davenport-Ward 17