

**Deputation to Toronto City Council Executive Committee – October 23, 2019****Item EX9.1 Toronto-Ontario Transit Update**

My name is Jana Orac. I live in Ward 4, Parkdale-High Park. I am here today as a private citizen.

I do not claim to be an expert in transit planning, operation or finance. But I do pay attention to what's happening in my city, and I care about public transit. I have been following recent developments, and I have read the City's latest report as well as analyses from other sources.

And even I can see that the Province's proposal as it stands -- with Toronto's retention of our own subway as a notional *quid pro quo* -- is highly problematic.

**Here's how it looks to me.** Three points:

One: Mr. Ford and the provincial government have decided against taking over Toronto's subway not because they respect Toronto's right to run its own affairs; we know that's not the case. They have decided to back off because it is bad for them.

Two: The subway takeover is one more action that Mr. Ford's government has taken and then had to roll back, at least in part, because it was bad policy, and because people across our province got angry. The lesson is that we need to stand up for ourselves and push this government hard.

Three: On transit, this provincial government has shown itself to be a difficult counterpart, full of unilateral moves that cause damage, and bold claims that turn out to have a weak foundation. This offer is in keeping with that record, with estimates of timelines and costs that are not credible, and many unanswered questions.

*continued*

**So, what now?**

This provincial government is on the losing side of history. But the decisions that City Council takes will affect the lives of Torontonians, young and old, on every single day for decades to come.

**Here's what I would like to see.** Four points:

One: I want Toronto to push the Province and its agencies hard, to get meaningful information that is shared; and to get the best possible benefits and outcomes – not just hypothetical, in principle, “better than nothing” benefits.

Two: I want meaningful consultations with the people who matter – by which I mean, Torontonians - and I want the feedback from those consultations to actually be incorporated into design, implementation and operation.

Three: I want the City and its counterparts to listen to informed critics and seriously consider their input.

Finally, I am looking to the City to bring all of its resources to bear to devise and implement an effective strategy for dealing with a difficult counterpart, and to get Toronto's people the effective and affordable transit system that we deserve.

Thank you for hearing me out.