

# HamRoad.com



To: David Wesenger, Senior Project Manager  
Stantec Consulting Ltd.  
361 Southgate Drive  
Guelph, Ontario, N1G 3M5

From: Dave Broostad, President  
Hamilton Road Area Business Association  
834 Van Street  
London, Ontario, N5Z 1M7

Subject: Union Gas Pipeline Project

Dear David

I attended the public information meeting you hosted Sept 26<sup>th</sup> concerning the proposed pipeline project that will go from Veteran's Memorial Parkway to the London District Energy Plant. As president of the Hamilton Road Area Business Association, the business area most affected by this proposal, I am pleased to provide you with the feedback, on behalf of our membership, that you had asked for.

At the meeting you and your associates repeatedly assured us that you are genuinely interested in our concerns and that the "Preferred Route", as proposed by your firm, has not been cast in stone.

Our current membership sits at just under 100 small business owners and community groups, which is exceptional for a micro-business association like ours. Subsequent to your meeting, we consulted with both members and non-members along the Hamilton Road corridor and we would like to submit the following for your consideration. I would also like to add that many of the business owners I spoke with had not heard anything about this project and that is of concern to us.

**We must object to the use of Hamilton Road for this pipeline for the following reasons:**

As you no doubt know, Hamilton Road is a gateway to downtown London and is the preferred route for much of the traffic flow moving from the eastern 401 corridor into the centre of the city. If you choose this Hamilton Road route, it will be at least the third time in the last two years that we have experienced major disruptions to our businesses caused by construction work along Hamilton Road. The section between Highbury Ave. and Gore Road, which you propose to use, is being re-paved as I write this!

By definition, running a business is about taking risk, but getting broadsided time and time again is more than many of our members can handle. These disruptions to our businesses happen on a number of different levels and cause severe economic strain to the most vulnerable among us, those who rely on consistent traffic flow and walk in business. Overhead (and taxes!) must continue to be paid while revenues drop. Not many of us can withstand this strain for any length of time and some of us, as I have mentioned, will be going through this for the third time in a short while!

Some of the more salient concerns expressed are as follows;

- At the meeting your representatives explained that you had selected the Hamilton Road route as your "Preferred Route" primarily because the route down Gore Rd. from Veteran's Memorial Parkway has the lowest concentration of residences and businesses of any of the other alternatives. Unfortunately, the turn onto Hamilton Road and west puts you into some of the highest concentrations of small businesses in the city.
- Even if you preserve full access to the business along the route, as you say, the perception of restricted access is enough to keep customers away. If you need to drop some dry cleaning off, pick up a prescription or buy some baked goods, are you going to slalom through the traffic cones, signal men and mud or drive down three blocks to a location you know is free of encumbrances?
- Even if it only takes your construction crews a week or two to move past a particular location, as you promised, traffic will be bottle-necked at some point along the route for the entire four months or longer, which we all know is very probable given the inevitability that construction delays will occur. Who wants to take a chance as to where the bottle-neck is going to be on any given day!
- As traffic congestion increases, access to parking along the main artery will be reduced and access to off street parking restricted in many cases or at least that will be the perception. Once again, does the consumer risk taking a chance or go to a place where they can be assured of easy and guaranteed access to parking
- Public service announcements in the newspaper and traffic reports on the radio remind consumers, on an ongoing basis, which roads in the city to avoid. Past experience has taught us that commuters, consumers, and customers will avoid our area like the plague.

- If you are in a traffic jam on Hamilton Road, are you going to take the time to stop off and do some shopping? If you know there will be tie ups someplace along Hamilton Road, are you going to take a chance or choose another route?

There is no doubt about it, if you end up choosing Hamilton Road, it will cause undo stress to our small businesses once again, some of which may very well not be able to last it out!

**We propose that you use the Alternate Route (4) which would cut across Hamilton Road at Gore and follow the river down the bike path to Nelson Street.**

We fully understand that there will be some who have issues with this route but it affects far fewer from a financial standpoint and there would be far fewer, if any, traffic disruptions. I would like to stress that we are not making a “not in my back yard” argument here. Most Hamilton Road area businesses do not object to putting up with their fair share of disruptions, especially when it will lead to improvements in the city’s infrastructure and increased use of environmentally cleaner co-generation energy solutions. What we cannot accept, however, is being unfairly targeted once again, especially when alternate, less intrusive routes are available.

We do not believe Hamilton Road is an appropriate venue for your pipeline project and we urge you, in the strongest way possible, to choose another route.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Dave Broostad  
President  
Hamilton Road Area Business Association

cc: Members of HRABA  
Mayor Anne Marie DeCicco-Best  
Controller Bud Polehill  
Controller Gord Hume  
Controller Tom Gosnell  
Controller Gina Barber  
Councilor Roger Caranci  
Councilor Cheryl Miller  
Councilor Judy Bryant