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News Release

Take Richmond-Byron routes off the table for good: Neighbours for Smart Western Rail

OTTAWA – Now that the Mayor and the City of Ottawa have acknowledged that western rail routes that run along the Richmond-Byron corridor would ruin Byron Linear Park and divide the community, Neighbours for Smart Western Rail wants those options taken off the table for good.

“Byron Linear Park is the pedestrian-friendly, green hub of our neighbourhood. The routes that would travel along Richmond Road, either from Rochester Field or from Churchill, should no longer be up for discussion,” said Neeta McMurtry, spokesperson for Neighbours for Smart Western Rail.

Neighbours for Smart Western Rail would also like the City to give serious consideration, and not just a cursory look, to burying the “Richmond Underground or R12 route. Burying the route would go a long way toward mitigating the noise, vibration, visual obstructions and the loss of greenspace. We would also like to see a plan for how the city will ensure pedestrian access to both the North and South sides of the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway.

Residents are also anxious about the City’s intentions with regard to development in the immediate area of the western light rail project. Will single family homes suddenly find themselves in the shadow of new condo buildings? Where will all the car traffic go that both the train and the new buildings will inevitably bring to the area?

As for the National Capital Commission, we encourage the NCC to work collaboratively with both the City of Ottawa and local residents. The biggest users of the federal lands in question are the families who live in the area, and the tourists who come to stay with them. Rochester Field is a valuable piece of greenspace that should not be offered up as a compromise that would merely send the train back along Richmond-Byron, ruin the Byron Linear Park and physically divide the community.

“We encourage the City of Ottawa and the NCC to view local residents as an integral part of the planning process around western light rail, and not as an afterthought,” said McMurtry.

For more information:

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