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Subject: LRT through the Eglinton Flats area
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Subject: [Keep Crosstown West Extension underground through Eglinton Flats](#)

I am Secretary of the Board for the Mount Dennis Community Association. In the spring of 2021 I was approached by Metrolinx to convene a group of about six local **residents who could advise your team** with respect to plans for the LRT through our area. We welcomed this initiative, and initially things went well. We accepted your team's advice that it was not practical to route the LRT beneath the Humber River, but objected to their initial proposal that it be routed at the edge of the playing fields just above the water-filled drainage ditches, insisting that it needed to be up on the Eglinton Avenue plateau, completely outside the park space and its forested perimeter. **Metrolinx agreed to this** re-routing, and agreed to address various other concerns as well.

However, after the end of August 2021 all consultation ceased. We gradually learned that Metrolinx was negotiating with the City of Toronto, and when your team finally went public with their new plan in early 2022 **it bore no resemblance to what we had been promised.**

We learned that far from being right beside Eglinton, the LRT between Pearen Park and Jane Street would be routed **entirely within Fergy Brown Park**, destroying hundreds of trees and completely changing what has long been a prized area of tranquil parkland. Equally unwelcome was the news that almost one-third of Pearen Park would become a works yard for about EIGHT YEARS, with trees removed, terrain levelled, and **residents left with zero public access to much of their only** immediately accessible **local park.**

By now the City had spent \$1.3 million building its new bike path in the area where we had been told the LRT would run. But we eventually learned that Metrolinx would need to **completely destroy this new bike path** so it could use the space beside Eglinton to ferry vehicles and equipment to where it would be building its LRT guideway. But "don't worry", we were told: a new temporary bike path would instead be built along the south side of Eglinton (something which, in the view of most local residents, will create as many problems as it solves), and about ten years from now the City's expensive new bike path can be re-built. (NONE of this sounds to us like responsible use of public funds – especially when there are alternatives available).

As we learned this, together with more details of the proposed routing west of Jane Street, I and others who had spent months collaborating with Metrolinx became firmly opposed to its plans. Far from being routed beside Eglinton Avenue as we had expected, the LRT is now proposed to be further north and will destroy huge areas of woodland beside and beyond the Eglinton plateau. Metrolinx has not provided a count, but from what we can tell **the loss of mature trees may well be in the thousands!** We have STILL not been shown precise plans, but it is clear that from west of Emmett Avenue, the LRT will be built entirely within our park-space: specifically the all-important woodlands that separate the playing fields from the Eglinton plateau and are home to a wide range of fauna.

YOU HAVE ALTERNATIVES if you care enough to look at them seriously, and **one of your relatively senior staff has informally conceded this.** My own preferred option would lower the trajectory of the tunnel west of Scarlett Road such that the LRT can be routed below Scarlett but above the

Humber River. The LRT can then enter a tunnel in the Eglinton plateau, beside Eglinton Avenue where the Humber River bridge ends, and continue underground until it eventually reaches the tunnel already being built west from Mount Dennis Station beneath Eglinton Avenue. Yes, there will be some additional costs to create an underground station at Jane Street, but we believe the long-term costs of this perfectly feasible option will end up being close to what is now proposed – considering the lower maintenance costs of a tunneled LRT and underground station, and the elimination of an ongoing graffiti-removal program which the current proposal is certain to require.

An alternative like this would be welcomed by the vast majority of Mount Dennis area residents and other users of the Eglinton Flats, who are growing increasingly angry as they learn of Metrolinx's plans and ongoing intransigence. And it would save Pearen Park, Fergy Brown Park and the North-West Flats Park from being damaged or degraded in any way - a HUGE gain for a relatively small added cost.

We were impressed by the lengths Metrolinx went to in addressing the concerns of Etobicoke residents who opposed an at-grade LRT through their neighbourhoods. In Mount Dennis the residents are less affluent and not as well-connected, but we believe we need the same level of consideration.

Thank you for taking our concerns seriously.

Yours

Simon B. Chamberlain

Mount Dennis resident

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