Dear Brenda,

Thank you for your prompt response to my e-mail regarding the 2014 budget. I’m sending along some further comments that I would like to be raised at Tuesday’s meeting:

1. Hamilton should get a handle on urban sprawl and the huge cost it entails.

2. Builders should be directed to rebuilding a vital inner city.

3. Hamilton politicians should be advocating for the elimination of the Catholic School System. This model is expensive and outdated.

4. We should be advocating for an overhaul of the social welfare system. It is everyone’s responsibility (provincial) to care for societies poor and marginalized citizens.

5. We should encourage our citizens to be physically active and to promote healthy living through expanding bicycle paths and green space throughout the city.

6. We should be lobbying the ministry of Health and Long Term Care to support “flex beds” in local hospitals to relieve congestion in emergency departments.

7. We should take the provincial government to task for dramatically reducing the number of registered nurses practicing in Hamilton and Ontario Hospitals. In part, due to increased acuity and co-morbidity levels, the entry to practice for registered nurses was changed to a baccalaureate preparation several years ago. What has changed?
8. We should be improving our bus service and ridership prior to considering any local funding for LRT. North/South public transport should be a priority to allow mountain residents to have better access to a new and revitalized city core.

9. We require a consistent, effective means to lobby the provincial government on issues that impact our city.

10. Politicians should never risk our hard earned tax money to fund projects of benefit to few of our citizens. (Ex. bicycle velodrome, Pan Am Stadium)

As a final comment I would like to add that it is imperative that our local politicians are fiscally responsible. Our overburdened middle class is shrinking and losing hope for a brighter economic future for themselves and their children.

Thank you for your time, Brenda and I do hope that this letter will generate some thoughtful discussion on Tuesday.

Sincerely
Gale Mitchell