May 17, 2006

City of Hamilton Councilors, staff and all who are here to speak and listen to a visionary presentation of the future of the City of Hamilton.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Planning the growth of this City is a task that should not be hurried, belaboured, or denied. Our City is growing in diversity, technologies are developing faster than our generations evolve, and our knowledge of our environment is increasing as we plan our future.

Upon reviewing the GRIDS study, it is apparent that there has been a great deal of ‘top-level’ research and postulations on how we will grow. Assumptions of growth type (including growth distribution, and growth employment) appear predestined and inevitable to occur.

The recommendation to accept Option 5 as the path the growth holds some very risky parameters that could create a cavernous hole in the transit system if changes to the current funding formula are to occur. The parameters on gas tax provisions to the City has already changed, which puts the “significant investment in transit” Key Disadvantage closer to the realization of being realized.

This is a great study, and a starting point towards growth initiatives. The cost is worth every tax dollar that is spent on its’ completion. The current transit trends in the GTA point towards significant funding from all three levels of Government. Our current funding model can supply increased transit support with traditional modes, however the recommendation of the GRIDS model is unsustainable with the current funding models.

While I agree that a decision must be made on the growth strategy for the City of Hamilton, a component of funding, especially for transit, must be included in the recommendation.

Thank you,

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