

Andrea Horwath



Leader of the Official Opposition
Chef de l'Opposition officielle
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December 18, 2019

Bonnie Lysyk
Auditor General of Ontario
Suite 1530 - 20 Dundas Street West
Toronto ON M5G 2C2

Dear Ms. Lysyk

As you may know, this week the Minister of Transportation announced the cancellation of the Hamilton LRT project, claiming “the project will actually cost five times more than the previous government led us all to believe.”

The minister claimed that the true cost of the project is \$5.5 billion. In contrast, the previous government had estimated the project's construction cost as \$1 billion, based on 2014 dollars.

The minister is suggesting that the construction cost-per-km for the Hamilton LRT is now somehow several times what other comparable projects have cost. For example, the approved Hurontario LRT had an estimated construction cost of \$1.4 billion and is 18 km long. The approved Finch West LRT had an estimated construction cost of \$1.2 billion and is 11 km long. Waterloo Region's just-completed ION LRT had a construction cost of \$868 million and is 18 km long.

It appears that the minister is comparing apples to oranges by including operations and maintenance costs over 30 years, as well as other non-construction costs, such as property acquisition, pre-construction municipal infrastructure upgrades and HST.

Further, the minister is refusing to disclose the third-party consultant's report that the Premier cites as validation for his figures, so the public has no way of independently assessing them.

The public deserves to receive honest and reasonable cost estimates when assessing the value of public transit projects that cost billions of dollars.

I am requesting that your office investigate the reasonableness of cost estimates presented to the public, under the current and previous provincial governments, for rapid transit projects, including the Hamilton LRT.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrea Horwath", with a long, sweeping underline.

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