

BACKGROUND

CLEAN TRAINS – A VISION FOR ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Clean Train Coalition was formed in April 2009 in response to Metrolinx' plans for the Georgetown South Service Expansion and the Union-Pearson Rail Link (GSSE/UPRL). Since then, the Clean Train Coalition has grown rapidly and now has over 50 active members and thousands of supporters — a reflection of how deeply disturbed we are by Metrolinx' plans for this corridor.

Members of the Clean Train Coalition include professionals from all sectors, representatives from neighbourhoods and communities throughout the city, and concerned citizens of all ages. We support these long overdue investments in public transit — our concern is that the Georgetown South/Pearson project as currently planned will endanger our health, pollute our environment and damage our neighbourhoods.

Our Concerns

The Georgetown South Service Expansion and Union Pearson Rail Link has been identified as a priority project by Metrolinx, the newly-amalgamated transit authority for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. Currently, this corridor is traveled by approximately 50 trains per day. The proposed expansion calls for more than 300 trains on opening day, and closer to 500 trains per day by 2025. In Metrolinx' current implementation plan, all these trains will rely on diesel-powered locomotives.

Exhaust from diesel locomotives is a known danger to public health. It has been linked to cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, cancers and premature death. It poses an especially potent danger to children and the elderly.

Diesel trains are harmful to the environment and contribute to climate change.

Diesel trains are also heavy, loud and disruptive to neighbourhoods and local quality of life.

Our Proposal

Increased rail service can improve our quality of life, protect our environment and stimulate our economy. But in order to see these improvements, **that increased service must be electric.** Electrification is feasible, and is status quo in cities across the globe: in Calgary, New York, in cities in India and throughout Europe. Using Metrolinx' estimates, electrification of this line will only cost an additional 17 percent — a small price to pay to protect the health of our children.

In our rush to get shovels into the ground, we risk wasting the opportunity to build a truly world-class transit system. Electrification will eliminate the health risks implicit in the current plan; it will also contribute to a healthier environment and stimulate the "Green Economy" to which Ontario aspires.

We're building this system for the future. We must electrify it now.

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For more information, visit www.cleantrain.ca.