

Madam Mayor, Members of City Council: My name is Jim Ruta and I am speaking against the proposed narrowing of Strathcona Road and the addition of a sidewalk to the east side. My family and I live at 4075 Hilton Avenue.

1. We have the same goal for this neighbourhood – increased safety for the residents. *But what if the proposals have the unintended consequence of instead reducing safety and increasing danger to the residents? What if we were making an unforced error that made our community worse, not better?*
2. **POINT ONE:** Unfortunately, I believe that the proposed sidewalk for Strathcona does just that. Strathcona’s street geometry has the effect of creating a nearly blind corner at all three intersections: Lakeshore Road northbound, Spruce Street southbound and New Street northbound and southbound.
3. Strathcona is not a straight roadway like Belvenia. There are curves built into the roadway at all three intersections that force drivers to use much of the existing width to make the turn they want. The curves surprise drivers. Westbound Lakeshore drivers turning north onto Strathcona must turn more than 90 degrees to continue. It’s the same with eastbound drivers on Spruce turning southbound and Eastbound drivers on New turning southbound onto Strathcona. The lack of visibility comes as a surprise and tends to create wider than normal turns meaning drivers at each intersection heading in the opposite direction are safer with the current road width. They would be in jeopardy with a narrower roadway.
4. Narrowing the roadway as proposed, will inadvertently reduce the safely margins built into the original road design and increase the chances of collisions. Such incidents would also threaten residents walking on a nearby, adjacent sidewalk. The existing wider roadway helps minimize these chances and maintains the current safety margin as well as retains the traditional character and charm of our neighbourhood.
5. Adding parking only to the east side of Strathcona will make all three of these intersection turns less safe than they are today. In particular, northbound Strathcona at Spruce is already too narrow when cars are parked on just one side of the road even with the current width. Eastbound Spruce drivers turning

southbound have a similar problem. Narrowing the roadway will only make it worse for all drivers. Pedestrians on an adjacent sidewalk will not be protected much by a low curb.

6. Adding winter snow windrows from plows that rarely come within a meter of the curb will only exacerbate the new peril. Add the fact that South Strathcona does not get the same snow clearing as North Strathcona does, and we will be dealing with a slippery, narrower road and more danger.
7. **POINT TWO:** Since there is no parking on Lakeshore Road, we on Hilton routinely have paid valet parking from Lakeshore addresses taking over our street. We can easily have our street filled with cars and busy traffic several times per year, even with two sides of parking on Strathcona.
8. Reducing parking on Strathcona to one side will make the parking situation worse and we will not even be able to have parking for our own guests at the same time – usually popular holidays. I oppose parking changes to Strathcona that will reduce the peaceful enjoyment of my property that we deserve.

In conclusion, we moved our family from Toronto to south Burlington 14 years ago because of the wide streets, relative safety and uncrowded charm and character of the Strathcona neighbourhood – exactly what you threaten with this proposal. There has been little demand or rationale for the proposed changes. There is no need to fix something that is not broken.

Changing the original design specifications for Strathcona will unnecessarily reduce safety for our community rather than improve it as intended. For these reasons and others, our family adamantly opposes the proposal and urges the Mayor and Council not to put their finger on the scale and vote with the majority of residents to turn it down.

Thank you.