

August 25, 2021

On behalf of the FCM-RAC Proximity Initiative, I am providing comments on the *Towards a Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan: discussion paper*.

The Proximity Initiative is a collaboration between the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Railway Association of Canada that promotes the use of the *Guidelines for New Development in Proximity to Railway Operations* (guidelines).<sup>1</sup> These guidelines were developed through extensive collaboration between railways and municipalities to identify a set of best practices that developers and municipalities are encouraged to follow to ensure that developments consider safety and livability to mitigate proximity issues.

As the proposed vision for the transportation plan is “of an interconnected transportation system that provides a safe, seamless and accessible transportation experience for all”, it is paramount that the guidelines are considered in the transportation plan. Particularly as the population in the GGH region is forecasted to grow from 10 million people in 2019 to 14.9 million people by 2051. This means that new residential buildings will need to be constructed which in turn may lead to more developments around railway infrastructure, more proximity issues (less livability for residents), and decreased safety within our communities.

The guidelines provide a suite of best practices for municipalities, provincial governments, and developers to plan accordingly by mitigating proximity issues such as noise, vibrations, emissions, trespassing, and most importantly implementing safety measures. The extensive data presented by industry and health experts will ensure that we have well-functioning transportation systems that will be developed for efficiency while balancing our community’s safety and livability for all. We are committed to partner to with the Greater Golden Horseshoe region to provide guidance as a proactive development approach.

Furthermore, as urban intensification occurs around railway sites, public education is also critical for ensuring public safety. From January 2021 – July 2021, Ontario experienced 16 incidents at railway crossings, 2 fatalities at crossings, and 3 serious injuries at crossings. Trespassing incidents have led to 20 incidents, 17 fatalities and 2 serious injuries. Operation Lifesaver can assist MTO with any public education campaigns to raise awareness of rail safety and the dangers of trespassing. More information may be found at [www.operationlifesaver.ca](http://www.operationlifesaver.ca)

I would be pleased to discuss these matters in greater detail with you and to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Sincerely,



Jenelle Saskiw  
Program Manager  
FCM – RAC Proximity Initiative

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<sup>1</sup> [http://proximityissue.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2013\\_05\\_29\\_Guidelines\\_NewDevelopment\\_E.pdf](http://proximityissue.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/2013_05_29_Guidelines_NewDevelopment_E.pdf)