SUBMISSION – MARGERIT ROGER

Item 1 of the Report of the Standing Committee Policy on Public Works dated March 4, 2026 (Transit Route Speed Reduction)

Submitted: Wed, 03/25/2026 - 09:00

Delegation information

Committee you want to address
Council

Agenda item you want to address (number and title)
1, Transit speed reduction order (under SPC on Public Works)

Support or oppose recommendations
I support the recommendations

Submit comments in writing checkbox
Submit comments in writing

Comments
For the Record

Spring 2024

Wolseley residents were completely taken aback when they found out at public "consultations" (more accurately these were exhibits, as almost all decisions had already been made) held on February 26 and March 2, 2024, that a very busy north-south bus thoroughfare was going to start travelling along Arlington and the Wolseley Greenway, ostensibly replacing the east-west #10. Buses were going to be travelling either north or south along Arlington every eight minutes from 5:30 in the morning to 10:30 at night. The #10 was apparently being cancelled because of low ridership.

Within three weeks of finding out about the proposed Master Transit Plan, around 400 Wolseley residents had signed a petition requesting that the implementation in the neighbourhood be delayed until a proper consultation could be done. This petition was never about cancelling the bus route but about ensuring appropriate levels of public transportation while preserving Wolseley's community character and homes. The planned bus thoroughfare was recognized as a direct contradiction to Wolseley's walkable neighbourhood and the recently implemented 30 km/hr Greenway along Wolseley Avenue. It was also clear to many residents along Arlington Street that their homes, property values, and liveability would be significantly compromised by the high volume bus corridor. In short, it was recognized by residents that Transit and the City had not truly done their

homework and that the new bus route used Wolseley but did not serve it.

• A group of concerned citizens sent a letter to Kevin Sturgeon on March 15, 2024, outlining the concerns that had been voiced in the neighbourhood during petitioning.
• Meetings started with Councillor Gilroy and various community groups.
• A well-attended community meeting was held in April 2023, attended by Councillors Gilroy and Lukes, as well as Transit staff. Councillor Lukes stated several times that resident concerns would be listened to and that issues would be addressed after a year of piloting.
• Neighbourhood newsletter The Leaf did several stories about the concerns.
• Research was conducted by Wolseley residents into Transit's planning process. Despite assertions about "consultations" having been completed by Transit, a neighbourhood SurveyMonkey survey (results provided to Councillor Gilroy in May 2024) showed that of the 150 respondents almost no one knew that changes were coming to the bus route. Transit's own data showed that no consultations were held in Wolseley despite the impending massive negative impact and, in fact, only 1.2% of the City's population had been minimally "consulted" in the planning stages based on Transit's own data.
• Survey respondents also voiced significant concerns about loss of access to necessary east-west public transportation (specifically to people needing to easily access the downtown hospitals), as well as concerns about safety, noise, house shaking, and loss of liveability, given that the thoroughfare would be travelling along a new Greenway and a residential street unfit for the proposed traffic levels.
• A website, Wolseley for Fair Transit, was launched to inform residents of the City's plans.
• Regular emails went out to around 400 residents who were concerned about the new thoroughfare and its negative impacts on the neighbourhood.

To raise the profile of the issues and concerns, numerous group and individual oral and written submissions were made to the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works and its members throughout the spring of 2025. In addition, numerous letters and emails were sent to the Mayor, Committees, and the Council.

Responses to these letters or emails were exceedingly rare. Certainly, nothing was done to address or integrate the concerns raised by residents before implementation of the new route. Only Councillors Gilroy and Wyatt publicly acknowledged that the new route would result in legitimate negative effects that could have been mitigated with proper consultation and planning. Regardless, the Master Plan was approved by the City in June 2024.

Summer 2025

Within hours of the new buses starting to run along Arlington Street, residents experienced serious house shaking and began to email or call 311 to get buses to slow down. Buses were travelling around 50 km/hr along Arlington. Not only was this level of traffic much higher than appropriate for the infrastructure, but other traffic - which had generally

travelled closer to 35 or 40 km/hr – also started to speed along the street, raising safety risks for children playing in front yards and walking to school. It's important to know that even the school principals in the area had not been consulted before the bus route was set.

House shaking from speeding buses was so severe over the summer months and into the fall that people were woken up from sleep. New cracks appeared in ceilings and walls, especially at the backs of the house where the vibrations were strongest. In some people's homes, the windows rattled almost every time a bus went by. Front rooms and porches stopped being used because of the noise and vibrations. Neighbours stopped hanging out and visiting on sidewalks and in front yards. Indeed, the impact of the new bus thoroughfare was worse than expected.

Due to the public outcry to 311 and various Councillors, a speed reduction order was put in place by Transit in August 2025. Theoretically, the buses were now to travel 30 km/hr along Arlington Street south of Portage Avenue to try to reduce house shaking.

However, to this day, Transit's speed reduction order has not worked. I work from home and so every day I watch speeding buses pass my house. There is no evidence that Transit has taken residents' concerns seriously, despite many, many emails and calls to 311 to report infractions. In fact, communications with 311 are an exercise in futility and frustration. Asking residents to report speeding bus drivers underscores the blatant disregard that Transit has for residents' concerns and shows the lack of control that Transit has over its own drivers. Even concerns voiced directly in person to Transit staff at Committee meetings have been largely and roundly dismissed. Clearly, Transit staff and Council members do not live on narrow residential streets with major bus corridors.

Secondly, residents had to fight ridiculously hard to address the poor quality of Arlington Street, which contributed to the house shaking now that buses were speeding along it every eight minutes for 17 hours a day. Finally, after numerous residents emailed complaints to 311 and with Councillor Gilroy's active support, some of the potholes were provided with minimal asphalt patches. This, even though the City knew that Arlington Street was in poor condition from its own studies and from residents logging complaints about house shaking as early as 2021. As it turns out, residents photographed the deterioration of the asphalt patches over the course of the next three weeks. And the house shaking continued. The new bus thoroughfare had been approved without considering how already-weakened infrastructure and nearby homes would be affected by such heavy and frequent traffic.

In August 2025, thanks to Councillor Gilroy's request in response to residents' dismay at the overall deterioration of the situation, Michael Cantor, Manager of Street Maintenance, conducted a site visit and concurred that Arlington Street required reconstruction because of the many breaks in the concrete. He also stated that a more comprehensive asphalt overlay might be possible in summer 2026 to mitigate some of the vibrations and harms

experienced in homes. In the meantime, only 15 of the approximately 100 homes along Arlington were provided with a more thorough asphalt patch to address some of the worst potholes and concrete breaks before the snow came.

Winter 2026

The house shaking reduced somewhat with the new asphalt patches and the snow cover. However, with melting snow and reappearing potholes, we know what's in store. Having buses with axle weights that nearly equal those of trucks confirms that Arlington Street – a narrow residential street leading to the Wolseley Greenway - has become a kind of truck route, only with far more frequent traffic and over far longer hours of operation than most truck routes.

Emails to 311 remain insultingly ineffective. We are still, absurdly, asked to provide the numbers of buses that speed, even though Transit has a GPS system and it's too cold to stand outside to monitor something that is Transit's responsibility. Besides, even when residents have proof of buses speeding, nothing gets done. Eight months after creating a speed reduction order, Transit clearly still cannot or will not get its drivers to obey it. Councillor Lukes and Transit staff visibly shrugged when confronted with that fact at a meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works, instead blaming the drivers.

Finally, in a report to the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works in March 2026, Transit admitted that buses did indeed travel at 50 km/hr or more along this street. Despite making it sound as if the speeding buses are anomalies, residents know that almost every single bus goes close to 50 km/hr along stretches of Arlington Street … all day long but especially in the early morning hours and later in the evening.

The amount of effort that has gone into fighting for even basic recognition of the negative, far-reaching, and very real effects on our homes, house values, and liveability have added insult to injury. There appears to be only a bare minimum of accountability for the poor planning and disastrous bus network that was approved by Transit, by the Standing Policy Committee of Public Works, and by the City.

In the meantime, statistics show that ridership in the Wolseley neighbourhood is even lower than the ridership was for the original #10. An average of 12 to 15 people get on or off the bus twice a day, with an average of between 0 and 5 people getting on or off the bus at all other times of day. That means that 100 homes are being shaken every eight minutes for a maximum of 15 people who take the bus twice a day. Once the buses start to run until 2 a.m. on April 12, the house shaking will only pause for three hours in the middle of the night so that those same 15 people can take the bus once at peak time in the morning and once at the end of the workday.

It's a nightmare. We need public transportation, but this bus thoroughfare has had more negative consequences than positive ones. The harms of the new bus thoroughfare far

outweigh any benefits and the people who made the decisions are trying to avoid their responsibility for all the downsides, the costs of which are being borne by Arlington residents.

Spring 2026

On March 26, 2026, City Council will vote on whether Transit's speed reduction order should be operationalized along Arlington Street and eight other residential streets suffering from the same negative effects. It is frankly the very least that the City can do to see that this speed reduction is implemented as quickly as possible. Woefully inadequate as a proper compensation for the harms caused by Transit and the City's poor planning, ensuring that bus traffic will travel at only 30 km/hr and strictly enforcing that speed limit AS WELL AS ensuring that narrow residential streets used as busy bus routes are carefully maintained to a high standard may reduce some of the harms that have been caused and begin to restore some good will with residents.

However, no resident along Arlington will soon forget the disrespectful and dismissive way that they were treated during the implementation of the bus thoroughfare. Rushed decision-making based on weak preparation has had serious consequences and if ridership remains low, you will have no one to blame but yourselves. Wolseley residents were not asked what they needed and what would encourage more bus ridership. Instead, we Arlington residents grieve the loss of use of our beautiful front yards and porches. We are angry about the invasion of noise and vibrations into our homes. We miss the community life we used to have on our front sidewalks. We worry about the financial implications of the decrease in the value of our homes and the foundation repairs that may become necessary over time as a result of the heavy traffic.

Neither the City nor Transit have earned out trust at this point, but we expect the Mayor and all Councillors to support the speed reduction order and to ensure that it is immediately and truly implemented by Transit, constantly monitored, and strictly enforced on ALL the affected streets. We have paid a high price for the City's poor processes and waited long enough for resolution.

Margerit Roger