



For Immediate Release
Sunday, September 30th, 2007

Former Governor General, Adrienne Clarkson, supports the return of King Edward Avenue to “an elegantly built avenue”

In a letter, soon to be forwarded to the City of Ottawa Transportation Committee and City Council, former Governor General, the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, has lent her support to the efforts of the King Edward Avenue Task Force to reestablish King Edward Avenue as an “elegantly built avenue” in the City of Ottawa.

On Wednesday, the City of Ottawa Transportation Committee will consider a study on the effects of reducing the street from six to four lanes. The King Edward Avenue Task Force and Lowertown Community Association are supporting this proposal, since it offers a partial solution for the avenue until the trucks are diverted to a new east end bridge.

Mrs. Clarkson expresses her surprise at the state of the avenue and says: “I think it is horrifying what has happened to it over the years as it became an expressway...”

Listed as an anomaly in the National Highway System, King Edward Avenue was chosen as the short-term compromise for a link between the 417 in Ottawa and highways 50 and 5 in Quebec back in 1965 after the construction of the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge. Forty years later, no alternative has been proposed leaving the residential street and surrounding community in a quality-of-life limbo.

The residential street serves as the regional truck route of choice, with anywhere from 3,000 to 6,000 large trucks snaking down it and the Rideau Street business district each day. A high number of social issues, including a high density of social services, are also exacerbating the problem in the area. Meanwhile, on a daily basis, up to 25 STO buses lay by along the street in front of residents’ homes and a day care centre, spewing out high levels of pollution while idling.

The former Governor General has now lent her support to the cause of improving the avenue: “I am pleased to hear that there is consideration of returning it to boulevard status,” referring to the King Edward Avenue Task Force and Lowertown Community Association’s recently launched campaign to deal with many of the long-standing issues relating to this historic avenue.

As Mrs. Clarkson’ letter concludes, “It is a beautification project in an urban setting, which makes a great deal of historic and aesthetic sense.”

King Edward Avenue Task Force

Groupe de travail de l'avenue King Edward



For more information, contact the following:

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<http://www.lowertown-basseville.ca/index/KingEdward.htm>

Turn on your speakers and view this excellent video (slideshow) regarding the issue:

(English Version) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0lT2VwybbY>

(French Version) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-jIcklYpu8>

Attachments:

- A copy of Ms. Adrienne Clarkson's letter
- A copy of a letter to be submitted by the King Edward Avenue Task Force to the Transportation Committee
- A copy of a 4-lane policy document to be submitted by the task force to the committee

King Edward Avenue Task Force
Groupe de travail de l'avenue King Edward



THE RT. HON. ADRIENNE CLARKSON PC, CC, CMM

July 19, 2007

Mr. Marc Aubin,
King Edward Avenue Task Force,
1-41 Cathcart Street,
Ottawa, ON K1N 5B7

Dear Mr. Aubin:

Thank you for your most interesting letter about King Edward Avenue. I think I mentioned how lovely it had been in a speech I made to the Royal Architectural Institute, because I do remember seeing photographs of it in the 30s when it was a boulevard. I think it is horrifying what has happened to it over the years as it became an expressway, and I am very pleased to hear that there is consideration of returning it to boulevard status.

If you wish, you can show this letter to the City of Ottawa council and tell them how much I support the idea of the return of King Edward Avenue not only to its historic role as a ceremonial passage, but also as an elegantly built avenue in the centre of Ottawa.

I did not receive the attachments of the pictures of King Edward Avenue, but I do know them from previous research that was done for me.

You can count on my support for this: it is a beautification project in an urban setting, which makes a great deal of historic and aesthetic sense.

All the best of luck to you. I hope to see large trees planted in the next few years!

With warmest good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

The Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson.

AC/asa

Copy to: Mr. Michel Vallée,
President, King Edward Avenue Task Force,