



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

To / Destinataire : Nancy Schepers
Deputy City Manager **File / N° de fichier :** 03
Isra Levy

From / Expéditeur : Medical Officer of Health **Date / Date :** Dec.19, 2014
Final Comments on the Screening Level Human Health Risk
Assessment of Local Air Quality Impacts for the West Transitway

Subject / Objet : Detour

Dear Ms. Schepers,

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) has consulted with our Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of the Ministry of Environment (MOE) and Public Health Ontario (PHO) contributors, to review the approach and findings of the Screening Level Human Health Risk Assessment (SLHHRA).

OPH is supportive of the approach undertaken to carry out the SLHHRA, which is consistent with accepted risk management practice. OPH is also in agreement with the resulting key conclusions of the report. These include the following:

1. No long-term health risks are expected related to air emissions from the west transitway detour and Light Rail Transit construction.
2. Acute health impacts that may be expected are reversible respiratory health symptoms (e.g. exacerbation of asthma) associated with NO₂ levels for sensitive individuals who happen to be present during the times when the “earthworks” construction phase of the project is occurring.
3. The air emissions from the project are predicted to make minor contributions to the air pollution levels at sensitive receptor locations around the proposed transit corridor during the project.

I note that there may be days when the background ambient air quality will exceed air quality guidelines, primarily for particulate matter (PM). Key health concerns with PM are related to chronic exposure to elevated concentrations. There is no short term or hourly benchmark for health impacts of particulate matter in Canada. Because the construction will be completed in 5 years or less, no long-term health impacts are expected from PM.

As the report findings indicate that there will be some exceedances of the guidelines that could impact sensitive individuals who happen to be present during times of the “earthworks” construction phase of the project, I understand that the RIO has committed to making the results of the SLHRAA public as was done with original modeling results.

OPH agrees with this approach as a means to ensure that the community is made aware of these findings. I am happy to discuss the mechanisms by which this communication could occur. OPH staff is available to discuss individual health concerns and liaise with your staff during this project. Residents' concerns can be sent to us by phone or email at 613-580-6744 and healthsante@ottawa.ca.

Finally, OPH has drafted a summary report (attached), which includes an overview of the process that OPH and the TAC have undertaken to review the reports commissioned by RIO as well as a summary of our findings related to these reports.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

'Original signed by'

Isra Levy, *MBBCh, MSc, FRCPC, FACPM*
Medical Officer of Health

CC:
Simon Dupuis, Rail Implementation Office