

Office of the Mayor

City Hall
426 Brant Street
Burlington, Ontario
L7R 3Z6
Telephone: 905-335-7607
Email: mayor@burlington.ca
Twitter: @marianneeedward
Facebook: [facebook.com/marianne.meedward](https://www.facebook.com/marianne.meedward)



The Honourable Marc Garneau, Minister of Transport
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario,
Canada
K1A 0A6

The Honourable Minister Karina Gould, MP Burlington
777 Guelph Line
Suite 209
Burlington, Ontario
L7R 3N2

December 2, 2020

Greetings Minister Garneau and Minister Gould,

I'm writing to you today about the canal piers near the Burlington lift bridge that are on both the Burlington and Hamilton side of the bridge.

Minister Gould was kind enough to give me a call recently to share the concerns of Transport Canada regarding public access to the piers.

I understand that the canal piers are intended to serve the purpose of breaking the waters to ensure the waters are calm for ship use to pass through the canal, which is narrow.

The open design of the piers at the Burlington Canal makes it susceptible to high wave action over top of the piers, and at certain times of the year ice accumulation, both of which can result in unsafe conditions for the public. Due to the narrow nature of the canal, there have been instances of freighters bumping into the piers, which also creates a potential safety hazard. Vessels do occasionally dock on the piers.

Transport Canada has contacted the City of Burlington and the City of Hamilton to discuss the implementation of the barriers, where the land ends.

The City is opposed to blocked public access to the piers. The piers are incorporated into the Regional Waterfront Park and are a well-used and well-loved aspect of the park.

At the same time, we recognize that from time to time public should not be on the piers - for example in icy conditions. At Spencer Smith Park we have implemented bollards that can be raised to block public access when water overtops our promenade and creates slippery conditions. We believe a similar method can be used, as needed, rather than a blanket closure of public access.

We are also aware that there are other piers, for example in St. Catherines, that have found a way to balance shipping needs and public access. We believe there is a similar win-win situation in Burlington.

Finally, from time to time, the federal government has approached the city about off-loading this infrastructure to the municipality. We reiterate that we have no interest in owning the lift bridge or piers.

In terms of next steps, I will be working with MPP Gould's office to facilitate a conversation between myself, the Ward 1 Councillor Kelvin Galbraith, relevant city staff and the Minister of Transport, the Honourable Marc Garneau, to discuss this issue further in the near future.

In summary we believe that public access to the piers, like the harbour itself, should be maintained and enhanced. This canal represents an important part of the history and marine heritage of our region. Our vision is to celebrate and promote this with access to the piers and interpretive displays for the public to experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marianne Meed Ward', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward
City of Burlington

Cc: *MP Pam Damoff*
MP Adam van Koeverden
Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr
Mayor Gord Krantz, Milton
Mayor Rob Burton, Oakville
Mayor Rick Bonnette, Halton Hills
Burlington City Council
Tim Commisso, Burlington City Manager