



June 19, 2023

Re: Duke Street Transitway Endorsement

Dear Mr. Mayor, Madam Vice Mayor, City Council members and City Manager,

On June 12 the Environmental Policy Commission unanimously endorsed the Duke Street Transitway Advisory Group's recommendations. Although some members of the community have raised objections and some have called for a pause, we have seen NO plan that provides a valid alternative that will meet the City's critical, urgent climate goals.

As we saw recently with the wildfire smoke from Canada causing one of the worst air quality days in the northeast/Mid-Atlantic States history, the climate crisis knows no boundaries and affects everyone. To fight the crisis, we must reduce carbon pollution, and since 96 percent of it is generated by members of the community vs. the City, we must do everything possible and as fast as possible to avoid a dangerous, unhealthy future.

The Environmental Policy Commission believes the proposed improvements to Duke Street are critical to meeting the goals of the City's Environmental Action Plan 2040 and those of the recently approved Energy and Climate Action Plan to reduce emissions and vehicle miles traveled. The Advisory Group's preferred option is the best way to generate more transit ridership and provide the best conditions for both cyclists and pedestrians, with separated facilities when possible. Moreover, this project also includes measures to enhanced pedestrian safety when crossing streets or accessing transit. All of these benefits should encourage more residents and business employees and customers to use transit options vs. single occupancy vehicles. The result represents the most carbon efficient option and thus we recommend approval.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kathie Hoekstra

Kathie Hoekstra
EPC Chair