

Dear members of the STB:

If the sale of the train lines to CN happens it will greatly change the life of Aurora residents, especially those of us on the West side of the tracks. As a resident in this area, I have tried to keep an open opinion about this sale and see both parties' sides. I see the benefits this sale has for CN and EJ&E. These companies will no doubt benefit financially from the sale of these tracks, not only in the immediate future, but for years to come. Long after this sale is over, CN will have the capacity to increase the trains from an average of 4 per day to an average of 20 per day. The financial benefits to Canadian National will be millions, and yet they are willing to only contribute a small amount to help with the mitigation efforts needed by the communities where the trains will pass through. What are the benefits to those of us who live in these communities, absolutely nothing! We have nothing to gain and everything to lose.

Throughout this process CN has continued to show that they have absolutely no concern for the safety and well being of our community residents. CN has made promises to offer money for mitigation, however what they are willing to offer will only pay for a portion of the mitigation needed for the additional train traffic. Who is going to pay for the rest? Should residents have to use their hard earned money to pay for tax increases so a Canadian company can prosper?

Once the sale is complete and the railroad companies have made their money where will the residents of the communities be? We will be left to deal with the congestion, noise, and environmental impact that the 400-600% increase in trains will cause. In addition, community residents will see a financial impact that these trains will have. We will see a decrease in property values, increase in property taxes to pay for the additional bridge construction and upkeep. In addition, those of us who have to cross these tracks on a daily basis for school, work, shopping etc. will need to find alternate routes to avoid mitigation construction zones and train congestion. With gas prices at an all time high it will affect the personal finances of thousands of people as we have to pay to travel further because of the increase in train traffic.

In addition to the above, the following concerns have continuously been highlighted at various town meetings and by residents of the communities affected by the sale of these train tracks:

- Train accidents on the EJ&E are projected to increase by 28%.
- Increase of hazardous materials transported through our communities will increase from 2 to 14
- There is an increased risk for pedestrian and bicycle accidents, in addition to train vs. car collisions.
- Fire and emergency medical service providers will experience "substantial effects" including delayed response times.
- Communities will experience an increase in travel patterns, travel times, and accessibility.
- Residential property values will likely decrease for homes within 300 feet of the EJ&E.

- Eighteen forest preserves will be negatively impacted, including bird populations experiencing behavioral and or/physiological effects.
- More than 30 parks in close proximity to the EJ&E will experience increased levels of noise and vibration in addition to decreased air quality.

I can not possibly understand how the sale of these tracks is even being taken into consideration as it will only benefit the Canadian National Railway and EJ&E. There is no benefit whatsoever to the communities who will be impacted by this sale. I beg of you as a citizen and taxpayer whom this sale would greatly impact to please not allow this to happen. Please do the right thing and stand up for the thousands of people who this will affect on a daily basis. It will change our lives for the worse and there is absolutely nothing for us to gain and all for CN to gain.

Thank you.

Rebecca Cousins
Aurora Resident