

Hello Mayor Kevin,

I hope this letter finds you well and I dearly hope it finds its way directly to you.

I am a mom of 3 young girls - 5, 3, and nearly 1.

I am writing to you in regards to the OPRE.

To give you some background, we have lived in North Brantford for almost 10 years. As much as we have loved it in the north end, my girls and I were always making the trek down to west brant to enjoy and bask in the beauty and peace of the river and the trail. We have spent endless hours exploring the trails, wading in the grand and just thanking the good Lord for putting such a gorgeous and peaceful spot in our town. I am also a runner and have logged more kms on those trails than I can count! I have often heard people speak of how awful Brantford is and how they would never want to live here. I just shake my head and think, 'if only you could take the time to find the magic and beauty hiding in this town, you would love it too.'

About a month ago, an opportunity came up to buy a home in West Brant. My husband and I drove past and were in awe. It was literally in the heart of my girls and my most beloved area - Kerr Shaver Terrace. Backing directly onto the peaceful oakhill cemetery and just meters from our favorite trail. We decided to buy the home without even seeing the inside. Knowing the rich beauty of our surroundings was more than enough to make that call.

Since then, we have discovered plans for OPRE. It won't just be close by - it will be our backyard.

I am devastated, gut punched, nearly physically pained. While I understand the need for urban growth and measures taken, I beseech and beg you as mayor and council to protect this spot and fight for a different solution. If you have ever been there yourself, you will know that some of the most astoundingly beautiful spots in all of Brant are right in there. They would be destroyed - gone forever and that is something we can never regain as a community. It is heart breaking. We need to preserve this spot.

Another thing that is so very apparent to those who frequent this spot regularly, is how often family and friends sit in peace at the graves of loved ones to remember and find comfort. This cemetery is a haven to so many. Last week, as I walked thru, I found a tim hortons coffee and a muffin left at the foot of a grave. I don't know the story there, but I can imagine it's important to whoever left it.

On another occasion a few weeks back, I had to stop my 3 year old as she nearly picked up a bunch of little toy dinosaurs someone had left at the grave of a young boy.

These spots aren't just special to those people - it's sacred.

This benefits of this highway can never outweigh the pain and destruction it will cause to the land and residence of Brantford.

For now, I pray that a new solution can be found and fought for. I know that no solution is perfect, but this is not a solution. This is the worst kind of urban destruction I can imagine.

I am not a tree hugger, but I am a proud resident of Brantford and a mom who wants her girls to be able to love and enjoy the beautiful land we get to call a part of our city. What a privilege to be host to this gorgeous piece of land right here in the heart of Brantford. Please protect it. I am begging from the heart of this mother.