

Dear Sir / Madam;

This letter is in response to the public consultation meeting. You did a good preparation job. I noticed that a lot of the people attending the meeting were older. The crew was well prepared and positive. Their job was to sell this bad idea to the public. I have a feeling that this plan has already been cast in stone and no matter what people say or the cost; the project will go ahead.

I have been with Transit for 26 years. I have served as a part time supervisor, chair of accident review, chair of the operations committee, recording secretary for the Union and acting sergeant at arms. During this time I have seen many mistakes (blunders) by the leaders of our community. All of these mistakes have cost the tax payers dearly.

The light rail system would be another financial blunder paid for by the tax payers. Here is a bit of history of Transit. Once the Duke Street Terminal outlived it's usefulness a new terminal was deemed necessary. The city of Kitchener at that time could have built the terminal next to the railway station, uniting, rail, city bus and out of town bus services. That would have made sense, the powers to be decided to put it where it is, on a side street, on a hill. In the winter time (no one in planning knows that we have winters) buses slide down the hill and can't stop at the terminal or even go into it, or they can't get up the hill to leave. Our terminal even made German newspaper headlines about its poor design and bad construction.

The terminal was designed and built on the recommendation of one man with power. It is based on an old English railway station. No matter about the objections of the drivers, supervisors or the public. The back wall fell down three times before it was encased in concrete. People used to jump the walls to get from one bus to another. Buses used to crash into the walls at the end of the platforms because of lack of space and built in flower pots; that were eventually dismantled. They still crash into each other because there is very little space for one bus to pass another. In the winter, barricades have to be erected around the main building to keep people away because snow and ice would fall on them. The poorly designed overhead canopy in the pods, give little shelter in the rain or snow. Eight bus bays are without shelter.

The same people purchased new buses from Flyer. The first batch was absolute garbage, so was the second. Hundreds of man hours were needed to fix and remedy the problems. These people did not learn, so they purchased natural gas buses from the same company. Little did they know that to run, a bus it needs fuel. The natural gas buses sat outside for a year and a half before a fueling station was built at a cost of millions. Many drivers were hurt and off work because of the poor steering. Drivers and passengers had to endure exhaust fumes coming inside these buses. Unknown to them, Government regulations kicked in, forcing the reconstruction of the garage just in case of an explosion. More tax payers dollars wasted. These people were considering buying hydrogen powered buses, to give the appearance that transit and the City of Kitchener cared about the environment. Of course there was no way to refuel them. They had a plan; send the fuel tanks to British Columbia by plane.

The City leaders decided to move the Farmers Market from Frederick Street to Cedar Street. They were told that it will not work but they went ahead with it. It does not work, so to save face, the tax payers have to subsidize another one of their mistakes. Their next big move was to narrow King Street, from four lanes to two. The wider sidewalks were filled with trees, garbage cans, poles to tie things to and benches, including small parking bays, that no one can park in correctly in the winter. The part of the sidewalk where people can actually walk is still the same width. The narrowing of King Street resulted in traffic congestion, lack of parking, and the inability of large vehicles to pass one another in the wintertime with snow banks on either side of the road.

The next big project which was on the drawing board for a long time was their desire to have a clear view and path from City Hall to the clock tower in Victoria Park. To accomplish this; Gaukel Street was narrowed, sidewalks were put in with mirror breaking lamp posts. The narrowing of Gaukel Street was a complete success, now all it takes is one bus at the red light on Gaukel to stop all other buses from leaving and entering the Terminal.

So here we are, trying to convince the people of Waterloo Region that they need a \$Billion+ light rail system that will have to be subsidized up to \$11 Million a year. I don't know about you, but the last time I looked we did not have a population that could afford or would need such a system. With the current economy, industrial parks are closing, large manufacturers are gone, the service industry is failing, full time workers are no longer needed, and pensions and benefits are hard to come by. Population projections show 750,000 people for the Region within the next 10 years. Why would people come to the Region if jobs do not exist? Are they to live on welfare? The number of people using the food bank is increasing every year. The Region is going through a financial crisis and someone wants to spend, spend, and spend.

All the pictures shown at the meeting, were from highly populated areas. We do not have that type of population. We do not have 30 to 40 story skyscrapers teeming with people wanting to get to work; our population is spread out over a large area. We do not have wide streets, and traffic is already congested. The train will focus in the middle of Kitchener, Waterloo, where the population density is the smallest. To make matters worse the train only stops at a few locations, forcing people to walk, use a cab or a bus.

Fairway Road has no houses, just Malls. Courtland is a dead area. Ottawa Street, just minimal housing. King Street and the Downtown core are dead, (only bars and fast food places exist). The train doesn't connect with the bus Terminal. The rest of the rail line goes through even less populated areas. The Waterloo Region is not built on a grid system like other cities. Why would anyone drive, take a cab or bus from outlying areas just to ride a train through the middle of Kitchener, or Waterloo, only to get off and take a bus or cab to their final destination?? This does not make any sense and is totally illogical. People like their cars. It is far faster to use a car to get to any destination in this Region than bus or train.

As a bus driver I have noticed that only a few routes carry passengers. Most buses are less than half full, especially at night. Several routes stop running early because we do not have people to carry. The busy routes carry University students 30% of whom enjoy a free ride. The WAT cards are easily forged poorly designed and can be used for 5 years or more. Rider-ship numbers are inaccurate, because of multiple boarding's. In other words 4,000 people, transferring several times could be counted as 10,000.

Kitchener at one time did have trains running up and down King Street. It worked for a while, but times changed. The roads were too narrow to handle cars and trains; the system was inefficient with fixed rigid tracks. An accident, a burst pipe, a road closure, a badly parked car and the train was done, no service. In the winter time, someone had to stand on the bumper of the train and pour sand onto the track for traction. In freezing rain conditions the ice would have to be knocked off the wires before the train could move. The next attempt at public transportation, were trolley buses. They too failed, because they did not have the ability to go anywhere, they were tied to a wire. So finally the best solution, "buses". Independent, can go on any road, is not susceptible to accidents, power outages, badly parked cars or trucks, or road closures.

So now we look at equipment. Who is supplying the trains? Who will make the decision to buy? All manufacturers lie about their product, just to make sales. Just look at the history of the buses purchased here. How many trains are required, add 20% to 30% to be in the garage for repairs all the time. How much to build the garage? to hire the mechanics?, to hire drivers and conductors?

Building a rail line on King Street will force drivers to use alternate narrow Streets, creating huge traffic tie ups. What about buses? We now have three regular buses and the I-Express fighting for position on King Street. Where will these buses go?

The best solution is to buy more buses and provide service in areas where service is needed and not yet provided. We now have a garage; and there are plans to expand it. We have the mechanics and drivers, there is a solid infrastructure. Adding new routes is far easier than playing with trains. I have lived in the Region for the last 32 years, if this costly system is built and my property taxes are raised I will move to another town so my taxes will not have to support a white elephant.

Yours truly

Laszlo Bori