

Hello,

My name is Lincoln McCardle and I would like to submit the following regarding the above-noted matter to be included on the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee agenda:

I suspect what you are about to read will differ from most of the correspondence you will receive in that I can confidently state that I am passionately undecided on this issue. The reason for this owes mostly to the fact that I feel woefully under informed and my stance has been further confused by the surprising reversal of city staff on the recommended solution. If they cannot make up their mind it seems next to impossible that I should be able to do so.

So, for brevity, I will ask but a single question: **Do Londoners TRULY have a choice on our rapid transit system?**

To clarify, while it has since been denied by them, Deputy Mayor Maureen Cassidy had previously eluded to “push back” from other levels of government over the cost of a system that includes light rail. If this is indeed true and a system including LRT is a non-starter, then we need to know this as a lot of time and energy are currently being spent as people advocate for their preferred solution which would be futile is the decision has already been taken out of our hands.

If it truly the case, as Edward Soldo (cc'd) has suggested, that the city's hybrid system was a “testing ground,” that did not pass the test on closer scrutiny, then that is another thing altogether. I'm a firm believer of making new decisions when new evidence becomes available, but in order for me to be “on board” I need to know what exactly changed here. Given the overwhelming enthusiasm only last November when I imagine the statistics must have been similar, reasons given for this new direction leave me . . . frankly skeptical, especially in light of recent and repeated claims of overwhelming support.

As my friend [REDACTED] has so eloquently asked, (and I suspect she will ask again) if provincial and federal governments have been “overwhelmingly positive” about rapid transit in London, why have we decided to now opt to a less ambitious plan?

With apologies in advance, let me assure you that my intent here is not to question anyone's honesty or integrity. I honestly believe this is the most important decision our city will make in our foreseeable future and I only want to ensure that we make it properly — not quickly. In order to do this I believe it is essential that we have ALL of the pertinent information.

If the answer is that we do actually have a choice then I would ask that council consider all options and ensure the final recommendation is what is best for the city. This is your decision to make, not that of city staff, and I hope and trust that you have the required information to do so — something I am clearly lacking. I suspect we can all agree that our existing public transportation system is currently lacking and in closing ask that you not overlook its existing shortcomings by focus too much on this one decision. Clearly it will be an important part of city's future transit system -- but much needs to be done to improve it regardless of what option we proceed with. I will leave you with the words of [REDACTED], "The reality about transportation is that it's future-oriented. If we're planning for what we have, we're behind the curve."

Thanks for your time and all the best!

Take care,
Lincoln

Lincoln McCardle

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