

**From:** Jarad Fisher  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2019 3:34 PM  
**To:** SPPC <[sppc@london.ca](mailto:sppc@london.ca)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] SHIFT Transit Plans

Dear London City Council,

I would like to urge this city council to move forward with the entirety of the BRT/SHIFT plan. It seems to me that the primary stumbling block is the Richmond/"Northern" route. While it might seem simple to extract this portion (and other inconvenient portions of the plan), city building is neither simple nor convenient. That route is likely the most contentious portion of the plan *because* it is the most necessary. It is the leg that has the most ridership, both in terms of transit riders and in terms of cars or trucks. We can't or won't expand the road as it is too expensive and too unpopular, so we have a very limited amount of space to work with. We need only ask one simple question: what is the most efficient use of this space?

The answer is simple enough that even a cursory knowledge of transportation planning would enable you to answer with confidence: mass transit is the most efficient way to move large numbers of people; rapid transit especially so. This is not surprising, groundbreaking, or controversial. It is accepted around the world. That means that if we are to get rid of any part of the plan, surely it must not be the most necessary leg: the Richmond route?

I can hear the naysayers now.

"It will be expensive!" Sure, but not as expensive as continuing to build the area around personal vehicle transportation. As stated, we cannot expand Richmond much further, and I doubt Old North residents would desire that in any case. Cars are far more expensive than even a top-tier transit system if you take away subsidized externalities such as free parking and road usage (when was the last time you used a toll road in Canada?), to name just a couple. Further, it will be cheaper to do so now while the city is less built up (unless these naysayers believe the city is on the cusp of depopulating) than in the future.

"The construction will be endless!" Yes, there will be construction, but if the jokes I've heard over the past number of decades are any indication, Canada has always had only two seasons: Winter and Construction. This is nothing new. Hyde Park was under construction for the better part of a decade recently. Wonderland will be soon. Western Rd? Hamilton Rd? Oxford? I could quite honestly list at least 50% of the roads in our great city and they have had a significant construction project in the past decade. There is a silver lining, though: the BRT project will require less road construction in the long term. Don't take my word for it, ask the experts. Rapid transit reduces road maintenance.

"It will make personal car lanes more congested!" Not if BRT is implemented in a way to reduce Londoners reliance on personal car trips. We will never have a situation where every resident would rather take transit (or cycle, or walk) to get to their destination, but every person that *does* choose to use transit (or cycle or walk) to their destination instead of taking a car will reduce congestion. In addition to this simple, self-evident fact, the added left-turn lanes and traffic measures along Richmond will actually increase the capacity of the remaining lanes.

London has spent over a decade hiring experts, purchasing properties, and lobbying upper levels of government to get to this point. It is of course easier to tear things apart than to build things up. We as Londoners look to you to make the difficult decisions that are best for our city. We have a problem: Our road and transit capacities are at their limits. What is the solution to this problem? What do the experts tell us to do? Is it to build rapid transit along those corridors? Or ever more roads? Which path has evidence to indicate it will help solve the problem and not exacerbate it? I urge our city council to follow that route. Stay on the path of evidence, not fear. Move forward, not backwards.

Thank you,

Jarad Fisher  
Concerned Londoner