

From: bill brock
Date: May 3, 2020 at 6:19:51 PM EDT
To: "Saunders, Cathy" <csaunder@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Council meeting of May 5th, 2020

Attention: Ms. Saunders, City Clerk
City Council Agenda for May 5th, 2020.
Re: COVID-19 / Budget Review
For your consideration!

Open Letter to London City Council

Today London; as like everywhere else, is dealing with a crisis like we have never seen before!

When you approved the budget it included projects to prepare for future years 10/ 20 /30. Increases over 4 years of 20% in taxes plus water rate increases. Several projects are based on millions of dollars supported not by fact but by assumptions! Your claim that pay more today easier tomorrow was supported without any real debate. Since COVID-19 reality is setting in that what you considered crisis before no longer fits the definition.

It appears the strategy being applied is to move on issues and look to Province or Feds. to reimburse because everything in your budget is "NEEDED".

You must reconsider!

Areas of concern and identified as example; noting at no time have you responded to concerns expressed!

BRT: 500 million dollars; noting never changed from original budget; even though full of assumptions; 50% contingency and major underpass on Richmond St..

Green bin program 15 million capital and 5 million annual operating cost! Was to close in 1998? You are taking contents of one bin and adding a second to split up! Not essential today as an added cost. Head of project indicated we could do both (before COVID-19).

TIMMS: Highly technical program for all 403 traffic lights. Savings in real time (seconds daily) doesn't justify multi year expenditure (millions) and lacks rational.

Bike Advisory Committee: Presented a multi page report covering electrification of transit over next 10 years decreasing auto traffic to 60% from 80%; increasing transit to 20% from 6% and bikes to 5% from 1%. Transit plan is 20 years plus!

New City Hall: 125 million \$: need everybody under one roof. This is like response from transit experts indicating you were using 20th century technology in 21st century (you ignored advise). Remind the public what happened with the Bell building. Working from homes coming on strong!

Snow clearance policies and speed limit policies: cost money to implement but in reality are not workable.

Staff are not just sitting around and city isn't the same every time it snows! Risk and perfection is not achievable nor reason to do something. Note you still allow smoking and drinking and driving.

Poverty: It was your task force that indicated do non-cost items first!

Affordable Housing: You must take responsibility for situation for the condition of housing and shortfall because public record will show knowledge but lack of will to do anything!

Accountability / Openness: Would you explain why East Lions Community Centre struggles which is contrary to the 2 in west and north? Would you explain why staff are there to implement your wishes as directed rather than provide valid rationale and guidelines for projects/ business.

Sidewalks: Need to put in so people have access! Reality is you can't change everything! Look at para transit; after all these

Money is needed now! Credit to a future date doesn't help! Whether city, Prov., or Feds. it is our dollar!

You must pause and refocus now! To think tomorrow London will go back to the way it was is wrong!

Society continues to eliminate the middle class and make the spread between the wealthy and the poor even greater. This virus has brought more clearly to us; as quoted in London Free Press "Disposable Society" by Kenneth Henry just how reality is going to hurt!

Start a "Monies Fund"; move budgets around and pay today; free of burden to those most in need!

I remind you when a union was given a 2% raise you claimed the good thing is we know for the next four years!

Today thousands of us don't know what tomorrow brings.

Media today: No quarantine streets and transit will ever go back the way it was!

Effect on transportation networks could be profound and potentially painful.

Transit passenger drops massive across country.

The shift to cars could be massive.

Traffic congestion could bring employment centers to the suburbs and eliminate need for commuting at all.

Please step back and deal with "Need" now! If you can't make it better now for all; tomorrow will only get worse!

William Brock