

Subject: Light-rail ridership data

From: Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>

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To: Mayor Walton and Council <council@dnv.org>, Mayor & Council <council@westvan.org>, Mayor & Council <council@cnv.org>, "James Ridge, CAO" <james_ridge@dnv.org>

CC: Mayor and Council <clerks@corp.delta.bc.ca>, corrie@kost.ca, Brian Platts-FONVCA <bplatts@shaw.ca>, Carolanne Reynolds <editorwvm@westvan.org>

6 December 2006

Dear Mayor Walton and Council:

When considering the proposed Evergreen Line, I thought you might find some of these references of interest.

http://www.lightrailnow.org/news/n_lrt_2006-04a.htm

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Light_Rail_systems_by_ridership (more difficult to evaluate)

<http://www.cfte.org/trends/trends.asp#2> If SkyTrain is so great, and LRT so bad, how come so many LRTs have been chosen?

The record of TransLink when it comes to transit solutions for the North Shore - or lack of them - has been atrocious, and, in my opinion, we should be asking for a value for money audit.

When reading the material, I ask that you bear the following in mind:

- Over the past 2 years TransLink has claimed a 12% increase in ridership
- There has been no concomitant decrease in private vehicle use - quite the opposite
- The U.S. cities listed (a) can actually count their ridership; and (b) find that their transit ridership has "soared" by anywhere from 3.3 to 8.8%. Remarkable.
- When reading the material on the first URL listed above, the "Myths" section is especially interesting
- When reviewing the myths which TransLink has been only too happy to circulate, please note the capital costs of construction and compare them to the TransLink claims that LRT would be way more expensive to build than SkyTrain.
- The relative attractiveness of light rail compared to the concrete monstrosities of SkyTrain.

Perhaps, though, a small and unsolicited note from my brother - who is living in Heidelberg, Germany, while doing a 5-month locum - will highlight the very essence of a light-rail system in such contrast to the *crime train* that two Richmond councillors say they fear will result from the \$2.2-billion+ Canada Line.

TransLink's response, of course, is that security systems and armed guards will take care of all that. So what would you prefer? Video cameras and armed transit police. Or citizens happily "hopping on and off" a much cheaper - and effective - light-rail system?

Should you have any questions about any of the U.S. systems quoted, I would be happy to research more detailed information.

Sincere,
Elizabeth James
[604] 988-2066

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