

**Subject:** Light Rail for Toronto

**From:** Elizabeth James <rimcoenterprises@yahoo.com>

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**CC:** FONVCA <corrie@kost.ca>

15 March 2007

Good Afternoon:

**"We have to remember that this is not our money."  
Premier Gordon Campbell in a recent speech to the Vancouver Board of Trade**

The following article and local commentary is forwarded for your interest.

The material is presented in the hope that this type of third-party information may persuade members of the current TransLink Board - and Minister Falcon - that positive and less expensive transit alternatives to SkyTrain and Son-of-SkyTrain systems do exist. In fact, not only do they exist, they are accepted worldwide because they have proven to be successful at attracting ridership.

GVTA and the province need to put an end to transit decisions based upon politics rather than on up-to-date transit knowledge and technology. Taxpayers want sound transit solutions, but they also want value for their dollars. If the provincial government and TransLink are sincere in the desire to cut back on automobile use, then it behooves them to buy as much transit as possible for the dollars available.

By any analysis, true light rail will win hands down in a comparison between it and SkyTrain. In fact, it is the capital, operating and debt-servicing costs of SkyTrain which have landed TransLink in its ever-increasing financial black hole. This has to stop - and attempts to take the TransLink operation behind the closed doors of Partnerships BC will not find any more money at the bottom of taxpayers' pockets - we are being bled dry and, yes, we have had enough.

In this regard - do politicians not see the irony in budgeting the huge costs of transit and transportation based on the availability of multi-million-dollar revenues from gasoline taxes while, at the same time lecturing people to get out of their polluting vehicles? Taxpayers outside the hallowed halls of the Legislature and 4720 Kingsway have sure made the connection. What on earth is Plan B if we all leave our cars at home and stop buying gasoline?

As noted above, Premier Campbell has recognized that "This is not [the government's] money" being spent. It is unfortunate that, to date, neither Minister Falcon nor most members of the various incarnations of the TransLink Board have heard the message.

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth James  
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**Light Rail for Toronto!**

**The Light Rail Committee's comments in red italics.**

**Malcolm Johnston**  
**Light Rail Committee**

**Plan calls for light rail network**

Mar 15, 2007 01:35 PM

John Spears

CITY HALL BUREAU

A sweeping plan to build a 60 to 80-kilometre light rapid transit network across Toronto, costing billions of dollars, will be unveiled tomorrow by the Toronto Transit Commission.

The system, probably consisting of light rail vehicles running on dedicated rights of way, was a key plank in Mayor David Miller's election platform.

While the bare bones of the plan have been in the works for some time, TTC chairman Adam Giambrone said in an interview today that "there are going to be some surprises."

"The goal is to inspire people," Giambrone said.

Miller's platform talked of an ambitious network of transit lines, including:

A dedicated transit corridor on Finch Ave., in part utilizing the hydro right of way, to connect north Scarborough and north Etobicoke to the subway; Building a dedicated rapid transit line along Eglinton Ave. W. that will connect the St. Clair street car right of way to the airport. A west waterfront line linking Etobicoke to Union Station; Connecting the Sheppard subway line to Scarborough Town Centre; Extending the Scarborough Rapid Transit (SRT) line to northeastern Scarborough. Since the SRT is due to wear out by about 2011 in any case, it's the subject of a separate planning process. *(A comment from Malcolm Johnston - The Scarborough RT or ICTS is Toronto's version of SkyTrain. It's going to wear out by 2011; has anyone told TransLink?)*

Another important rapid transit route that will likely be covered in the TTC report tomorrow is the Don Mills corridor, Giambrone said. Planning work is already under way on Don Mills.

Environmental assessment work has also been done on several of the other proposed lines.

The cost of the new system will be huge.

Giambrone said the all-in costs of building light rapid transit lines is about \$30 million a kilometre *(A comment from M. J. \$30 million/km. is for deluxe LRT and I'm sure that the costs could be trimmed by \$10 million/km. with little effort. Compare this cost with over \$90 million for the so-called Evergreen LRT).* That would put the price tag for an 80-kilometre system at \$2.4 billion *A comment by M.J. \$2.4 billion is now the accepted price tag for our 20 km. RAV line!).*

Giambrone shied away from saying that tomorrow's report will be an implementation plan with firm schedules and costs.

But he said the city expects to move ahead with the help of funding from the gas tax, and a hoped-for \$2 billion national transit strategy, of which Toronto would get a substantial slice.

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