



Your Worship and honourable members of Township council. South Fraser OnTrax is a grass-roots community organization that very much represents a cross-section of the community, and most especially the Township of Langley. Our group's members also represent a broad range of personal political affiliations, but still we band together in unity in support of community rail on the old Interurban line or where the engineering experts may deem it to be technically feasible. We also support an eventual community streetcar program, in addition to smart growth strategies like transit oriented development, that will further enhance ridership on a revived Interurban.

South Fraser OnTrax has studied the Township Community Rail Report by UMA, as well as the staff's transportation engineering report, and we URGE council today to act without further delay to vote in favour of Councillor Bateman's Notice of Motion to take the community rail next steps, as outlined by UMA. We strongly believe this to be in the best interest of the residents of the Township of Langley. Our local and regional newspapers have published numerous articles and insights that are pro-community rail in the South Fraser. TransLink and the MOT want to offer us buses at a future date and this is not acceptable. To provide us with these buses is the equivalent to giving us our current traffic-choked Highway 1 some time in the distant future. It is not a viable option. Buses will not get people out of their cars! Many Langley residents (and your constituents) have commented on these newspaper articles and area Blogs. Their support for light rail is embodied in these current news articles. The people have clearly spoken and they wish to have light rail, and to have it NOW without referrals, debates or delays.

#### **Some Recent Newspaper Headlines:**

**More transit sought from funds**

**Dismissing light rail in Valley short-sighted**

**Planning for rail up the Fraser Valley is plain common sense**

**Benefits of rail often go unseen**

**Rail advocates meet up**

**A desire for streetcars**

**Development put in context**

**Commuter rail could work – The New President of Southern Railway of BC**

We the citizens of the Township require your immediate attention and decisive action to move the Interurban line ahead NOW. This issue can no longer wait for outside agencies to determine our fate. The only thing that holds this Interurban solution back from the people is the constant speculation of the nay-sayers, without the data to back them up. Please help us to collect that data NOW. South Fraser OnTrax submits a few reasons why Township council should not deny us a positive vote on this very important motion and to move the study forward NOW:

1. Our neighbour, the City of Surrey, and most especially Abbotsford have a renewed interest in the Interurban. Surrey is moving forward with their Heritage Rail experiment, and the City of Abbotsford has appointed a select committee to which South Fraser

OnTrax is serving on. Abbotsford councillors and staff are talking about funding transit, or perhaps joining MetroVancouver to obtain the Interurban. Now is the time to engage these communities through the approval of motion. To work with them to obtain the facts that can then be provided to TransLink and the MOT, so that these agencies can make an informed decision. It will be a small price to pay. The time to act is NOW!

2. Gas prices are rising and will continue to do so. Our community desperately needs viable smart transit options and solutions NOW. They are looking to mayor and council for these solutions. We can speak about TransLink and the MOT, but to the people of the Township, the buck stops here at your doorstep. The people see you as the face of government. Please do not turn us away or put this community rail solution on hold any longer. The Interurban will entice “choice riders” out of their cars, and that is something that buses will never do. 1 rail line = 15 lanes of traffic. 1 light rail car = 75-100 single occupancy vehicles. 90% of our trips are inter-community. We need community rail now without delay.

3. This matter has already been referred to Township Staff during the UMA research process. We appeal to you to not delay or refer this Community Rail solution ANY LONGER. South Fraser OnTrax would also like to say that in all fairness to Mr. Cordeiro and the Township engineering staff, until the UMA report was released, staff had not heard any major council desires for community rail. They only had knowledge of the South of Fraser BUS PLANS that council had previously supported as a possible stop-gap measure to a more complete transit solution. As Mr. Cordeiro and the engineering staff have now received greater input from council and the general public. They know that there is now keen interest in pursuing community rail. We should extend Mr. Cordeiro and staff a bit of grace here, and allow them to review the results of some new numbers, technical data, and the computer modelling that approval of this motion would provide. After all, they have only been presented with the results of a HIGH LEVEL REVIEW thus far.

It is the opinion of South Fraser OnTrax that it is not productive for the people of this Township to experience any further delays in receiving the community rail viability data that this critical Motion will provide to them.

We trust that you will also engage and call South Fraser OnTrax to the table of any future discussions regarding community rail, streetcars, smart growth, transit oriented development and related matters. We could go on with additional reasons why the time is NOW to move community rail forward, but we at South Fraser OnTrax have confidence in our council and mayor. We believe you are very knowledgeable on this issue and clearly understand the matters at hand and the need to act NOW. We ask you to do so in representing the wishes of the people of the Township of Langley today. Our community must catch up to meet our South of Fraser transportation demands TODAY. We must not delay the vote on this important motion, and the Interurban work it will allow to progress to the next level **NOW**. Thank you.