



**23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2016**

**Outline script for presentation to TransLink board of directors**

**\* Each bracket (1) should aim for about ~20 seconds for a 5 minute presentation.**

**(1)** My name is Daryl Dela Cruz. As some of you recall I presented to this board on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 urging the consideration of SkyTrain expansion South-of-the-Fraser. Some of you also know me as a regional blogger at daryldelacruz.com, and as the founding director of SkyTrain for Surrey, a community campaign that has given a voice to those sharing the belief that expanding our SkyTrain system is the way to go.

**(2)** I'm not here to repeat what I said back in December, but I also understand that many things have changed since the last time I presented in front of this board. For one, TransLink has brought in our current CEO, Kevin Desmond, and I understand that this is the first time he will be hearing from my organization on this issue.

**(3)** Apart from that, SkyTrain celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, and numerous new Mark III cars arrived. Work has proceeded on finalizing the design of our rapid transit projects, as well as their business cases. Surrey City staff confirmed that the city's LRT proposal would cost \$500 million more than originally expected. The signature count on my campaign's petition passed 1,000 people earlier this year.

**(4)** Apart from the petition and information package I would like to present to the Board today, I would also like to comment on something I learned about just a few weeks ago. I received word that a SkyTrain alternative is being considered as part of the current Surrey Rapid Transit business case analysis.

**(5)** Today I am here to thank the TransLink board, the Regional Mayors' Council, and all of the staff who have been involved, for seeing through the smoke and mirrors created by Light Rail support groups who have insisted that their information is always right and have perhaps been convinced that their case does not need to be made any further, as I understand one such support group made a very urgent delegation at the last board meeting.



**(6)** The decision to proceed with studying both SkyTrain and LRT alternatives is very necessary and is being applauded today by the 1300 people who have come out in support of the SkyTrain for Surrey campaign.

**(7)** I will reiterate that, in 2012, the preliminary phase II Surrey Rapid Transit Study analysis did not find a positive business case for the LRT alternatives. The conclusion was, in fact, that extending SkyTrain to Langley while equipping our L-Line corridor with a BRT system would have the most transportation benefits, the highest ridership, and the best potential business case for approximately the same cost as the now-proposed LRT.

**(8)** Following which, the Mayors' Council selected LRT for the region's transit vision, almost ignoring the 2012 analysis and the time and money spent to create it.

**(9)** I'm not here to say that this is Mayor Hepner's fault, as much as she has been supportive, to the extent of making election promises, of having Light Rail Transit in her community. And I am not here to suggest that TransLink staff conduct anything that can twist the results of these business cases; if SkyTrain is going to lose, then SkyTrain is going to lose. Rather I would like to suggest we look at ways to ensure the business case has the desired outcome and its development process is as fair as possible. Let's be honest.

**(10)** That means, if the LRT alternative is going to have a bad business case, the TransLink Board and the Mayors' Council should be prepared to accept that outcome, and make any necessary changes. It means that if the current analysis actually finds that an LRT would bring more travel time savings than BRT and SkyTrain, then I see a solid explanation for that - because the 2012 analysis concluded differently.

**(11)** In addition, each line must get its own analysis. The L-Line gets its own business cases, the Fraser Highway line gets its own business cases. I recall from the 2012 analysis that if the L-Line were to be built on its own, it would have had basically no return on investment, with no travel time savings against existing transit and the worst business case out of all alternatives.

**(12)** Being completely honest about these business case outcomes will allow us to drop any projects that aren't a good fit before they turn into serious problems, or undermine the confidence of those who are funding us. It doesn't mean there isn't another, potentially even better alternative.



**(13)** For example, we could build the L-Line as a BRT system. It would cost less, be built sooner, and in certain cases offer advantages over LRT like reduced transfers and through running routes. BRT was found suitable for the L-Line in the 2012 analysis, because it would offer comparable travel time benefits and could easily be upgraded to an LRT if needed. In return, we could then focus our capital efforts on Fraser Highway, where rapid transit investments – especially on extending SkyTrain – would bring significantly higher returns on investment.

**(14)** Beyond the technical details that I look forward to hearing about from TransLink once the final 2016 business cases are worked out, I would like to present this community petition with 1300 signatures calling for a switch to SkyTrain. The full package I would like to submit to the board includes a geolocation map of all signatures, which I hope will be effective in showing that our support comes from all over Surrey and Langley and not just certain neighbourhoods. It also includes our list of the 15 major issues we've identified with the proposed LRT system, which can be found online at [skytrainforsurrey.org/issues](http://skytrainforsurrey.org/issues).

**(15)** I am pleased to see that TransLink has already recognized that there is strong opposition all-around for the Surrey LRT proposal, and that actions continue to be taken to keep rapid transit in Surrey on the table and move toward the best outcome for South-Fraser residents.

Thank you for having me in today.

**Drafted and finalized by our campaign directors:**

Daryl Dela Cruz (*Surrey, chair*), Benedic Dasalla (*Surrey*), Jacky Au (*Surrey*), Spencer Whitney (*Langley Township*)