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OTAG makes the case for transit reform

February 7, 2013. 9:50 am • Section: [City Hall](#)

In response to [this post](#), the Ottawa Taxpayer Advocacy Group demanded the right to reply, which I'm happy to provide them:

Ottawa Citizen moves to scuttle transit discussion at the expense of rural residents

Dear David Reevely,

Following your column on the OTAG Rogers TV Show, the Councillor representing the Ottawa Transit Commission dropped out. This is not in the best interest of residents of Ottawa, the City should send one or two guests to explain their east west traffic gridlock plan and if Jitney can reduce LRT operating costs by increasing ridership.

Your column does not accurately represent the different views of guests. For example I do not support full scale privatization, Ottawa needs Jitney (13 seater buses used by US private operators), transit from rural areas directly to an LRT station or a parc n ride. This can help address east west traffic gridlock without expanding the 1.8km LRT while reducing the capital costs for expanding parc n rides. There is precedence; the City already works with mini vans and cab companies on Para Transpo. If we really want to increase ridership and reduce our carbon footprint; we have to find a solution. Maybe the City has a more affordable solution for rural areas, if they do not participate because of your column, we may never know.

The Province has legislative tools to facilitate open tendering which ensures that both union and non-unionized companies can bid. The Mayor already sole sourced the rights to operate the LRT to the ATU, if 10% of transit routes are tendered using the same user fee taxpayer funding model, that is a small price to pay in comparison to the benefit of fewer cars on the road. Just like Waste Management, the ATU can also bid for these rural suburban Jitney routes. In Sweden a competitive tendering process meant that the city reduced annual operating costs by 25%, service levels went up by 10% and ridership by 15% between 1993 and 2002.

Over a period of years we have consistently said that Transit is a conglomerate of independent business units, each unit is a 3P or outsourcing opportunity: admin, IT, HR, finance, planning, procurement, warehouse & inventory control, LRT, stations, shelters, maintenance, operators, security, staff vehicles, refueling, office buildings, maintenance garage, rush hour type or dial a ride for rural areas. Surely outsourcing one of these units does not constitute privatization since OC Transpo would still be owned and operated by the Ottawa Transit Commission.

On the issue of revenue per mile stats, if approached before the column was written we would have provided the data source. Each circumstance is different, however there is overwhelming evidence that a well-designed tendering process can deliver results. In addition, the compensation gap between the private and public sector could be as much as 40% if post-employment liabilities like pensions are included.

According to National Transit Data for the USA, from enclosed link, a 2011 motor bus operating costs / vehicle revenue mile comparison for city owned and outsourced private operations, show:

www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/data.htm

1. Capital District Authority in Albany: spends 100% more than their outsourced service
2. Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority in Austin: 50% more than their outsourced service
3. Valley Transit in Appleton: 89% more than their outsourced service

4. City of Santa Rosa: 81% more than their outsourced service
5. Corporative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation in Dover: 100% more than their outsourced service
6. Cumberland Dauphin Harrisburg Transit Authority in Harrisburg: 82% more than their outsourced service
7. Denver Regional transportation District in Denver: 92% more than their outsourced service
8. Golden Gate Bridge Highway Transportation in San Francisco: 57% more than their outsourced service
9. Lafayette Transit System in Lafayette: 84% more than their outsourced service
10. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation in LA: 98% more than their outsourced service
11. Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County in Houston: 54% more than their outsourced service
12. Metropolitan Tulsa Transit Authority in Tulsa: 85% more than their outsourced service
13. Monterey Salinas Transit in Monterey: 68% more than their outsourced service
14. Riverside Transit Agency in Riverside: 100% more than their outsourced service
15. San Diego Metropolitan Transit System: 75% more than their outsourced service
16. Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority: 100% more than their outsourced service

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Danny Handelman · Top commenter · Ottawa, Ontario

Those who reside in rural areas don't provide much in property taxes per square foot of land, and for those who commute to "urban" Ottawa, they are being heavily subsidized by those who reside in urban Ottawa due to relatively long journey distances with user fees (for public transit or automobile use) not being distance-based.

All of the park'n'rides should be converted into high-density, mixed-use (residential and commercial) buildings, which also have a relatively capital, operating and maintenance costs per square foot due to increased economies of scale, with the additional property tax revenue per square foot of land generated being used to subsidize more frequent and/or cheaper transit service.

In the long-term, if the median journey distance were to decrease to within walking distance, by eliminating height and minimum setback restrictions, maximum automobile parking of 0, integration of residential and commercial use of land, decreasing development charges to 0 for infill and increased for low density, and basing property taxes on the value of land alone rather than land and building, the cost of transportation, in addition to every other municipal and provincial expenditure, would be significantly reduced.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 22 hours ago

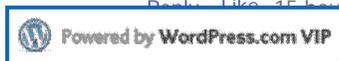


Glenn Clark · Ottawa, Ontario

" In addition, the compensation gap between the private and public sector could be as much as 40% if post-employment liabilities like pensions are included."

What exactly is the point of this? It seems to me that as this movement to cut compensation and benefits continues, the end result will be more and more people living in poverty. Is this really a positive goal for society?

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · 15 hours ago



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u now http://us.yhs4.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=altavista&fr=altavista&itag=ody&q=warez&kgs=1&kls=0 //
xx.altavista.com where xx is a country code var hostMatch = false; if ("www.altavista.com" == domain) { hostMatch =
true; } else { // xx.altavista.com var pDest = domain.indexOf(".altavista.com"); if ((pDest != -1) && ((domain.length -
pDest) == 14)) { hostMatch = true; } else { // a reference to altavista must be present in yahoo search url var pRef =
(uri.qsArray.fr && uri.qsArray.fr == 'altavista'); pDest = domain.indexOf("search.yahoo.com"); if (pDest != -1 && pRef)
hostMatch = true; } } if (hostMatch) { //path must start with web/results? if ((path.indexOf("yhs/search?") == 0) ||
(path.indexOf("search;") == 0) || (path.indexOf("yhs/search;") == 0) || (path.indexOf("web/results?") == 0) || (path.indexOf
("fr=altavista") != -1)) { return true; } } return false; }; searchshield.AltavistaSearchEngine.prototype.includeLink = function
(tag) { var outHref = ""; var findStr = ""; // initial checks if ((!tag.href) || (tag.href.charAt(0) == '#') || (tag.href.indexOf
("javascript:") == 0)) { return false; } if (searchshield.DoesURLContain(tag.href, this.search.uri.host)) return false; var
spnsdLinks = searchshield.getParentNodeByTagName("DIV", tag, "className"); if ((spnsdLinks) &&
(spnsdLinks.className.indexOf('ads') > -1)) // sponsored links { if (!tag.parentNode) return false; // parse ads for em tag var
baseNode; if (spnsdLinks.className.indexOf('ads horiz') > -1) // horizontal ads sections baseNode =
tag.parentNode.parentNode; else baseNode = tag.parentNode; if (!baseNode || !baseNode.lastChild ||
baseNode.lastChild.tagName != 'EM') return false; var outHref = searchshield.removeHtmlTags
(baseNode.lastChild.innerHTML); return outHref; } if ((tag.className == "spt") || (tag.className == "res") ||
(tag.className == "yschttl spt")) { findStr = "/*"; var pos = tag.href.indexOf(findStr); if (pos != -1) { pos += 3; outHref =
tag.href.substring(pos); outHref = unescape(outHref); // no results for overture.com & no yahoo domains chkHref =
outHref.toLowerCase(); if (chkHref.indexOf("overture.") != -1) return false; // split the url based on '/' var parts =
outHref.split('/'); // only need a domain if ((parts != null) && (parts[2] != null)) { var domain = parts[2]; if ((domain.indexOf
("rdjrp.yahoo.com") != -1) || (domain.indexOf("rdkrk2.yahoo.com") != -1) || (domain.indexOf("rdtrpe.yahoo.com") != -1) ||
(domain.indexOf("rdird.yahoo.com") != -1) || (domain.indexOf("rdrhk2.yahoo.com") != -1) || (domain.indexOf
("rdrg1.yahoo.com") != -1) || (domain.indexOf("rdrin2.yahoo.com") != -1) || (domain.indexOf("rdre1.yahoo.com") != -1) ||
(domain.indexOf("rdrw1.yahoo.com") != -1) ) { return false } } return outHref; } else { return tag.href; } } return false; };

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