



BILL & LILLIAN VANDER ZALM

3553 ARTHUR DRIVE, LADNER, B.C., V4K 3N2

March 6, 2020

Dear Mayor Braun

As best as I can, I have been following your comments about the proposed "South Fraser Community Rail." Your questioning of the work being done by this hard-working volunteer group, which has the livability of the Fraser Valley as its' primary objective, is welcome, but unfortunately not based on facts. You obviously are entitled to your own opinion, but you are not entitled to your own facts.

When I was a teenager, I used to take the 10-cent ride from Bradner to Abbotsford on the B.C. Electric (forerunner to B.C. Hydro as you know) Interurban. B.C. Hydro came to see me in 1987 when I was the premier of the province. They had already discontinued the "Tram Service" from Vancouver to Chilliwack in the early 50s, for lack of passengers, and were now wanting to sell their freight division because of heavy financial losses. They needed government approval to sell any of the assets.

My very capable Minister Mr. Jack Davis and I agreed immediately that their request was not acceptable as presented. After considerable research and study the Minister and I concluded that the "urban rail right-of-way", everything above it and beside it was not to be sold under any circumstance. We concluded that the rails, then used exclusively for freight, could only be leased with renewable options. We further required that the rail line be maintained in top condition, when required by us for Transit, passenger transportation. The agreement would further state that the successful bidder, lessee, would need to double track, at their cost when demand exceeded capacity.

In the Press Release, issued by Minister Jack Davis at 2 PM on July 27th, 1988 re the successful bidders on the leases, he stated "the successful" ITEL offer was approximately 32 million dollars and that CP Rail had purchased the "running (freight) rights" over 12 Kms. of B.C. Hydros' right-of-way, otherwise known as the "Pratt Livingstone Corridor" in the Fraser Valley for 6.3 million dollars.

Obviously, as we have seen recently with the pipeline protest, as informed responsible citizens, we are all concerned with maintaining the free movement of freight in our country and province, although I believe both ITEL (Operation since purchased by Southern Rail) and CP have done very well over these last 30 years and that is good, but progress must continue. The "Master Agreement", which covers the Pratt Livingstone Corridor, lays out very specific obligations by CP Rail - sharing the line equally with Passenger Traffic at no cost, and double tracking if traffic volume requires it, at CP's expense. These were not requests, these were and are contractual obligations - in other words, conditions of the sale of freight rights.

Mr. Mayor, you are well aware of the exponential population growth in the Fraser Valley and are also well aware that it has only just begun. The use of the "Interurban rail corridor" for a pollution free hydrogen passenger train, all the way from Chilliwack to connect with the Metro Vancouver Skytrain at the Patullo bridge, is a "win-win".



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The enormous amount of money saved alone should be a win-win for the taxpayer.

The 99 Km Inter-Regional South Fraser Hydrogen train will serve over 10 times as many people as the 7 km. SkyTrain to Fleetwood, less than half-way to Langley city, but in the end the cost will be about the same. (99kms for the price of 7kms?)

The South Fraser Interurban Line would open up many opportunities for “lower cost housing” and employment. The Fleetwood Skytrain would serve a relatively small population and not serve any traffic producing facilities. The South Fraser Interurban Line would serve the populations of and traffic for N.W. Surrey, N. Delta, Newton, Sullivan, White Rock, S. Surrey, Cloverdale, Kwantlen, Langley City, Langley Kwantlen, Fort Langley, Trinity University, Township of Langley, Gloucester Industrial Park, Aldergrove, City of Abbotsford, the Abbotsford International Airport, the University of the Fraser Valley, Sumas, Yarrow, Sardis and Chilliwack. Contrary to statements made it does go through the Fraser Valley’s population centers, high traffic industrial parks and within a 5-minute shuttle Bus ride to the Abbotsford Airport and in Chilliwack, the entire Canada Education Park.

The truth is the Fraser valley was developed around the Interurban Rail Line.

Mr. Mayor, I’m glad I have the opportunity of providing you with the correct information. I hope we can get you to soldier with us, to prevent a huge waste of money on the proposed Skytrain proposal which would keep the Fraser Valley from getting the needed transportation for this generation and a generation here after. Work with us in getting effective planning for lower cost housing growth at the Inter Urban Station Nodes and thereby preserving “green space” and Agricultural lands.

If further detailed information is required and more questions asked, please do not hesitate to call me or our astute and hard-working South Fraser volunteer leader, a former Mayor of Langley Township, Mr. Rick Green - 778 705-9282 / 604 866-5752 or email southfrasercommunityrail@shaw.ca

Respectfully yours

Bill Vander Zalm
Cc All Media

All Federal, Provincial and Municipal elected representatives South of the Fraser.