

Thank you for including us on the agenda so quickly and for allowing us to speak before you tonight.

We are the citizens of Lanark County and Ottawa commuters who have suffered undue financial hardship by the increase in fares imposed upon us by Thom Transport Ltd.

We were given two days notice on Sept 14th, 2006 of a 50% fare increase. The cost to commute into Ottawa has increased from \$200 to \$300 per month plus for an additional cost of a monthly OC Transpo pass @ \$71.25 per month = \$371.25 per month. We are the victims of Thom's poor business management and practices.

Thom's service and fares affects our livelihoods and our ability to remain in a rural area that we dearly love. The service is not timely therefore getting to work on time is not guaranteed: the buses break down; the air-conditioning and heating on the buses is poor and sometimes not working; we are not allowed to use the express lanes going into Ottawa; the connection to OC transpo lines is not convenient and the black smoke spewing from some of the vehicles is an embarrassment environmentally to Lanark County as we are associated with endorsing this service.

As a result we have organized ourselves by sending to the associated officials and politicians a signed petition by Lanark commuters asking for an investigation into our claims. A covering letter and the petition was then sent to the Hon .Donna Cansfield M.P.P. the Minister of Transportation by Norm Sterling's office on October 10th, 2006

We have also organized ourselves by forming a group called Community Transit Solutions who meets weekly in CP, invites new members from Lanark communities and runs a website to inform and invite participation online.

However, we need to take a step forward to prevent further crisis for Lanark county residents and we are appealing to you for help on three counts.

First, I would like to ask you to strike a committee, that committee being Community Transit Solutions, to investigate with council the need for a Public Transit System in Lanark County.

Our vision is to see a well managed Lanark County transit system which includes a community-based management authority and private sector service provider.

Part of our vision comes from studying "Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition" on community development and from investigating from October 2005 onwards the very successful public transit model of Rockland – Clarence. We have been offered support from Rockland-Clarence. The Director of Physical Services Richard Sarazin has agreed to meet and explain how they created and implemented their system. And as of late the Major Richard LaLonde has also expressed interest in meeting with us. We also have a consultants report prepared for Rockland-Clarence detailing the results of a public transit study for their communities.

I believe that the province wants us on board with them! Developing a municipal transit system opens the gateways to provincial funding to help finance the set up of a public transit system and to obtain provincial funding for gas tax incentives. I would like to call upon Cliff Neudorf a member of our group to quickly explain a bit about The Public Transportation Act

If agreeable to this, when would you be prepared to strike the committee?

Secondly, we would like to come before council to make a presentation of the needs of the community with the will to educate explaining the transit issues.

If agreeable can you please set a date for us to make this presentation after the election but as soon as possible?

Thirdly, we would like to ask your help in making Transportation-Public Transit Systems" part of the Town's Strategic Plan?

If agreeable to this what would you need from us to help make this happen.

Thank You