

CITY OF KELOWNA

APR 26 2010

April 14, 2010

ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT

Mayor Sharon Shepherd
City of Kelowna
1435 Water St
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4

Original to: Communications
Copied: Mayor
 City Manager
 Councillors

File Number: 0705-55
Initials: *JS* Date: *Apr. 26/10*

RE: Federal legislation for transit and other green commuter choices

Dear Mayor Shepherd and Council,

Declining air quality and the threat of climate change demand creative ideas that encourage alternative commuting choices to the single-occupancy car.

We therefore write to ask for your support for Bill C-466, which would facilitate green commuter choices for Canadians by making employer-provided benefits for transit, carpooling and bicycle commuting tax-free at the federal level.

Across Canada, regional and municipal governments like yours are challenged to provide high-quality, accessible and affordable transit service to their residents within ever-tightening budgets. The annual choice between fare hikes, tax increases or operational deficits is not sustainable for the fiscal or social health of our communities.

Bill C-466 is a good first step toward alleviating this dilemma. In addition to increasing transit demand on individual and company-wide levels, it would assist long-term institutional planning for transit authorities by facilitating cost-effective bulk transit purchases by employers. The Bill is supported by the Canadian Urban Transit Association, which has advocated for this measure for over two decades.

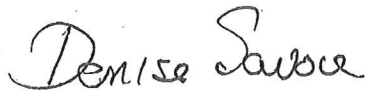
Further, Bill C-466 incorporates other green commuter choices for the first time in Canadian history, in recognition of the exceptional efforts of Canadian cities to make sustainable transportation a priority in their municipal planning. Traffic congestion is increasingly recognized as a critical urban planning issue in need of cost-effective solutions, and the creation of viable, safe, user-friendly bicycle infrastructure requires increased demand and resources. Bill C-466 rewards green commuters and brings carpooling and bicycle commuting onto the radar of the federal government.

We recognize the gross fiscal imbalance between the federal government and Canadian cities that dates back to the downloading of social program costs during the 1990s. It is evidenced by today's cumulative \$238-billion municipal infrastructure deficit, and it is exacerbated by the continued requirement of cities to pay one third of shared project costs with only eight percent of national tax revenues. For that reason, the federal NDP remains committed to a national transit strategy and an increase in the municipal share of the gas tax.

In the meantime, we respectfully ask for your written support of Bill C-466, addressed to the prime minister and copied to the Bill's sponsor, Denise Savoie, MP (Victoria). Any additional advocacy – in the media, to your residents, or in representations to your fellow municipal leaders and other levels of government – would be greatly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Savoie's office at 613-996-2358 or savoid@parl.gc.ca to discuss other avenues to express your support and contribute to our campaign to pass C-466 into law.

Thank you for your attention.

In solidarity,



Denise Savoie, MP
Victoria



Jack Layton, MP, Leader
New Democratic Party of Canada

Regular Meeting – P.M.March 15, 20048. BYLAWS (OTHER THAN ZONING & DEVELOPMENT)(BYLAWS PRESENTED FOR FIRST THREE READINGS)

- 8.1 Bylaw No. 9196 – Amendment No. 1 to Sewer Specified Area No. 20
Bylaw No. 8929 (North Rutland)

Moved by Councillor Hobson/Seconded by Councillor BlanleilR272/04/03/15 THAT Bylaws No. 9196 and 9197 be read a first, second and third time.Carried

- 8.2 Bylaw No. 9197 – Sewer Connection Charge Bylaw Amendment No. 13

See resolution under 8.1 above.

9. COUNCILLOR ITEMS(a) Taking the Tax off Transit

Councillor Shepherd asked that Council support an initiative to lobby the federal government to allow employers to provide non-taxable transit benefits for their employees.

Moved by Councillor Shepherd/Seconded by Councillor Hobson

R273/04/03/15 THAT the Mayor write a letter on behalf of Council to the Hon. Ralph Goodale, Minister of Finance, with copies to Prime Minister Paul Martin and the Hon. John Godfrey, Parliamentary Secretary for Cities, asking that the Income Tax Act be amended to allow employers to provide non-taxable transit benefits for their employees.

Carried(b) Public Safety in the Downtown

Councillor Given referred to a recent article in a local newspaper indicating that transients are making people uncomfortable on some streets in the downtown. He suggested that the City Manager meet with the RCMP, the Downtown Kelowna Association, the Downtown Patrol and City Bylaw Enforcement Officers to consider what will be done to deal with issues of transients and safety of the public through the upcoming summer tourist season, and report back to Council.

10. TERMINATION

The meeting was declared terminated at 4:33 p.m.

Certified Correct:_____
Mayor_____
City Clerk

BLH/am