

The Practical North South LRT Alternative

For less than \$50 million, Ottawa Can Meet its North-South LRT Needs and Serve Citizens Faster and More Conveniently.

The capacity of the current O-Train could easily be upgraded by a factor of four times simply by running double car trains and doubling service frequency from every 15-minutes to every 7.5 minutes. With modest line and station improvements, and single-track extension to a Leitrim Park & Ride, the peak hour capacity of this approach would be in excess of 9,000 riders at a total capital cost of well less than \$50 million. These would represent sufficient peak hour and daily capacity for IBI's ridership projections through to 2031.

This pragmatic alternative compares with the city's proposed electric LRT, which would cost between \$800 million to one billion dollars and would serve no more than the same amount or riders. Stated another way, enhancement of the existing O-Train service would provide well over 100% of the North-South ridership capacity and infrastructure requirements at about 5% of the cost of the city's proposed LRT. Combined with local and feeder bus routes, as well as leveraging underutilized capacity on both south Transitways, this practical alternative would provide all the N-S transit capacity needed to meet the projected growth of Barrhaven and Riverside South for many decades to come.

All of this can be done with no disruption to current transit services and it could be completed in less than a year. In contrast, the proposed LRT would shut down the current O-Train service for two and a half years, requiring 5 million riders over that time to travel by bus or car.

Further capacity and ridership can be gained from the existing O-Train by using triple car trains and extending the service over the Prince of Wales rail bridge to Gatineau.

By using diesel LRT, the city will avoid massive incremental primetime demands on the Ontario electricity grid. Diesel LRT also provides the option of using locally produced biodiesel fuel which generates no more CO₂ (greenhouse gas) than is consumed by the plant material from which biodiesel is made.

Most important, the practical alternative would also leave the windfall \$400 million in Federal and Provincial funds, as well as the \$200 million in debt that can be supported by gas tax revenue, effectively all available for an optimal solution for the Bayview to Hurdman corridor.

The city says there is "no option" other than their proposed billion dollar electric LRT. They say that "all other alternatives" to support the growth in Barrhaven and Riverside South are "impractical and impossible." This, like so much else they have said in order to try to get their project approved, is completely false.