

Terminal is key to the rail service

BY JULIAN ISITT, TIMES COLONIST MARCH 4, 2011

We have been let down by those members of council who imperil the future of rail not just in Victoria but inevitably on Vancouver Island. The elimination of the rail bridge is short-sighted. Perhaps, much sooner than we dare realize, private transportation may cease to be practical.

What has the public been told about the implications of eliminating the rail bridge?

I see no public proposals to relocate the current terminus. Were it relocated to Langford for example, passenger rail would no longer be viable for many Victorians given one-hour bus connections, \$50 plus cab rides or impositions on family and friends for lifts.

The loss of ridership could easily be the proverbial straw leading to termination of the service.

Mayor Dean Fortin, rather than leading the fight to preserve rail option, throws up his hands and whines about "throwing good money after bad." Is this truly the expression of support that could help bring on side other governments?

The mayor's posturing raises serious doubt. The public needs unambiguous assurance that there is no private deal afoot to close the railway to further development along the corridor.

I commend Coun. Geoff Young for his rational and well-informed fight against knee-jerk replacement plans for the Blue Bridge.

I also acknowledge those other councillors who have lately joined him to keep alive the rail option. May our children and grandchildren yet benefit from these brave 11th hour efforts.

Julian Isitt
Victoria

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