

Sam Spencer for QCity Metro: "Imperfection is no reason to reject the transit plan"



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Friends -

I wanted to share part of [my opinion piece in QCity Metro this morning](#) in favor of the transit referendum. From the Affordable Care Act to the U.S. Constitution itself, we've always been aware that while transformative legislation has faults, it shouldn't halt progress.

Please share far and wide!

Hope all of you are well.

Cheers,
Sam

Imperfection is no reason to reject the transit plan

If voters reject the current plan, every commuter who stands to benefit will be left waiting while our transit system deteriorates.

The clock is also ticking in Charlotte. After years of false starts, economic crises, changes in political leadership and a pandemic, our community is finally in a position to build the transit and mobility system we deserve.

One of the primary goals of public policy should be to ensure a full life, with as much quality time as possible. When you strip away all of the arguments and assumptions about Charlotte's transit plan, it boils down to our most valuable and irreplaceable resource: time.

For the single parent working two jobs who has a round-trip commute measured in hours, a better bus system means more quality time with their kids.

For the Lake Norman commuter who can't afford the toll lanes, it's an extra hour each morning to answer emails or read a book on the train.

For the elder in East Charlotte who takes Special Transportation Service (STS) buses to their medical appointments, it's a quicker round trip. For the small business owner driving their truck around town, it's less time between stops — and hopefully fewer potholes.

For the person who was about to get behind the wheel when they've had too much to drink, it's a safe ride home instead of an appointment with the criminal justice system.

For one or more of the 100-plus people in Mecklenburg County who die in traffic fatalities each year, a one-cent sales tax could be worth decades.

A vote in favor of the referendum is a vote for more time.

Better roads, more railways, and a more frequent, interconnected bus system will not only give us more choices, they'll give us more quality time — and that's before noting that public transportation is much better for the environment, air quality, and public health than our car culture.

It's also much safer. Nationwide, approximately 50,000 Americans die each year from vehicle fatalities. Public transit has a lower crime and crash risk compared to driving, and the fatality rate is less than one-tenth that of cars per passenger mile.

More decades with a loved one who chooses transit is an immeasurable benefit.