

My name is Carla Ens. I am an epidemiologist and an academic specializing in public and population health. The framework that guides my work and research is the social determinants of health. Those are the elements that impact the health of populations such as gender, income, education, housing, social networks, environment, and so on. We know for a fact that where we live has a greater impact on our health than how many miles we jog each day. We know for a fact that how much money we make is a greater predictor of health status than access to health care services. I'm not going to engage you in a lecture on social responsibility but please keep that framework in mind as I speak.

As an academic, I'm very interested in understanding the basis of how we develop our perceptions and make decisions. Critical analysis is vital determining the value, the merit, or the accuracy of words be they written or spoken. Even the ethics can be evaluated. When reviewing a document, for example, people are differently impressed when it translates nicely, looks professional, and is lengthy. We make assumptions about literature well before we review content. This can be a fatal flaw.

The two key documents available to you, unless you have undertaken additional time for personal review and study, are both the unabbreviated Transit Report as well as the short report. I want to address three points today that pertain to the reports available:

- 1) the community engagement process was insufficient and did not effectively contribute to the proposal
- 2) section 8 containing the identification of priorities and their weights was definitive yet extremely subjective

3) Appendix B describing external stakeholder meetings indicates a clear bias in process

First, let me say that the community feedback in this report is insufficient and should be disregarded. Why? There were two public meetings – held 3 days apart- as well as the option to complete an online or hardcopy survey. There was no speaker presenting the plans, but rather information set up on poster boards around a room. Just 375 people attended the open houses- a very small sample. I would suggest that a topic with this level of community engagement should have garnered 3 or 4 times that many people. I suggest the format was not appropriate for the area residents nor did it accurately capture the concerns of attendees.

So I challenge you to try this again. Use methods proven to garner accuracy. Saturation, for example, would be something to try. It's a research method where data collection is finalized when it appears that no new themes or ideas are being presented. The number of surveys or interviews or focus groups is not pre-determined as the goal is to understand all that a population has to offer. You keep talking to people until nothing new comes up. And you talk to as many different types of people as possible to really understand an issue. So you don't just talk to those in the parker area, but the business owners along pembina, students from U of M and U of W, residents in the suburbs the new line is meant to attract. Does Lindenwoods even want access to transit? Speak to people. Seek them out until you get an accurate picture.

But don't rely on pie charts that say nothing and are based on samples far too small to tell an accurate story. The merit of these statistics is

really poor. Be very cautious or even better, throw them out and start again.

Second, let me draw your attention to section 8. The report provides details on different categories, their weights, and corresponding scores. You can find the pertinent table on page... of the long report and page... of the short summary.

It is evident from the weightings that 1B has the highest score and thus is the best option.

The report also determines that these categories were determined by the Advisory Group. How? On the basis of what? Where is the scientific or grey literature supporting the categories?

CURRENT PROPOSAL

Weighting	Category	1A	1B	2	Total
High	Operational	4	4	2	10
	Land Acquisition	4	4	1	9
	Capital Costs	4	4	5	13
	Public Consultation	2	3	5	10
TOTAL HIGH (3)		14	15	13	42
Medium	Implementation	4	4	2	10
	Community	3	3	4	10
	Transit-oriented development and tax increment financing	4	5	2	11
	Future Build out	5	5	1	11
TOTAL MEDIUM (2)		16	17	9	42
Low	Environmental	3	3	5	11
TOTAL LOW (1)		3	3	5	11
OVERALL TOTAL		33	35	27	

The weights and marks play a huge role in determining the final mark---

any subjectivity will provide a different answer. I created an example to prove this point.

CARLA'S PROPOSAL

Weighting	Category	1A	1B	2	Total
High	Community	3	3	4	10
	Environmental	0	0	5	11
	Operational	4	4	2	10
	Capital Costs	4	4	5	13
	Public Consultation	2	3	5	10
TOTAL HIGH (3)		13	14	21	54
		39	42	63	162
Medium	Implementation	4	4	2	10
	Land Acquisition	4	4	1	9
TOTAL MEDIUM (2)		8	8	3	19
		16	16	6	38
Low	Transit-oriented development and tax increment financing	4	5	2	11
	Future Build out	5	5	1	11
TOTAL LOW (1)		9	10	3	22
		9	10	3	22
OVERALL TOTAL		30	32	27	95
WEIGHTED TOTAL		85	90	96	295

With just a few changes, highlighting what I believe to be of greater importance to the citizens of Winnipeg, the result is very different. Where is the transparency in this process? Without any type of justification for categories or weights, it is useless and should not be considered as you review this document.

The third and final point I want to make pertains to the external stakeholder meetings. The summary of these are found in Appendix B. I really had difficulty suppressing my shock when I reviewed this section. This project is estimated to cost hundreds of millions of dollars, and in the 7 stakeholder groups determined to be involved in this process, the group was able to scrounge up only 10 participants.

Let me summarize what they said:

Shindico: They think that above ground LRT along Letellier is the better option and anyhow, they have no interest in building bike paths or walking trails in the Parker lands.

CN: they think that the rail system is much less impacted in the Parker plan than in the Letellier plan. Also, that they see the Letellier plan as feasible.

City of Winnipeg Water and Waste: the Letellier plan would not impact the city aqueduct or the feedermain yet the Parker plan certainly would.

AECOM: (a company that specializes in aqueduct and feedermain work for the city). More investigations needed in the Parker lands... no issues with Letellier.

Hydro: all the hydro lines in the Parker lands are in use—they really don't want to share their lands as they envision continued expansion. But there would be no hydro land impacted in the Letellier route.

U of M: they like a "more direct route" that "does not impact the heritage value of U of M's gateway". As long as there is no impact to Chancellor Matheson, they really don't care.

And finally Gem Equities: They are indifferent.

7 external stakeholders. 10 people. Millions of dollars and the future of public transit at stake. Letellier wins hands down. And yet Parker is still chosen as the preferred route.

And I should add that not once was the environment considered a stakeholder.

I focused on three key points today. Point one: the community engagement process was insufficient. Point two: that the stated priorities have no basis, and Point three: that external stakeholder meetings do not support the proposed route nor did they represent all key stakeholders.

After the Infrastructure Public Meeting about 2 weeks ago, I was really disturbed to hear both the decision and councillor Vandal's ensuing soundbite: that the decision was made because it was the cheapest option. Really? Not because it was the best option for the people who need and use transit. Not because it was an investment in the future that was based on sound processes and effective data collection. Not because we value the health and well being of our communities. Not that we respect and value the land for its unique ecosystems. But because we want the best deal. Well, in this case, I predict you'll get what you pay for.