

To the editor:

Now that Lawrence voters have shown how warmly they support the T, we have a golden opportunity to rethink and improve local public transit. Integrating the KU and City systems, which is projected for mid-2009, will help greatly. But equally important is the work of the new Sales Tax Oversight Committee. This committee will monitor the expenditure of the funds produced by these taxes.

How this money is spent -- "to verify that the approved City retailers' sales tax revenue is being used properly," to quote the resolution -- is a crucial matter. And we strongly believe that the public should be fully represented on this committee. So, on behalf of the Campaign to Save the T, we call upon the City Commission to appoint suitable public representatives. Our campaign, which united people from across the political spectrum in Lawrence, would like a representative. And we believe that other community organizations with an interest in the T should have representation on this committee as well.

We are sending the Commission a letter stating this request formally, because we believe that the concerns and good ideas voiced during the recent campaign should continue to be heard. That can best be achieved, with full openness and accountability, if the public is fully represented on the Oversight Committee. So we call upon Commissioners to conduct a full, deliberate discussion of the mission and composition of this committee, in which public concerns are fully heard -- and in which substantial public representation is assured.

Gwen Klingenberg, David Smith, Lisa-Marie Wright