

To: Mayor and City Commissioners
From: Patricia Sinclair, MSW
Re: Regular Agenda Items 2 a and b
Date: July 21, 2015

First, let me state that I am totally opposed to the relocation of the public transit transfer center to the proposed location at 21st and Iowa Streets and do not accept the lengthy list of rules as it is too much to digest now and because I believe that the Transit is much too strict about some things, for example, not allowing a folding shopping cart, or laundry, or a beverage.

Second, there is so much information presented here, that I could not even digest it or print it all. We have, for the first time, the minutes of the Public Transit Advisory Committee meeting of 5/12/15 and 6/09/15, a very lengthy study from April 2014, numerous other studies or explanations about why locations were chosen or not, why downtown was not appropriate, a recently added map of the shelters, etc.

I believe that downtown may not be an ideal location for all time, but I also believe that it is the best option for the time being. To be told that the presence of buses interferes with functions like parades downtown and that increased building made it difficult to locate the buses on the streets seems to be a ridiculous argument. Any city-dweller knows that buses or other public transportation are expected, even desired, at busy locations. During all of the transitions, the bus shelters and stops have been poorly marked and appropriate schedules not available. I am not referring to the initial changes made when buses completely blocked small businesses. In my opinion, large buildings should not have been allowed to be quickly built in such a manner that buses could not stop in front of them and given other concessions.

With regard to the proposed location, it's important to note that once KU became represented on the Board, we began to cater to KU's needs and routes were designed to access campus. I once waited on Iowa Street for a bus that went over my head on the bridge. KU students can purchase passes, and apparently do, for unlimited riding,

KU or the KUEA has offered this site under whatever circumstances as it will serve them well. I do not believe that it will serve Lawrence citizens well. First, I believe that stops are not allowed on Iowa or 23rd as they are state highways, although I could not find that in the literature provided. Next, an agreement has been reached with the residents of 21st street (and surrounding area) about not adding buses to their street. The crossing at 23rd and Iowa is perilous, and there have been tragic accidents there.

Most importantly, when I take the bus and wind up downtown, I can visit a library or a bank, do a little shopping or window shopping, get in from the heat/cold/rain/snow, have a bite to eat, use a public restroom. I used to wish that there was a pay phone as I felt sorry for those who could not make a call. At a location such as the one proposed, there are very few ways to pass the time, no restrooms proposed, no eating or drinking on the bus, so one would have to find a place nearby and finish before the bus arrived.. I believe that these are some of the reasons why people are opposed to this location. There is nothing to do and few amenities and it is probably out of the way. It might even be creepy to be in a building with just one other person.

As expected, it is stated that most routes will be changed. This is a very serious business, and I do not believe that Mr. Nugent is keen on suggestions from the public.

I have attended mass transit meetings from the very beginning and believe that the system was not wanted by the administration and it was set up to be doomed to fail, from beginning in the winter with route markings missing and not planned well. It was based upon an out-of-date plan by an out-of-town firm and when a director was hired they had no experience with starting up a transit system.

I attended a reception/meeting regarding this issue of 21st and Iowa at the old Arts Center, I believe in spring 2014. There were only a few people there, there were photos or drawings of buildings in other cities, but nothing to indicate what was planned for this site, there was a survey to fill out, with no mention of this location, and Mr. Nugent was totally authoritarian in what he would allow to be discussed or in answering any questions. That is, if one began a sentence, he would state "NO" and refuse to go on..

I own a car, but sometimes take the bus. I would take it more often if it ran more often and to places which I want to visit, with less waiting time for transfers. I counted on having a bus route near my home so that I could use it as I and my car age and during bad weather and when my car is unavailable. This route has gotten worse and worse, but it's better than nothing.

There are still many people in the city who disparage public transit, yet voters supported it. If everyone drove a car, there would be no parking, many uninsured and unsafe vehicles, and the roads that citizens complain about would be very crowded and rundown. Yet we need more frequent service and service that allows all residents to access the various amenities and necessities they desire to reach. And we need a transfer location and routes designed to provide maximum service.