

## **Chastain and light rail**

An open letter to Clay Chastain:

For the last 20 years this community has grappled with funding light rail, and in November of 2006 you did it. Kansas City voters decided finally that their reliance on cars had to be balanced by an attractive, new public transit idea: yours.

Now you're saying we want to "give away light rail's funding mechanism to the bus system" (4/2, Opinion, "Kansas City deserves a much better plan for mass transit")? No, Clay, that's not how it went. You stole the  $\frac{3}{8}$ -cent sales tax that voters passed overwhelmingly in 2003 to enhance our bus service for your light-rail idea. This "inefficient" bus system has since seen ridership increase nearly 14 percent.

You've been invited by many groups to discuss what to do to ensure another success for light rail. Now I ask you to believe that our elected leaders and our technical consultants have their constituents' objectives at heart and have the expertise to guide our community to a realistic proposal that will produce "more jobs and a greener, more progressive and vibrant city."

Dissension in the ranks is destructive. If you will join this team and participate in crafting the final plan, we can make light rail happen. Together.

**Kite Singleton**

*Former Chair of City Planning Commission  
and Board Member, Regional Transit Alliance  
Kansas City*