

Transit boss gets walking papers

Parsons, Lou

# Parsons GOing, gone; eyeing mayor's job

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Lou Parsons says he has his eye on Mississauga's mayor's seat now that his term as GO Transit chairman is coming to an end.

Yesterday, Parsons told *The Mississauga News* he would most likely run for the top position on city council once Hazel McCallion steps aside.



**PARSONS**

"As long as Hazel is there I wouldn't compete for the position. She has done too good of a job," said Parsons. "But if she decides not to run at some point, then yes, I would be interested in the job."

Parsons, who is 59, admitted he may have to wait a long time before McCallion retires, but quickly added that day will eventually come and that he will be ready.

"I think I still have something to offer the people of Mississauga," he said.

Parsons' political history dates back to the early '70s when he served as deputy reeve for the town of Mississauga.

In 1974, he was appointed chairman of Peel Region, a post he held until 1979 when he was made GO Transit boss by the Progressive Conservative government headed by Bill Davis.

Since that time, Parsons has survived two changes in power at Queen's Park until last week when he was told by NDP government officials that his term, which ended yesterday, would not be renewed. He will continue in the post until his successor is named.

In 1985, Parsons served as campaign manager for Frank Miller's Tory leadership campaign and later that year earned the title Sir Lou when he was named a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory, the highest honor that can be bestowed a lay member of the Catholic Church.

"I enjoyed the job but I guess it's time to move on," Parsons said of the \$35,000 a year post with GO. "I could complain but I won't. The terms for these type of jobs usually last three to five years, I've been around 13, what can I say?"

As well, aside from the mayor's job, Parsons said there are other career paths open to him including in the private sector transportation field and even a return to full-time duties with his realty firm.

Parsons said considering how long it takes the government to make appointments, he could continue in the capacity for several months.