

Board In Brief

October 18, 2000

Here are the main points from the October 18th TransLink Board of Directors meeting. The complete agenda and supporting reports for every Board meeting are posted on TransLink's website (www.translink.bc.ca). Click on "Board Meeting Agendas and Reports" and then on the meeting date. This document is also posted on TransLink's website—click on "Board-in-Brief" and then on the meeting date.

Item 3.1—Final South of Fraser Area Transit Plan Approval

The Board received the report, titled as above, for information. The Board approved the South of Fraser Area Transit Plan, with the amendment that approval and implementation be subject to sufficient funding for all Strategic Transportation Plan improvements for the whole region.

The South of Fraser Area Transit Plan was developed through a partnership between TransLink staff and municipal staff from each of the five municipalities involved, and it is the product of extensive community consultation. From 2001 to 2003, the Plan calls for:

- A 37% increase in bus service hours (194,000 hours)
- 64 additional peak buses (42% increase)
- a \$4 million investment in Transit Priority measures
- a relocated South Surrey Park & Ride lot

Computer modeling analysis of travel behaviour indicates that the proposed service improvements will achieve:

- an additional 3.5 million transit trips to and from the South of Fraser region annually;

- a 27% increase in the volume of transit trips in the morning peak hours;
- an increase in transit mode share from 5.6% to 7%.

Item 3.2—Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Project Update

The Board received the report for information, and granted specific project approval to the following ITS projects:

1. Richmond–Vancouver 98B-Line Bus Rapid Transit Evaluation, and
2. Integrated Mobility Systems: A Multi-Modal, Multi-Application Smart Card Initiative for Canada.

The Board authorized the Vice-President of Contracts & Acquisition to enter into satisfactory contribution agreements with Transport Canada required to receive Federal funding.

As part of the federal government's strategy for stimulating development and deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) across rural and urban Canada, Transport Canada issued a request for proposals in March 2000 under the ITS Deployment and Integration Plan. TransLink staff were involved in the submission of proposals for the aforementioned two projects, both of which were selected for funding.

The total cost of the first project is \$175,000, with Transport Canada contributing \$75,000. (TransLink will contribute \$50,000 in cash and \$25,000 through in-kind resources.) The second project, involving 19 partners from throughout Canada, will cost \$865,809. Transport Canada will contribute \$250,000; TransLink will contribute

\$50,000 in cash and \$32,200 through in-kind resources.

Item 3.3—TransLink and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Study

The Board received the report, titled as above, for information.

The TransLink service region has been selected as one of six regions in North America to be showcased in a resource guide on Intelligent Transportation Systems. The project will document regional approaches to transportation operations and management.

TransLink is considered unique in North America as a regional transportation organization due to the strong institutional structure, its legislated mandate and authority, and its proactive Intelligent Transportation Systems operating subsidiary.

Item 3.4—Government of Canada's Action Plan 2000 on Climate Change

The Board took the following actions on this matter:

- Directed the Chair to write to the Premier, Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks, and the Minister Responsible for Transit to urge that the Province press for matching federal investment in new transit systems;
- Directed staff to work with the Canadian Urban Transit Association to develop a coordinated position with transit operators across Canada for submission to the federal government;
- Directed staff to monitor any opportunities for urban transit that may develop from the Action Plan and report back to the Board; and

- Directed the Chair to write to the federal Minister of Environment (David Anderson), and, while expressing appreciation for the positive elements of the program, advise the federal Minister of TransLink's disappointment with the limited support for urban transit in the Government of Canada's Action Plan on Climate Change.

- Referred the report, titled Government of Canada's Action Plan 2000 on Climate Change, to GVRD member municipalities for formal adoption, to allow for municipal input, and to endorse the TransLink submission to the Federal government.

The federal government's announcement on October 6 for a \$500-million plant to combat global warming has missed the mark by almost completely ignoring the critical role of urban transit in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Item 3.5—Proposed Discontinuation of Route #357 in South Surrey

The Board approved the discontinuation of bus route #357, effective April 2001.

The route, which operates along 24 Avenue in South Surrey, carries only 50 passengers per day. Most trips operate with less than 3 passengers, with the total cost per passenger at \$28.40 per ride.

The projected cost savings are approximately \$180,000 annually. Community Shuttle services are proposed for the area to replace this route, although these services will likely be delayed due to issues that are currently before the Labour Relations Board. June 2001 is seen as the most likely start-up date for the Community Shuttle service in South Surrey/White Rock.

Item 3.6—Change in Membership on the Board of Directors of Coast Mountain Bus Company Ltd.

The Board approved the appointment of TransLink Director Jennifer Clarke as a Director of Coast Mountain Bus Company. Director Clarke will replace TransLink's Senior Vice-President Larry Ward on the Coast Mountain Board.

TransLink has adopted a general principle that the Board of its operating subsidiaries should be comprised in majority by elected officials rather than staff. This change is in keeping with the principle.

Item 3.7—Public Consultation for the Strategic Transportation Plan/Funding Options

The Board received the report, titled as above, for information. It is a summary and evaluation of the communications initiatives and the public feedback generated on the funding options for the Strategic Transportation Plan.

The purpose of the public consultation process, as directed by the Board, was to engage the public in discussions about how to fund the Plan in a fair and equitable way. TransLink provided the public with several ways to offer their input—open houses, mail, fax, telephone, e-mail, and the website.

Item 3.8—Ipsos-Reid Survey—Strategic Transportation Plan & Funding Options

The Board received the report, titled as above, for information.

TransLink commissioned Ipsos-Reid (formerly known as the Angus Reid Group) to conduct a random survey of 1000 people in order to get a statistically accurate, quantitative view of public

attitudes as of Fall 2000 toward the Strategic Transportation Plan and the funding options.

At the beginning of the survey, 58 percent of the participants supported the Strategic Transportation Plan, while 25 percent opposed the Plan. At the end of the survey, support for the Plan rose to 74 percent while opposition decreased to 19 percent.

Regarding funding options for the Plan, the strongest support was for federal funding. Of the options that TransLink has the authority to implement, a levy based on vehicle weight received the highest support, followed by a levy based on vehicle insurance classifications. There was also significant support for electronic road tolling (which would require changes to the legislation that governs TransLink).

Item 3.9—Vehicle Levy Collection Process

The Board received the report, titled as above, for information. The report will be referred back to the Board for consideration after the Council of Councils review of the levy options (November 4).

The report provides information on the mechanics to implement a vehicle levy, and recommends steps to initiate the implementation of a collection process for it.

Item 3.10—Strategic Transportation Plan Funding Options: Recommendation

The Board took the following actions on this item:

- Referred the report, with the supporting information, to the Council of Councils for comments prior to final consideration by the Board;

- Voted to maintain its aggressive pursuit of federal operation and capital funding, with appropriate reductions in the levy if federal funding is achieved (two related reports are provided in this package);
- Requested the Province to amend TransLink's legislation to permit system tolling so that such a system can be pursued in the longer term as a potential replacement for the vehicle levy;
- Directed staff to develop and implement an ongoing education program aimed at communicating TransLink's role and purpose to the public.

Three vehicle levy options were presented to the Board in this report: a weight-based levy, an insurance-based levy, and a levy based on both vehicle weight and insurance. The Board decided not to give any preliminary endorsement to one of these options at this time.

Item 3.11—Review of the RTP2000 Fare Technology Safety & Security Study

The Board took the following actions on this item:

- Advised RTP2000 (Rapid Transit Project Office) that it is not prepared, at this time, to approve the proposal to implement a barrier/turnstile fare collection system on the existing SkyTrain line and to proceed with immediate procurement of fare machines and associated equipment;
- Advised RTP2000 that TransLink wishes to continue to work with RTP2000 on the selection of fare collection technology for the existing and Millennium lines and the development of a joint procurement proposal;
- Directed staff to develop implementation options comparing an enhanced "proof of payment" system with additional security and enforcement staff and a realistically priced gating option for the complete SkyTrain system;
- Advised RTP2000 that it is prepared to make spare fare machines for the existing line available

- to RTP2000 so the opening of the initial portion of the line can proceed as scheduled;
- Authorized proceeding with ticket vending machine procurement by mid-November, subject to RTP2000 agreeing that it will not proceed with the acquisition of gates or smart card technology without TransLink's agreement.
- Received on-table correspondence from RTP2000 regarding the Fare Technology, Safety and Security Study on the Millennium line for information.

The RTP2000 Fare Technology Safety & Security Study report provides an overview of the fare collections system, safety and security research and the public opinion surveys that the Rapid Transit Project Office has conducted over the past several years. The report concludes that there is a considerable level of public concern about fare evasion and personal security on SkyTrain, and public support for increasing the presence of staff and installing barrier/turnstile fare collection systems on SkyTrain to address these concerns.

These concerns need to be addressed in a cost-effective manner. TransLink staff believe that there is a high degree of uncertainty and unnecessary risk associated with the present RTP2000 proposal to implement a barrier/turnstile fare collections system and to proceed immediately with the procurement of fare machines and other equipment for the existing and Millennium lines.

Item 3.12—Review of the British Columbia AirCare Program Report

The Board received the report for information and directed staff to assess the consultant's recommendations for future consideration for the AirCare program.

A review, commissioned by provincial agencies, was conducted by Rob Klausmeier—an expert

consultant in the field who has evaluated similar programs in many jurisdictions. Mr. Klausmeier's report confirms that AirCare is one of the most effective programs of its kind in North America, and that previous estimates of its air quality impact over the first seven years of the program are accurate.

The report also supports the major design elements of the AirCare program, which will take effect on January 1, 2001. Mr. Klausmeier included recommendations for potential changes to further improve the effectiveness of AirCare.

Item 3.13—Proposed Federal Funding Program

The Board took the following actions on this matter:

A. Approved a proposed federal funding program, developed with advice and support from the British Columbia Automobile Association, the BCTrucking Association, and the Gateway Council, with the following components:

1. an annual contribution, beginning with \$93 million in 2001 and increasing to \$148 million by 2005 (approximately 20% of TransLink's operating and debt service costs for transit services), to offset the need for a vehicle levy or other local funding source;
2. an annual contribution of \$50 million per year for the federal share of Major Road Network capital improvement projects; and
3. a federal commitment to fund one-third of the proposed rapid transit line from Richmond and the Airport to downtown Vancouver when agreement is reached on alignment and technology.

B. Voted to support the lobby efforts of these groups to obtain approval of the funding program.

C. Committed TransLink to a reduction or elimination of a vehicle levy or other local

funding source consistent with the receipt of federal funding under A1.

At present, Canada is the only G-7 country without a national transportation infrastructure program, leaving its transportation providers without the necessary support to provide a truly effective and competitive transportation system.



Item 3.14—North Road Preferred Alignment for the Port Moody Coquitlam SkyTrain Extension

The Board voted to refer the report on the North Road SkyTrain alignment to the next Committee of the Whole meeting on Wednesday, November 8.

Committee of the Whole offers public delegation the opportunity to make five-minute presentations to the TransLink Board.

The next TransLink Board meeting will be the Committee of the Whole:

Date: Wednesday, November 8
Time: 11:30 a.m.
Location: Greater Vancouver Regional District
2nd Floor Boardroom
4330 Kingsway, Burnaby

The next regular TransLink Board meeting will be:

Date: Wednesday, November 22
Time: 8:00 a.m.
Location: Greater Vancouver Regional District
2nd Floor Boardroom
4330 Kingsway, Burnaby