



To: Richmond City Council
From: Councillor Lyn Greenhill
Chair, Public Works & Transportation
Committee
Date: January 10th, 2002
File: 6520-02-01
Re: **#98B LINE, LOCAL AREA TRANSIT SERVICE AND CITY CENTRE TRAFFIC
CONDITIONS – PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

The Public Works & Transportation Committee, at its meeting held on January 9th, 2002, considered the attached report, and recommends as follows:

Committee Recommendation

- (1) *That the following transit service improvements proposed by TransLink to address concerns with the #98 B-Line and other Richmond transit services, be endorsed for possible implementation as part of TransLink's 2002 Program Plan:*
- (a) *implement new peak period express routes to provide direct service from southwest and southeast Richmond respectively to downtown Vancouver via Garden City Road, the Sexsmith Park and Ride lot and Oak Street;*
 - (b) *revise downtown Vancouver routing of Richmond peak period express services to avoid congested areas and shorten overall travel times;*
 - (c) *work with the City of Vancouver to increase enforcement of parking regulations and HOV lane use and implement transit priority measures for the downtown area and the southbound approach to the Arthur Laing Bridge;*
 - (d) *work with the City of Richmond and the City of Vancouver to complete the installation of transit priority measures and the optimization of traffic signals along the #98 B-Line route;*
 - (e) *refine the schedule of the #98 B-Line service to ensure that local services operating through Richmond City Centre are timed to minimize wait times for transferring passengers;*
 - (f) *extend the operation of the #98 B-Line service along No. 3 Road to Steveston Highway and on Steveston Highway to Shell Road during peak periods;*
 - (g) *monitor service utilization of the #98 B-Line and introduce additional buses as required to ensure that adequate capacity is provided to meet demand;*
 - (h) *continue to monitor bus operations at the #98 B-Line Anderson Road terminus to ensure that operators adhere to policies regarding idling and stopping procedures;*
 - (i) *review the routing and stopping procedure of the Richmond-UBC service (#480) to identify potential improvements;*
 - (j) *improve the Richmond HandyDART service and, in particular, extend the evening hours of operation;*

- (k) introduce new community shuttle (mini-bus) services for the City Centre circulator; and*
- (l) provide improved service to the Crestwood industrial area during peak periods, particularly on No. 6 Road north of Bridgeport Road.*
- (2) That staff undertake the following activities to enhance traffic flow efficiencies, pedestrian movements and overall traffic safety for all road users in the City Centre:*
 - (a) pursue implementation of the various short-term and long-term road and traffic improvements (described in the staff report dated December 11th, 2001, from the Director, Transportation);*
 - (b) ensure that any road and traffic improvements initiated are consistent with the principles and policies established in the City's Official Community Plan and the City Centre Transportation Plan; and*
 - (c) report to Council on the progress of the implementation of the various measures.*
- (3) That Recommendation 1 (of the report dated December 11th, 2001 from the Director, Transportation) be conveyed to the TransLink Board of Directors.*
- (4) That the Public Works & Transportation Committee hold a public meeting in July, 2002, to provide the public with the opportunity to comment on the results of the improvements implemented to address the concerns relating to the #98B Line and the provision of local transit service in Richmond.*

Councillor Lyn, Chair
Public Works & Transportation Committee

Attach.

VARIANCE

Please note that Committee added Part (4) to the recommendation.

Staff Report

Origin

At the Regular Council meeting on November 13, 2001, Council passed the following resolution:

“That the Public Works & Transportation Committee hold a public meeting in the near future to investigate the situation relating to the 98B Line transit service and the No. 3 Road traffic situation, and to include in that, an investigation of the differences between public expectations and public perceptions to determine how these perceptions diverge, and that following the public meeting, staff undertake an analysis and suggest possible feasible alternatives.”

The public meeting was held December 11, 2001. This report summarizes the major issues identified at the public meeting, the improvements proposed by TransLink to address the transit-related issues and the strategies to enhance traffic conditions in the City Centre.

Analysis

1. Public Meeting Presentations

A special meeting of the Public Works and Transportation Committee was held December 11, 2001 to gain feedback from the public regarding their perceptions and expectations of transit service and traffic conditions in the city, particularly in the City Centre. City and TransLink staff gave an overview of, respectively, the City Centre Transportation Plan and the proposed recommendations resulting from the recent review of Richmond transit services, including the #98 B-Line. A copy of this presentation, as well as an information sheet and comment form made available to attendees of the meeting, is contained in Attachment 1.

Approximately 60 people attended the meeting, of which 19 people spoke on transit and/or traffic issues. The City also received 10 written submissions before the meeting and six comment forms after the meeting. All public comments are summarized in Attachment 2. The following sections discuss the major issues identified and, for each issue, propose a package of immediate and long-term improvements to address these concerns.

2. Regional Transit Service

Concerns were raised with respect to the Richmond-Vancouver regional service changes effective August 2001 and the performance of the #98 B-Line service. Generally, these same concerns were identified during TransLink's recent review of Richmond transit service, which included a public consultation process with local transit users, transit operators, City staff, the Public Works and Transportation Committee and other stakeholders. TransLink staff have developed a number of recommendations to address the issues, which are presented in this report, and anticipate seeking TransLink Board approval of these recommendations in January 2002.

2.1 Sexsmith Park and Ride

- *Issue*: The Sexsmith Park and Ride facility is no longer viable due to the loss of direct Richmond-Vancouver service on Garden City Road. The shuttle service provided between the site and No. 3 Road is not adequate as it only operates weekdays during peak periods.
- *TransLink Recommendation*: Two peak period express services to downtown Vancouver would be introduced. Both services would route via Garden City Road and provide direct service to and from the park and ride site on a combined 10-minute frequency. The existing shuttle service would be eliminated.
- *Staff Comments*: The new services will significantly improve access to/from the facility but only during weekday peak periods. TransLink should be encouraged to retain the shuttle service for operation outside of peak periods and continue to pursue the establishment of a permanent park and ride facility in the vicinity of Capstan Way and No. 3 Road.

2.2 Loss of Direct Service to Vancouver

- *Issue*: A loss of direct service to Vancouver for some areas of Richmond (e.g., Garden City Road) has resulted in longer travel times due to the required transfer to the #98 B-Line. Some passengers also believe that the new loading procedure whereby Richmond express buses now pick up passengers in Vancouver has increased travel times.
- *TransLink Recommendation*: The proposed peak period express services would route through areas of Richmond currently lacking direct service to downtown Vancouver. One service would operate via Moncton Road, No. 2 Road, Blundell Road, No. 3 Road, Cook Road, Garden City Road, and Oak Street. A second service would originate at Riverside Industrial Park and route via No. 5 Road, Williams Road, Garden City Road, Granville Avenue, No. 3 Road, Cook Road, Garden City Road, and Oak Street. These services may operate with drop off only procedures in Vancouver. The loading procedure of the #98 B-Line will be maintained. During peak periods, operation of the #98 B-Line service would also be extended along No. 3 Road to Steveston Highway and on Steveston Highway to Shell Road in the peak direction (mornings northbound and afternoons southbound). The revised routing would eliminate transfers and provide an additional peak period direct service to/from downtown Vancouver for passengers on No. 3 Road south of Granville Avenue.
- *Staff Comments*: With the proposed express routes, passengers in most areas of Richmond would have direct service to Vancouver during peak periods. These services, which would operate on Oak Street, would improve access to the medical-related facilities in this area.

2.3 #98 B-Line Service – Reliability and Travel Times

- *Issue*: The #98 B-Line is performing poorly in terms of reliability and schedule adherence.
- *TransLink Recommendation*: Northbound buses are performing within the scheduled travel time of 43 minutes while southbound buses are experiencing delays of 6-8 minutes. The opening of the bus on-ramp to the Moray Channel Bridge has reduced travel times by 2-3 minutes. TransLink will work with Vancouver to increase enforcement of parking regulations and HOV lane use. The optimization of traffic signals will continue as will the installation of the traffic signal pre-emption (TSP) and the automated vehicle location (AVL) systems. Full implementation of the TSP and AVL systems is anticipated in spring 2002. TransLink will also seek additional transit priority measures in Vancouver, such as bus lanes in downtown Vancouver and at the Arthur Laing Bridge southbound approach. In addition,

the routing of some express services may be modified to by-pass Waterfront Station to reduce travel times.

- *Staff Comments:* The installation of TSP software at intersections on No. 3 Road between Capstan Way and Park Road was completed in December 2001. The operation of the TSP system, in concert with the AVL technology, will provide a unique ability to minimize schedule slippage and maintain service reliability. Additional transit priority measures in Vancouver as well as a modified routing for some express services should also contribute to improved travel times.

2.4 Capacity of #98 B-Line

- *Issue:* The #98 B-Line is often crowded.
- *TransLink Recommendation:* The proposed express peak period routes would increase system capacity by up to 240 seats per hour and thus relieve overcrowding on the #98 B-Line. TransLink would continue to monitor utilization of the #98 B-Line service and would introduce extra buses as required.
- *Staff Comments:* The added capacity of the two proposed services, plus the reserve capacity for the #98 B-Line, should address the issue of over-crowding during peak periods. Staff would continue to monitor and review usage of the service with TransLink staff.

2.5 #98 B-Line Connections with Local Services

- *Issue:* Arrival and departure times of local services and the #98 B-Line are not co-ordinated.
- *TransLink Recommendation:* As the #98 B-Line operates very frequently during the daytime, it is neither practical nor possible to co-ordinate transfer connections to or from the #98 B-Line. During the evening, when the #98 B-Line operates every 15 minutes, the schedules for the #98 B-Line and local services will be revised to minimize wait times for transferring passengers.
- *Staff Comments:* Staff would monitor the services under the revised schedules with TransLink staff to assess performance and identify further opportunities for improvement.

2.6 #98 B-Line Shelters

- *Issue:* The #98 B-Line shelters do not provide sufficient protection from inclement weather.
- *TransLink Recommendation:* Following a review of the design and effectiveness of the shelters, a number of modifications were undertaken including sealing the gap between the roof and the top of the walls.
- *Staff Comments:* The modifications appear to improve weather protection. Staff will monitor customer satisfaction with the shelters and advise TransLink of any further concerns.

2.7 #98 B-Line Terminus on Anderson Road

- *Issue:* Operation of the #98 B-Line terminus on Anderson Road generates concerns by area residents regarding levels of noise, vibration and diesel fumes.
- *TransLink Recommendation:* TransLink will continue to monitor bus operations at the site to ensure that operators adhere to policies regarding idling and stopping procedures.

- Staff Recommendation: Richmond Health Services will be requested to undertake surveys in the area to document the extent of the noise and odour concerns.

3. Local Transit Service

With respect to local transit issues, concerns were expressed regarding the level of HandyDART evening service and the provision of accessible bus stops, transit service to/from the airport and the need for expanded service to new areas of Richmond. Local bus services were significantly improved in August 2001 as part of the #98 B-Line integration plan of the Richmond Area Transit Plan (ATP). Further improvements to local services will be addressed through the 2002 Program Plan. The recent approval by the TransLink and GVRD Boards of fuel tax, property tax and transit fare increases will enable a modest expansion of transit service in 2002. TransLink staff anticipate presenting a final 2002 Program Plan for Board approval in March 2002.

3.1 HandyDART Service – Evening Hours of Operation

- Issue: The current evening HandyDART service ends around 9:00 p.m. for Richmond users while other regions in the Lower Mainland have evening service until around 11:00 p.m.
- TransLink Recommendation: As part of the 2002 Program Plan, TransLink staff propose a HandyDART service review with the intent of rationalizing service levels among all municipalities by improving service hours where required. It is noted that Richmond is the only Greater Vancouver municipality with a 100 percent accessible bus fleet.
- Staff Recommendation: Staff will continue to work with the Richmond Committee on Disabilities and TransLink to achieve improved HandyDART service levels for Richmond users, particularly for evening service. This improvement has been identified in the City's recommended list of transit service requests for consideration by TransLink in the development of its 2002 Program Plan.

3.2 Accessible Bus Stops

- Issue: Additional accessible bus stops are required in selected areas of the city.
- Staff Recommendation: Staff will work with the Richmond Committee on Disabilities to develop a prioritized list of bus stops in the city to be made accessible. Construction of the facilities would occur as part of the Minor Capital Program, subject to Council approval of the 2002 Capital Program.

3.3 Transit Service to/from the Airport

- Issue: Transit service to the airport requires too many transfers.
- Staff Comments: The implementation of the first phases of the Richmond ATP has significantly improved transit service to/from the airport. Previous to the ATP, the #404 provided service via the City Centre to the airport on 15-minute and 30-minute frequencies during peak and off-peak periods respectively. Transit service to the airport is now predicated on a feeder bus system that brings passengers to Airport Station where the #424 provides a shuttle service to the main terminal (7-8 minute frequency during weekdays and 15-minute frequency during evenings and weekends). During peak periods, most trips from Richmond to the airport would require one transfer, as the express bus services (#491 and

#496), the #98 B-Line and the #404 all stop at Airport Station. Travel during off-peak periods may require two transfers, depending on the origin of the trip.

3.4 Community Shuttles

- *Issue:* Community shuttles are required in the City Centre and other areas of Richmond.
- *TransLink Recommendation:* The Richmond ATP recommends the use of community shuttles (mini-buses) in the City Centre and for new services along Williams Road, Blundell Road and the Bridgeport area. Implementation of community shuttles has been delayed due to labour relations issues and the provision of sufficient funding and vehicles to support the services.
- *Staff Comments:* The Williams Road cross-town service and the City Centre circulator are included in the recommended list of local service improvements for consideration by TransLink in the development of its 2002 Program Plan.

3.5 Transit Service to Industrial Areas

- *Issue:* Improved transit service to Bridgeport/Crestwood industrial areas is required.
- *TransLink Recommendation:* The Richmond ATP recommends expanded service to the Crestwood and Bridgeport industrial areas.
- *Staff Comments:* Implementation of the new services is subject to sufficient funding to support the services. Staff will work with TransLink staff on a business case for improved service along No. 6 Road north of Bridgeport Road. TransLink staff anticipate submitting the recommended improvement as part of the 2002 Program Plan.

4. TransLink Funding and Accountability

Several comments were received with respect to the resolution of TransLink's recent funding issue, its degree of accountability and the desire for an on-going public consultation process.

4.1 Resolution of Funding Issue

- *Issue:* Concerns were expressed regarding the tax and transit fare increases and that transit users will pay a disproportionate amount compared to motorists.
- *Staff Comments:* TransLink undertook a consultation process on two options to address its forecast deficit of \$40 to \$60 million. The results of the public meetings and market research conducted by TransLink indicated that most Greater Vancouver residents supported an increase in fuel taxes, property taxes and transit fares. Transit fares will increase by \$0.25 for one zone and \$0.50 for two and three zones effective April 1, 2002. Monthly passes will be exempt from the fare increase to encourage long-term regular transit use.

4.2 Accountability

- *Issue:* TransLink lacks accountability to regional residents. An on-going public consultation process is required.
- *Staff Comments:* In response to the resolution of its funding concerns, TransLink has committed to undertake a review of its governance structure and prepare a proposal for consideration by mid 2002. The agency will also develop a transit performance plan, in

consultation with municipalities and stakeholders, and review bus services in relation to the plan. TransLink has further committed to provide regular progress reports on these initiatives and create opportunities for on-going dialogue with municipalities, stakeholders and residents throughout the Greater Vancouver area.

5. City Centre Traffic Conditions

Many of the concerns regarding traffic conditions in the City Centre focused on the changes to No. 3 Road traffic patterns resulting from the completion and operation of the median busway. Other comments referred to the desire for long-term improvements such as rapid transit and the provision of new road connections. The need for improved pedestrian amenities was also identified. To address these concerns, staff propose a package of short-term and long-term improvements that are consistent with the recommendations contained in the City Centre Transportation Plan. Short-term improvements are those deemed feasible within the immediate to 3-year period while long-term improvements would be implemented in the next 3-10 years as development opportunities occur.

A. Short-Term Improvements

5.1 Traffic Signs and Signal Configuration

- *Issue:* The traffic signals at intersections on No. 3 Road are confusing.
- *Staff Recommendation:* The configuration of traffic signals must respect provincial and industry regulations and guidelines for legal and safety reasons. Staff are reviewing the legal requirements regarding the arrangement of traffic signals at intersections on No. 3 Road with the intention of simplifying the overall layout of these traffic control devices. Staff are also examining additional measures to clarify and improve traffic movements at intersections such as enhanced left-turn signal signage, bus lane warning signs and adjustment of pavement markings.

5.2 Traffic Signal Timing Optimization

- *Issue:* Traffic signals on No. 3 Road are not synchronized.
- *Staff Recommendation:* Staff are reviewing traffic signal timings at each intersection on No. 3 Road to achieve improved traffic flow. This work is being co-ordinated with the installation of the TSP and AVL systems.

5.3 Safety of Median Busway Operation

- *Issue:* The median busway is unsafe due to increased pedestrian movements at intersections and turning vehicles that may drive into the busway.
- *Staff Recommendation:* Reported accident statistics indicate that an average of 25 accidents occurred during August to November in 1998 and 1999 at major intersections on No. 3 Road prior to the start of the #98 B-Line service. The reported number of accidents for the same period since the implementation of the #98 B-Line (August to November 2001) is 21. In addition, the City produced an information brochure that identifies the locations and turning movements for the new U-turns on No. 3 Road. The brochure is posted on the City's web site and was distributed to all businesses on No. 3 Road between Granville Avenue and

Sea Island Way, all libraries and community centres, all driving schools and car rental agencies as well as shopping malls and Autoplan insurance brokers in the City Centre.

5.4 Use of Median Busway by Other Vehicles

- Issue: Buses currently using the curb lanes of No. 3 Road should use the median busway instead. High occupancy vehicles should be allowed to use the busway.
- Staff Recommendation: The service areas of local buses using the curb lanes involve travel on short sections of No. 3 Road. Access to and from the busway would be difficult for buses or other vehicles at points outside the beginning and end of the busway due to safety and operational efficiency considerations. Moreover, allowing additional vehicles to use the busway, such as HOVs, could impact upon the service reliability of the #98 B-Line service.

5.5 Sidewalks/Walkways

- Issue: Some areas of the City Centre area lack sidewalks. Existing street furniture obstructs sightlines and impedes pedestrian movements. Some sidewalks lack wheelchair ramps.
- Staff Recommendation: The provision of new sidewalks to enhance pedestrian movements in the City Centre is identified in the Five-Year Capital Plan. Subject to Council approval of the Capital Plan, the following sidewalks are scheduled over the next five years:
 - north side of Alderbridge Way from Hazelbridge Way to Garden City Road;
 - east side of Minoru Boulevard from Elmbridge Way to Alderbridge Way; and
 - north side of Firbridge Way between Minoru Boulevard and No. 3 Road.

In addition, staff will review the placement and arrangement of street furniture to ensure that sightlines are not obstructed and pedestrian flow is not impeded. Staff will also survey existing sidewalks to identify locations that require wheelchair ramps.

5.6 Pedestrian Signals

- Issue: Pedestrian signals on No. 3 Road do not allow sufficient time to cross the street.
- Staff Recommendation: Staff will review the pedestrian signal phases on No. 3 Road, particularly where the median busway exists, and make adjustments as necessary.

5.7 General Traffic Congestion on No. 3 Road

- Issue: Traffic is congested on No. 3 Road.
- Staff Recommendation: The City Centre Transportation Plan envisions the creation of two loop roads and a number of secondary roads to improve traffic circulation in the City Centre and enhance access to the downtown's retail areas. Road improvement projects in support of the plan that have been completed include:
 - Airport Connector Bridge and related road improvements;
 - Lansdowne Road extension (No. 3 Road to Minoru Boulevard);
 - completion of the south loop road;
 - Kwantlen Road extension (Lansdowne Road to Alderbridge Way); and
 - various new traffic signals.

Further road improvement projects that are potentially feasible within the next 2-3 years include:

- Garden City Road extension between Sea Island Way and Bridgeport Road;
- re-alignment of Hazelbridge Way to connect with Northgate Way to form the east leg of the north loop road;
- creation of a two-lane road parallel to the CN Rail right-of-way to form an interim west leg of the north loop road;
- extension of Leslie Road and Browngate Road to connect with the north loop road; and
- conversion to 4-lanes of Hazelbridge Way, Leslie Road, Northgate Way, Capstan Way and the remaining 2-lane sections of Minoru Boulevard and Cooney Road.

5.8 Driver Compliance at Crosswalks

- *Issue:* Lack of driver compliance at crosswalks.
- *Staff Recommendation:* The City is planning a phased upgrade of all arterial road crosswalks to a minimum standard of internally lit overhead signs with pedestrian-actuated amber flashers. As part of this upgrade, staff are developing a program of education, engineering and enforcement initiatives to raise the level of driver compliance and promote safe pedestrian usage at all crosswalks in the city.

5.9 U-turns at Sea Island Way and No. 3 Road

- *Issue:* U-turns are required for traffic northbound on No. 3 Road at the intersection of Sea Island Way and No. 3 Road.
- *Staff Recommendation:* The City does not have jurisdiction over Sea Island Way, as it is part of the provincial highway system. Notwithstanding, due to concerns of traffic safety and the existing road geometry, a provision for U-turns at this intersection is not recommended.

B. Long-Term Improvements

5.10 Rapid Transit

- *Issue:* Rapid transit is needed between Richmond and Vancouver.
- *Staff Recommendation:* The City participated in a multi-agency study, completed in February 2001, that examined the costs and benefits of building a rapid transit system between Richmond, the airport and Vancouver by 2010 versus 2021. Council endorsed the study's conclusions that the overall benefits of the system justified early construction. Further study by the project team is underway on the feasibility of the project as a public private partnership. Staff will continue to provide support to the project team to advance the project to the design and construction phases.

5.11 City Centre Road Network

- *Issue:* Traffic is congested on No. 3 Road.
- *Staff Recommendation:* Long-term road improvement projects as identified in the City Centre Transportation Plan include:

- conversion of CN Rail right-of-way to a 4-lane road to form the west leg of north loop road between Capstan Way and Leslie Road;
- completion of the north loop road consisting of Capstan Way, Northgate Road, Hazelbridge Way, Leslie Road and a new road adjacent to the CN Rail right-of-way;
- extension of existing roads, such as Leslie Road, Minoru Boulevard and Browngate Road, to allow for more convenient circulation; and
- new road connections to link the north and south loop roads to provide continuous alternative routes to No. 3 Road.

Financial Impact


There is no immediate financial impact to the City. Funding for the proposed road and traffic improvements will be identified in future Capital Plan submissions, which will be subject to Council approval.

Conclusion

TransLink staff propose a number of transit service improvements to address regional service issues regarding the availability of direct Richmond-Vancouver service, access to the Sexsmith Park and Ride and the reliability of the #98 B-Line as well as local service concerns such as the requirement for expanded HandyDART service and timed transfers. The proposed recommendations will be presented to the TransLink Board for approval in January 2002. Staff are supportive of the recommended improvements, as they address the major issues identified by transit users and other stakeholders during both TransLink's and the City's public consultation processes.

Cited concerns related to current traffic conditions in the City Centre include the new traffic patterns on No. 3 Road, traffic congestion and a desire for improved pedestrian facilities. Staff have identified a number of feasible pedestrian and road improvement projects that could be implemented as part of the City's capital program in the short-term (i.e., over the next 2-3 years) to address these issues. Long-term improvements, as identified in the City Centre Transportation Plan, would be implemented over the next 3-10 years and as opportunities arise from local redevelopment.



 Victor Wei, P.Eng.
Manager, Transportation Planning

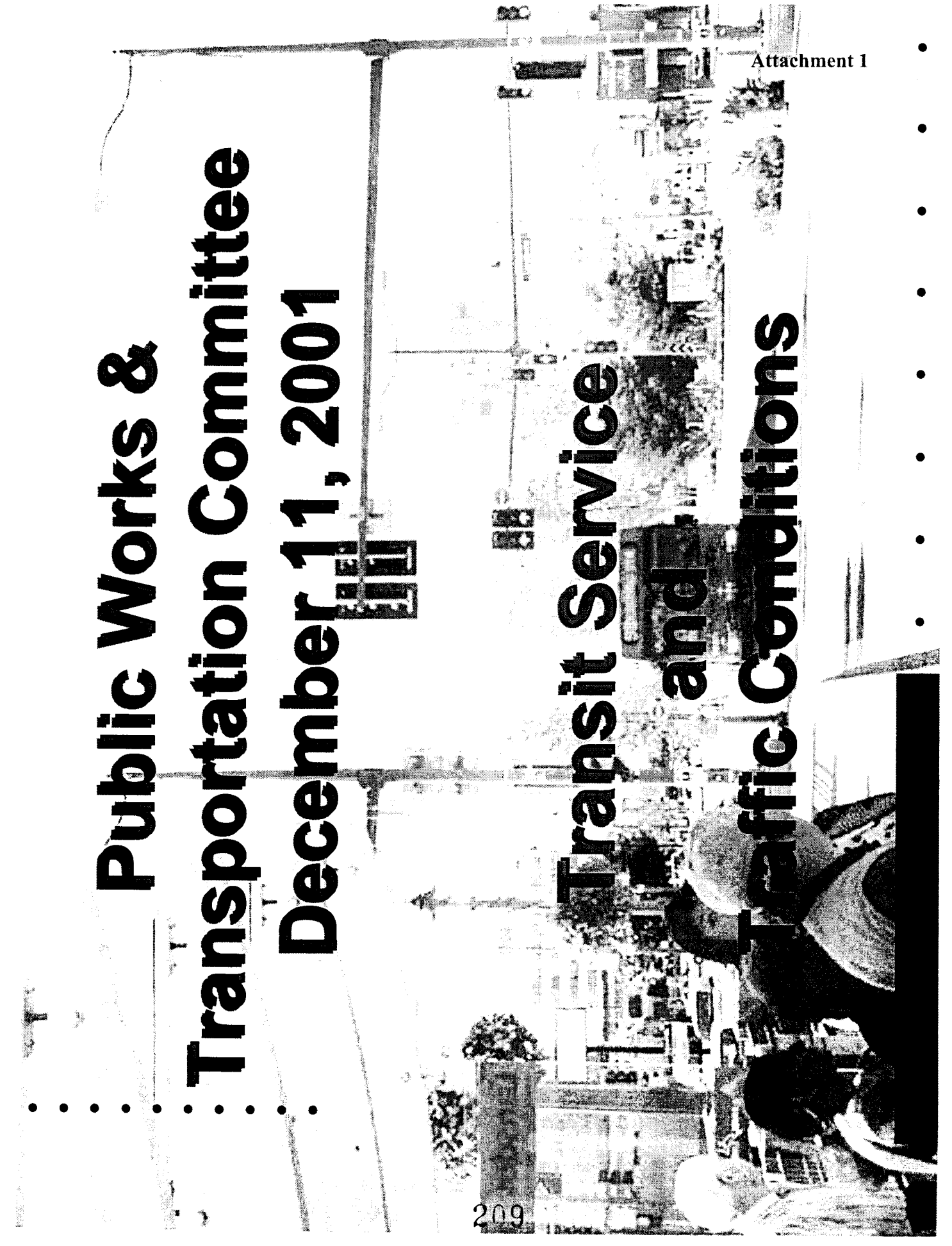


Joan Caravan
Transportation Planner I

JC:

Public Works &
Transportation Committee
December 11, 2001

Transit Service
and
Traffic Conditions



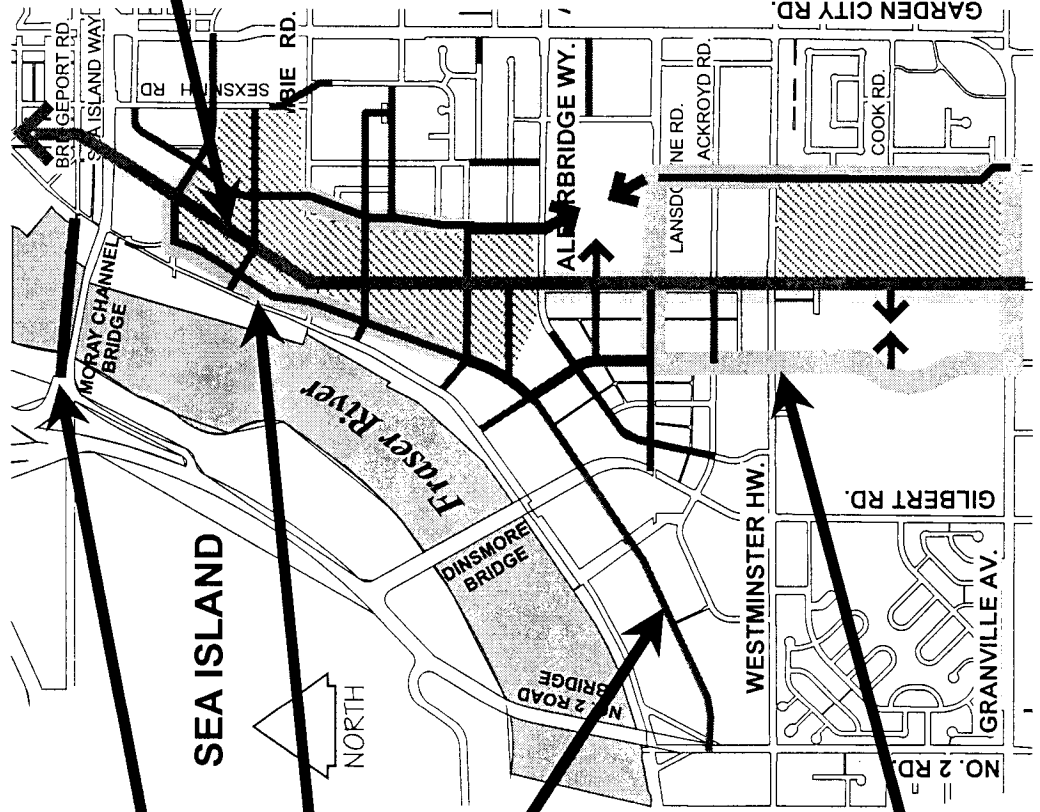
City Centre Transportation Plan

Background

- Our city is growing @ 3-4% per year
- In City Centre -28,000 people today, 60,000 people 10-20 years
 - 33,000 jobs today, 48,000 jobs 10-20 years
- Second largest retail centre in the region
- *City Centre Land Use Plan* - adopted 1995
- *City Centre Transportation Plan* - adopted 1997
 - roads, transit, pedestrians, cycling, parking

City Centre Transportation Plan

Long-Term Road Network



Airport Connector Project

North Loop Road

New 4-lane road parallel to No. 3 Road via CPR

North & South Loop Road connections

South Loop Road

Designated No. 3 Road corridor for rapid transit

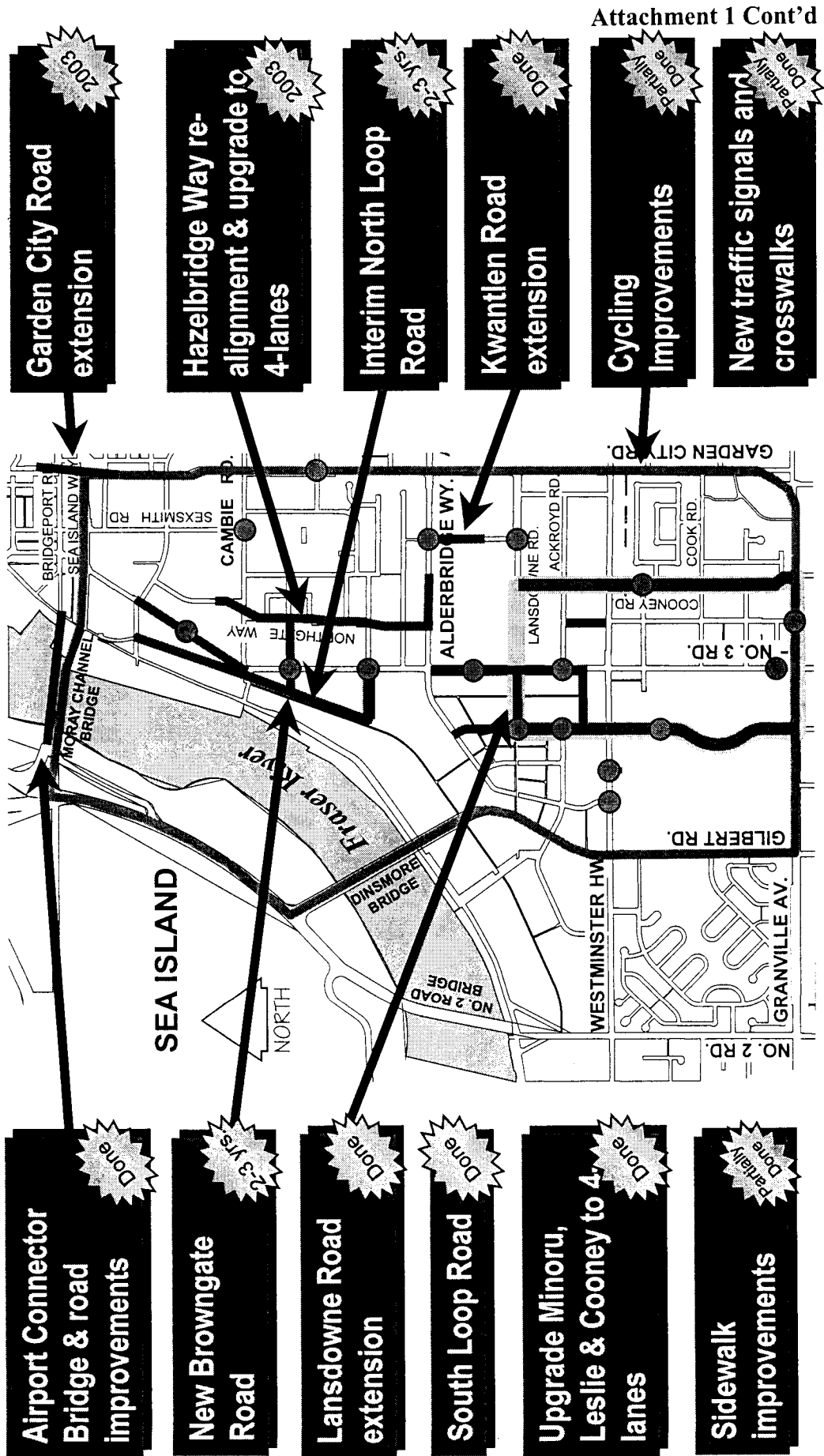
New or upgraded 4-lane streets
 •Alderbridge Way
 •Capstan Way
 •Hazelbridge Way

City Centre parking management

New roads to create shorter city blocks

City Centre Transportation Plan

Short Term Road Improvements



Attachment 1 Cont'd

TransLink
Richmond Transit Review
Preliminary Findings

Glen Leicester
Manager, Implementation Planning
TransLink





Public Works & Transportation Committee
Public Meeting on Transit Service and Traffic Conditions
December 11, 2001

**PLEASE HAND IN BEFORE YOU LEAVE.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMENTS!**

1. What are your views regarding transit service and traffic conditions in the city?

2. What are your expectations of transit service and traffic conditions in the city?

3. What are your ideas and suggestions for change?

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ e-mail: _____

***City Centre Traffic Conditions – #98 B-Line – Transit Services in Richmond
Frequently Asked Questions***

Q: Is there a plan to address traffic congestion in the City Centre?

A: Council adopted the City Centre Transportation Plan in 1997. The plan emphasizes the provision of improved transit service but also recognizes that an efficient road network is an important element of a vibrant downtown. The provision of “loop roads” and the upgrade of secondary roads in the City Centre along with other traffic and parking management measures will help improve circulation and allow No. 3 Road to retain its role as the city’s “main street.”

Q: Why build a median busway instead of operating the buses in the curb lanes?

A: The establishment of the median busway not only secured the right-of-way alignment for a future rapid transit system but also provided exclusive bus lanes that enable the #98 B-Line service to minimize traffic delays associated with the adjacent general-purpose lanes.

Q: Why don't all buses operating on No. 3 Road use the median bus lanes?

A: The service areas of local buses operating in the curb lanes involve travel on short sections only of No. 3 Road. Access to and from the bus lanes would be difficult for buses at points outside the beginning and end of the busway due to traffic management and safety requirements.

Q: What is the City doing to educate motorists on the traffic changes on No. 3 Road?

A: The City produced a brochure in June 2001 that identified the locations and rules for the new U-turns on No. 3 Road. The brochure, viewable on the City’s web site, was distributed to all businesses on No. 3 Road between Granville Avenue and Sea Island Way, all libraries and community centres, all driving schools and car rental agencies as well as shopping malls and Autoplan insurance brokers in the City Centre.

Q: Have there been more traffic accidents on No. 3 Road since the start of the #98 B-Line?

A: Reported accident statistics indicate that an average of 18 accidents occurred during August to October in 1998 and 1999 at major intersections on No. 3 Road prior to the start of the #98 B-Line service. The reported number of accidents for the same period since the implementation of #98 B-Line (August to October 2001) is 12.

Q: Why are there so many traffic signals at intersections on No. 3 Road?

A: The layout of traffic signals must respect provincial and industry regulations and guidelines. The City, however, is currently investigating the requirements for the number of traffic signals and is also examining the arrangement of the signals to simplify their configuration.

Q: Why are the lanes on No. 3 Road so narrow?

A: The lane widths on No. 3 Road adjacent to the median busway are 3.0 metres (left lane) and 3.25 metres (right lane). As a comparison, the lane widths on Granville Street and Oak Street in Vancouver are 2.9 metres.

Q: When will the construction associated with the Airport Connector Project be finished?

A: Construction of the Airport Connector Project is nearing completion and traffic conditions in the area have stabilized. The need for better directional signage, particularly on the new bridge for Vancouver-bound traffic, is also being reviewed.

City Centre Traffic Conditions – #98 B-Line – Transit Services in Richmond
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the status of a rapid transit system coming to Richmond?

A: A multi-agency study completed in February 2001 that examined the costs and benefits of building a rapid transit system between Richmond, the airport and downtown Vancouver sooner (by 2010) versus later (by 2021) concluded that the overall benefits of the system justified early construction. Further study is currently underway on the feasibility of the project as a public private partnership.

Q: Is the #98 B-Line service running on time yet?

A: Recent data on the #98 B-Line from TransLink indicates that northbound buses are generally running on time while southbound buses experience occasional delays during peak periods. The new bus-only on-ramp for the Swing Bridge, expected to be open by the end of the year, will improve the travel times for southbound buses by 2-3 minutes. Increased enforcement of parking restrictions and HOV facilities together with the commencement of various transit priority measures are expected to enhance schedule adherence of the service.

Q: Can additional direct bus services to downtown Vancouver be implemented?

A: TransLink recognizes that some Richmond passengers have been affected by a loss of direct bus service to downtown Vancouver. As part of the #98 B-Line service introduction in August 2001, three peak period direct services to Vancouver were retained and operate via No. 1 Road (#491), Railway Avenue (#496) and Steveston Highway (#490) respectively. The agency is currently examining the provision of additional peak period services between Richmond and downtown Vancouver, including the feasibility of peak period services that would travel from No. 2 Road and No. 5 Road via Garden City Road and the Oak Street Bridge. The #98 B-Line service may also be extended in peak periods to/from the Richmond Transit Centre at Shell Road and Steveston Highway, thereby effectively providing direct service to Vancouver over the entire length of No. 3 Road.

Q: Are there any plans to provide bus service to downtown Vancouver via Oak Street?

A: As part of TransLink's current review of peak period transit services to downtown Vancouver, the agency is examining the potential for routing selected transit services via Oak Street in order to provide better service to the medical-related facilities along the corridor.

Q: Are there any plans to improve transit service to the Sexsmith Park and Ride?

A: TransLink anticipates that any transit service to downtown Vancouver re-instated along Garden City Road would provide direct service to the Sexsmith Park and Ride.

Q: Is TransLink making any improvements to local transit services?

A: Recent local service enhancements include extended and more frequent services, combining of routes to provide cross-town connections, expanded service to East Richmond and the airport, and new direct services between West Richmond and Vancouver. Further improvements are also expected in 2002.

Summary of Comments

1. Regional Transit Service

Comment	# of Times Cited
Sexsmith Park and Ride facility is no longer viable as it is too remote from transit service and not a safe option at night. Need all-day shuttle service or direct service from the Park and Ride to downtown Vancouver.	9
It takes longer to travel between Richmond and Vancouver due to transfers (loss of some direct bus service) and the buses now pick up passengers in Vancouver.	8
#98 B-Line shelters are inadequate.	6
#98 B-Line service is poor in terms of reliability, capacity, local connections and travel time.	4
Need improvement of transit priority measures in Vancouver and at the bridges.	3
Congestion in downtown Vancouver delays the #98 B-Line. Route buses along Howe Street in Vancouver rather than Burrard Street as Howe Street is less congested.	2
It is difficult for bus drivers to monitor the destinations of all passengers (i.e., one zone versus two zones) and ensure that passengers have paid the correct fare. Thus, some passengers boarding in Vancouver pay a one-zone fare but travel to Richmond, which is a two-zone fare. This behaviour is unfair for those passengers who pay the correct fare.	2
Vancouver-bound buses should not travel via No. 3 Road, as it is too slow.	2
The #98 B-Line should be the main north-south service with all other Richmond buses travelling east-west on the major arterials. These routings will help prevent traffic from stopping behind buses and ease congestion.	1
Extend #98 B-Line service along No. 3 Road to Steveston.	1
Provide Park and Ride facilities at Westminster Highway and Highway #99 and at Steveston Highway and Highway #99. Run all #98 B-Line buses on Highway #99.	1
The Anderson Road terminus for the #98 B-Line generates unacceptable noise, vibration and diesel fumes due to idling of buses and operation of engines and brakes.	1
Convert Oak Street Bridge to counter-flow system with one lane reserved for buses.	1
The #491 provides good service between Vancouver and Richmond.	1
Evening service between Vancouver and Richmond is inadequate.	1
Need Richmond-Metrotown service.	1
Support alternative routing of some Vancouver-Richmond bus services via Oak Street.	1
Too much reliance on #98 B-Line as main service between Vancouver and Richmond. However, additional express buses will rectify this.	1
Need more bus capacity and more road capacity for the buses.	1
Need more monitoring of #98 B-Line to determine if capacity is adequate outside of peak hours.	1
Transit service to 22 nd Street Station (and Metrotown via SkyTrain) has improved.	1
Need accessible buses that go to Oak Street and Cambie Street corridors.	1
Lack of direct HandyDART connection to SkyTrain.	1
Vehicles mixing with buses at Airport Station cause delays for transit service.	1
New routing in downtown Vancouver to include Waterfront Station is beneficial as many people use this station (e.g., to catch the Seabus).	1
Routing buses over the Arthur Laing Bridge rather than the Oak Street Bridge saves a lot of travel time.	1
Picking up passengers in Vancouver improves service for these customers and results in only minimal extra stops.	1

Comment	# of Times Cited
Route the #491 and #496 over the No. 2 Road Bridge rather than the Dinsmore Bridge to save travel time.	1
Provide more forward-facing seats in the articulated buses. Current seats do not provide sufficient back support.	1
Transit drivers are inconsistent with respect to where in Vancouver they change the destination sign of the bus, which can create confusion for passengers, and how long they wait at bus stops for passengers, especially when there are several buses at one stop.	1

2. Local Transit Service

Comment	# of Times Cited
Service to the airport requires too many transfers and takes too long. The #404 does not always go to the terminal, which necessitates a transfer.	3
Need City Centre circulator shuttle service.	2
Extend evening hours of operation of HandyDART system from 8:30-9:00 p.m. to 11:00-11:30 p.m.	2
Improve accessibility to transit for disabled passengers.	2
Need better service to hospitals and theatres within Richmond.	1
Need smaller buses instead of running large empty buses.	1
Would like the #402 re-routed to provide service on No. 6 Road between Bridgeport Road and Vulcan Way. (Submission included a petition with 118 signatures).	1
Has east-west transit service improved?	1
Has service to Crestwood and North Richmond industrial areas improved?	1
Frequency of buses on No. 3 Road has improved.	1
Lack of accessible bus stops on No. 2 Road at major cross streets.	1
Lack of accessible bus stops on Cambie Road and Bridgeport Road.	1
Lack of co-ordination to facilitate transfers between local services and Vancouver services, especially the #98 B-Line, increases overall travel time.	1

3. TransLink Funding and Accountability

Comment	# of Times Cited
Did not agree with tax increases being granted to TransLink. Unfair that transit users will pay more than motorists who cause traffic congestion.	3
Need more accountability to the public in Richmond.	2
Would like follow-up presentation by TransLink on how it will address concerns identified at tonight's meeting. Keep consultation process going.	2
How or by who are directors of transit organizations elected? What cities are they from? Can they be fired? Who decides what taxes will be charged for transit services?	1
The four-month transit strike caused great hardship. What happened to the money saved during the strike?	1
TransLink should fund local road improvements to address major road congestion.	1
TransLink should get out of roads and concentrate only on provision of transit.	1
Should examine use of fuel cell vehicles rather than rely on diesel buses.	1
Waiting times on customer service phone lines are too long and unacceptable.	1
Need procedure to familiarize users with accessible buses.	1

4. Traffic Conditions in City Centre

Comment	# of Times Cited
Rapid transit between Richmond and Vancouver should be a priority.	5
Median busway is unsafe, as pedestrians must cross to centre lanes instead of boarding from the curb lanes and vehicles may drive into busway when turning.	3
There are too many traffic lights at the intersections on No. 3 Road.	3
Traffic congestion on No. 3 Road is very bad.	2
Need more enforcement at crosswalks to improve driver compliance.	2
The greenery and flowers on No. 3 Road looks very nice.	2
Traffic lights on No. 3 Road need to be synchronized.	2
Extension of Garden City Road to Bridgeport Road will provide congestion relief for No. 3 Road and improve access to businesses in North Richmond.	2
Pedestrian signals do not allow enough time to cross intersections on No. 3 Road and should be extended.	2
Run all transit buses in the median busway instead of operating some in the curb lanes.	2
Need more parking facilities in the Asia West area.	2
Continue with implementation of the City Centre Transportation Plan and fast track the loop roads.	1
Fast-track creation of central parking facilities in the City Centre.	1
Transit service should be top priority. Population and pollution concerns demand that reliance be switched from SOVs to HOVs and/or cycling. Need long-term plan to emphasize HOVs over SOVs that has firm support of government.	1
Need rapid transit to Vancouver core and to the central Fraser Valley (Langley, Aldergrove, Abbotsford).	1
Rapid transit may not be the answer to long-term transportation needs of City.	1
Congestion on No. 3 Road north of Alderbridge Way can prevent access to businesses by emergency services vehicles.	1
Too many flowers on No. 3 Road and the trees in the median on Gilbert Road interfere with Fire-Rescue Department operations.	1
Traffic flow has improved both on and across No. 3 Road due to intersection changes and the allowance of U-turns.	1
Access to retail services on northwest corner of No. 3 Road and Alderbridge Way needs to be improved.	1
A median barrier is required on Alderbridge Way between No. 3 Road and Minoru Boulevard to prevent left turns that impede traffic flow.	1
The City should work with trucking associations to facilitate goods movement through the city and ensure that road widths accommodate the turning radii of trailers.	1
The lanes on No. 3 Road are very narrow and will get narrower during snowfalls when the snow is pushed to the side of the road. Trees in the median block sightlines.	1
U-turns should be allowed at the intersection of No. 3 Road and Sea Island Way to facilitate access to businesses on west side of No. 3 Road between Capstan Way and Sea Island Way.	1
Allow HOVs with 3 or more people to use the median busway.	1
Need better signage to identify that median busway is for exclusive use of buses.	1
Traffic lights for the median busway should use "bus bars" consistent with those in use at Airport Station.	1
Lack of sidewalks on Alderbridge Way in the vicinity of Kwantlen College.	1
Allow general purpose traffic destined for Vancouver to use the median busway.	1

Comment	# of Times Cited
Median busway is good as it allows #98 B-Line buses to avoid congestion associated with vehicles turning into driveways.	1
Changes to the Miller Road and Russ Baker Way intersection have improved traffic conditions for vehicles northbound on Russ Baker Way.	1
Shorten phase of left-turn signal at intersections on No. 3 Road.	1
Establish a think-tank or committee that is representative of all Richmond residents to examine transportation issues. Committee would have authority over TransLink.	1
Difficult to access Parker Place Mall due to congestion in vicinity of No. 3 Road and Hazelbridge Way. Need roadway improvements to address this issue.	1
Inadequate signage on Airport Connector to direct motorists to Vancouver.	1
Landscaping and other structures at No. 3 Road and Cook Road intersection create blind spots and block sightlines for wheelchair users.	1
Sidewalks in vicinity of Anderson Road terminus are in poor repair.	1
Lack of corresponding curb cut on Buswell Road to facilitate wheelchair access.	1
Need more street lights, left-turn lanes, left-turn signals; pedestrian crossings with traffic signals rather than amber flashers; wider lanes with reflectors between lanes; bigger street name signs; evergreen shrubs rather than tall seasonal trees.	1