



TRANSLINK BOARD-IN-BRIEF— MAY 13, 2002

Here are the main points from the May 13th meeting of the TransLink Board of Directors. The complete agenda and supporting reports for every Board meeting are posted on TransLink's web site (www.translink.bc.ca). The Board-in-Brief is also available on the web site.

Note: Board-in-Brief is not the official minutes of the TransLink Board meeting and should not be interpreted as such. The minutes for this meeting will be adopted at the next TransLink Board meeting.

Item 4.1—Fraser River Crossing Project

The Board:

- Received the report summarizing the consultation, due diligence, traffic, financial and other studies and analysis that have been undertaken to confirm the feasibility and desirability of the Fraser Crossing project;
- Endorsed two options as warranting more detailed project specification and environmental assessment: i) the bridge configuration developed in the preliminary feasibility work and refined in the due diligence report, and ii) a tunnel-bridge configuration via Barnston Island;
- Authorized the initiation of the project, establishment of a project team and approved the expenditure of:
 - up to \$5 million to undertake the project planning, environmental, engineering and other work required to identify the preferred option(s) for tendering, to prepare project specifications and contract terms for tender documents and to maintain ongoing communication and consultation with directly affected residents, businesses and communities, and
 - up to \$8 million for the strategic acquisition of properties as required to protect corridors and minimize ultimate property acquisition costs, with all such funds being drawn from the existing Major Road Network Major Capital budget and incorporated into the project's capital costs with the intent of recovering them from project revenues should the project proceed;
- Directed staff to: i) develop terms of agreements with agencies, municipalities, GVRD, the province and First Nations as required to be able to tender the project and

- minimize its costs and ii) report back to the Board no later than December 2003 with the tendering plan, tender documents and proposed terms of agreements;
- Directed staff to work with provincial government representatives and report back on a Fraser Corridor / Gateway initiative that would see the Fraser Crossing project developed as part of a broader integrated highway development plan, including the South Fraser Perimeter Road and, potentially, the North Fraser Perimeter Road project, short and long improvements to Highway 1 and the Port Mann Bridge, and improvements to the Lougheed Highway and Pitt River Bridge, such report to include the specific set of projects to be developed and general timeframe for their implementation, development strategy and responsibilities, financing and cost recovery arrangements.

The Fraser Crossing is targeted to be in-service by the end of 2006 or early 2007.

Financial feasibility of the project assumes a toll in the range of \$2 to \$2.50, with debt financing. The financial feasibility will be enhanced by some senior government contribution. Private financing of the crossing would greatly increase the required toll or create a requirement for very significant government contributions. A financing and implementation strategy that minimizes the cost of capital and maximizes private sector participation and incentives in design, construction, operations and toll collection will be pursued.

Item 4.2—2002 Capital Program Projects – Specific Project Approvals

The Board provided specific project approval for the following capital projects:

- 2002 Custom Transit Vehicle Replacement – 28 Vehicles – Budget: \$2,911,000
- 2002 Custom Transit Vehicle Expansion – 16 Vehicles – Budget: \$1,727,000

These projects involve the replacement of 28 older vehicles in the HandyDART fleet that have reached the end of their useful lives, plus a 16-vehicle expansion of the HandyDART fleet to meet increasing demand for services.

Item 4.3—Proposed 2002 Bicycle Infrastructure Capital Cost Sharing Program

The Board:

- Approved the Bicycle Infrastructure Capital Cost Sharing Program as described in the report;
- Approved that the 2002 Bicycle Capital Program funding residual, as identified in the report be carried forward to remain available for bicycle capital projects.

The program is intended to encourage the construction of more bicycle routes and remove existing barriers to cyclists across the region. Municipalities can apply for cost-sharing funding from TransLink of up to 50% of bicycle infrastructure project costs (but not exceeding the annual allocation made available by TransLink to each municipality).

The TransLink Board established a fund of \$750,000 for the program in 2002. Of that amount, \$77,645 has not been allocated because some municipalities did not submit applications for funding in 2002. These funds will remain available for future bicycle capital projects as initiated by a municipality or TransLink.

Item 4.4—Appointment of External Auditor

The Board appointed KPMG as external auditors for TransLink and its subsidiaries for 2002 subject to the attainment of satisfactory fee arrangements.

It is the policy of the TransLink Board to tender for external audit services every five years. The external audit service for TransLink's predecessor, BC Transit, and related companies was last tendered in 1997 and KPMG was appointed the external auditor for the five years ended 2001 as a result of this tender.

Extending KPMG's term for another year frees up TransLink staff time to concentrate on other important strategic initiatives. As well, there is a possibility that the current Board structure could change as a result of the current governance review process and this option would delay the tender process until after the governance review is completed.

Item 4.5—Status of Granville Mall

The Board endorsed the City of Vancouver staff recommendations as outlined in Attachment 1 of the report and as reproduced below:

- A. THAT Granville Street, between Smithe and Hastings, be kept as a transit, pedestrian and service vehicle only mall to ensure that effective transit service and generous sidewalk space are maintained.
- B. THAT a commercial streetscape/entertainment district/greenway design scheme be developed for Granville Street, in consultation with land owners and commercial stakeholders, between Drake and Cordova, at a cost of \$60,000 to be funded from 2001 Streets Basic Capital Budget – Greenways (CA2EA2H, order number 30003084), and that TransLink be requested to share in this cost.
- C. THAT options for the management of Granville Mall be reviewed in consultation with stakeholders, and specifically in partnership with the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, to better promote and manage the on-street activities and assets along the mall, with a report back to Council before the end of 2002.

There are significant benefits of retaining the Granville Mall as a priority route for transit, pedestrians and service vehicles. These benefits include:

- cost savings to TransLink and efficient use of new trolleys
- travel time savings to pedestrians, transit users, motorists and goods movement
- increased ridership

- economic benefits to retailers and other businesses

{Note: At its May 14 meeting, Vancouver City Council passed a motion to refer this matter to another study. A company named City Works Consultants will look at a redesign of Granville from the bridgehead through to the waterfront. This redesign may or may not involve the reintroduction of motor vehicles, but a major criteria is that there be no loss of transit efficiency.}

Item 4.6—Prime Minister’s Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues Interim Report, April 2002

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

The Prime Minister’s Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues released its Interim Report on May 2, 2002. Transportation infrastructure has a central place in the urban strategy recommended by the Task Force. It is identified as a “key component of economic competitiveness as well as quality of life in urban areas.” The Task Force notes that gridlock is seriously affecting our urban regions, citing congestion of huge losses to productivity and commercial revenues, as well as contributing to air pollution and production of greenhouse gases.

Item 4.7—First Quarter (Jan – Mar) – 2002 Capital Project Summary Report

The Board received the report, titled as above, for information. The report provides summary information for TransLink capital projects and programs.

The next TransLink Board meeting will be held:

Date: Thursday, June 27 (changed from the original date of Friday, June 21)
Time: 8:00 a.m.
Location: Richmond City Hall
6911 No. 3 Road