



**CITY OF RICHMOND**

**REPORT TO COMMITTEE**

**TO:** General Purposes Committee **DATE:** May 30, 2000  
**FROM:** Gordon Chan, P. Eng. **FILE:** 6480-01  
 Manager, Transportation  
**RE: Update on #98 B-Line – Proposed New Express Services from West Richmond, Initial “Trial Run” Commissioning Service, and Construction Schedule/Traffic Management Plan**

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) That the following proposed initiatives related to the start-up of the new #98 B-Line as proposed by TransLink and outlined in the attached report from the Manager of Transportation be supported:
  - a) The concept of introducing new express direct services (#491-No. 1 Road, #492-No. 2 Road, and #496-Railway Avenue) between West Richmond and Vancouver downtown using 16 of the 44 articulated buses originally allocated for the #98 B-Line; and
  - b) The initial three-month “trial run” of the #98 B-Line commissioning service between the new airport exchange on Miller Road and Vancouver downtown starting in September, 2000 prior to the official start-up of the service in December, 2000.
- 2) That the Chair of TransLink Board of Directors be advised of Council’s support of the above initiatives.
- 3) That staff continue to work with TransLink and the contractor of the #98 B-Line No. 3 Road construction project to ensure that the proposed Construction Traffic Management Plan is followed in order to minimize the construction impacts on traffic and adjacent businesses.

Gordon Chan, P. Eng.  
Manager, Transportation

Att. 1

<b>FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY</b>		
<b>ROUTED TO:</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b>
Engineering .....	Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	_____

## STAFF REPORT

### ORIGIN

TransLink is scheduled to appear as a delegation at the June 5, 2000 General Purposes Committee to provide an update on the #98 B-Line project. As detailed information of TransLink's presentation has not yet been made available to staff at the time of preparing this report, it is expected that the focus of their presentation will be on the recent progress and changes related to the project.

Through recent discussions with TransLink staff, the changes being presented include firstly the introduction of new express services between West Richmond and downtown Vancouver using some of the B-Line articulated buses, and secondly the introduction of a #98 B-Line initial "trial run" commissioning service in September, 2000. It is also expected that the key elements of the proposed Construction Traffic Management Plan will be presented.

This report offers staff's comments on these changes related to the project in anticipation of the above information to be presented by TransLink for Council's consideration.

### ANALYSIS

#### **1. New Express Services from West Richmond**

TransLink is proposing to introduce new downtown direct services between West Richmond and downtown Vancouver. This will be implemented by reallocating 16 of the 44 articulated B-Line buses to three new peak hour downtown direct services. These three new services are:

- No. 1 Road (new #491 replacing the existing #411),
- Railway Avenue (new #496), and
- No. 2 Road (new #492)

All of the three new lines would follow the #98 B-Line route from the new airport exchange on Miller Road to downtown Vancouver via Arthur Laing Bridge and Granville Street. These new services are proposed to be introduced in addition to the current services (which will be greatly enhanced in December, 2000).

Rationale for New Services - In March, 2000, market research was conducted for TransLink to test bus service concepts for the Richmond Area Transit Plan. The market research tested the concept of introducing new downtown direct service to determine whether or not a reduction in the peak frequency of the #98 B-Line (from 2-3 minutes to 4-5 minutes in the peak hour) would impact ridership. In addition, the market research also tested whether or not the introduction of new downtown direct services would impact trip volume on the Richmond transit system overall. The findings indicated that:

- Richmond residents are highly supportive of the concept of introducing new direct services between West Richmond and downtown Vancouver.
- consumers do not differentiate between a 4-5 minute peak service frequency and a 2-3 minute peak service frequency; and

- the 4-5 minute B-Line service combined with the introduction of new express services from West Richmond would result in a 26% greater overall trip volume than the 2-3 minute B-Line service alone.

It should be noted that during the public consultation activities for the B-Line project and the Richmond Area Transit Plan, many residents also expressed an interest in retaining direct service between West Richmond and downtown Vancouver.

Staff Comments - This proposal is supportable by staff given that it is expected to result in increased overall ridership on the Richmond transit system, and it would be consistent with the public feedback on the need to retain and to improve direct services from West Richmond. Furthermore, it is also estimated that the service quality of the #98 B-Line would not be compromised as a result of the re-allocation of 16 articulated buses from the total of 44 as the decrease of frequency would not be noticeable by the users.

## **2. Initial “Trial Run” Commissioning Service**

TransLink plans to offer a #98 B-Line initial three-month “trial run” commissioning service commencing in September, 2000. The purpose of this service will be to ensure that all aspects of the service are operating smoothly by opening day in December, 2000. It is proposed that this special service will operate between downtown Vancouver and the airport exchange located at the south-east corner of the Russ Baker Way/Miller Road intersection. This trial service is proposed to terminate at the airport exchange to avoid any potential conflicts with the road construction activities on the No. 3 Road corridor prior to December, 2000.

Staff Comments – The #98 B-Line “trial run” commissioning service is supportable as it would minimize technical difficulties of the new system when it officially starts its full service in December, 2000.

## **3. Construction Schedule and Traffic Management Plan**

A comprehensive Construction Traffic Management Plan has been prepared by the contractor for the #98 B-Line project, Imperial Paving Limited. The following provides a brief summary of the plan:

Construction Timing – Construction work for the #98 B-Line project on No. 3 Road recently began and will continue until the end of September, 2000 (with landscape work to be carried out until November, 2000). The construction is beginning at the corner of Anderson Road and No. 3 Road and will proceed to the north.

Construction-Related Disruptions - The construction will be done mainly at night (7:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.) to minimize delays to traffic and disruptions to businesses during the day. Any lane closures, especially during peak times of No. 3 Road including the weekends, will require advance approval by the City. It should be noted that the contractor will also endeavour to minimize construction noise levels during the night.

Communication of Construction Activities- TransLink will be setting up a public information office shortly at 4800 No. 3 Road (at Alexandra Road). The public will also obtain information on the construction activities from notice signs, news media and radio stations, advance notices to all businesses and residents that may be affected by any works, emergency services, etc. The

contractor will also consult with each of the businesses being directly affected by the construction activities particularly on issues related to driveway access prior to carrying out the work.

Staff Comments – In staff's assessment, the proposed Construction Traffic Management Plan is supportable as it ensures that adequate access to businesses is maintained during business hours, and the delay to traffic during peak times is minimized. In addition, a public communication strategy has also been put in place by the contractor and TransLink, including the establishment of an on-site information centre on No. 3 Road during the construction period.

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

None to the City at this time. Details on the financial impact of the infrastructure requirements for the new downtown direct services on No. 1 Road, Railway Avenue, and No. 2 Road will be determined when the location of the new bus stops is identified. Staff will be working with TransLink to explore joint funding opportunities for the infrastructure required to support the new services. It is expected that some of these improvements could be completed as part of the Transit Infrastructure Program in the current 2000 Major Capital Works Program.

### CONCLUSION

Staff support the concept of introducing new express services between West Richmond and downtown Vancouver by allocating 16 of the 44 articulated buses from the #98 B-Line. This support is based on the fact that customers do not distinguish between a 2-3 minute service frequency and a 4-5 minute frequency for the #98 B-Line and that there is an expected increase in the overall ridership on the Richmond transit system. Staff also support the Construction Traffic Management Plan proposed by TransLink as it would ensure adequate business access and minimize delays to traffic. The proposed #98 B-Line three-month "trial run" commissioning service to operate between the new airport exchange and Vancouver downtown starting in September, 2000 is also supportable to ensure minimum technical problems for the official start-up of service in December, 2000.

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