

TRANSLINK BOARD-IN-BRIEF

July 19, 2006

Here are the highlights of the July 19 meeting of the TransLink Board of Directors, including specific actions taken on agenda items.

The complete agenda and supporting reports for every board meeting are posted on TransLink's website (www.translink.bc.ca). The Board-in-Brief is also available on the website.

Please 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.

REPORTS

4.1 Regional Transportation Implications of the Provincial Gateway Program; responses from Municipalities

- 4.1.1** The Board voted to advise the Minister of Transportation the GVTA supports the proposed order of projects that would see the North Fraser Perimeter Road and the South Fraser Perimeter Road completed ahead of the Port Mann Bridge twinning and Highway #1 widening.
- 4.1.2** The Board voted to advise the Minister of Transportation that the GVTA supports moving forward with the South Fraser Perimeter Road (SFPR) as outlined in the Gateway Program Definition Report and to request that the Province take steps to ensure the improvements to moving goods on the South Fraser Perimeter Road are maintained over the long term as congestion increases.
- 4.1.3** The Board voted to advise the Minister of Transportation that the GVTA supports moving forward with the North Fraser Perimeter Road (NFPR) as outlined in the Gateway Program Definition Report and to request that:
 - (A) The Province take steps to ensure the improvements to moving goods on the NFPR is maintained over the long term as congestion increases; and
 - (B) The Province and the Federal Government work with the GVTA and the City of New Westminster on a mitigation plan for the existing and future NFPR and rail impacts that recognizes and supports New Westminster's downtown as a key regional town centre under the Livable Region Strategic Plan; and
 - (C) The Province seek federal funding under the Pacific Gateway Program to complete the NFPR, leveraging TransLink's NFPR investment; and
 - (D) The Province consider the impact of the proposed changes to Highway #1 on the North Shore and the Upper Levels Highway.

- 4.1.4** The Board voted to advise the Minister of Transportation that the GVTA's support for the Highway #1/ Port Mann Bridge improvements as outlined in the Gateway Program Definition Report is conditional on:
- (A) The introduction of tolls and other transport pricing mechanisms to fund, manage demand and promote efficiency in the use of the transportation system;
 - (B) The introduction of a system of road user priorities to be reflected in the designation of exclusive lanes, as well as highest priority access and other measures to promote the movement of transit, high-occupancy and goods movement vehicles ahead of single-occupant vehicles to meet current and future demands; and
 - (C) The Province does not promote the Pattullo Bridge as a free alternative to the Port Mann Bridge, due to the traffic diversion effects that may arise.
- 4.1.5** The Board voted to request that the Province:
- A. Cost share with the GVTA in rehabilitation upgrades to the Pattullo Bridge in the short term;
 - B. Work with the GVTA to develop a long term strategy for the Pattullo Bridge including possible replacement; and
 - C. Provide the necessary infrastructure for a bus rapid transit system along Highway #1 between the Braid Station and Surrey/ Langley including high occupancy vehicle lanes, park and ride lots, exclusive bus only access and egress to and from park and ride lots and Braid Station to enable the GVTA to fund and operate the new transit service on Highway #1.
- 4.1.6** The Board voted to advise the Minister of Transportation that the GVTA agrees with the Gateway Program's conclusion that Highway #1 is not the right location for a high capacity rail service at this time and to request that the Province through its means or through its support for federal funding provide 60% senior government cost sharing to the GVTA for capital expenditures for the Evergreen Light Rail Transit Line between the existing Millennium Line and Coquitlam City Centre and ensure that the twinned Port Mann Bridge and the new Pitt River Bridge are constructed in a way to allow for potential future accommodation of light rail transit.
- 4.1.7** The Board voted to request that the Province ensure that the budget for the Gateway Program include funding for expenditures on the GVTA-funded Major Road Network and transit and cycling infrastructure that may be directly affected by the Gateway Program.
- 4.1.8** The Board voted to request that the Province work with the GVTA to initiate a regional dialogue on the role of transport pricing in the region and to develop a common approach to tolling policy, system and level within Greater Vancouver.
- 4.1.9** The Board voted to advise the Province that it supports:
- (A) Investments in cycling as part of the Gateway Program, requesting that the Province work with the GVTA and municipalities to clarify the level of resources available for cycling related improvements and to determine the optimum use of the funding including consideration of enhancing parallel traffic separated cycling routes such as the Central Valley Greenway and the BC Parkway; and
 - (B) Initiatives to examine opportunities with the Federal Government to expand

the use of rail and marine transportation to move goods into, out of and around the region thereby enhancing the efficiency of the Gateway Program.

- 4.1.10** The Board voted to advise the Province of its concern that lane widening of Highway #1 East of the Cassiar Tunnel and of Highway #99 from Horseshoe Bay to Squamish, will further exacerbate congestion on the North Shore Upper Levels Highway, including the Lions Gate and Ironworkers' Memorial Bridges, and that these areas should be addressed in the gateway Plan.
- 4.1.11** The Board voted to support the Greater Vancouver Regional District in that it not be required to pay for the movement of utilities required as a result of the Provincial Gateway Project.
- 4.1.12** The Board directed staff to forward a copy of this report to the GVRD and member municipalities.

4.3 2006 Capital Program Projects – Specific Project Approval for SkyTrain Fleet Expansion

The Board deferred a decision on a \$147 million purchase of new SkyTrain cars until the October 2006 meeting.

4.4 Evergreen Line – Project Definition Update

The Board approved a revised in-service date of September 2011, given the advantages of extending the detailed design and construction schedule and the high risk associated with meeting the December 2009 in-service date.

4.5 Canada Line – Design Changes at Richmond/Brighouse Bus Loop and Broadway Station

The Board:

- 4.5.1** (A) Approved the proposed design change for the Richmond-Brighouse Bus Loop, subject to agreement from both the City of Richmond and CLCO to contribute a minimum of equivalent funding;
- (B) Approved GVTA funding from existing capital programs in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000, excluding interest during construction; and
- (C) Authorized the Chief Executive Officer to execute legal documentation to implement this change.

4.5.2 The Board:

- (A) approved the proposed design change for Broadway Station subject to agreement from both the City of Vancouver and CLCO to contribute a minimum of equivalent funding;
- (B) approved GVTA funding from existing capital programs in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 excluding interest during construction; and
- (C) authorized the Chief Executive Officer to execute legal documentation to implement this change.

4.6 Golden Ears Bridge Project – Proposed Land Exchange with Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District

The Board:

(A) approved the exchange of 0.793 acres of property with the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District (GVS & DD), required to construct the Golden Ears Bridge (GEB) project, as described in the report; and

(B) authorized the Chief Operating Officer to execute all documentation necessary to effect the property exchange.

4.7 Haney Place Transit Exchange – Additional Funding Request

The Board approved additional funding of \$1,031,000 for the design and construction of Project 0513 - Haney Place Transit Exchange.

4.8 2006 Capital Projects – Specific Project Approval

The Board provided Specific Project Approval for the following capital projects:

- Public Address System Replacement - Expo Line: Budget: \$1,110,000
- Skytrain Card Access Control System: Budget: \$1,065,000
- Lighting Upgrades in Expo Line Stations - Phase 2: \$1,950,000
- Marine Drive Trolley Overhead Extension: \$8,795,000
- West Coast Express Ticket Vending Machine Replacement: \$6,900,000

4.9 Proposed Terms of Reference for the Finance and Audit Committee

The Board approved the proposed terms of reference for the Finance and Audit Committee.

4.10 Toronto Transit Commission Proposal – “Instant Tax Credit”

The Board voted to advise the TTC that GVTA supports the need for additional sustainable funding for transit from the Federal Government and that it does not support the “Instant Tax Credit” proposal.

6.1 Motion from Director Dianne Watts – Long-Term Sustainable Funding

The Board approved the following motion:

Whereas, in large measure due to funding shortfalls, TransLink has not achieved the 5-year targets as documented in the Transport 2021 document and it is considered very improbable that TransLink will achieve the remaining future targets of the Transport 2021 document; and

Whereas the Transport 2021 document was endorsed as the Transportation Plan for the Region and formed the basis for the operation of TransLink; and

Whereas TransLink has been and continues to be the brunt of public criticism in relation to its attempts to raise revenues needed to achieve the Transport 2021 objectives and targets, which are considered necessary for the on-going prosperity of the Region; and

Whereas TransLink is projecting funding deficits in its annual budgets starting in 2009 and escalating thereafter to as much as \$208 million in 2013; and

Whereas the purposes of TransLink were primarily to plan, implement and operate an effective transportation system in the Region and not to have as its primary focus, the raising of revenues;

Therefore, be it resolved that the GVTA Board request the Province to take immediate action in conjunction with the Federal government and local governments to establish appropriate sustainable funding sources to provide funding to TransLink on annual basis in line with the Transport 2021 objectives or such other future Regional transportation plan that is approved as the basis for building and operating an effective transportation system for the Region.”

7.1 Motion from Director Marvin Hunt – Tax Treatment of Family Passes

The Board approved the following motion:

WHEREAS:

1. Each employee of TransLink and its subsidiaries is provided with one non-transferable pass (referred to as a Family Pass) to be used by a member of the employee’s family, as designated by the employee;
2. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has taken the position that the Family Passes are taxable benefits for TransLink and subsidiary employees;
3. The CRA has long-standing administrative policies where passes provided to employees of bus and rail companies are not considered a taxable benefit to the employee;
4. The CRA has proposed a valuation method of the Family Passes based on the adult three-zone fare for all employees, without regard for the individual circumstances and the true “benefit” that may have been enjoyed based on the usage of the passes
5. The CRA’s proposed valuation method of the Family Passes is excessive and inequitable;
6. If a taxable benefit is determined to exist, the valuation of such a pass must take into account a number of important factors such as the actual usage, the non-transferability of the Family Passes, the pricing of similar passes offered by TransLink and its subsidiaries to other community groups and TransLink’s objective of increasing the use of public transportation rather than maximizing profits in conducting its activities;
7. There are clear precedents for similar benefits not being taxed, such as the various arrangements for airline employees and family members to travel free or at deep discounts; and
8. The CRA’s position is contrary to the federal government’s policy to encourage the use of public transit, such as the new tax credit for transit passes;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the GVTA Board advise the Minister of National Revenue that it does not agree with the Canada Revenue Agency’s (CRA’s) position that Family Passes are taxable benefits for TransLink and subsidiary employees and requests a reversal of the CRA’s position.

7.2 Motion from Staff Recommendation – Amendment to Rules of Procedure

The Board amended the Rules of Procedure, dated May 20, 2005, by adding the following provision:

"3.3 (b) Directors may attend Special In-Camera Meetings via teleconference facilities and those Directors so attending will be included in the determination of quorum and will be entitled to vote as if they were attending in person."