



TRANSLINK BOARD-IN-BRIEF— NOVEMBER 23, 2001

Here are the main points from the November 23rd meeting of the TransLink Board of Directors. 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.

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 3.1—Financial Consultation – Public Consultation Report

The Board received the report, titled as above, for information. The report summarizes the feedback obtained by TransLink on its funding options from local governments, transportation stakeholders and the general public.

From September 8th to November 19th, TransLink held meetings with 18 municipal councils and 27 stakeholder organizations. In addition, nine public meetings were held throughout the region to gain residents' feedback.

TransLink received 3,887 comments on the funding options via mail or fax, adding to the 4,804 choices made via the TransLink website. 71 per cent of the mailed/faxed responses and 69 per cent of the on-line responses were in favour of Choice #2 (maintain and begin to improve roads and transit services by increasing revenues).

Ipsos-Reid conducted a survey of 1,000 residents for TransLink and the Pacific Newspaper Group (the Vancouver Sun and the Province newspapers). 68 per cent of those polled were in favour of Choice #2.

Public support for Choice #2 was not without qualification. Issues related to governance, accountability and efficiencies were raised consistently during the consultation.

Item 3.2—Financial Consultation – Funding Options

The Board took the following actions on this item:

- A. Approved a funding package consisting of fuel tax, property tax and transit fare increases to stabilize funding for TransLink for the next three-year period pending development of a new strategic transportation plan and related initiatives, and specifically:
 - a. Accepted the offer from the Province to collect an additional two cents per litre in fuel tax within the Greater Vancouver Regional District, and requested that it be implemented as soon as possible;
 - b. Approved and referred for ratification by the GVRD Board a regional property tax increase of \$20 million for 2002, such increase to be levied on the basis of assessment;
 - c. Approved an increase in transit revenues on a staged basis, beginning with cash fares, single-ride tickets and day passes effective April 1, 2002;
- B. Communicated to the Province TransLink's acceptance of the offer to collect an additional two cents per litre in fuel tax, and authorized the Chief Executive Officer to complete negotiations with the Province in order for legislation necessary to implement the additional fuel tax by April 1, 2002 to be introduced in the Spring 2002 session of the Legislative Assembly;
- C. Directed staff to prepare for consideration by the Board in early 2002 a three-year financial plan for roads and transit within the proposed funding sources;
- D. Directed staff to prepare for consideration by the Board in early 2002 a three-year roads and transit program plan, such plan to include:
 - a. spending on roads programs equal at a minimum to the amount generated by two cents per litre in fuel tax within the GVRD by 2003;
 - b. review of bus service in relation to performance and other objectives developed in consultation with member municipalities and stakeholders;
 - c. a comprehensive review of the fare system, including policy, pricing and fare payment technology conducted in consultation with stakeholders;
 - d. a program review by TransLink and its subsidiaries to identify opportunities to reduce costs and in particular a strategy to reduce the cost of bus service delivery;
 - e. implementation of mini-bus programs as contemplated by Local Area Transit Plans;
- E. Directed staff to work with the Major Roads and Transit Advisory Committee (MRTAC) to develop a list of potential minor road capital projects for the three-year program plan;
- F. Directed staff to commission an audit of the extent of transit fare evasion and related fare auditing processing. If any additional fare revenue is collected as a result of this audit, such funds should be invested back into the transit system;
- G. Asked the Governance Committee, with involvement of the Province, to conduct a review of transportation governance and produce a proposal for consideration by the TransLink Board, the GVRD Board and the Province by mid 2002;
- H. Directed staff to work with the GVRD on the sustainable region initiative including the review of the Livable Region Strategic Plan, and to begin, in consultation with the public and stakeholder groups, the development of the new strategic transportation plan and related funding mechanisms;

- I. In partnership with the GVRD and the Province, continue efforts to encourage the Federal government to recognize the fuel tax paid annually by the people of the GVRD, and to return a portion of that revenue in the form of a long-term, sustainable contribution to transportation in the region; in that event, the proposed regional revenue sources would be reviewed.

Item 3.3—2002 Property Tax Funding By-law

The Board passed and adopted the “Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2002 Property Tax By-law Number 21-2001,” and requested ratification of said by-law by the GVRD Board of Directors.

This by-law is TransLink’s official request to the GVRD to approve an increase in property taxes based on assessed value. The average assessed value of a residential property in GVRD is \$280,000 and the proposed property tax increase would be about \$22 on average. This property tax increase, along with the increase in transit fare revenue approved by TransLink’s Board, would meet the provincial requirement that the region match the additional \$40 million in revenue that would be produced by a two cent per litre increase in fuel tax that the province has offered to institute in 2002.

Item 3.4—Proposed April 1, 2002 Transit Fare Change and Tariff Revision

The Board approved the fare changes as described in the report (titled as above), pending a report back from staff to the Board in December on the financial impact of “freezing” FareSaver ticket prices at this time.

The next TransLink Board meeting will be:

Date: Tuesday, December 18
Time: 9:00 am
Location: GVRD 2nd Floor Boardroom
4330 Kingsway, Burnaby

Please note that the December Committee of the Whole has been cancelled.