

ITEM 8
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 25
COUNCIL MEETING 88/04/05

RE: TRANSIT PLANNING IN BURNABY - AN UPDATE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Director Planning & Building Inspection be adopted.

* * * * *

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1988 March 25
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & Our File:
BUILDING INSPECTION
SUBJECT: TRANSIT PLANNING IN BURNABY - AN UPDATE

=====

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

R E P O R T

1.0 INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY

At recent meetings of Council a number of queries regarding the planning of transit services have been raised by Members of Council. This report is intended to address those concerns by providing an update of public transportation planning in Burnaby. This report considers the 1988/89 Annual Service Plan for Transit, discusses what is in the plan and more significantly for Burnaby, what is not. It also addresses the issue of the transit fare zone boundary in North East Burnaby. The review of the funding formula and proposed fares requested by Council will be the subject of another forthcoming report.

2.0 1988/89 ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN

Attached to this report as Exhibit A is the Executive Summary from the 1988/89 Annual Service Plan for the Vancouver Regional Transit System. The report from which this summary has been extracted has been enclosed with Council's agenda and a copy is available for public review in the Clerk's Department. The purpose of the Annual Service Plan is to outline a base level service for the metropolitan transit system and to identify service changes for the forthcoming fiscal year. The Service Plan is a prerequisite to the development of a detailed operating budget, the determination of funding requirements and the setting of fares by B.C. Transit.

The 1988/89 Service Plan does not include changes of any major significance to Burnaby. It proposes implementation of North East Burnaby Bus/SkyTrain integration for 1988 June. However, this item was included in the previous (1987/88) Service Plan and has recently been dealt with by Council (North East Sector Bus/SkyTrain Integration, Item #4, Manager's Report No. 12, Council Meeting 1988 02 15). At that time Council adopted the following recommendations:

117

1. THAT B.C. Transit be requested to leave the routing of the #151 bus to downtown via Willingdon/Hastings unchanged in the forthcoming N.E. Sector Bus-SkyTrain Integration Plan.
2. THAT the routing of the #151 and the issue of services along the Hastings and Broadway corridors be further reviewed in conjunction with the North Burnaby Area Plan.
3. THAT B.C. Transit staff be invited to present revised proposed route changes to Council prior to the final consideration of the matter by the Transit Commission.
4. THAT a copy of this report be sent to B.C. Transit."

More recently Council has informally met with the Vice President, Planning of B.C. Transit to review Transit's current proposals for Bus/SkyTrain integration. The modification of greatest interest to Burnaby is the routing of the 151/152 to downtown via Broadway/Clark/Hastings rather than Broadway/Cambie as was previously proposed. Staff have reviewed Transit's proposal and conclude that Council's previously adopted recommendations remain appropriate. Council has reiterated its previous recommendations to the Vancouver Transit Commission.

3.0 OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Appendix 2 of the 1988/89 Annual Service Plan includes "Municipal Requests". Burnaby's requests and Transit's response from that Appendix are attached to this report as Exhibit B. These items are further discussed below.

Most of the Municipal "suggestions" for the 1988/89 Annual Service Plan have been made previously. The Municipality has been pursuing their inclusion in the Service Plan to achieve implementation of the Transit component of the Burnaby Comprehensive Transportation Plan and Adopted Policy.

3.1 North Burnaby Area Plan

The routing of buses in North Burnaby has been considered to be a problem by successive transit authorities since the 1970s but comprehensive transit initiatives remained unimplemented. The GVRD initiated a review of the North Burnaby area with a series of public meetings in 1982. The draft Service Plan for 1986/87 (dated 1985 October) which was approved by Burnaby Council, BC Transit stated:

"An analysis of the current community land use pattern, coupled with the performance of the existing transit system supports the conclusion that a major restructuring of transit routings is required in North Burnaby. Over the past 20 years there have been significant changes to the nature of the community, resulting in many new and varied travel patterns. The route structure however, has not responded to these changes resulting in the situation today where transit is not meeting the needs of residents in the area. Ridership data has confirmed this as many North Burnaby locals routes are failing to meet even minimum productivity levels.

The service plan is designed to update the North Burnaby transit system in light of changes in land use. It is also designed to improve overall efficiency and effectiveness by using existing resources more logically.

The construction of a new operating centre on Boundary Road (at Kitchener Street) coupled with the January 3, 1986 bus-ALRT changes will allow the North Burnaby project to proceed as originally planned.

Notwithstanding this emphatic endorsement the final version of the 1987/88 Service Plan published in March 1986 postponed the implementation of the area plan to the next fiscal year - 1987/88 and since then the North Burnaby Area Plan no longer features in Draft Annual Service Plans. However B.C. Transit staff promise that 1988/89 will see the reinitiation of the planning process for the North Burnaby Area Service Plan.

The North Burnaby Area Plan route reorganization concept once included the extension of the trunk line trolley services that now terminate in Vancouver west of Boundary Road. Some years ago it appeared that extension of Hastings services beyond Kootenay Loop to Inlet Drive was a serious possibility and was being actively pursued by transit planning staff in consultation with the Municipality. Apparently that proposal has been shelved. The extension of Broadway services to Brentwood has also been a North Burnaby plan component, but B.C. Transit staff are now skeptical whether even this shorter extension is cost effective. It is assumed that planning process will address the issue of the trolley extensions and development of the transit focus at Brentwood.

3.2 South Burnaby Bus/SkyTrain Integration Review

Integration of the South Burnaby transit network and SkyTrain occurred in 1986 March shortly after SkyTrain entered revenue service. There has been some "fine tuning" of routes but further review is required to assess whether or not particular routing proposals made by the Municipality should now be implemented. Burnaby has proposed that the No. 28 Smith bus, which serves Burnaby Hospital, be routed to the Metrotown transit focus rather than to Joyce station. This rerouting warrants reconsideration with Metrotown core area development. It is perhaps significant that when bus/SkyTrain integrations was under review in Vancouver, the Joyce Station Area Planning Committee also recommended the #28 be focussed on Metrotown rather than Joyce Station.

Similarly, the municipality, with support from Burnaby residents has recommended that the #101 bus originating at Loughheed Mall terminate at the Edmonds Station rather than at the 22nd Street Station in New Westminster.

119

3.3 A Strategic Plan for Transit

The municipality has recommended that Transit develop its annual service plan in the context of longer range plans. B.C. Transit has indicated that it will be developing a 5 year plan. It appears that B.C. Transit, the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and the Municipalities (through GVRD Development Services Department) will shortly embark on a coordinated Transportation Forecasting/Planning exercise. The result could be a Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan that integrates public transportation and road infrastructure investment.

3.4 Skytrain Extensions

It is in the interest of all the municipalities of the region that B.C. Transit define future rapid transit corridors and specify when lines/expansions might be implemented. An operationally attractive proposal that has been tested through computer simulation is extension of Skytrain to Loughheed Mall via the Edmonds Corridor. The municipality has agreed to work with B.C. Transit to develop a preliminary plan which would determine whether a feasible alignment could be specified. In this instance municipal staff are most concerned that potential negative impacts on adjacent land uses can be mitigated. We also wish to ensure that land development is coordinated to support a future extension (assuming a feasible alignment is defined and adopted).

3.5 Commuter Rail

Burnaby's Comprehensive Transportation Plan shows commuter rail service along the Burrard Foreshore. It is our understanding that this project is dormant if not dead - rendered unfeasible by the compensation requirements of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Notwithstanding recent political initiatives to revive it, it is our understanding that B.C. Transit staff are not actively considering the Commuter Rail proposal. It is our view that a review is warranted and should be carried out in conjunction with the regional transportation planning exercise discussed above. If the project is confirmed as being not cost effective it should be discarded and consideration should be given to other initiatives.

Municipal staff have been requested to provide the Transportation Committee with a more extensive update of commuter rail. That review is in progress.

3.6 Innovative Transit Vehicles

Municipal staff have suggested that B.C. Transit evaluate the introduction of non-standard transit vehicles. An early draft of the annual service plan proposed the introduction of articulated diesel buses on selected Richmond trunk routes. This proposal has been dropped from the current draft of the annual service plan.

We have also observed that in Europe the use of mini/midi bus vehicles is now common practice for many transit operations. In North America the common wisdom among bus operators is that small buses are not as cost effective as standard buses because of their shorter life cycle and higher maintenance costs. We have suggested that it may be worthwhile to test smaller vehicles on some of Burnaby's local feeder routes, such as the #116 Suncrest. Mini/midi buses may be less intrusive and more productive than full size buses when operating on local residential streets.

4.0 THE TRANSIT FARE ZONE BOUNDARY AND NORTHEAST BURNABY

The matter of fares and funding is usually dealt with by B.C. Transit in a separate planning document. We understand that on this occasion all consideration of fares has been suspended pending a resolution of a funding formula between the Vancouver Transit Commission and the Province.

In the past the Council has made strong representations to B.C. Transit as well as the Vancouver Transit Commission regarding the Fare Zone Boundary in N.E. Burnaby. The background to the fare zone issue is as follows:

1. The concept of fare zones was reintroduced to the region by B.C. Transit in a 1984 February report, "Vancouver Regional Transit System: Conventional Transit 1984-85 Fare Plan". That document showed all of Burnaby and New Westminster to be a part of fare zone 2. The proposed fare zone boundaries that were mapped were clearly coincident with the municipal boundaries.
2. B.C. Transit's Conventional Transit 1984-85 Fare Plan Report (including zone boundaries) was endorsed by Municipal Council at its meeting of 1984 February 13.
3. The fare plan was implemented in 1984 April. However, the eastern boundary of fare zone 2B had been shifted westward from North Road (the municipal boundary) to the Gagliardi Way corridor. The effect of this was to alienate the substantial Lougheed Town Centre development from the rest of the Municipality. The shift was applied by B.C. Transit to obviate enforcement/operational problems arising from the transferability of a single zone fare card.
4. As a result of this fare zone boundary shift the Municipality became the recipient of complaints from Burnaby residents adversely affected by this change. At its meeting of 1984 05 22 Council received a staff report regarding this issue and adopted the recommendation "THAT B.C. Transit include northeast Burnaby in fare zone 2B as originally proposed in the Conventional Transit 1984-85 Fare Plan".
5. In 1984 June B.C. Transit staff presented a report to the Transit Commission on "The Fare Zone Boundary in Northeast Burnaby". That report made a case for the fare zone shift based on six criteria, the overriding one being the operational concern regarding fare card enforcement.

Municipal Manager

re: Transit Planning in Burnaby - An Update
1988 March 25 Page 6

ITEM 8
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 25
COUNCIL MEETING 88/04/05

6. Further discussion on this matter culminated in the submission by Council of a Brief regarding the "Location of the Transit Fare Zone Boundary in Northeast Burnaby" to the Vancouver Transit Commission at its meeting of 1984 October 12th. That brief recommended "THAT the transit fare zone boundary in northeast Burnaby be relocated to coincide with the municipal boundary along North Road except to include the Lougheed Mall Transit Interchange."

121

7. At it's meeting on 1985 January, the Commission gave further consideration to the fare zone boundary location issue. At that time it received a further "summary" report from B.C. Transit staff as well as the Municipal rejoinder to that report. It was the Municipality's judgment that "there is no major or overriding technical reason for not changing the northeast fare zone boundary to coincide with the municipal boundary". As it was however the Transit Commission elected not to deal with this issue further, leaving the fare zone boundary the way it was, and is today.

8. The possibility of rezoning the fare zone boundary was reintroduced in fare plan proposals for 1987-88. Amongst other things B.C. Transit proposed a new type of fare card - one that obviated the enforcement/operations problem that was key to B.C. Transit's position on the location of the eastern fare zone boundary. The Transit Commission elected not to introduce the non-transferable single zone fare card.

9. At a recent meeting Council were told by B.C. Transit that a revision to the fare zone Boundary was not under consideration. Subsequently by letter Council reiterated its previous concerns to the Vancouver Transit Commission.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The outstanding issues previously discussed should not be viewed in isolation. Significant transit improvements have been made since the adoption of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The implementation of SkyTrain and the related transit focal concept in South Burnaby have resulted in improved accessibility to the transit system, improved service coverage and frequency.

The most important outstanding project is considered to be the North Burnaby Area Plan (incorporating trolley extensions and a new transit focus at Brentwood). We are optimistic that work on this Plan will commence within the next year. The extension of SkyTrain to Lougheed Mall and the development of Commuter Rail require further scrutiny and again we anticipate that this review will also be initiated soon.



A.L. Parr
DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION

PL/pja

Attachments

cc: Director Engineering

EXHIBIT A

ITEM 8
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 25
COUNCIL MEETING 88/04/05

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Annual Service Plan is to outline the base level of service and to identify service changes for the fiscal year 1988/89. The 1988/89 Annual Service Plan has been developed for services operated by BC Transit (BCT), the West Vancouver Municipal Transportation Department (WM/TD) and the BC Rapid Transit Company (BCRTC). The plan has been prepared by BC Transit in consultation with the various municipalities within the region through the Transit Technical Committee (TTC). In addition, staff from the operating companies have provided input regarding service levels and operational criteria. Finally, a series of public meetings were held in August and September to gather public input into the plan.

The 1988/89 fiscal year is proposed essentially as a "status quo" year. Projections of economic activity indicate that some modest improvements can be expected. Unemployment will decline slightly with real growth projected in the order to 2.8% in 1988 as opposed to 1.9% in the current year. The regional population will similarly show a modest growth rate of approximate 1%. As a result of the above factors, transit ridership is projected to increase only slightly, from an estimated 101 million in 1987/88 to 102 million in 1988/89.

Under this relatively stable scenario, the existing base level of service will be maintained with only incremental service changes. New or expanded service is proposed only where increased travel demand warrants the additional service. At the same time overall system performance will be improved slightly through a more effective use of existing resources.

The major service changes proposed for 1988/89 include the completion of the final phase of the bus/SkyTrain integration plan, the UBC trolley extension and the extension of SkyTrain to the Columbia Street Station. The former which marks phase VII of the integration program, will focus on the Northeast Sector. Bus routes in the Central Coquitlam/Lougheed Mall area will be revised to feed the SkyTrain at New Westminster and Broadway Stations. The UBC trolley extension will permit the #10 route to be converted to trolley operation thus better utilizing the existing trolley fleet and freeing diesel buses for use elsewhere. In addition, the extension will allow the Fourth Avenue trolley service to be operated to UBC, thereby improving upon service quality. At SkyTrain, the Columbia Street Station located at 4th & Columbia in New Westminster is scheduled to open in February 1989. The new station marks the first extension of SkyTrain since the start-up of service in January 1986.

Apart from the three major changes, there are a number of minor changes proposed throughout the region. Route changes are proposed in South Delta and Newton in order to improve efficiency and make more effective use of resources. Increased peak period service is proposed for the South Surrey/White Rock area which has experienced considerable population growth. Service extensions are proposed for Citadel Heights in Port Coquitlam, North Ladner in Delta and Champlain Heights in the City of Vancouver in order to improve service coverage. Finally two new peak period routes are proposed for Indian River in North Vancouver and Eagle Ridge/Noon's Creek in Coquitlam/Port Moody where transit service presently does not operate.

Aside from the service changes outlined above, 1988/89 is proposed as a year of consolidation. The past two years have seen fundamental changes in the way people move around the region. SkyTrain, which commenced operation in January 1986, now carries between 15 and 20% of all transit passengers in the region. To complement SkyTrain, the surface bus system has undergone a major transformation to provide "feeder" service to the new rapid transit line. The changes brought about by the "feeder bus" system have disrupted some traditional and long established travel patterns. As the last of these changes are implemented in June 1988, attention will be turned toward assessing the impact of the proposed changes. Minor changes throughout the year can be expected as services are "fine tuned". These changes will be forwarded to the Vancouver Regional Transit Commission through the Quarterly Service Adjustments Process. Finally it is proposed that a major review of the Commission's Service Design Guidelines be completed in the forthcoming year in order to reflect the new integrated system concept.

The costs in terms of service hours reflect the "status quo" environment. BC Transit bus hours are projected to decline by 17,440 hours or 0.7% over the current base level of service. At Seabus and West Vancouver (WM/TD), service hours are projected to remain constant as service will be essentially unchanged. Finally at BCRTC (SkyTrain) service hours are projected to increase by 1.5%, largely as a result of the Columbia Street Station extension and the need to add an additional train to meet projected loadings.

Overall total hours for the Vancouver Regional Transit System are proposed at 2,981,708 in 1988/89 representing a reduction of 12,765 hours or 0.4% over the current level of service.

MUNICIPAL REQUESTS

Municipality of Burnaby

Request	Implications	Response
Implement North Burnaby Area Plan	Plan was prepared in 1982-84 and thus requires updating in light of land use changes in Burnaby and introduction of SkyTrain.	Plan will be updated in 1988/89. Public meetings will also be scheduled prior to implementation.
Review bus/SkyTrain integration and specifically consider rerouting #28 to Metrotown Station (instead of Joyce) and #101 to Edmonds Station (instead of 22nd St.)	Rerouting of #28 and #101 represent major changes to long established travel patterns.	Existing ridership data does not support changing services at this time.
Develop 5 Year Plan for transit.	Is outside the context of Annual Service Plan.	5 Year Plan is being prepared.
Identify SkyTrain Extensions	Is outside the context of Annual Service Plan.	Will be considered in the context of Long Range Planning.
Consider Commuter Rail Service between NE Sector and Vancouver	Is outside the context of Annual Service Plan.	Will be the subject of more detailed study in next year.
Innovative transit vehicles	Is outside the context of Annual Service Plan.	Will be the subject of more detailed study.
Public meetings	(See response)	Public meetings will be held for major service changes and annual service plan.