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REPORT
Regular Council Meeting
1992 March 23

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY

TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT COMMITTEE
(TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT DIVISION)

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND ALDERMEN:

B.C. TRANSIT REPORT ON TRANSIT PRIORITY MEASURES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to B.C. Transit, 1200 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.

R E P O R T

"1. BACKGROUND

At its regular meeting of 1992 February 24, Council received correspondence from B.C. Transit requesting comments on a report entitled "Transit Priority on the Regional Road System". The report provides a compendium of transit priority measures including bus lanes, bus activated signals, etc. and their current application in the Lower Mainland Region. Council's comments on the report were requested by the end of March to permit B.C. Transit to prepare a report for the April meeting of the Vancouver Regional Transit Commission. Upon consideration of the correspondence Council referred the report to the Traffic and Transportation Committee to assess the need for transit priority measures in Burnaby.

This report provides a review of the B.C. Transit report for the consideration of Council.

2. POLICY SUPPORT IN THE BURNABY TRANSPORTATION PLAN

As noted in the report, transit priority measures have been slow to develop in the Greater Vancouver Region. In recent years however, the desire to promote transit usage coupled with environmental concerns have led to increased acceptance of measures to give priority to buses on the road network.

The development of a renewed strategy and policies for the Burnaby Transportation Plan supports the increased application of transit priority measures to facilitate transit operations and increase transit ridership. Transit priority measures accord with two of the seven major policy directions in the draft Transportation Strategy including moving people efficiently by road and promoting alternative modes of travel. The following policies in the draft Transportation Strategy support the concept of transit priority measures:

1. That the arterial road system be developed to emphasize the movement of more people in fewer vehicles during peak periods.

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This policy recognizes that improvements to the arterial road system should give priority to facilitating the operation of higher occupancy vehicles including transit and car pools. Improvements noted in the B.C. Transit report including exclusive bus lanes and bus only streets, bus queue jumpers and high occupancy vehicle lanes are applications of this policy.

3. **THAT a traffic operations strategy be developed to foster the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians on major streets.**

This policy supports the application of signal control systems which give transit priority including signal pre-emption, bus activated signals, etc.

4. **THAT except in designated commercial areas the Municipality should ensure that the provision for parking on arterial and major collector streets reflects the need to maximize mobility.**

Application of this policy provides opportunities for unobstructed transit use of the curb lane through the application of peak period parking prohibitions.

14. **THAT the Municipality ensure that land development and the street network are designed to facilitate transit.**

This policy would ensure that transit needs are recognized in new developments and associated transportation infrastructure.

18. **THAT the Municipality in conjunction with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and B.C. Transit develop a High Occupancy Vehicle Road Network which will designate roads for use by car pools and buses during peak periods.**

Incorporating a High Occupancy Vehicle Network in the Transportation Plan fosters the more efficient use of roads and would facilitate transit operations in conjunction with car pools.

3. APPLICATIONS IN BURNABY

While the concept of transit priority measures accords with the developing strategy in the Burnaby Transportation Plan the application of these measures in Burnaby will need to be adapted to the local context. The following offers some comments on the various types of transit priority measures outlined in the report:

(i) **Transit Priority on Roads/Streets**

The development of roads and streets with lanes for exclusive use by transit or other high occupancy vehicles is largely dependent on the current or expected bus volumes on the street and the degree of traffic congestion. Exclusive bus lanes and bus only streets are primarily warranted in corridors with high volumes of buses. Few corridors would qualify except perhaps Hastings Street between Holdom Avenue and Boundary Road which accommodates high volumes of local Burnaby buses as well as express buses from north east sector municipalities. The Barnet/Hastings People Moving Project envisions a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane for both buses and car pools in this section of Hastings.

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Bus queue jumpers provide an alternative route for buses to bypass chronic traffic queues and can often yield substantial benefits to transit at relatively low cost. In the Greater Vancouver Region major queuing tends to be focused on the approaches to major crossings of the Fraser River and Burrard Inlet which are located in adjacent municipalities.

HOV lanes could have potentially broader application in Burnaby than other transit priority measures. The Burnaby Transportation Plan includes consideration of a HOV network which would identify roads appropriate for development as HOV facilities. This network would be developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and B.C. Transit.

(ii) Transit Priority Through Signal Control Systems

Signal control systems to facilitate transit operations could be considered for application in specific areas in the Municipality. Many applications of signal control technology in Burnaby however will involve Provincial highways and therefore would be undertaken in cooperation with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways. The development of a Traffic Operations Strategy in the Burnaby Transportation Plan provides the opportunity to assess the application of signal control systems to give transit priority on municipal roads and streets.

(iii) Transit Priority Through Regulation

Measures to give transit priority through traffic regulation involve turn ban exemptions, no stopping zones (within an intersection), right of way for buses when making lane changes and parking bans. In Burnaby exemptions from left or right turn prohibitions and peak period bans on curb parking have been applied to benefit transit operations. Banning on-street parking during peak periods however often involves a trade-off between traffic needs and the desire of residents and businesses to retain on street parking.

4. SPECIFIC TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECTS

The B.C. Transit report identifies a number of areas for specific application of transit priority measures. In Burnaby the list includes only two projects namely:

(i) Lougheed Highway (North Road to Willingdon Avenue) HOV Lanes

A priority in the Burnaby Transportation Plan is the development of peak period/peak direction HOV lanes in conjunction with the widening of the Lougheed Highway to a six lane standard.

(ii) Hastings Street (Inlet Drive to Boundary Road) Bus Lane

The B.C. Transit report notes the need for a bus only lane on Hastings Street from Inlet Drive to Boundary Road. This proposal however is inconsistent with the Barnet/Hastings Project which incorporates a HOV lane in this section of Hastings.

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Both of these projects involve roads classed as Provincial Highways and will therefore largely require the cooperation of the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to implement. As no projects mentioned in the report involve municipal streets, there is an implication that the municipal street system currently facilitates transit operations and no further action to expand transit priority measures in Burnaby is required.

While Lougheed Highway and Hastings Street offer the most significant opportunities for bus priority measures, there are likely other applications in the Municipality which could benefit from a cooperative approach with B.C. Transit. The proposed intersection reconstruction projects on Boundary Road at Adanac and 22nd Avenue/Elmwood are examples.

5. CONCLUSION

The process for renewal of the Burnaby Transportation Plan fully supports measures to facilitate the operation of buses on the road system. The application of these measures in Burnaby however would often require the involvement of the Ministry of Transportation and Highways but in the context of developing a traffic operations strategy in the Burnaby Transportation Plan. In advance of these discussions, B.C. Transit should work with Burnaby and the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to develop an objective framework for evaluating proposed transit priority measures. B.C. Transit, together with staff, would then have the opportunity to identify areas for potential application of transit priority measures in the Municipality."

Respectfully submitted,

Alderman J. Young
 Chairman

Alderman D. Evans
 Member

Alderman D. Lawson
 Member

Alderman C. Redman
 Member

Mr. Peter Miller
 Member

Mr. Ernest Neumann
 Member

Mr. Len Werden
 Member