

CITY OF BURNABY

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
(TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT DIVISION)

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

Re: BC TRANSIT FARE INCREASES FOR SENIORS: CORRESPONDENCE  
FROM JOANNA AULICH

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council request that the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority implement a reduced price Concession DayPass for seniors as outlined in Section 3 and Section 4 of this report.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. G. Puil, Chair, Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority.
3. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to J. Aulich, #1006 - 9304 Salish Court, Burnaby, B.C. V3J 7C5, John Larsen, Bonsor Seniors Society, Burnaby, B.C. and Mrs. I.M. Lewis, 3880 Nithsdale Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 1P6.

REPORT

Council, at its meeting held on 1997 October 27 received correspondence discussing BC Transit fare increases for seniors and the overall transit services provided by the Greater Vancouver area. Arising from consideration of the correspondence, Council resolved to refer the matter to the Traffic and Transportation Committee (Transportation and Transit Division) for consideration.

The Committee, at its meeting held on 1997 November 12, received the correspondence and requested staff to report to the Vancouver Regional Transit Commission advising of Ms. Aulich's concerns regarding BC Transit fare increases.

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Arising from that direction, the Traffic and Transportation Committee (Transportation and Transit Division), at its meeting held on 1998 October 20, adopted the attached report addressing the BC Transit fare increases for seniors. (Ms. Aulich's correspondence is attached to the report as **Attachment A.**)

MEMBERS:

Mr. Lyle Boivin  
Mr. Raymond Lupien  
Mr. W.B. Roxburgh  
Ms. L. Tatangelo

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Evans  
Chair

Councillor J. Young  
Vice Chair

Councillor N. Volkow  
Member

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS 1998 October 20  
TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
(Transportation and Transit Division)

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING OUR FILE: 8.211

SUBJECT: BC TRANSIT FARE INCREASES FOR SENIORS : CORRESPONDENCE FROM  
JOANNA AULICH

PURPOSE: To advise the Traffic and Transportation Committee on an approach to respond to  
the concerns raised by Ms. Joanna Aulich regarding the fare increases implemented  
in 1997 September.

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#### **RECOMMENDATIONS :**

- 1. THAT** the Traffic and Transportation Committee recommend that Council request that the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority implement a reduced price Concession DayPass for seniors as outlined in Section 3 and Section 4 of this report.
- 2. THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to Mr. G. Puil, Chair, Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority.
- 3. THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to J. Aulich, #1006 - 9304 Salish Court, Burnaby, B.C., John Larsen, Bonsor Seniors Society and to Mrs I.M. Lewis, 3880 Nisthdale Street, Burnaby.

### **REPORT**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

At a previous regular meeting, the Traffic and Transportation Committee received correspondence from J. Aulich with regard to the fare increases which were approved by the Vancouver Regional Transit Commission in 1997 September. The changes to the fare system increased concession fares, reduced the concession discount on a number of fare instruments and applied formerly peak period zone fares throughout the day. The correspondence from J. Aulich brought these matters to the attention of the Committee,

offered suggestions for the changes to the fare system and requested the assistance of the Committee and Council.

This report discusses the issues raised by the correspondent as a basis to propose changes to the fare structure to be considered by the Vancouver Regional Transportation Authority in response to these concerns.

## 2.0 FARE CHANGES

The fare changes introduced in 1997 September were intended to realize a 5% increase in transit revenue. The approach taken by the Vancouver Regional Transit Commission to achieve this target involved firstly, applying zone fares during the mid-day and secondly, significantly increasing concession fares.

Concession fares are discounted fares available to children 5-13 years, students 14-19 years (with a valid GoCard) and seniors 65+ years. Prior to 1998 September, concession fares were priced at 50% of the regular fare; after the fare changes, concession fares increased to 67% of the regular fare. As shown in Table 1 attached peak period concession fares rose from \$0.75, \$1.10 and \$1.50 for a 1, 2 and 3 zone trip respectively to \$1.00, \$1.50 and \$2.60 amounting to a 33%-36% increase. More significantly, off-peak concession fares for mid-day travel between 9:30AM and 3:30 P.M. which were formerly covered by a one-zone fare of \$.75 became subject to zone fares of \$1.00-\$2.60 representing increases of from 33%-245%. Other fare media such as FareSaver tickets and DayPasses also increased correspondingly from \$7.50 to \$10.00 and from \$2.25 to \$4.00 respectively. To encourage monthly pass usage the Concession FareCard increased only by a relatively modest amount from \$33.00 to \$35.00.

Adult fares remained relatively unchanged except that adults were also subject to zone fares in the off-peak periods. However, prices for two and three zone FareCards were reduced to encourage use of non-cash fare media. Prices for a 2-zone and 3-zone FareCard declined from \$82.00 to \$78.00 and from \$106.00 to \$103.00 respectively.

In reviewing the fare changes the following conclusions can be drawn:

- the fare changes involved substantially increased transit fares for seniors at all times of the day. In contrast, regular fares for adults increased only during the off-peak for multi zone trips. Other adult fares remained the same or declined.

- the increases for seniors applied to all trips during the day both peak and off-peak. The most pronounced increases were for mid-day trips ie. shopping, medical appointments and recreation which involve multi-zone travel.

Clearly, the fare changes affected seniors more negatively than any other single group without offering alternatives to accommodate seniors who depend on transit for mid-day trips for shopping, medical needs, recreation, exercise etc.

### 3.0 CORRESPONDENT'S CONCERNS

J. Aulich's letter in Attachment A raises similar issues as noted in the preceding section and suggests the following changes to soften the impact of the fare changes on seniors:

- **offer FareSaver ticket booklets for 1, 2 and 3 zones at a reduced price.** Currently, Concession FareSaver tickets are only available for single zone trips. Transit riders wishing to travel on a concession fare for a multi-zone (2 or 3 zone) trip would have to add fare. However, BC Transit may not be amenable to introducing separate Concession multi-zone tickets to accommodate a specific group of concession transit riders.
- **reduce the price of a DayPass to allow seniors to travel all day.** This proposal could be implemented by offering the Concession DayPass at a reduced rate to seniors upon presentation of appropriate identification. Under the fare changes the Concession DayPass was raised in price from \$2.25 to \$4.00.

The option of introducing multi-zone FareSaver tickets would be an administratively more difficult method of providing reduced mid-day fares for seniors and would not offer the discount available through the reduced price Concession DayPass. The reduced price Concession DayPass would allow seniors the flexibility of unlimited travel (after 9:30 A.M.) throughout the transit system, but especially during the mid-day period when seniors could make a number of trips for a wide range of trip purposes. As many of the seniors' trips on a DayPass would be made during the mid-day when base period transit services are not overly utilized, additional transit resources would not be needed as a result of this accommodation to the needs of seniors. It is suggested that this Concession DayPass be priced at \$2.50.

### 4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The request for a reduced fare DayPass is being advanced as a matter requiring expeditious consideration by the GVTA Board in response to issues raised by lower-income seniors in the community who are not eligible for the Annual Pass and have been significantly disadvantaged as a result of the 1997 September fare changes. Although it is recognized that the organizational structure for transit has not been finalized the City of Burnaby would

request that this matter be given priority consideration by the GVTA Board and prompt consideration by the Transition Team or GVTA/BC Transit staff to address the significant inequities inherent in the current fare system as it applies to a substantial portion of the senior's community.

**5.0 CONCLUSION**

The 1997 September fare changes had a significant impact on concession fares which, prior to these changes, offered a significant discount for seniors. The overall increase in concession fares and the application of zone fares all day eliminated the discount available to seniors, particularly women, who found travel during the mid-day period safe, convenient and economical for shopping, medical visits, recreation etc. To address this issue, it is proposed that the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority expedite consideration of a change to the fare structure to offer a DayPass to seniors at a reduced price of \$2.50.



D.G. Stenson, Director  
PLANNING & BUILDING

RG/sk  
cc. City Manager

**TABLE 1  
TRANSIT FARES**

	ZONES	ADULT FARES		CONCESSION FARES	
		Pre Sept. 1997	Post Sept. 1997	Pre Sept. 1997	Post Sept. 1997
<b>REGULAR CASH FARES</b> <i>Weekdays before 6:30 p.m.</i>	1	1.50	1.50	.75	1.00
	2	2.25	2.25	1.10	1.50
	3	3.00	3.00	1.50	2.00
<b>DISCOUNT CASH FARES</b> <i>Weekdays after 6:30 p.m. and all day Sat., Sun. &amp; holidays</i>	All Zones	1.50	1.50	.75	1.00
<b>PREPAID FARES</b> • <b>Monthly Farecards</b>	1	54.00	54.00	33.00	35.00
	2	78.00	82.00	---	---
	3	103.00	106.00	---	---
• <b>FareSaver Tickets</b> <i>Book of 10</i>	1	13.75	13.75	7.50	10.00
	2	20.50	20.50	---	---
	3	28.00	28.00	---	---
• <b>Day Pass</b> <i>One day's unlimited travel</i>	N/A	5.50	6.00	2.25	4.00

CORRESPONDENCE  
1997 OCTOBER 27

Johanna Aulich  
1006-9304 Salish Court  
Burnaby, B.C., V3J 7C5  
Tel. 421-5726

October 16, 1997

Municipal Council  
4949 Canada Way  
Burnaby, B.C.  
V5G 1M2

Re.: October 1997, BC Transit Fare Increases for Seniors;  
Transit Service in Greater Vancouver.

As a senior and frequent transit user, I would like to join all concerned citizens in the plea to have the recent fare increases for seniors revised and brought down to a more acceptable level.

Most centers in the world provide for a variety of transit fare reductions for seniors, averaging mostly at 50 % of the regular charges. Vancouver is considered one of the wealthiest cities in Canada, perhaps even in North America. Would it not be an act of courtesy and appreciation to seniors who spent their lives building this community to offer to them affordable transit fares?

A great number of seniors are unable to drive a car or do not own a car any longer and do depend on public transport. The majority of seniors using bus service consists of women who live on limited incomes. Particularly, the mid-day reduced fare period was always very popular with these women to do their shopping, medical visits and other errands. Seniors who are active in community work and volunteer services, also those who follow educational and cultural pursuits or just cherish a ride into town deserve a financial break at one time of the day. Reduced fares at night time are of little value to seniors in view of the existing safety risks. To burden seniors with additional expenses means to shut them in frocibly. Thus, years of community effort to improve the lot of seniors are being reversed, and so is the idea of using the mid-day period to ease the passenger load on busses during the rush hour.

The average rate of the recent increases in fare costs to seniors amount to 52.4 % (based on increases for: 1, 2 and 3 zones, day passes, Monthly Fare Cards and Fare Saver Tickets) - a much higher rate than that applied to non-concession fares. For the average senior who travels usually 1-2 zones, mid-day, the actual costs rose by appr. 75 %. This obviously does not represent a fair deal and literally begs for a more just solution.

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- DIRECTOR ENGINEERING  
- DIR. PLNG. & BLDG.



Further, I would like to suggest a more flexible ticket system which could be implemented easily. Such system would reduce fare cost to seniors and transit administration as well:

- 10 ticket booklets for 1 zone at a reduced price  
(only non-concession reductions are offered at present),
- 10 ticket booklets for 2 zones at a reduced price,
- 10 ticket booklets for 3 zones at a reduced price.

Tickets could be made half size of the present ones (or less, similar to movie tickets or tickets in other provinces), reducing, thus, the cost for paper, printing and storage volume.

The price for a Day Pass for seniors is at present totally out-priced and should be reassessed. While a monthly bus pass might offer more freedom to a senior, at \$ 35.--, it cuts too deeply into an average income of a senior. Prepaid by monthly or flexible annual bus passes could be developed to reduce cost to all parties involved.

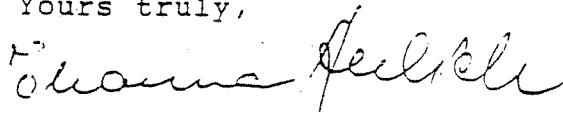
Another great concern to seniors (and other bus users) are the various shortcomings in bus service, such as:

- frequent disregard of posted schedules (plus and minus),
- irregular synchronization of lines (making transfers difficult),
- busses failing to stop at legitimate stops for mysterious reasons.

If the length of routes presents problems for keeping the times according to schedules, routes should be divided instead of cutting service and its quality.

I sincerely hope that the Council will be in a position to act in the above matter.

Yours truly,



CC.  
Mrs. Millie Canessa,  
Secretary COSCO  
5131 Carson St.,  
Burnaby, V5J 2Z1

