

CITY OF BURNABY

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TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
(TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT DIVISION)

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

RE: TRANSLINK STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council forward a copy of this report to G. Puil, Chair, TransLink Board of Directors.

R E P O R T

The Traffic and Transportation Committee (Transportation and Transit Division), at its meeting held on 2000 April 12, received and adopted the *attached* report to review the implications for the City of Burnaby of the TransLink Strategic Transportation Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor N. Volkow
Chair

Councillor D. Evans
Vice Chair

Councillor N. Harris
Member

<p>:COPY - CITY MANAGER - DIRECTOR ENGINEERING - DIRECTOR FINANCE - DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING</p>
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TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS 2000 April 04
TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
(Transportation and Transit Division)

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING OUR FILE: 08.109

SUBJECT: TRANSLINK STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION PLAN

PURPOSE: To review the implications for the City of Burnaby of the TransLink Strategic Transportation Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to G. Puil, Chair, TransLink Board of Directors.

REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 1998, TransLink has recognized the need for a long range transportation plan to provide a perspective and direction for the regional transportation authority. The Strategic Transportation Plan, under development since early 1999, was presented to the TransLink Board in 1999 November with the public having the opportunity to submit opinions on the Plan through a variety of venues including a series of public fora held throughout the region, online contact and discussion boards. The Public Forum for the Burnaby/New Westminster area was held on 2000 March 07 in New Westminster. However, this location reduced attendance from Burnaby residents.

This report presents the Strategic Transportation Plan, assesses its implications for the City of Burnaby and summarizes the results of the public process.

2. THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Strategic Transportation Plan (STP) consists of five parts: the Plan Vision and Objectives, the Transit Plan, the Road and Infrastructure Plan, the Management Plan and the Financial Plan. The following summarizes the key components of each.

2.1 Plan Vision

The vision of the STP is “*Enhanced Livability through Managed Mobility.*” In this respect the Plan is intended to support the Livable Region Strategic Plan vision of enhanced livability. Managed Mobility is achieved through a Transit Plan, a Roads and Infrastructure Plan, and a Management Plan to be implemented over a five-year period.

2.2 Transit Plan

The objective of the Transit Plan is to enhance the transit system through the expansion of existing services and the provision of new services that meet consumer needs. From now to 2005, the draft Strategic Transportation Plan envisions more than \$1 billion in capital investments to expand the transit system. These service enhancements include the following:

2.2.1 Bus Services

B-Line - this service (using longer, articulated buses and offering frequent boardings and limited stops) would expand to serve major activity centres.

- 165 buses by 2005
- “Real time” schedule information
- Bus Priority Measures to avoid traffic congestion

The 99 B Line service would be discontinued in Burnaby with the start of service on the Millennium SkyTrain Line but a new Coquitlam-Lougheed Mall B-Line service could be available in 2001 as a precursor to the development of the SkyTrain extension to Coquitlam.

Express Buses - highway coaches (the bus equivalent to commuter rail) will begin service between regional town centres.

- Seventy-six new coaches by 2001
- 100 coaches by 2005

These services would primarily be directed to the outer suburban cities although an express bus service is proposed between Metrotown and Richmond by 2002.

City Buses - these local bus services will improve in the more densely populated areas.

- More buses - from 1,015 today to 1,323 by 2005
- More service - peak hours every ten to fifteen minutes, daytime every fifteen to twenty minutes
- Commitment to trolleys - 250 new vehicles in an expanded fleet

As part of the Growth Concentration Area, Burnaby, Vancouver and New Westminster will be the focus of the bulk of City Bus improvements providing increased service frequencies on existing routes to a maximum of 10-15 minutes during peak periods and 15-20 minutes daytime.

Community Shuttles - use minibuses and shared-ride taxis where large conventional buses are too expensive and inefficient to operate.

- Link hospitals, schools and recreation facilities with major transportation corridors
- Twenty-two vehicles this year
- Fifty-two vehicles by 2005

A Community Shuttle using smaller, ten-person TaxiBus vehicles will be introduced in the Burnaby Heights to support the implementation of the neighbourhood traffic calming plan. Some areas of the South Slope are also candidates for this type of service.

Customer Services - improvements that make it easier to use the bus system.

- Better street-level facilities including shelters
- Measures to make the system safer and more secure
- New customer-friendly “real time” schedule, trip planning and information services

2.2.2 Marine Transit

SeaBus - assess ways to increase passenger capacity on the two existing vessels.

New Passenger Ferries - new services to be studied, including new routes across Burrard Inlet.

2.2.3 Rail Transit

SkyTrain - maximize use of existing line and build new lines.

- Addition of ninety-seven new “Mark II” cars
- Complete full ‘T’ Line (New West - Coquitlam Centre - Vancouver)
- Start planning for Vancouver - Richmond line

These improvements are expected to increase the transit ridership of Burnaby residents significantly and will directly serve the large flow of commuters from the Northeast Sector to Burnaby.

West Coast Express - more capacity will be provided

- Expansion to thirty-seven cars this year
- Sixth train added in 2002

Although not noted in the STP, the provision of a WCT Station in Burnaby at the foot of Penzance Drive needs to be more closely evaluated over the next five years.

2.2.4 Other Transportation Alternatives

Included in the Plan are other alternatives to single occupant vehicles:

- New bike lockers at some SkyTrain stations
- More bike racks on buses
- Support for the region's cycling path network.
- New funding and technical support for the Jack Bell Foundation to increase the number of vanpools from ninety-six today to 500 by 2005

2.3 Roads and Infrastructure Plan

The objective of the Roads and Infrastructure Plan is to improve the Major Road Network (MRN) through rehabilitation and improved maintenance of existing roads, making the most of existing roads through traffic management and selective addition of new facilities that will support goods movement and relieve congestion at key locations.

2.3.1 Maintenance and Repair

Funding is provided in the Plan for pavement, curbs, drainage, cleaning, snow removal, ice control, signals, lighting, pedestrian facilities and road markings. However, TransLink has decided to postpone until 2001 moving from the 70% to the 80% level of funding for maintaining the uploaded former municipal roads in the MRN.

2.3.2 Road Improvements

A TransLink fund (Minor Capital) for "smaller" capital projects (co-funded by municipalities).

- \$10 million this year for the entire region
- Increasing to \$20 million per year by 2005
- Transit, goods movement & HOV traffic given priority
- Traffic controls co-ordinated between municipalities along major routes

Under the current funding allocation, the City of Burnaby receives approximately \$1.2 M. annually to fund improvements to the MRN that this year will total approximately \$6.7 M. Clearly, the available MRN capital funding from TransLink

falls considerably short of the identified needs - a significant issue for cities like Burnaby that, in 1998, received several downgraded highways from the Province.

2.3.3 New Roads & Bridges

TransLink's capital fund for new construction of "major capital" projects (in partnership with the Provincial and Federal Governments, municipalities and the private sector) has identified several for funding including a new crossing between Maple Ridge and Langley, the South Fraser Perimeter Road, realignment of the Dollarton Bridge and others.

- \$5 million in 2000
- \$40 million per year by 2005
- Goods movement a priority

The Stormont-McBride Connector and the United Boulevard Extension are two of the proposed high-priority "major capital" projects that would significantly affect travel within, to and from Burnaby.

2.4 Management Plan

The objective of the Management Plan is to develop a system that implements transportation demand management, promotes the use of walking, cycling, and other alternatives, integrates management of all elements of the transportation system cost effectively and monitors the progress of this implementation.

2.4.1 Revenue Generation

For TransLink, managing the transportation system involves getting more revenue from the users of the transportation system. Adopting "user pay" approach to generating revenue for the system also offers a way to use the pricing of transportation services (over which TransLink has some control) as a way to influence the demand for transportation. Currently, TransLink pays for the transportation system mainly through the following revenue sources:

- Transit fares
- Part of the gasoline tax
- Parking sales tax
- Hydro "transit levy"
- Commercial property taxes

The "user pay" approach would see the transportation system funded less from general taxation and more from user charges including transit fares, parking charges and a new vehicle levy as follows:

- Transit fare increases of 25 cents per zone for Bus, SeaBus and SkyTrain this year. In 2003, fares would be 25 cents more for one or two zones and 50 cents more for three zones.
- West Coast Express fares would be increased 50 cents for one zone rising to an increase of \$1.00 for five zone travel.
- Motorists would pay a vehicle levy of up to \$75 beginning in 2001.
- A 14 per cent increase in paid parking charges would start in 2005, with measures taken regarding “free” parking at malls or other locations.
- Property owners benefitting from publicly funded road and transit improvements would share in those costs.

2.4.2 Alternatives to the Single Occupant Vehicle

The STP supports alternatives to the single occupant vehicle other than transit including:

- vanpool and carpool
- cycling
- walking
- review of major land developments to ensure support for the Livable Region Strategic Plan

This accords with the policies of the Burnaby Transportation Plan to promote alternative modes.

2.4.3 Customer Focus

The STP has a strong customer focus in market research, safety and security, customer information, public consultation

2.4.4 Major Road Network

Managing the Major Road Network involves programs that give priority to alternative modes on the MRN, develop transit priority measures and coordinate signal operations

2.4.5 Other Management Initiatives

TransLink also proposes to manage the transportation system effectively through the following:

- Measuring, monitoring and reporting on the system’s performance
- Creating products to meet demand and exceed expectations
- Using new technology to allow better access to information
- An independent review of the structure and performance of the system.

2.5 Financial Plan

The STP recognizes that improving the transportation system in the region will be costly and that new revenue sources will be required to fund transportation. Prudent financial management and cost sharing with other agencies are identified as ways to optimize the application of TransLink's financial resources.

2.5.1 Financial Outlook

The Plan assesses the effect of not implementing the aforementioned new revenue sources. This review found that total costs would increase from \$544.4 M. in 2000 to \$928.1 M. in 2009, but revenues would fall short of costs leaving a deficit that would increase from \$18.6 M. in 2000 to \$78.9 M. in 2009. As shown in Table 1, the Recommended Financial Strategy incurs deficits in 2000 and 2001 but surpluses begin to appear in 2002 with the additional revenue sources from transit fare increases, vehicle charges and parking taxes. However, after 2005 the additional debt servicing costs of the Coquitlam SkyTrain extension lead to deficits in the second half of the decade even assuming increased revenues from transportation taxes.

Table 1
Financial Outlook (Recommended Revenue Strategy) \$ Millions

	Annualized			Projected				
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2009
Revenues								
Operating	203.6	227.0	245.0	254.6	290.6	300.8	312.0	356.8
Taxation	284.5	291.3	338.4	421.9	443.4	459.9	504.6	571.3
Total Revenues	488.1	518.3	583.4	676.5	733.9	760.7	816.6	928.1
Costs								
Operating Costs	430.4	453.2	483.9	519.4	551.6	576.6	611.7	671.2
Debt Servicing Costs	76.3	91.2	114.9	141.6	163.7	181.4	202.7	335.8
Total Costs	506.7	544.4	598.8	661.0	715.3	758.0	814.4	1007.0
Surplus (Deficit)	(18.6)	(26.1)	(15.4)	15.5	18.6	2.6	2.2	(78.9)
Reserve Balance	44.2	18.1	2.7	18.2	36.8	39.5	41.7	(215)

3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

The public consultation process for the STP was initiated in early February and continued through until March with Public Forums held in all areas of the region. The main points of discussion were as follows:

- **Transportation Taxes** - opposition to the vehicle charge and the parking levy from both private citizens and the business community.
- **Transit Fare Increase** - objections to the proposed fare changes as they would be regressive to encouraging transit use and would penalize seniors and those on low incomes.
- **Fare Evasion** - deal more aggressively with the issue of fare evasion.
- **Cycling** - several improvements to cycling facilities including bike lockers and racks and more opportunity to take bicycles on the transit system.
- **Transit Availability** - the lack of transit especially to the Vancouver International Airport and in the outer suburban areas including Maple Ridge, the City and District of Langley.
- **SkyTrain Security** - concerns about the criminal activity at specific SkyTrain stations.
- **Motorcycles** - were identified as a mode of transportation that should be encouraged and should not be subject to the vehicle levy.

There was only one comment specific to the transportation system in Burnaby. One person commented on the need for better transit in the early morning for employees going to Burnaby Hospital.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR BURNABY

The Strategic Transportation Plan (STP) is a comprehensive document with far-reaching implications for the way in which transportation services are planned, funded and constructed in the region. The development of the GVTA in 1998 was heralded as an opportunity for the municipalities to have greater control over a broad range of "regional" transportation services, many of which were formerly under provincial jurisdiction. However, with the greater responsibility for provincial highways came increased costs to rehabilitate, maintain, operate and upgrade the downloaded roads. Similarly, with regional control over a transit system that had been significantly underfunded by the Province, there are increased costs to acquire new transit infrastructure to encourage the mode shift from auto to transit and to support the development strategy in the Livable Region Strategic Plan. Clearly, TransLink has brought its own set of rights and responsibilities - the right for municipalities to decide their own transportation future, but also the responsibility to pay the higher costs of achieving it.

Consequently, the City stands to benefit significantly from the initiatives in the Strategic Transportation Plan, but there are also substantial costs involved in realizing these benefits. In this context, the STP would have the following major implications for Burnaby:

Transit services in Burnaby will be substantially improved

As part of the Burrard peninsula growth concentration area, Burnaby is expected to receive higher growth in population and employment and a substantial share of the transit service improvements proposed in the Strategic Transportation Plan. This larger share means more than just the extension of the SkyTrain system to serve the Lougheed corridor. It also requires a variety of other transit service improvements. These service improvements will be defined in Area Plans to be undertaken in Burnaby this year and in 2003 and could include the following:

- **B-Line services** from SFU to downtown Vancouver, from Coquitlam to Lougheed Town Centre (as a precursor to rapid transit) and from the University SkyTrain Station to SFU.
- **Express bus service** from Metrotown to Richmond Town Centre and from Metrotown to North Vancouver City Centre.
- A reorientation of local **City bus services** to serve the SkyTrain stations and to provide the more direct and continuous north-south routes identified in the Transit Concept in the Burnaby Transportation Plan. Increased service frequencies appropriate to a more urban standard with 10 min. peak period service and 15 min. daytime service on many routes.
- **Community shuttle buses** would be available in lower ridership areas such as Burnaby Heights and the South Slope.

Currently, in Burnaby it is estimated that approximately 16% of all trips are taken by transit. This is higher than the 11% transit share in the region as a whole partly due to the high use of SkyTrain for peak period trips from Burnaby into Vancouver. The development of the Millennium Line by 2006 should substantially increase the transit share in Burnaby as rapid transit will be available to serve the two major Burnaby travel flows from North Burnaby to Vancouver and from the Northeast Sector into Burnaby. In tandem with the other transit improvements, the transit share of Burnaby trips could rise to the 20% range by 2006.

The City's road costs will increase substantially

The declassification of Provincial highways that accompanied the inception of the GVTA resulted in the City assuming responsibility for the maintenance, operations and upgrading of approximately 207 km. of additional arterial roads which previously the City did not pay to upgrade. TransLink has assumed partial responsibility for funding capital upgrading of these facilities to a maximum of 50% as part of the Major Roads Network (MRN) Capital Program. The total budget allocated for roads capital in the 1999 TransLink budget was \$10 M. of which the City received \$1.2 M. as a contribution to fund a portion of the Marine Tenth Connector.

45 The Strategic Transportation Plan proposes a total budget of \$15 M. for MRN Capital Projects of which \$10 M. would be allocated for Minor Capital projects (largely municipal roads) cost

shared with the municipalities and \$5 M for Major Capital projects (new bridges, highways etc.) to be cost shared, largely with the Province. The total budget for Minor Capital projects would increase to \$20 M. by 2005 while the budget for Major Capital projects would increase to \$40 M.

For the Minor Capital projects, the total budget over the five year period would be \$10 M. in 2000 increasing to \$13 m, \$15 M., \$17 M. and 20 M. in the succeeding years of the Five Year Program for a total of \$75 M. Under the current funding allocation formula, Burnaby would receive approximately \$9 M. over the five year period to fund all upgrading projects on the MRN. However, this amount would not cover 50% of the approximately \$23 M. in projects currently planned by Burnaby for the MRN and identified in the 2000-2004 Burnaby Capital Program for Major Roads. Unless funding for the MRN Capital Program is increased over the next five years, the City will be responsible for most of the costs of Minor capital improvements to the Major Roads Network or alternatively, projects will have to be deferred. Funding for the Major Roads Network should therefore move away from the block funding approach under which municipalities receive a maximum funding allocation based on a formula regardless of the capital cost of approved projects. The more equitable approach would be one in which full 50% funding from TransLink is guaranteed for approved projects under a TransLink Five Year "Minor" Road Capital Program that relates to both TransLink and City priorities.

Transportation demand management is delayed

Both Transport 2021 (the 1995 Regional Transportation Plan) and the Burnaby Transportation Plan emphasized that it would not be financially possible or environmentally acceptable to continue to increase the supply of roads and bridges to meet all the demands for single occupant vehicle travel of a rapidly escalating population and growing employment base in the region. Measures were required which would either reduce the use of transportation during peak periods or redirect transportation demand to alternative modes such as transit, carpooling, cycling or walking. Pricing strategies such as tolls on new facilities and parking charges were identified as effective ways to not only to shift the dominant transportation mode away from single occupant vehicles in the peak periods, but also to generate revenue for the improvements to alternative modes needed to accommodate this shift.

The Strategic Transportation Plan acknowledges that, while road and parking pricing strategies are better tools to increase transit ridership and carpooling than the annual vehicle charge (proposed for implementation in 2001), road tolls and parking charges are further away than originally envisioned in Transport 2021. The annual vehicle charge will generate much needed revenue sooner, but will not have the desired effect on the use of transportation as would tolls and parking charges. The delay in implementation of road pricing will hamper the capability of TransLink to shift substantial numbers of auto trips to transit and carpools.

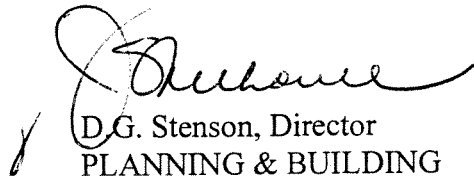
Moreover, as the TransLink deficit increases due to the onset of the debt servicing costs for the Coquitlam extension in the 2006 to 2010 period, there will be a need for significantly increased revenues from transportation taxes and a larger role for road and parking pricing not only in generating these revenues directly but also shifting more trips to the transit system.

5. CONCLUSION

The TransLink Strategic Transportation Plan proposes a bold direction for transportation in the region primarily involving major expenditures on improvements to the transit system. As part of the Growth Concentration Area, Burnaby stands to benefit substantially from these initiatives including the Millenium Line, new B-Line rapid bus services and expanded and more frequent City bus services. However, without a firmer commitment to the earlier implementation of road pricing strategies these major expenditures will have relatively little influence on shifting travel from single occupant vehicles to transit. The transit share of total trips region-wide is expected to increase from the current 11% to an estimated 12.5% by 2006. Funding for the improvements to the Major Roads Network over the next five years, however, will fall short of the identified needs requiring many municipalities, particularly the City of Burnaby (with a large number of downloaded provincial roads), to bear an increasing proportion of the capital costs of upgrading the road system.

Overall, the Strategic Transportation Plan, particularly the Lougheed and Coquitlam SkyTrain lines, will provide much needed support for the policies of the Burnaby Transportation Plan by significantly increasing the transit share of travel in Burnaby and by creating the compact development in Burnaby town centres that is critical to fostering transit ridership in the future. New local bus routes to serve rapidly developing areas of Burnaby and better service on existing routes will also increase the attractiveness of transit.

However, the City's transportation future also depends on sustaining an efficient arterial road system which will carry the bulk of trips by auto, transit, carpool, trucks and even bicycles. TransLink and Provincial funding for improvements to the Major Roads Network, particularly HOV/bus lanes, queue jumper projects and major roads capital projects to facilitate the operation of buses and goods movement by truck, is necessary to sustain a viable future regional transportation network in Burnaby and throughout the region.


D.G. Stenson, Director
PLANNING & BUILDING

cc: Director Engineering
Director Finance

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