

CITY OF BURNABY

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TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

**RE: CORRESPONDENCE FROM MRS. E. HAYWARD, AND MS. L. BURNHAM
REGARDING BUS ROUTE CHANGES OF 2002 SEPTEMBER.**

RECOMMENDATION:

1. ***THAT*** Council forward copies of the attached report to: Ms. K. McCune, Coast Mountain Bus Company; Mrs. E. Haward, 6582 Grant Street, and Ms. I Burnham, 7255 Barnet Road.

REPORT

The Transportation Committee at its meeting held on 2003 February 12 , received and adopted the attached report responding to bus route concerns raised by Mrs. E. Hayward and Ms. I. Burnham.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor N. Volkow
Chair

Councillor D. Evans
Vice Chair

Councillor L. Rankin
Member

COPY: CITY MANAGER
DIR. ENGINEERING
DIR. PLNG. & BLDG.

TO: TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE 2003 February 6
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 08.211
SUBJECT: Correspondence from Mrs. E. Hayward and Ms. I. Burnham Regarding Bus Route Changes of 2002 September
PURPOSE: To respond to bus route concerns raised by Mrs. E. Hayward and Ms. I. Burnham.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** copies of this report be forwarded to: Ms. K. McCune, Coast Mountain Bus Company; Mrs. E. Hayward, 6582 Grant Street; and Ms. I. Burnham, 7255 Barnet Road.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

On 2002 September 2, TransLink implemented the Burnaby / New Westminster Area Transit Plan, encompassing the most comprehensive restructuring of Burnaby bus routes in many years. The primary impetus for this was the opening of the SkyTrain Millennium Line. Routes were revised to provide more of a focus on the new SkyTrain line, while still maintaining good service to other areas. The new routes were presented at public open houses in 2002 January, and were approved by Council on 2002 June 24.

Council has received letters from Mrs. E. Hayward and Ms. I. Burnham, expressing their concerns about certain elements of these route changes. The purpose of this report is to respond to the issues raised.

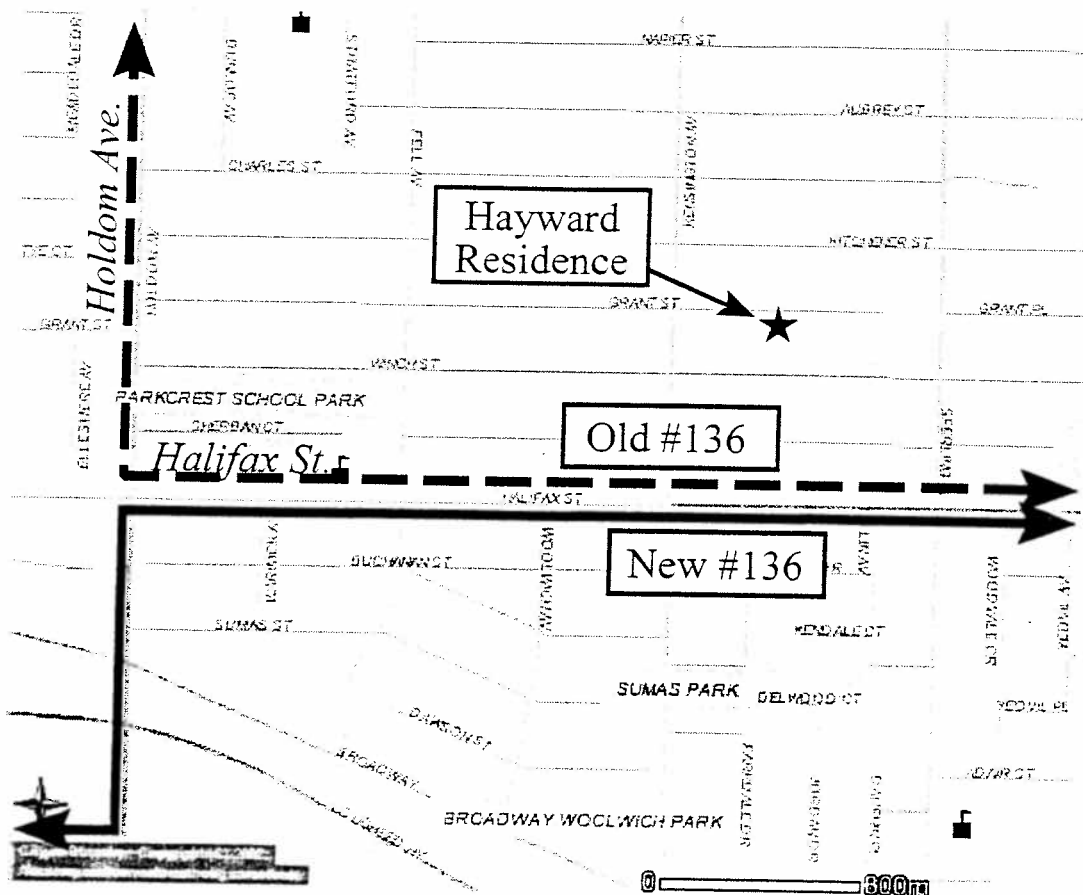
2.0 HALIFAX STREET

Mrs. E. Hayward of 6582 Grant Street is concerned about the changes to the #136 bus. This issue is illustrated in *Figure 1*. The #136 is a local bus that, among other things, provides service along part of Halifax Street. It previously went north on Holdom Avenue to Hastings Street, and then into the Burnaby Heights area. Under the new routing, it now turns south on Holdom Avenue and proceeds to Brentwood Town Centre.

Mrs. Hayward travels to the Burnaby Heights commercial area. This was a one-bus trip for her under the old route system. As a result of the Area Plan changes, she must now transfer to a second bus. She would prefer that the one-bus routing to Burnaby Heights be restored. However, since we have heard no other complaints (and neither have TransLink or Coast Mountain Bus Company), it is likely that the majority of residents along Halifax Street prefer the new routing, with its direct access to Brentwood Town Centre and the Millennium Line.

Mrs. Hayward presently has several options available for a two-bus routing to Burnaby Heights. She is presently using the #134 (rather than the #136) and connecting to route #129 at the intersection of Holdom and Curtis. She also has the option of taking the #134 or #136 to Brentwood, from where the #123 and #130 provide service to Burnaby Heights. In addition, route changes currently under consideration have the potential to create another two-bus routing option for her in the coming months. However, it is not possible to restore a one-bus routing from Halifax Street to Burnaby Heights without simultaneously down-grading the service from Halifax Street to Brentwood Town Centre.

Figure 1: Routing of #136 Bus



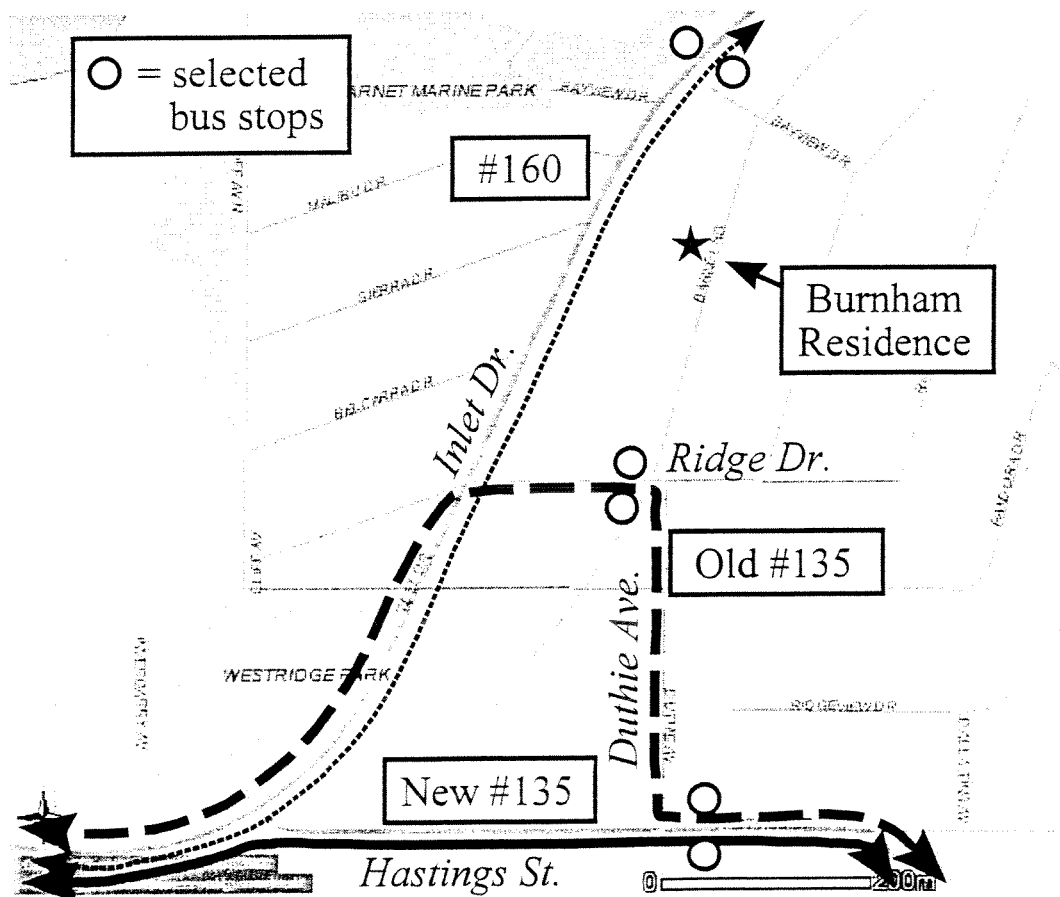
3.0 BARNET ROAD

Ms. I. Burnham of 7255 Barnet Road is concerned about the changes to the #135 bus, as illustrated in *Figure 2*. The #135 is more of a regional service, linking downtown Vancouver with Simon Fraser University. Prior to 2002 September, it diverted into the Westridge neighbourhood, running up Duthie Avenue, across on Ridge Drive, and back down Inlet Drive. Ms. Burnham would board at the intersection of Ridge and Duthie for trips to various points along Hastings Street.

On 2002 September 2, this route was made more direct to reflect its regional character. The intent was to make this route faster, easier to use, and easier to understand for the majority of people using this service. In the process, one bus stop (in either direction) was eliminated; namely at the intersection of Ridge Drive and Duthie Avenue. This was the stop that Ms. Burnham had been using, and it was about 250 metres from her home. Being on the side of Burnaby Mountain, her walk to this stop involved an elevation gain of about 7 metres.

Under the new bus network, Ms. Burnham has two options. She can walk down Duthie Avenue to Hastings Street, and catch the #135 there. This is a distance of about 550 metres from her home, and involves an elevation gain of about 18 metres.

Figure 2: Routing of #135 Bus



This bus stop for route #135 is beyond the 450 metres that TransLink considers an acceptable walking distance for bus service. However, there is a closer stop available. The #160 bus from Coquitlam stops at the corner of Inlet Drive and Bayview Drive, which is about 250 metres from Ms.

Burnham's home. This is similar to the distance that Ms. Burnham had been walking previously. However, there is an elevation change of 20 metres along this walking route. In addition, the frequency of service is not as good on the #160 bus, as it operates on a 30-minute headway for most of the day.

Ms. Burnham is elderly and uses a walker. She has indicated that any significant grade is a barrier to her, particularly under icy conditions. She is also concerned about the high speed of traffic on Inlet Drive. For these reasons, she does not use either the #135 or #160 bus. She is presently arranging for rides from friends.

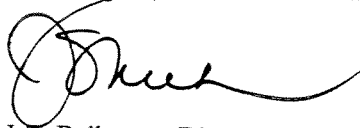
The conventional bus network, being based on a 450-metre walking limit, is designed primarily for people who have the ability to cover a 450-metre distance on their own, even if there are grades. With this in mind, the regional transit system includes alternatives for people who have difficulty accessing the conventional network.

The other options available to Ms. Burnham are HandyDART and Taxi Saver. HandyDART provides door-to-door service. It would thus address Ms. Burnham's concerns about walking on hills, icy sidewalks, and crossing a busy road to get to a bus stop. She has never tried this service, but has spoken to others who have used it. Her perception is that you have to be ready well in advance of your scheduled travel time, and that the HandyDART bus is not necessarily on time. For these reasons, she has chosen not to try HandyDART. In staff discussions with HandyDART, they indicate that they request people to be ready 10 or 15 minutes ahead of time, to allow for variability in bus times. (Each day's routes are customized, so there is greater variability than with the conventional bus system.) They indicate that most pick-ups are made within 10 or 15 minutes of the scheduled time. Ms. Burnham's trips to the Hastings area would cost \$2.00 each way. The comparative cost for Ms. Burnham by conventional bus would be \$1.50 (concession fare).

The second option is Taxi Saver, which is a 50% discount for travel by taxi. Bookings are made directly with the user's choice of taxi companies, and are paid for using coupons purchased from TransLink. A payment of \$20 to TransLink will purchase \$40 worth of Taxi Saver coupons, thus creating the 50% discount. The Taxi Saver option is more expensive than HandyDART, but provides greater reliability for pick-up times and can accept bookings on short notice.

It appears that Ms. Burnham is eligible for both HandyDART and Taxi Saver. These options have been discussed with Ms. Burnham.

It does not appear feasible to revise the conventional bus service in a way that would suit Ms. Burnham. In the longer term, it may be possible to operate a Community Shuttle into this area. Such a service could potentially link the Westridge and Lochdale neighbourhoods into the commercial area around Kensington Square. This possibility will be pursued in subsequent discussions with Coast Mountain Bus Company and TransLink. However, in view of the demand for Community Shuttle services throughout the region, this will not be a short-term solution.



J.S. Belhouse, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

SR/sa
cc: City Manager
Director Engineering

