

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

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**SUBJECT: #134 BUS SERVICE**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. THAT Council request Coast Mountain Bus Company to implement Community Shuttle service at off-peak times on Burnaby bus routes, where warranted by rideship levels and subject to case-by-case evaluation.
2. THAT Council send copies of this report to those that have corresponded with the City on this issue, as well as P. Noriega, Manager, Service Planning, Coast Mountain Bus Company, and G. Masterton, Program Manager, TransLink.

**REPORT**

The Transportation Committee, at its meeting held on 2006 September 13, received and adopted the attached report responding to concerns raised by residents regarding #134 bus service.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor N. Volkow  
Chair

Councillor S. Dhaliwal  
Vice Chair

Councillor L. Rankin  
Member

Copied to:	City Manager Director Engineering Director Planning & Building
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**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2006 September 7

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**FILE:** PL 90100-03  
*Reference: Bus Routes, Service,  
Fares, Stops*

**SUBJECT:** #134 BUS SERVICE

**PURPOSE:** To respond to concerns raised by residents regarding #134 bus service.

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#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council request Coast Mountain Bus Company to implement Community Shuttle service at off-peak times on Burnaby bus routes, where warranted by ridership levels and subject to case-by-case evaluation.
2. **THAT** Council send copies of this report to those that have corresponded with the City on this issue, as well as P. Noriega, Manager, Service Planning, Coast Mountain Bus Company, and G. Masterton, Program Manager, TransLink.

#### REPORT

##### 1.0 BACKGROUND

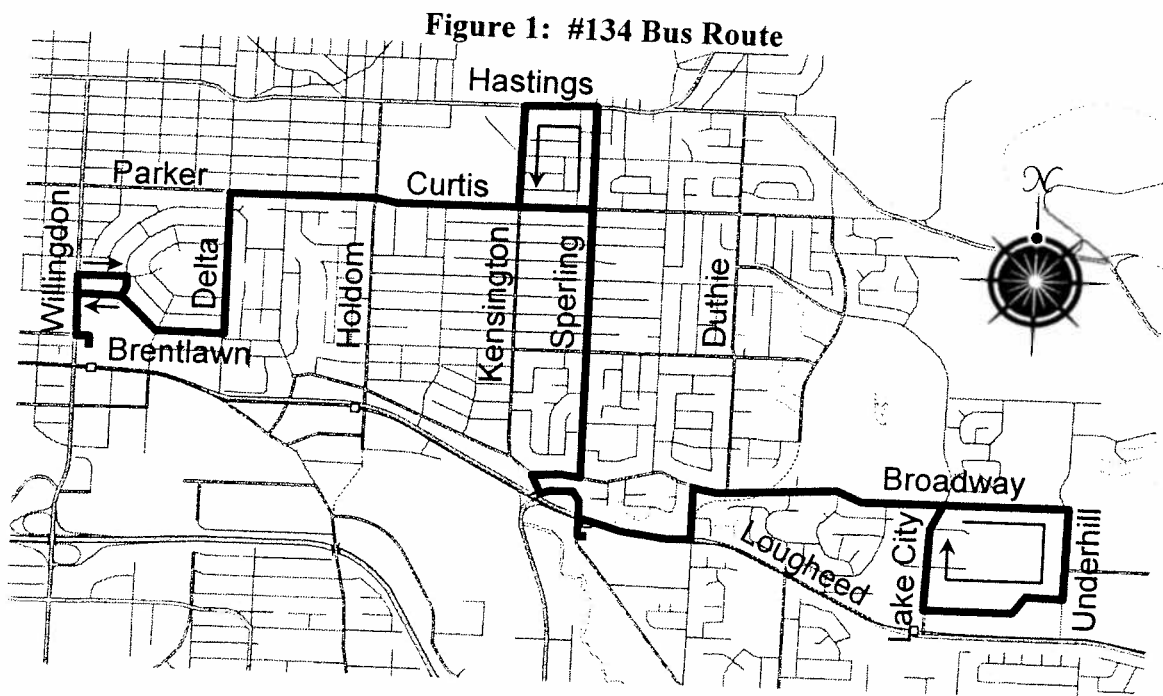
Council and the Transportation Committee have received concerns expressed by four residents about the #134 bus service, which operates through north Burnaby between the Brentwood and Lake City SkyTrain stations. Input received is as follows:

- A letter from Darcy Olson dated 2005 October 11.
- A letter from Gwen Johnson dated 2005 October 13.
- Mr. Olson and Ms. Johnson spoke as a delegation at the 2005 October 17 meeting of Council. Council referred the matter to the Transportation Committee.
- Claude and Linda Dosdall sent an e-mail to the City on 2005 October 30 and spoke as a delegation at the 2005 November 9 meeting of the Transportation Committee. The Committee requested a report from staff.
- Mr. Olson spoke as a delegation at the 2006 March 8 meeting of the Transportation Committee.

A staff report on this issue was presented to the Committee on 2006 March 8. The Committee referred the report back to staff for further consideration of the issues that were discussed at that time. The current document incorporates the findings of the original report, as well as reflecting the discussions at the March 8 Transportation Committee meeting.

## 2.0 ISSUES

The present routing of #134 is shown in **Figure 1**. It is a local neighbourhood route, linking single-family residential areas with the amenities and regional transit facilities of the Lougheed and Hastings corridors. It operates with a conventional 40-foot bus. Service begins at about 5:15 a.m. on weekdays, 6:15 a.m. on Saturday, and 7:15 a.m. on Sunday. It ends on all days at about 12:30 a.m. Service frequency is every 30 minutes, seven days a week, at all times of the day.



The following views were expressed by one or more of the people named in section 1.0:

1. The bus is "frequently completely empty" when traversing the Brentlawn neighbourhood, often with only one or two passengers and rarely more than four or five.
2. The bus is too large for the local roads, needing to squeeze between the two rows of parked cars.
3. The bus is too noisy for a residential area, particularly during the hours when people are sleeping.
4. Service is too frequent for the demand, and runs too late at night.

5. The Brentlawn area is well served by Willingdon buses and SkyTrain. It does not need #134. The bus passes through the neighbourhood, but is not used by the local residents.
6. The route operates “with no more than five people on it at any one time”.
7. The bus should be re-routed onto Willingdon Avenue (as illustrated in **Figure 2**), replaced with a Community Shuttle, or discontinued.
8. The recently implemented extension of the route to Hastings Street (at Kensington Square) “has no ridership” and should be eliminated.

**Figure 2: Proposed Re-Routing of #134**



Concern was also expressed by one of the delegations about the speed of cars operating on Brentlawn Drive. They report that parked cars have been damaged by speeding vehicles. Traffic calming measures such as intermediate stop signs (e.g., at Fairlawn and at Beta), speed humps, or traffic circles were proposed by the delegation to address this. They suggested that switching to Community Shuttles would allow bus service to continue after the implementation of measures such as traffic circles.

### 3.0 ANALYSIS

Brentlawn Drive is designated as a Local Collector road in the Burnaby Transportation Plan. It thus serves a function greater than the adjoining Local Residential roads, by providing an east-west neighbourhood link between Willingdon Avenue and Delta Avenue.

In response to the issues raised, Coast Mountain Bus Company (CMBC) conducted a ridership survey of #134 in 2005 November. Upon reviewing the data, City staff have concluded that:

1. The ridership follows the traditional pattern of being higher at commuting times, and lower in between. Mid-day trips typically have 5 to 10 riders on board at any given time,

yet peak-period trips can have as many as 30 riders, or occasionally as high as 40. These peak loads exist on almost all the route length, including the Brentlawn neighbourhood and the recent route extension to Hastings Street. The only under-utilized section of the route is between Sperling and Lake City SkyTrain stations.

2. Most stops along the route are being used regularly, not on every trip but several times a day. This is the typical pattern for a neighbourhood route. This includes the stops along Delta Avenue and the stop on Brentlawn Drive at Beta Avenue. This indicates that the route is being used by residents of the Brentlawn neighbourhood.
3. Similarly, the stops along the new extension to Hastings Street are also being used, on a level comparable to the rest of the route.
4. Not surprisingly, the busiest stops are at the Brentwood and Sperling SkyTrain stations. Many of the trips on #134 either begin or end at SkyTrain.

Strictly from a ridership perspective, the route could be operated as a Community Shuttle at off-peak times. However, CMBC indicates that there are several difficulties:

- The supply of Community Shuttles in the transit fleet is limited, and these vehicles are understandably being targeted at the lowest-ridership routes. There are other routes in the transit system with lower ridership than #134, that would be better candidates for Community Shuttle service.
- System-wide transit ridership has been rising steadily, in response to such factors as increasing gasoline prices. As a result, some routes that had been converted to Community Shuttle are now being converted back to regular bus service.
- Buses that serve #134 also operate on #136 (Brentwood Station to Lougheed Station, via Halifax) which is a busier route. A conversion to Community Shuttle service would need to accommodate both routes.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the use of Community Shuttles at off-peak times has clear benefits for the neighbourhood, primarily in terms of reduced noise. This benefit is particularly appreciated in the evenings and on weekends; times when the lower ridership could allow for use of a Community Shuttle.

This principle is not limited to #134, but also applies to other local bus routes in single-family residential areas that have similar ridership patterns. It is therefore recommended that Council ask CMBC to implement Community Shuttle service at off-peak times on Burnaby bus routes, where warranted by ridership levels and subject to case-by-case evaluation.

Regarding the other points that have been raised by one or more of the delegations:

- **Road width.** Brentlawn Drive is about 8.5 metres wide, with parking on both sides. This is less than the 11.0 metres normally provided on a Local Collector road. As a

result, opposing vehicles (including cars) must use the curb-side parking area to pass each other. However, City staff are not aware of any bus-related accidents resulting from this road width. Bus service has been operated on Brentlawn Drive for over 40 years.

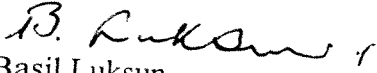
- **Noise.** This is an issue wherever buses, primarily conventional 40-foot buses, operate in residential areas (particularly single-family residential areas). Noise levels would be reduced by the proposed conversion to Community Shuttle service at off-peak times. This corresponds with times that many people are at home, and thus affected by bus noise.
- **Frequency and hours.** The existing service frequency of 30 minutes is considered a minimum operation, and is typical of that provided on other neighbourhood routes in Burnaby. The hours of service are designed to be consistent with the rest of the transit system, so that riders can expect consistent system-wide service within those hours. This consistency is important for attracting people to use transit. The effects of this service on residents would be ameliorated by the use of Community Shuttles at off-peak times.
- **Re-route via Willingdon and Parker.** Such a re-routing would merely add more buses onto a road (Willingdon Avenue) that is already heavily served. It would take buses away from roads (Delta Avenue and Brentlawn Drive) where the bus stops are being used. It would increase the walking distance for most residents, and reduce the number of people that are close to bus service. In addition, there are bus operational issues with the intersection of Willingdon at Parker. The southeast corner of the intersection would need to be reconstructed if buses were to turn right from northbound Willingdon Avenue to eastbound Parker Street.
- **Speed of cars.** It has been suggested that the speed of cars on Brentlawn Drive is too high, aided by the lack of stop signs at any point on Brentlawn Drive (except at the ends). Stop signs, speed humps, or traffic circles have been proposed. Speed humps and traffic circles are inconsistent with the street's role as a Local Collector road, which is expected to serve a larger neighbourhood role. Conversion of the intersection of Brentlawn at Beta to four-way stop-sign control was evaluated by City staff. It was found that this intersection does not meet the warrants for a four-way stop.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

This report has responded to issues raised about the #134 bus service. It is recommended that Council ask CMBC to implement Community Shuttle service at off-peak times on Burnaby bus routes, where warranted by ridership levels and subject to case-by-case evaluation.

To: Transportation Committee  
From: Director Planning and Building  
Re: #134 Bus Service  
2006 September 7 ..... Page 6

It is also recommended that copies of this report be sent to those that have corresponded with the City on this issue, and to Coast Mountain Bus Company.

  
Basil Luksun  
DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

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Copied to: City Manager  
Director Engineering

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