
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: TRANSLINK UNIVERSAL PASS

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council endorse the resolutions as set out in this Report.
2. **THAT** copies of the resolutions be forwarded to the TransLink Board of Directors, the provincial Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, and provincial MLAs in Burnaby.

REPORT

The Transportation Committee, at its meeting on 2009 June 10, discussed TransLink's Universal Pass (U-Pass) program as detailed below.

1.0 CITY OF VANCOUVER RESOLUTION

The Transportation Committee received and endorsed the following resolution from the City of Vancouver:

WHEREAS TransLink states that the U-Pass is a "way of providing students with affordable access to public transit and reducing vehicle trips to campuses;" and

WHEREAS in order to meet the greenhouse gas emissions set by the premier of British Columbia, transit ridership in the GVRD would have to double by 2020; and

WHEREAS implementation of the U-Pass at SFU and UBC has led to 39% and 53% increases in ridership since 2003; and

WHEREAS the Students' Union of Vancouver Community College, Douglas Students' Union and the Emily Carr Students' Union have repeatedly requested that TransLink remove the "revenue neutrality" policy (institutions with high ridership prior to U-Pass implementation are assessed a higher U-Pass fee) to allow for the expansion of a fairly priced Universal Pass to all public post-secondary students in Metro Vancouver; and

WHEREAS the Presidents of VCC and Emily Carr have sent letters of support to TransLink for a fairly priced Universal Pass at their institutions; and

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WHEREAS UBC students pay \$23.75/month, SFU students pay \$26.10/month, while Vancouver Community College, Emily Carr University and Douglas College students are forced to pay up to five times that amount; and

WHEREAS the BC Select Standing Committee in Finance and Government Services agrees with students that accessible transit services are an important spending priority and has urged government to consider facilitating the implementation of a standard U-Pass, bearing in mind the regional differences in transit services; and

WHEREAS The Students' Union of Vancouver Community College, Douglas Students' Union and the Emily Carr Students' Union intend to launch a formal complaint against the Ministry of Transportation and TransLink through the BC Ombudsman for U-Pass price discrimination;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver endorse the formal complaint to the BC Ombudsman launched on behalf of students of Emily Carr University, Vancouver Community College and Douglas College seeking an end to this discriminatory policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver endorse the call of the Students' Unions of Vancouver Community College, Emily Carr Students' Union and Douglas Students' Union for a standardized price for the Universal Pass program in Metro Vancouver that will not increase the cost to students already included in the program; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver, through the Mayor, communicate this decision to the TransLink Board of Directors and Transport Minister Kevin Falcon and circulate this resolution to other municipalities through the TransLink service area for their consideration and endorsement.

2.0 CITY OF BURNABY RESOLUTION

Arising from the discussion, the Transportation Committee requested staff prepare a further resolution to address specific concerns about how such an amended U-Pass program would be funded. That resolution is herewith presented for Council's consideration:

WHEREAS the TransLink U-Pass Program has been established as a successful transit incentive program, with fares set at different levels for specific Lower Mainland college and university campuses, and contributes significantly to increasing transit mode share;

AND WHEREAS the Province of B.C. has introduced a greenhouse gas reduction plan and Transit Plan to double ridership by 2020, and TransLink has adopted the "Transport 2040" strategy which calls for substantial investment to achieve a significant increase in transit mode share;

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AND WHEREAS the TransLink U-Pass Program, as designed, discriminates in its fare charges for students attending various educational institutions, which results in inequitable treatment for student transit riders, and further as TransLink and the Province of B.C. have not provided any funding resolution to resolve this fare disparity in order to contribute to their future transit plans to increase ridership;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Burnaby call on TransLink to review their funding programs and fare charges to establish an equitable universal fare for the U-Pass program for all post-secondary educational institutions, that will result in no increased costs to students currently participating in the program, and that the City of Burnaby call on the Provincial Government through the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to provide for consistent and predictable annual funding to allow for this amendment to the U-pass program with no increase in TransLink's reliance on revenue drawn from the municipal property tax base.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council endorse the resolutions as set out in this Report, and that copies of the resolutions be forwarded to the TransLink Board of Directors, the provincial Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, and provincial MLAs in Burnaby.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor N. Volkow
Chair

Councillor S. Dhaliwal
Vice Chair

Councillor R. Chang
Member

Copied to:	City Manager Director Planning & Building Director Engineering
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