

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: TAXISAVER PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT His Worship, Mayor Derek R. Corrigan write to TransLink's Board of Directors asking the Board to address the issues raised by Voices of Burnaby Seniors, and seeking clarification regarding the rationale for the proposed elimination of the TaxiSaver program.

REPORT

The Transportation Committee, at its meeting held on 2012 June 13, received correspondence from Ms. Carole Kaye, Chairperson, Voices of Burnaby Seniors (*Attachment #1*), urging Council to pass a motion opposing the elimination of the TaxiSaver program.

The Committee noted TransLink's Board of Directors issued a press release advising the decision to eliminate TaxiSaver program was put on hold and an engagement process with additional stakeholders was launched.

Arising from discussion, the Committee recommended that His Worship, Mayor Derek R. Corrigan write to TransLink's Board of Directors asking the Board to address the issues raised by Voices of Burnaby Seniors, and seeking clarification regarding the rationale for elimination of the proposed TaxiSaver program.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor N. Volkow
Chair

Councillor S. Dhaliwal
Vice Chair

Councillor R. Chang
Member

Copied to:	City Manager Director Planning and Building
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VOICES OF BURNABY
seniors

CLERK'S FILE: 46000-08

June 01, 2012

Burnaby Mayor and Council
c/o Office of the Clerk
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby BC V5G 1M2

Re: Urgent request to address TransLink's elimination of TaxiSaver Program

Dear Mayor and Council,

At an in-camera meeting on May 2, 2012, TransLink's Board of Directors decided to eliminate the TaxiSaver Program. TaxiSaver, as you are no doubt aware, provides introductory responsive, needs-based, affordable access to taxi transportation to those who need it on a limited basis.

Voices of Burnaby Seniors (VOBS) is very concerned about the significant impact of TransLink's decision on Burnaby seniors' health, well-being and ability to live independently and be contributing members of our community. Eliminating the program will also put seniors and people with disabilities at risk of social disconnection and isolation—two key risk factors for poor health.

For background: The TaxiSaver Program offers seniors and people with disabilities with a transportation option that would be otherwise unavailable, unaffordable and/or inappropriate for their needs. The Program is for people who are unable to use the bus and qualify for HandyDART. They can purchase up to \$100 of TaxiSaver coupons each month, providing a 50% discount on taxi rides. It is a cost-effective system as the users pay half the cost and are able to directly schedule their own rides, eliminating booking or dispatch costs.

While HandyDART provides a critical and valuable transportation service, it does not offer same-day service, is often fully booked well in advance, and is over-subscribed. Public transit is not an option for many seniors and full-fare taxi and private transportation rates are prohibitively expensive. At a basic level, for instance, this means that a senior who is suddenly ill may not be able to afford a trip to medical services in a timely fashion. It also means seniors cannot accept social invitations or enjoy an impromptu outing. The opportunity for spontaneity is lost.

The Voices of Burnaby Seniors (VOBS) Transportation Working Group urges the Mayor and Council of the City of Burnaby to pass a motion opposing the elimination of the TaxiSaver program.

Thank you for considering our request. Please keep us up to date on your efforts on behalf of Burnaby seniors.

Sincerely,

Carole Kaye
Voices of Burnaby Seniors Chairperson

<p>COPY: CITY MANAGER DIR. FINANCE CHIEF, LIC. INSP. DIR. PLNG & BLDG.</p>
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c/o Carole Kaye, VOBS Chairperson
1955 Woodway Pl.
Burnaby, BC V5B 4S5
VOBS is funded by United Way of the Lower Mainland.