

# **PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA**

Version: May 21, 2021

May 27, 2021, 9:00AM to 10:00AM

Via Videoconference (live streamed to Mayors' Council YouTube Channel)

Chair: Mayor Jonathan X. Coté Vice-Chair: Mayor Jack Froese

Note that times for each agenda item are estimates only. This meeting will be livestreamed and available afterwards on the <u>Mayors' Council's YouTube channel</u>.

8:50AM	<b>Technology Test:</b> Members please connect to the meeting early, by 8:50AM, to	
	pro	ovide time to trouble-shoot any connection problems.
9:00AM	1	PRELIMINARY MATTERS
9.00AW	т.	-
		<b>1.1.</b> Adoption of agendaPage <b>1</b>
		<b>1.2.</b> <u>Approval of Minutes (April 29, 2021)</u> <b>2</b>
0.05 4 14	2	
9:05AM	Ζ.	PUBLIC DELEGATES
9:30AM	3.	REPORT OF TRANSLINK MANAGEMENT
		<b>3.1.</b> <u>Transport 2050 Phase II Engagement Update</u> <b>8</b>
		<b>3.2.</b> <u>Ridership Recovery Update</u> <b>13</b>
		• Attachment 2: 2020 Transit Service Performance Review <b>ON TABLE</b>
9:55AM	4.	OTHER BUSINESS
		<b>4.1.</b> Next Meeting (via videoconference) – June 24, 2021

**10:00AM 5. ADJOURN** to closed session

Note that Mayors' Council members and Public Delegates will be participating via Zoom videoconferencing. Zoom connection information sent separately via e-mail.

# MEETING OF THE MAYORS' COUNCIL ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DRAFT PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation (Mayors' Council) held Thursday, April 29, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. via videoconference.

#### PRESENT:

Mayor Jonathan Coté, New Westminster, Chair Mayor Jack Froese, Langley Township, Vice-Chair Chief Ken Baird, Tsawwassen First Nation Councillor Christine Boyle, Vancouver (alternate) Mayor Malcolm Brodie, Richmond Mayor Linda Buchanan, North Vancouver City Councillor Craig Cameron, West Vancouver Mayor Bill Dingwall, Pitt Meadows Mayor George Harvie, Delta Mayor Mike Hurley, Burnaby Mayor Mike Little, North Vancouver District Mayor Doug McCallum, Surrey Director Jenn McCutcheon, Electoral Area A Mayor John McEwen, Anmore Mayor Ron McLaughlin, Lions Bay Mayor Mike Morden, Maple Ridge Councillor Alison Morse, Bowen Island Mayor Jamie Ross, Belcarra Mayor Jamie Ross, Belcarra Mayor Richard Stewart, Coquitlam Mayor Rob Vagramov, Port Moody Mayor Val van den Broek, Langley City Mayor Darryl Walker, White Rock Mayor Brad West, Port Coquitlam

#### ALSO PRESENT:

Michael Buda, Executive Director, Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation Secretariat Geoff Cross, Vice-President, Transportation and Planning, TransLink Andrew McCurran, Director, Strategic Planning and Policy, TransLink Dom Repta, Acting Director, Enterprise Sustainability, TransLink

#### **PREPARATION OF MINUTES:**

Carol Lee, Recording Secretary, Mosaic Writing Group

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Jonathan Coté declared that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Chair Coté acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on the unceded and traditional territories of the Halq'eméylem, Semiahmoo and Skwxwú7mesh speaking people. These refer to the language groups that more widely encompass the Indigenous people of many nations who use and continue to use the land on whose territories TransLink works, operates and serves. As a council, we recognize the importance of doing our best to build respectful relationships that contribute to stewarding the land and waters in the community with integrity and consideration for future generations.

#### 1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

#### 1.1. Adoption of the Agenda

Draft agenda for the April 29, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, version dated April 23, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.

#### It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the agenda of the April 29, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation be adopted, as presented.

#### CARRIED

# 1.2. Approval of Minutes (April 1, 2021)

Draft minutes of the April 1, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation was provided with the agenda material.

#### It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the minutes of the April 1, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation be adopted, as presented.

#### CARRIED

# 2. PUBLIC DELEGATES

The following documents were provided with the agenda material:

- Report titled "Item 2 Public Delegate Presentations", dated April 23, 2021
- Report titled "Item 2 Public Delegates: names, topics and presentations", dated April 29, 2021.

#### 2.1. Joe Kunzler

Mr. Kunzler requested the Mayors' Council support Transport 2050 (T2050) and a low carbon bus rapid transit (BRT) fleet as the spokes of Network B with SkyTrain to North Vancouver and Port Coquitlam. Mr. Kunzler demanded the Province immediately allocate the COVID-19 vaccine to TransLink operators and maintenance and support staff.

# 2.2. Daryl Dela Cruz

Mr. Dela Cruz expressed concern that the T2050 network concepts will not address the infrastructure gaps between the north and south of Fraser areas. Mr. Dela Cruz recommended that planning be undertaken for a second SkyBridge over the Fraser River, on a route that serves downtown Surrey and provides an alternate to the Expo Line route.

#### 2.3. Nathan Davidowicz

Mr. Davidowicz recommended that electric community shuttle and HandyDART vehicles be added to the Low Carbon Fleet Strategy, with funding from the provincial government.

# 3. **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

# 3.1 Federal and Provincial Budget Update

*Report titled "Item 3.1 – 2021 Federal and Provincial Budgets", dated April 27, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.* 

Michael Buda, Executive Director, Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation Secretariat, reviewed the report provided with the agenda material and highlighted:

- Senior governments investments of approximately \$5.5 billion in regional transit and transportation capital projects in Metro Vancouver between 2016 and 2021
- Pandemic relief and recovery funding provided by the federal and provincial governments

• Analysis of the 2021 federal and provincial budgets.

# It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation receive this report.

#### CARRIED

#### 4. REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

#### 4.1. Low Carbon Fleet Strategy Implementation

*Report titled "Item 4.1 – Low Carbon Fleet Strategy Implementation", dated April 16, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.* 

Geoff Cross, Vice-President, Transportation and Planning, TransLink, led the review of a presentation titled "Low Carbon Fleet Strategy Update" and highlighted:

- Update on implementation
- Transition period for the replacement of almost 600 diesel buses with 677 additional battery electric buses
- New funding opportunities to offset initial capital costs
- Projected greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions and operating cost savings.

Discussion ensued on:

- Concern that the Low Carbon Fleet Strategy does not facilitate TransLink's primary objective of increasing the availability of transit service to move people from their vehicles to transit
- Consideration to replacing non-service vehicles to low carbon alternatives:
  - Conventional transit vehicles are the first priority, as their replacement will have the largest impact to reducing GHG emissions
- Current plans to exchange the batteries twice during the 17-year life of the electric buses
- The impact of the projected GHG reductions on the Metro Vancouver's emission target reductions
- The analysis undertaken to determine the routes on which the electric buses will be deployed in the first 10 years:
  - Suggestion that social equity, in addition to technical issues, be a factor in the deployment of the battery electric buses
  - $\circ$  The need to consider the health impacts of living in proximity to transportation corridors
- The need to extend the aggressive approach to the replacement of HandyDART vehicles
- The significant difference in the GHG reductions between the aggressive and progressive approaches
- Opportunity to take advantage of senior government funding provided for the acquisition of low carbon fleet vehicles to address the climate emergency
- Support for next generation bus rapid transit (BRT).

# It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation:

- 1. Endorse the "aggressive" transition option in the Low Carbon Fleet Strategy as the default fleet plan and associated capital program in the next Investment Plan; and
- 2. Receive this report.

#### CARRIED

# 5. REPORT OF THE NEW MOBILITY COMMITTEE

# 5.1. Overview of Transport 2050 (T2050) Phase 2 Public Engagement

*Report titled "Item 5.1 – Overview of Transportation 2050 Phase 2 Public Engagement", dated April 22, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.* 

Andrew McCurran, Director, Strategic Planning and Policy, TransLink, referenced the report provided with the agenda material and noted:

- The public engagement on T2050 will occur from April 19 to May 14, 2021
- Input from the public is being sought on the following issues:
  - Agreement with the five draft goals
  - Support for people-first streets that invite walking, cycling and rolling
  - The approach to significantly expand the length and reach of the rapid transit network
  - Support for measures to help mitigate the negative congestion impacts of automated vehicles as they arrive on roads in our region
- A report of the findings will be provided to the Mayors' Council following the conclusion of the public engagement.

Discussion ensued on:

- The connection between the public engagement on the planning for the Millennium Line extension to UBC (UBCx) and T2050
- Concern with conducting public engagement prior to confirmation of funding for a project:
  - Funding has not been confirmed for projects that are currently included in Phases 2 and 3 of the existing Mayors' 10-Year Vision (10-Year Vision)
  - The need to be clear that the findings of the UBCx consultation will be part of the evaluation and prioritization of all projects during the refresh of the 10-Year Vision
  - The need to consider regional equity with respect to transportation infrastructure investments
  - The need to ensure the public is aware that grade separated alignment costs are five times that of an at-grade alignment and the associated trade-offs
  - GHG emissions, ridership and equity are factors to be considered with respect to the UBCx as there are residents from across the region that travel to the UBC campus
- The need for alignment between T2050 with land use planning by Metro Vancouver and municipalities
- Concern that the question on the approach to expand the length and reach of the rapid transit network will create division in the region
- The need to ensure the participating municipality is supportive of the reallocation of road space to walking, cycling and rolling.

# It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation receive this report.

#### CARRIED

# 6. OTHER BUSINESS

# 6.1. Next Meeting

The next Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council was scheduled for May 27, 2021 and will be held via videoconference.

# 7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the April 29, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation was adjourned to a Closed Session at 10:34 a.m.

Certified Correct:

Mayor Jonathan X. Coté, Chair

Carol Lee, Recording Secretary Mosaic Writing Group TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation
FROM: Gemma Lawrence, Coordinator, Mayors' Council Secretariat
DATE: May 20, 2021

SUBJECT: ITEM 2 – Public Delegate Presentations

# **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation receive this report.

# PURPOSE:

To introduce the objectives and process for hearing from public delegates.

#### BACKGROUND:

Public participation at meetings is valued by the Mayors' Council, and 30 minutes is set aside at each open meeting to receive public delegations. The Mayors' Council will only receive public delegations who intend to speak on matters that are within the authority of the Mayors' Council.

Individuals can apply to be a delegate by completing the online <u>Application Form</u> up until 8:00AM, two business days prior to the meeting. In situations where there isn't enough time to hear from everyone wishing to speak, the Mayors' Council encourages written submissions be sent to <u>mayorscouncil@translink.ca</u>.

The webpage for public delegates includes a Protocol for Public Delegates that notes:

- the Mayors' Council Chair will exercise discretion in maintaining a reasonable level of order and decorum;
- delegates and all meeting participants are reminded that different points of view are respected, and discussions are kept above the level of personal confrontation, disruptive behaviour and profanity.

# DISCUSSION:

The deadline to apply to speak to the Mayors' Council is 8:00am two days prior to the meeting. At the time of this report, not all prospective speakers will have had a chance to complete applications. Accordingly, the **list of approved speakers, as well as any written submissions or presentations, will be provided <u>on table</u>. Any presentations provided by delegates will also be provided to Mayors' Council members only, on table (up to 10-pages maximum). Each delegation will be given a maximum of <u>three minutes</u> to address the Mayors' Council. As a general rule, there are no questions or discussion between Council and delegates. The policy governing Public Delegates can be <u>found online</u>.** 

#### ITEM 3.1 – MANAGEMENT REPORT: T2050 Phase 2 Engagement Update

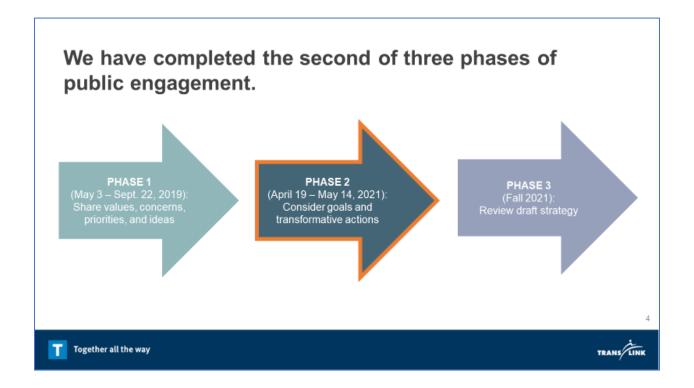






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# This second phase was a "pulse-check" to see if we are on the right track

- · We asked to what extent people support:
  - The five draft goals related to convenient, reliable, affordable, safe & comfortable, and carbon-free choices; and
  - Three particularly transformative actions related to people-first streets, expanding the rapid transit network, and managing the arrival of automated vehicles.



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# We invited people to have their say at transport2050.ca – and we spread the word through multiple channels

Media:

- Press release and info bulletin
- One-on-one interviews with TransLink spokespersons
- Coverage 3 TV, 3 radio, 14 online/newspaper

#### Social Media:

- 5 Buzzer blog posts, 2 podcasts
- Clubhouse chat and Reddit Ask Me Anything
- Social media posts resulting in 1,700 engagements
- Videos garnering 68,000 views

#### Marketing/Digital:

- Digital Ads: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google, etc.
- Radio and Spotify
- Out-of-home ads
- Email campaign: emails sent to 8,600 contacts
- Engagement portal: 16,300 visits
- Partner channels
  - Targeted outreach to 100+ organizations to amplify reach

You shared your vision for the future. Now we're sharing ideas that'll get us there.



<u>Public</u> Meeting (via videoconference) of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation Page **10** of **20 AGENDA PACKAGE,** May 27, 2021

# We had a great response with extensive and in-depth feedback.

#### Public Engagement

- Online Survey: 5,000 completed
- Representative public opinion poll w/500 respondents
- Discussion guide: 2,683 downloads
- Technical backgrounders: 1,085 downloads
- Email submissions
- 4 online open houses
- Stakeholder & 4 online open Partner Engagement
  - 3 stakeholder meetings
  - 14 workshops with multicultural community leaders (EmpowerMe)
  - 15 workshops with youth leaders via Youth Advisory Committee (CityHive)
  - Workshop with Indigenous leaders via Indigenous Advisory Committee
  - 2 workshops for elected officials
  - Meeting of Council of Councils (including all local government Councils)
- TransLink employee communications and presentations

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We will assess where there is broad agreement, where there is concern, and how these views might differ for different groups of people

- · By type of disability (for people with a disability that makes taking transit difficult)
- By age
- By gender
- By race
- · By indigeneity
- · By current employment status
- · By current housing situation
- · By household income
- · By main mode of transportation
- · By home municipality

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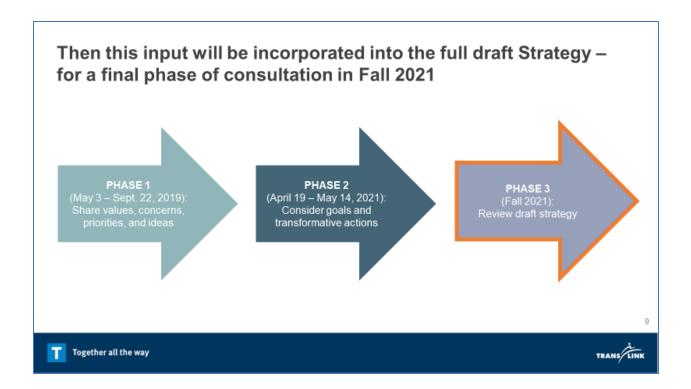




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TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation
FROM: Geoff Cross, VP Transportation Planning and Policy
DATE: May 20, 2021

SUBJECT: ITEM 3.2 – Ridership Recovery Update

# **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation receive this report.

# PURPOSE:

This report will provide an update on ridership recovery trends to-date including some benchmarking with other metropolitan regions, a discussion on factors that drive ridership recovery as well as a high-level overview of how the transit system is performing at the new ridership level.

# BACKGROUND:

COVID-19 has resulted in much lower transit ridership in Metro Vancouver, as is the case in other parts of the world. Prior to the pandemic, the region had been a leader in transit use and ridership growth in the continent. To-date and into the future, many regional land-use and transportation objectives are built on the region's strong transit culture.

# **DISCUSSION:**

# A slow but steady climb from the ridership freefall of March 2020

In mid-March 2020, TransLink's system ridership began its precipitous drop from 1.4 million boardings a day to around 240,000 boardings, or about 17% of 2019 ridership within the month. From this low point, monthly ridership grew steadily over last summer and has been holding steady at around 40% of 2019 ridership since Fall 2020 despite BC's second wave in the winter and the current third wave and the associated social and economic restrictions of provincial health orders. TransLink maintained its pre-COVID service levels to provide reliable transit for essential transit trips as part of the federal – provincial Safe Restart Agreement.

# Since the ridership drop was on the heel of record high levels, considerable ridership remains

Prior to the pandemic, TransLink was in the midst of several continuous years of record-breaking growth with a 20% increase in transit ridership over the four-year period from 2016 to 2019. One in five commute trips in Metro Vancouver was being made by transit.

TransLink had 218 million annual boardings in 2020, retaining nearly half of its all time high 2019 ridership. Among the ten Canadian and US metropolitan regions with the highest annual boardings, TransLink had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest ridership retention rate (48%) and remained 6<sup>th</sup> place overall in ridership. This is a notable achievement considering Metro Vancouver's population is significantly smaller than these peer regions (ranked 24<sup>th</sup>) which means per capita annual boardings are very high (4<sup>th</sup> in 2020). To

put this in perspective, TransLink's lower pandemic ridership is still higher than metro Portland's prepandemic boardings and only marginally behind Seattle's.

# As the pandemic wanes and the economy reopens, ridership is expected to follow

COVID-19 cases, and now vaccination levels, are key determinants of ridership recovery. Many regions have experienced spikes and rebounds in ridership correlated with waves of high COVID-19 cases and restricted economic activity. In regions where cases are dropping and vaccination rates are high, economies are reopening with fewer social distancing restrictions. Transit ridership is growing in these areas. For example, London, UK has one of the highest vaccination rates and declining cases, with recent ridership reaching a new high of just over 50% of pre-pandemic ridership, even after a third wave in early 2021. In Auckland, New Zealand, where caseload has been kept extremely low through an aggressive social distancing approach, ridership rebounded to a high of over 90% in the last little while whenever social distancing measures were lifted.

TransLink should be ready for a steady rebuilding of its ridership as Metro Vancouver progresses toward community immunity in late 2021 and the region returns to more 'normal' conditions. Earlier forecasting work suggests that ridership recovery could reach between 70% to 90% pre-pandemic range by the time the economy and society fully reopen, the extent will depend on a variety of external factors as discussed below.

# Work is underway to proactively prepare for the uncertainties in ridership recovery

TransLink is updating its near-term forecasting, dubbed Pandemic Disaster and Recovery Scenarios (PANDARS), to incorporate recent changes in underlying factors driving travel demand. In particular, a stronger than expected economy and a return to on-campus post secondary instruction in Fall 2021 are encouraging developments, signalling higher transit demand. Uncertainty remains however in several areas – including the level of apprehension about vaccination efficacy and COVID-19 variants. In addition, one of the biggest elements of uncertainty influencing travel demand is the level of telecommuting that would continue to be present post pandemic. This will impact both how much transit use and driving there will be. A future with significant telecommuting will translate into less significant ridership recovery but also less driving which has the associated congestion and GHG impacts.

To keep as much as the recovered travel demand from switching from transit to auto trips, it is important that a convenient and competitive transit service continues to be available. TransLink will continue with its high, mid, low demand scenarios and modelling to estimate the likelihood of these outcomes. This work will support 2022 Budget development.

# Our 2020 Transit Service Performance Report (TSPR) provides details on how transit service has supported ridership recovery

Throughout the pandemic, TransLink's transit service has supported safe and reliable essential travel through the implementation of extraordinary measures - mandatory masks, hand sanitary dispensaries, bacteria-killing copper surfaces, increased disinfection and cleaning, protective operator barriers, and restricted seating on vehicles to facilitate social distancing. Because social distancing measures have reduced available capacity in buses and trains, service has been added where needed to reduce pass ups and crowding at the busiest times of the day.

The forthcoming TSPR provides a snapshot of trends from early fall 2020 - the most stable period of ridership during the pandemic last year. The TSPR includes the following findings:

- Transit remained an important part of our regional transportation system: During early fall 2020, TransLink continued to serve 620,000 boardings every weekday made by people across the region.
- *Many aspects of transit network travel patterns remained stable:* With few exceptions, the busiest bus routes in 2019 are still the busiest routes in 2020. Specifically, eight of the top 10 busiest bus routes in 2019 were still among the top 10 routes by boardings in 2020.
- Changes in ridership patterns that did occur demonstrate the importance of transit for people making essential trips while bus ridership recovered more strongly in some parts of the region than in others, ridership on routes that serve essential workers remained strong in 2020.
- We prioritized service on bus routes when and where customers most needed it: Although transit ridership decreased across the entire region, we increased service on some bus routes in 2020 to ensure there was enough vehicle capacity for customers.

A draft of the 2020 TSPR is attached to this report; the final document will be released publicly at the Mayors Council meeting on May 27th.

# CONCLUSION:

TransLink's ridership recovery has been both resilient and stable since Fall 2020. The service quality fundamentals that underlie the ridership growth in the region pre-pandemic continue to support safe and reliable mobility through the pandemic and the recovery from it. Experience from around the globe indicates that transit ridership grows when the pandemic begins to wane, and more typical activities return. The ebb and flow associated with COVID-19 is still unfolding in this region which means that some uncertainty remains in the near-term transit ridership trend. Latest forecasting suggests a more optimistic view anticipating a steady rebuilding of ridership as the pandemic draws to a close.

Our experience thus far in the pandemic suggests that providing safe, reliable and convenient transit service has allowed core ridership to remain in the system and signaled to the public that good service is available when people are ready to return to transit. This approach has laid the groundwork for the post-pandemic rebuilding phase as ridership is likely to recover faster and farther if supported by high quality transit options. The cities which are unable to reverse transit service cuts made during the pandemic may see long-term negative impacts to their transit use. The importance of maintaining convenient and competitive transit service is further supported by preliminary results from TransLink's latest round of ridership recovery market research which reveal that fast and frequent service, on-time reliability and safety/cleanliness are the top three factors that residents would consider in their decision to return to transit post pandemic.

# ATTACHMENTS:

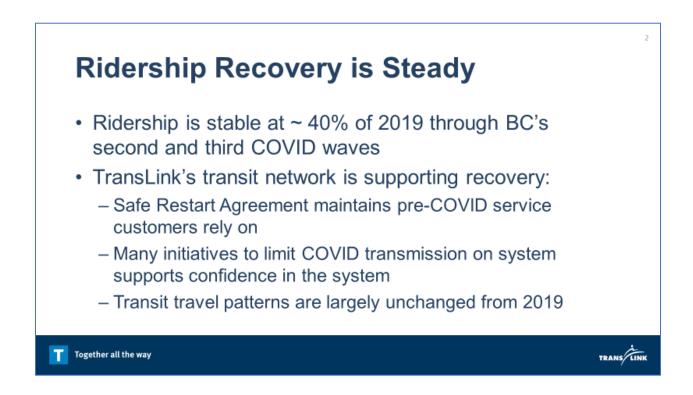
- 1. Summary PowerPoint presentation on ridership recovery
- 2. 2020 Transit Service Performance Report (on table)

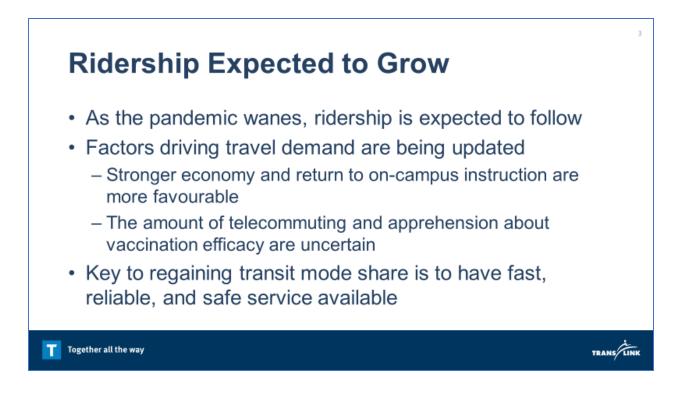
# Management Report Ridership Recovery Update

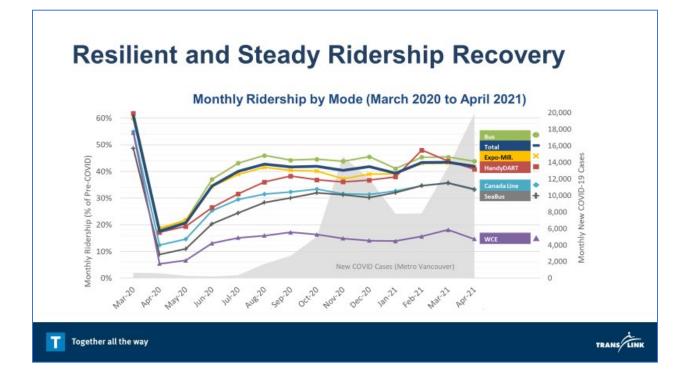
May 27, 2021 Mayors' Council Meeting

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# Our 2020 Transit Service Performance Report (TSPR) provides details on how transit service has supported ridership recovery

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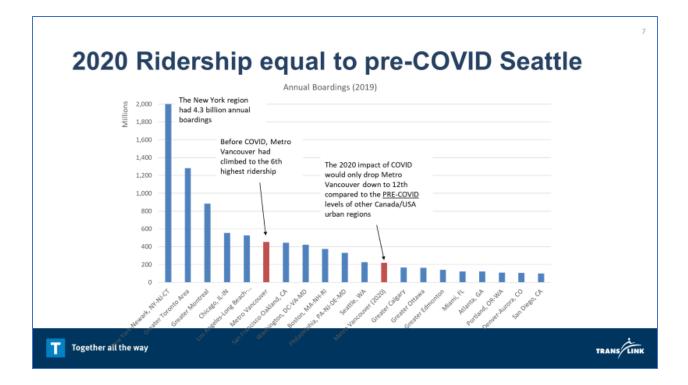
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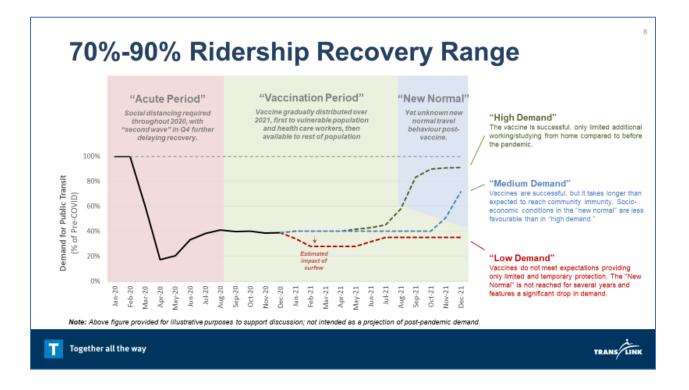
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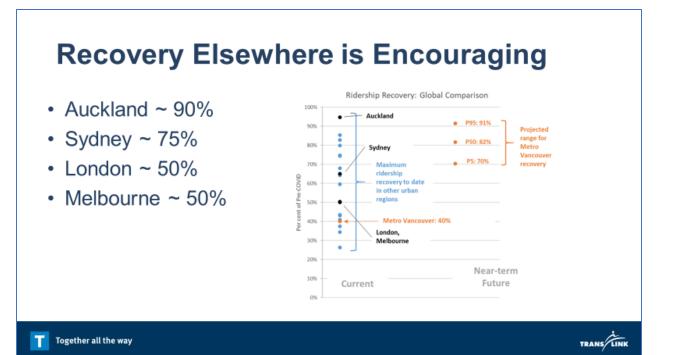
The TSPR will be released publicly at the Mayors Council meeting on May 27th.

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218 Million Boardings in 2020 2020 boardings as a percent of 2019 boardings for the 10 busiest Canadian & US transit system 2<sup>nd</sup> highest retention 60% rate (48%) 50% Same strong 40% 30% performance as 2019: 20% - 4<sup>th</sup> in per capita 1.0% boarding – 6<sup>th</sup> highest in boardings Amona the 10 busiest Canadian & US systems Together all the way TRANS LINK







# **Rebuilding Ridership - Service is Key**

- A convenient, reliable and safe system has supported essential travel to date
- Fast and frequent service, on-time reliability and safety/cleanliness are foremost, recent survey says



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