



PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA

Version: September 23, 2021

September 29, 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 [Mayors' Council's YouTube channel](#).

8:50AM ***Technology Test:** Members please connect to the meeting early, by 8:50AM, to provide time to trouble-shoot any connection problems.*

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 9:00AM | 1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS 1.1. Adoption of agenda Page 1 1.2. Approval of Minutes (July 29, 2021) 2 |
| 9:05AM | 2. PUBLIC DELEGATES 6 |
| 9:20AM | 3. REPORT OF TRANSLINK MANAGEMENT 3.1. CEO Report..... ON TABLE |
| 9:35AM | 4. REPORT OF THE NEW VISION WORKING GROUP 4.1. New 10-Year Vision Workplan Overview 7 4.2. New 10-Year Vision Budget 10 |
| 9:45AM | 5. REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 5.1. Transit Ridership Update 12 5.2. Update on George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project 17 |
| 9:55AM | 6. OTHER BUSINESS 6.1. Next Meeting (via videoconference) – October 22, 2021 |
| 10:00AM | 7. 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, July 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
Mayor Malcolm Brodie, Richmond
Mayor Linda Buchanan, North Vancouver City
Councillor Craig Cameron, West Vancouver
(arrived at 9:20 a.m.)
Mayor Bill Dingwall, Pitt Meadows
Mayor George Harvie, Delta
Mayor Mike Hurley, Burnaby (arrived at
9:06 a.m.)
Mayor Mike Little, North Vancouver District
Mayor Doug McCallum, Surrey

Director Jen 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 Kennedy Stewart, Vancouver
Mayor Richard Stewart, Coquitlam
Mayor Rob Vagramov, Port Moody (arrived at
9:06 a.m.)
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
Kevin Quinn, Chief Executive Officer, TransLink
Steve Vanagas, Vice-President, Customer Communications and Public Affairs, 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 9:03 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 July 29, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, version dated July 22, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the agenda of the July 29, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation be adopted, with an amendment to delete Item 2.

CARRIED

1.2. Approval of Minutes (June 24, 2021)

Draft minutes of the June 24, 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 June 24, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation be adopted, as presented.

CARRIED

2. PUBLIC DELEGATES

Report titled "Item 2 – Public Delegate Presentations", dated July 20, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.

In accordance with Item 1.1, this item was deleted from the agenda.

Members Arrived

Mayors Mike Hurley and Rob Vagramov joined the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

3. REPORT OF TRANSLINK MANAGEMENT

3.1. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Report

Kevin Quinn, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), introduced himself, outlined his priorities as CEO and provided updates on:

- July 9, 2021 federal funding announcement for the Surrey-Langley SkyTrain (SLS) line
- July 22, 2021 event to celebrate the maiden voyage of the new SeaBus, named the Burrard Chinook
- Commencement of replacement of expansion joints on the Expo Line SkyBridge on July 31, 2021
- Launch of the Reconnect campaign to encourage a return to transit following the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - There has been an encouraging increase in ridership levels in recent months.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation receives the report.

CARRIED

3.2. Report on Transport 2050 (T2050) Phase II Public Engagement

The following documents were provided with the agenda material:

- *Report titled "Item 3.2 – Transport 2050 Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary Report", dated July 20, 2021*
- *Document titled "Phase 2 Engagement "WHAT WE HEARD" SUMMARY REPORT April 19 – May 14, 2021".*

Geoff Cross, Vice-President, Transportation and Planning, TransLink, led the review of a presentation titled “Transport 2050 Phase 2 Engagement Summary Report” and highlighted key findings

- Release of the T2050 Engagement Report on July 29, 2021
- T2050 engagement phases and timelines
- Findings of the engagement and opinion polling with respect to support for the five goals:
 - Goals are on track
 - Strong support across demographics and sub-regions
 - Many suggestions are either currently part of the draft Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) or could land in other parts of the strategy

Member Arrived

Councillor Craig Cameron joined the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

- Key findings regarding Action 1: Create more people-first streets that invite walking, biking, and rolling:
 - Support was strong across demographic categories and across the region
 - People agreed with the aspiration of reducing the region’s reliance on the automobile, while supporting safety, street vibrancy and a cleaner environment
 - People commented that implementation and design are very important:
 - Accessibility, goods movement and parking concerns need to be addressed
- Key findings regarding Action 2: Fast and frequent rapid transit that is a competitive choice for most longer trips:
 - Balanced support for both concepts:
 - Very few respondents said they “don’t support either network” or “don’t know”
 - Network B saw slightly higher support than Network A across most demographic categories and sub-regions
 - People were able to identify the key trade-offs between the two networks
- Key findings regarding Action 3: Automated vehicles that provide convenient access to car trips without adding to congestion:
 - In general, automated vehicle (AV) actions were supported however, more people said they were “neutral” compared to other actions
 - More mixed support for using fees to manage zero passenger trips or congestion
 - People liked the safety and accessibility benefits but were skeptical about AVs or thought AVs could make issues like congestion or inequality worse
- Importance of continuing to engage First Nations and equity seeking groups.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation receives the report titled “Transport 2050 Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary Report” for information.

CARRIED

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1. Next Meeting

The next Public Meeting of the Mayors’ Council was scheduled for September 30, 2021 and will be held via videoconference.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the July 29, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation was adjourned to a Closed Session at 9:26 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: September 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 [Application Form](#) 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 mayorscouncil@translink.ca.

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 on table**. 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 three minutes 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 [found online](#).

TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation
FROM: Geoff Cross, VP Transportation Planning and Policy
DATE: September 16, 2021
SUBJECT: **ITEM 4.1 – New Vision Workplan Overview**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The New Vision Working Group recommends that the Mayors' Council and Board receive this report.

PURPOSE:

To confirm the proposed approval timeline, scope and public engagement process for the update to the *10-Year Vision for Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation*.

BACKGROUND:

The SCBCTA Act requires two planning documents, the 30-Year *Regional Transportation Strategy* and the 10-Year *Investment Plan*, which form the basis of annual capital and operating budgets. In February 2014, prior to holding a referendum on a new transportation funding source, the Provincial Government requested the Mayors' Council to clarify the cost, priorities, and phasing for transportation investments. In response, the Mayors' Council developed a third type of document—a blueprint for spending priorities called the *10-Year Vision for Transit and Transportation for Metro Vancouver* (also known as "10-Year Vision" or "Mayors' Vision").

This 10-Year Vision document became a reference for priority setting to advocate for senior government funding to deliver the Phase One and Two Plans of the 10-Year Vision in 2016 and 2018 respectively. In October 2020, the Mayors' Council approved a 2021-2021 mandate to begin renewing the Vision with the aim of approval by July 2022, prior to local government elections.

DISCUSSION:

Process

The New Vision will be developed under the direction of the full Board and Mayors' Council through joint workshops with all members. A working group will meet on an ad hoc basis in advance of each Joint Workshop to provide input and oversight of staff in the development of Joint Workshop materials, and would be comprised of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of:

- TransLink Board
- Board Planning and Stakeholder Committee
- Mayors' Council
- Mayors' Council Regional Transportation Planning Committee
- Mayors' Council New Mobility Committee
- Mayors' Council Finance and Governance Committee

Scope

In 2014, staff worked with the Mayors' Council to complete the *10-Year Vision* within four months with enough detail and specificity to quickly pivot to the development of 10-Year Investment Plans. This new Vision process is starting from a different foundation:

- *Transport 2050* will provide the basis of prioritized investments in the New Vision
- As per Mayors' Council direction at its October 1, 2020 meeting, the Phase Three Plan of the current 10-Year Vision should be considered as the starting point for the New Vision.
- Capacity and resource constraints of staff, Board, Mayors' Council, and partners with *Transport 2050* and the *2022 Investment Plan* also concurrently in development
- There is not a comprehensive backlog of scoped and costed projects and programs backed up with years of studies
- Different modes and policy areas have differing available technical work completed
- *Transport 2050* introduces new areas that require additional scoping (e.g., new mobility, equity, reconciliation)

Given the above situation, the New Vision will have reduced scope details compared to the 2014 *10-Year Vision* that will allow flexibility to clarify details in the future, primarily through future investment planning processes.

Public engagement and timelines

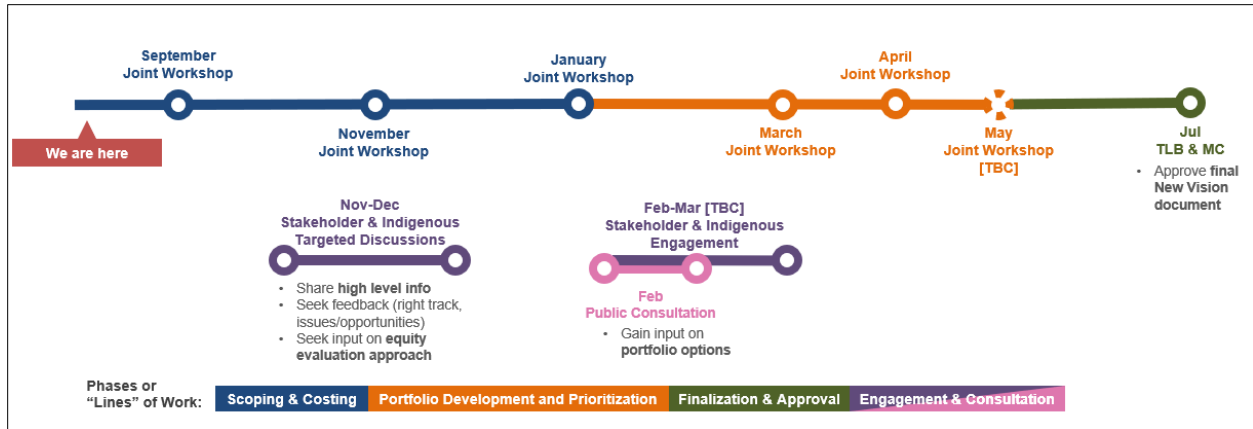
The primary engagement goal of the New Vision is to provide all Metro Vancouver residents with equal opportunities to provide informed feedback that will help shape the New Vision, specifically:

- Explain the **correlation between T2050 and the New Vision**
- Raise **awareness and encourage active participation** in the New Vision across Metro Vancouver
- In advance of the engagement process, **pro-actively develop relationships with disadvantaged individuals and groups**
- Ensure that those impacted both positively and negatively can **share their perspective on the proposed New Vision**
- Ensure that **engagement input influences development** of the New Vision and that **participants can see how their input was used**
- Enhance TransLink's reputation for **transparent, forward-looking, responsive policy development**

Staff will endeavour to engage disadvantaged individuals and groups, such as groups who experience barriers to participation including people with low-incomes, people with disabilities, people who do not speak English, students and seniors, as well as Indigenous groups and First Nations.

With a July 2022 approval two phases of engagement can be conducted:

- November - December 2021 - stakeholder engagement focused on prioritization of values and goals from T2050, and identification of current and new projects and programs
- February - March 2022 public consultation and stakeholder engagement focused on the draft evaluation and prioritization of projects and programs.



Engagement activities will be comprised of online and if circumstance allow, in-person engagement events. Local, regional, provincial and federal agency partners will be invited to send representatives to participate in the engagement process. Municipal staff will also be engaged through regular updates and discussions with the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) and the Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC).

CONCLUSION:

Next steps for developing the New Vision include:

- Continue preliminary scoping and costing of potential projects and programs, based on previous 2014 Vision and strategies and actions in the draft of *Transport 2050*
- Develop a performance evaluation and prioritization framework, based on draft of *Transport 2050*
- Further refine the engagement approach

A joint workshop of the Board and Mayors’ Council is being scheduled in the fall to review the first drafts of potential projects and programs and the prioritization framework.

TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation
FROM: Mike Buda, Executive Director, Mayors' Council Secretariat
DATE: August 31, 2021
SUBJECT: **ITEM 4.2 – New Vision Project Budget Allocation**

RECOMMENDATION:

The New Vision Coordination Working Group recommends that the Mayors' Council:

1. Direct the Executive Director to develop the Mayors' Council's 2022 budget such that it includes an allocation of up to \$345,000 to TransLink to support the development of the new 10-Year Vision in 2022;
 2. Receive this report.
-

PURPOSE:

To direct up to \$345,000 from the Mayors' Council's 2022 budget envelope to support the development of the new 10-Year Vision ("New Vision Project").

BACKGROUND:

At its July 29, 2021 meeting, the Mayors' Council reviewed a high-level workplan to renew the 10-Year Vision over the next 10 months, and approved creation of a *New Vision Coordination Working Group*, comprising of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the TransLink Board, Mayors' Council, Mayors' Council Planning, New Mobility and Finance and Governance Committees, and the Board Planning and Stakeholder Committee, to provide oversight of the process.

DISCUSSION:

The New Vision project was not anticipated in TransLink's 2021 workplan or budget, although staff have ensured that the project received the appropriate resource allocation required for consultant services to support the project (\$250,00 for modeling and concept design). However, it was not anticipated that the Investment Plan, Transport 2050 and New Vision processes would be occurring simultaneously which is a strain on the Transportation Policy and Planning Division's 2022 budget request.

In 2022, additional resourcing is required in order to deliver this project within existing headcount and given that the project is a one-time activity. To that end, TransLink Planning staff have proposed that \$345,000 for New Vision Project Management and Public Consultation activities in 2022 be paid for out of the Mayors' Council budget envelope. See Annex A below for the 2022 New Vision Project budget.

The Mayors' Council's 2022 budget is expected to be similar to the 2021 budget. The 2021 budget, approved by the Mayors' Council on December 3, 2020, directed \$712,635 towards projected 2021 expenditures, out of an estimated total 2021 budget envelope allocated by legislation to the Mayors'

Council from TransLink, of \$1.379 million, leaving \$666,423 unallocated. The 2021 budget is on track to come slightly under projected expenditures.

Given the expectations for the 2022 budget (which will be presented for consideration to the December 3, 2021 meeting), and the importance of the New Vision Project to the Mayors' Council's 2021-22 mandate and work plan, a \$345,000 allocation from the Mayors' Council's budget to the New Vision Project fits within the Mayors' Council's legislated budget envelope and is consistent with the Mayors' Council's purpose.

ANNEX A: New Vision Project Budget

| New Vision process management and document delivery | Project Budget | Funding Source | Description |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Project Management | \$ <u>200,000</u> | Mayors' Council Budget | External project management assistance for this ad hoc project (current head count does not allow for adequate staffing and project oversight, particularly coordination of scoping and estimation workstreams) |
| Modeling & Evaluation of Network | \$ 100,000 | Approved 2021 Budget | Extensive modelling will be required to support performance evaluation of initiatives, especially major transit projects |
| Conceptual Design and Development of Network | \$ 150,000 | Approved 2021 Budget | Consultant services for conceptual planning of initiatives and corridors identified in first 15-year priority bucket in Transport 2050 |
| Evaluation of Non-modellable and Non-network projects/programs | \$ 60,000 | New 2022 Budget Request | Consultant services to support evaluation and portfolio prioritization efforts |
| Cost Estimation | \$ 60,000 | New 2022 Budget Request | External cost estimation resources to cost initiatives (input to cost-effectiveness assessment needed for prioritization) |
| Public Consultation | \$ <u>145,000</u> | Mayors' Council Budget | Budget requested to support engagement efforts with the public, First Nations, stakeholders, and other partners |
| TOTAL | \$ 715,000 | | |

TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation
FROM: Geoff Cross, VP, Transportation Planning and Policy
DATE: September 20, 2021
SUBJECT: **ITEM 5.1 - Ridership Recovery Update Report**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayors' Council receive this report

PURPOSE

This report will provide an update on transit ridership recovery trends since May 2021 and a discussion on the pandemic's impact on recent ridership increases, prospective recovery in the near-term and system-readiness for ridership rebuilding. This report is for information purposes only.

BACKGROUND

TransLink's ridership fell from 1.4 million boardings a day in mid-March 2020 to about 240,000 boardings or approximately 17% of 2019 ridership within the first month of the global pandemic. Metro Vancouver has a strong transit culture. Transit remained an important part of our regional transportation system from the pandemic's start. In Fall 2020, ridership stabilized at about 40% of pre-COVID (2019) with 620,000 boardings every weekday made by people across the region. TransLink supported safe and reliable essential travel through BC's three COVID surges and the associated social and economic restrictions of the provincial health orders.

DISCUSSION

Recent ridership recovery is tied to the pandemic's progression

Ridership recovery has been improving since June. This recovery is tied closely to the three pandemic determinants: COVID-19 case numbers, vaccination rates and public health measures. In the spring of 2021, all three of these factors began to change for the better. The number of COVID-19 cases of BC's third and largest-to-date wave began to sharply decline throughout May, reaching a low of 31 new cases on average per day in early July. At the same time, vaccination rates across the province and especially Metro Vancouver, were rapidly increasing. More than 70% of eligible Metro Vancouver residents are double vaccinated, one of the highest rates in the world. Meanwhile the Province began rolling out the BC Restart Plan. Step 1 began on May 25 permitting small group indoor dining, worship services, outdoor sports games. On June 15, Step 2 in mid-June increased the maximum size of social gatherings, indoor dining of larger groups, small in-person work meetings, and recreational travel within BC was allowed. On July 1, Step 3 eliminated the need to reduce the maximum number of passengers in vehicles, masks became recommended (not mandatory) on transit and more social and economic activities were permitted such as fairs, festivals and Canada-wide recreational travel. Some parts of daily life started to look and feel a lot more 'normal' in Metro Vancouver.

Transit was part of this return to near normal activities. There was more reason to travel within the region to restaurants, movies, summer markets, and for some, a gradual return to workplaces. Residents and visitors have been making more transit journeys, with each week surpassing the previous in ridership recovery. System-wide weekly journeys are at 52% recovery. Driving was already reaching close to 100% of pre-pandemic recovery by Fall 2020. Bridge vehicle volumes have surpassed 100% on recent occasions.

Regional ridership is trending upwards across all modes

Customers are returning to all modes. Throughout August, average weekday ridership recovery was steadily growing by about 2% over the previous week. By mid-month, ridership recovery had reached 50% of pre-COVID levels, the first time since the pandemic started. By month's end, average weekday boardings were hovering at over 720,000 or 53% of pre-COVID. Post Labour Day, average weekday boardings jumped up 17% (850,000) and average weekday journeys were almost 19% higher than those in the previous week. Weekly boardings on Bus and Expo-Millennium still lead recovery, both modes are between 50 - 55% of pre-COVID levels. HandyDART has seen the steepest recent increase in ridership, recovering upwards of 60% (pre-Labour Day) mainly related to customers accessing reopened day programs or for miscellaneous purposes. Since early May, Canada Line and SeaBus percent recovery has been improving and is now approaching Bus and Expo-Millennium Line levels. Tourists and locals typically flock to Canada Line and SeaBus in the summer for travel to/from the airport and community or cultural events. Customers' choice of these reliable and fast modes is consistent with pre-COVID summer travel trends. Commuters are also returning to West Coast Express since May, boosting recovery from 17% to 25% in late August. The attached Weekly Ridership Report includes a statutory holiday (Labour Day) that impacts (lowers) some percentages.

People across the region are including transit to access newly reopened shops, services, and workplaces and as well as favourite fair weather recreational areas. Ridership recovery is improving throughout Metro Vancouver but the southeast subregion (North Delta/Surrey/City and Township of Langley/White Rock) continues to have the highest Bus recovery rate (64%). Weekend ridership recovery remains marginally higher than weekday ridership recovery (~58% compared to ~55%). Overcrowding is generally low; we are monitoring bus routes with peak crowding in first weeks of September.

A Fourth Wave

Despite high vaccination rates, COVID-19 cases are rising quickly once more in BC. Most cases are the fast spreading delta variant. Mandatory masks on public transit and indoors was reinstated on August 25th. The 'return to normal' expected with BC's Restart Plan Step 4 is being delayed; it did not proceed as planned on September 7. Post-secondary institutes (PSIs) returned to on campus instruction in September. Ridership increased with students, faculty and staff travel to and from campus. Gains in PSI related ridership could be tempered by a fourth wave. In this case, we would expect ridership recovery to hold at current levels (above 50%) for the remainder of 2021. Low, mid, and high scenarios are being adjusted to consider the potential impacts of a fourth wave on 2021 ridership and revenues, 2022 Budget, and for the 10-year investment plan period.

Previously identified uncertainties remain for the near term, notably the level of apprehension about vaccination efficacy and COVID-19 variants and the level of continued remote working. TransLink's planning scenarios incorporate higher levels of telecommuting in the region compared to pre-COVID. More telecommuting means less demand for commuting. A future with significant telecommuting translates into lower or slower transit recovery but also less driving and associated GHG impacts. People's apprehension to sharing public spaces whether it's a transit vehicle, a workspace or retail shop is unknown. This apprehension translates into slower ridership recovery in our planning scenarios.

Still Ready for Ridership Rebuilding

Throughout the pandemic, TransLink's transit service has supported safe travel with on-board measures like enhanced disinfection and cleaning, bacteria-killing copper surfaces, masks either recommended or mandatory, and protective operator barriers. TransLink is maintaining its pre-COVID service levels to provide reliable transit as part of the 2020 federal-provincial Safe Restart Agreement. The importance of maintaining convenient and competitive transit service is further supported by TransLink's latest round of ridership recovery market research indicating fast and frequent service, on-time reliability and safety/cleanliness are the top three factors that residents consider in their decision to return to transit.

September service changes are supporting people traveling to work and school, for social, shopping or cultural events, and to medical appointments. A new SeaBus, the Chinook, joined the fleet and is providing 10-minute peak hour service to this crucial link between the North Shore and Downtown Vancouver. PSIs returned to on-campus instruction; university routes have service boosts. West Coast Express commuters have more travel time options with Train 4 returning to service. Another seven bus routes had service increases and are ready for customers return to transit. As noted above, some crowding is occurring at peak travel times as people transition to new fall routines. We are monitoring these services. Customers can travel with confidence and at their comfort level using a new customer-focused app called "Room to Ride" that estimates crowding on their bus. Lastly, transit travel is easier and more affordable for families now because children 12 and under ride free of charge as part of a new provincial program.

CONCLUSION

TransLink's ridership recovery has been resilient through the first three COVID surges. Providing safe, reliable and convenient transit service has allowed people to maintain mobility within the region and as needed for essential travel. From May 2021, restrictive public health measures began being rolled back as COVID cases waned and vaccination rates grew. As more social, cultural and economic activities restarted in Metro Vancouver, so did the demand for transit. Uncertainty surrounding how much and how quickly ridership recovers remains as the province enters its fourth COVID-19 wave. This region has a strong transit culture. The transit network is ready to support the region's return to school this September and rebuild ridership to the extent possible during this phase of the global pandemic.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Weekly Ridership Report September 15, 2021



2021 COVID-19
Weekly Ridership Report
PRELIMINARY
UPDATED SEPTEMBER 15, 2021



WEEKLY RIDERSHIP COMMENTS

Preliminary COVID-19 Weekly Ridership Report

- From September 6-12, 2021:
 - Average weekday journeys are at **54.9%** of Pre-COVID levels
 - Average weekend journeys are more recovered than weekday, at **57.9%** of Pre-COVID
- Total Boardings have recovered more than Journeys
 - Weekly Boardings: 52.9% Pre-COVID
 - Weekly Journeys: 52.1% Pre-COVID
- **This week in 2021 included Labour Day, but the pre-COVID comparison week did not include Labour Day**
- Weekly ridership may fluctuate due to weather or holidays. Variations in weekly ridership may not be significant.

This past week marked the first week back to school and the return to on campus instruction in Metro Vancouver. Looking at **average weekday ridership only**:

- Average weekday journeys are 18.8% higher for Tuesday, September 7 – Friday, September 10 than the previous week (August 30 to September 3), while average weekday boardings are 17% higher.
- Comparing post Labour Day weekdays in 2021 to 2019 (Tuesday, September 3 – Friday, September 6), average journeys in 2021 are at 55% of 2019 levels. Average boardings are at 55.7% of 2019 levels.



WEEKLY RIDERSHIP

Preliminary COVID-19 Weekly Ridership Report

Current Week

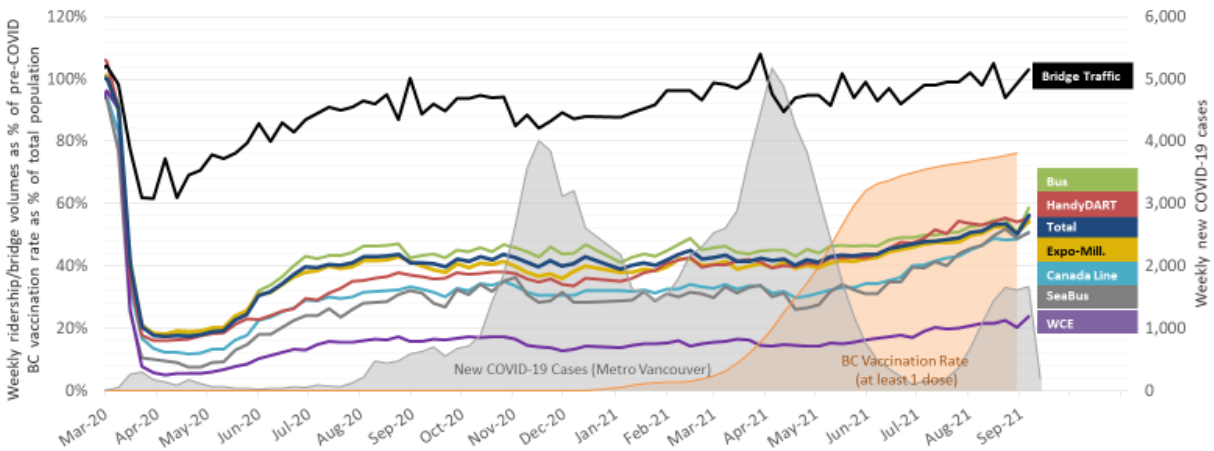
| | September 06 to September 12 | Percent relative to pre-COVID ridership levels (same week in 2019) | Percent relative to same week in 2020 | Percent change relative to previous week |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Total Weekly Boardings by Mode | | | | |
| Bus | 3,209,000 | 55% | 134% | 9.3% |
| Expo-Millennium | 1,201,000 | 51% | 135% | 3.9% |
| Canada Line | 494,000 | 49% | 156% | 0.0% |
| SeaBus | 61,900 | 50% | 164% | -1.5% |
| WCE | 10,300 | 19% | 152% | -5.7% |
| HandyDART | 15,700 | 49% | 148% | -5.2% |
| Total System-Wide Boardings | 4,992,000 | 52.9% | 137% | 6.8% |
| Total Weekly Journeys | 2,955,000 | 52.1% | 142% | 8.1% |

Notes:

- 2021 and 2020 weeks included Labour Day, the 2019 (pre-COVID) week did **not** include Labour Day.
- Weekly ridership may fluctuate due to weather, holidays, or other factors. Variations in weekly ridership may not be significant.
- All ridership counts are preliminary and may be revised in future reports.
- Totals may not exactly equal sum of components due to rounding.

3

Weekly Recovery of Transit Ridership and Bridge Vehicle Volumes



Notes:

- Vaccination data lags 1-2 weeks behind
- Bridge vehicle volumes is based on 3 bridges: Knight Street, Pattullo and Golden Ears
- Transit ridership data is based on final ridership for 2020 and preliminary ridership for 2021
- All holidays are removed from data to smooth irregularities

TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation

FROM: Geoff Cross, Vice President, Planning and Policy

DATE: September 22, 2021

SUBJECT: **ITEM 5.2 - Update on George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Mayors' Council receive this report.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Mayors' Council with information regarding the recent Provincial announcement of the George Massey Crossing Project. This includes key transit elements already included in the approved project design, as well as expected additional work required with the Province in order to develop and deliver a high-quality highway bus rapid transit corridor.

BACKGROUND

Initially opened in 1959, the existing George Massey Tunnel has been a vital corridor for the movement of goods and people for more than 6 decades and is currently part of the Province of BC's Highway 99 corridor. The Province has been assessing replacement options over the past decade and commissioned an *Independent Technical Review* (September 2018) looking at regional alignment, projected capacity needs, transit infrastructure and the feasibility of seismically upgrading the existing tunnel.

In early 2019, the Province engaged Indigenous groups, local governments, TransLink, and Metro Vancouver regarding initial options development, including developing and finalizing project principles, goals, and objectives. Later that year the Province and the Metro Vancouver Task Force endorsed 6 options for further review. In November 2019, the Metro Vancouver Board endorsed the 8-lane immersed tube tunnel (ITT) as the preferred crossing option.

In support of this work, the Province undertook the *Crossing Solution Business Case*. Completed in December 2020 (updated April 2021), the study considered crossing service delivery options (i.e. 8-lane bridge vs. 8-lane ITT), supportive corridor improvements, procurement analysis and a recommended implementation plan.

On August 18, 2021, the Province announced that it would be moving forward with a new 8-lane ITT *"providing people with a toll-free crossing that aligns with regional interests and an active transportation connection across the Fraser River"*.

DISCUSSION

To support Provincial decision making, TransLink completed an assessment using the Regional Transportation Model (RTM) to understand potential long-term (80-years) travel demand on the crossing, using growth assumptions from Metro Vancouver. Analysis found that capacity and cost of SkyTrain would be significantly in excess of forecast demand, and that this part of the region could be more effectively served by a high-quality highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network. As a result the Province concluded that planning for a highway BRT into the project design was most appropriate.

With respect to alignment with TransLink policy, the announced project is consistent with direction established in the Regional Transportation Strategy (2013): *“Work with the Province to ensure a replacement to the Massey Tunnel is integrated with the regional network in a way that is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy”*, as well as emerging policy direction in TransLink’s update to the RTS, *Transport 2050*, relating to new active transportation infrastructure and developing a network of fast and reliable transit-dedicated lanes on regional and provincial highways.

Project includes new tunnel and interim corridor improvements

The new ITT will feature two four-lane roadway tubes with a dedicated bus-only transit lane in each direction and an additional five-metre wide tube for pedestrians and cyclists. The new ITT is expected to be in operation in 2030, with an estimated cost of \$4.15 billion.

In the interim the Province will be undertaking a number of different Highway 99 corridor improvements. These include two near-term projects: (1) construction of bus-on-shoulder transit lanes south of the tunnel between Highway 17A and the Ladner Trunk Road off-ramp, and northbound from Ladner Trunk Road to the existing start of the high-occupancy lane on Highway 99. At a projected cost of \$12.8 million, these new lanes will tie into the dedicated transit lanes that will be built into the new ITT; and (2) construction of the Bridgeport Road bus connection and other improvements to the Highway 99 / 17A interchange, creating a new bus-only access from Bridgeport to Highway 99 southbound (projected cost \$5.28 million). Concurrently, TransLink is working with the City of Richmond to support their plans for improving bus priority between Bridgeport Station and Highway 99, better connecting the municipal roadway system to Provincial improvements. This support includes TransLink funding through our Bus Speed & Reliability program.

The Provincial interim work will also include the creation of a new multi-use pathway from the Oak Street Bridge into Richmond, as well as improvements to the bicycle shuttle pullout on Highway 17A, including new ramp crossings and improved connections into the existing cycling network.

In addition to these projects the Province has also committed to replacing the Steveston Interchange. Construction of the new interchange is anticipated to begin in 2022 and be completed in 2025. The new interchange will improve connections for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.

TransLink has been working with the Province to confirm the interim improvements will support the regional transportation system, especially transit and active transport. While there has been ongoing staff engagement, the scope of the interim improvements is constrained by limited existing policy direction for the corridor, especially regarding bus rapid transit. TransLink staff continue to advocate for ensuring designs anticipate future needs and support regional objectives.

Opportunity to deliver Fast & Reliable transit concurrent with new infrastructure

Looking ahead, it will be essential that TransLink and the Province continue to work together towards a coordinated vision for the corridor. Both Highway 99 and 17A have been identified in *Transport 2050* as part of the Fast & Reliable Transit Network, a regional network of fast and reliable transit services travelling in dedicated rights-of-way. As described earlier, TransLink’s assessment of long-term corridor demand confirmed that the region would be effectively served by a high-quality highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – which are currently not part of the proposed design. Essential elements of BRT infrastructure include: bus priority lanes, “rail-like” stations with high quality passenger amenities, and convenient multimodal access to stations (e.g. bus, cycling, walking, and park & ride where appropriate). **The tunnel replacement project is an important opportunity to deliver high-quality transit south of the Fraser. To do this, and maximize the investment in the new ITT, support from the Province relating to highway BRT infrastructure through both interim and full crossing project phases will be critical.**

Upcoming development of the New Vision, and subsequent expansion Investment Plans, will consider opportunities implement the network described in *Transport 2050* in this corridor.

NEXT STEPS

TransLink will continue to work with the Province on improving transit design elements in both the interim improvements and new tunnel. This will also include ongoing work with the Province towards a coordinated vision for the entire Highway 99 corridor.