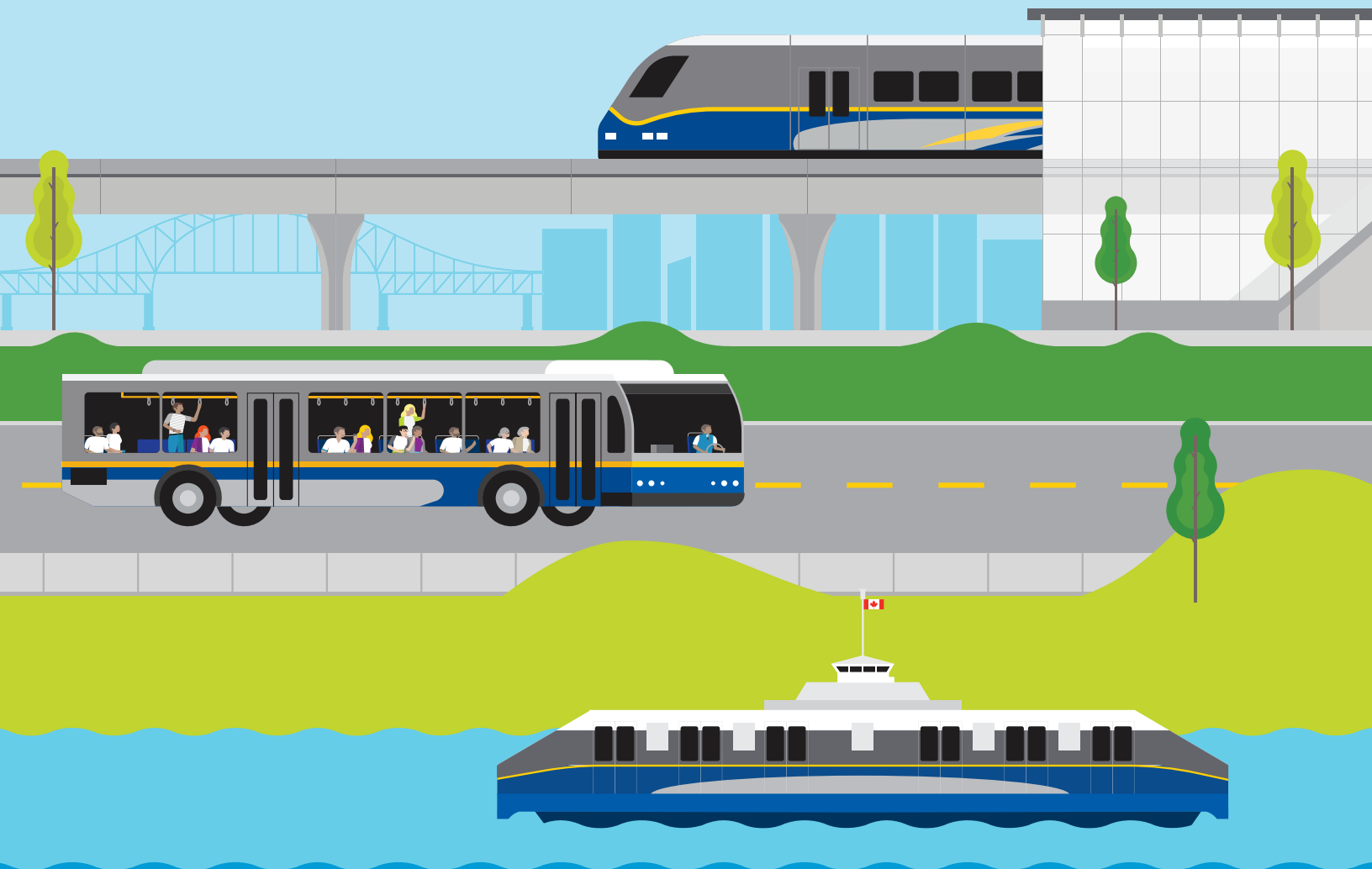


# Transit Fare Review Phase 4 Summary Report

Executive Summary  
July 2018



# Table of Contents

Introduction	2
About the Transit Fare Review	3
What we did	3
What we heard & learned	4
Phase 4 activities	7
Next steps	7

# Introduction

In this four-phase Transit Fare Review, we've taken a fresh look at how we price transit in Metro Vancouver. We completed Phase 4 in June 2018, and this report summarizes what we did, what we heard, and what we learned in this phase of the Transit Fare Review.

## Timeline



## Highlights

We received over 11,000 responses in Phase 4 of the Transit Fare Review, bringing the combined total to over 66,000 responses during all four phases. Throughout this two year process, we have heard respondents overwhelmingly say they want to see change from our current zone system to one that they feel is more fair.

In Phase 4, nearly three-quarters of respondents told us the key recommendation for a fare structure that prices by the distance between stations would result in a system that is more fair than today. While a portion of respondents did express concern that the recommended system may be more difficult to understand and that their fare may be higher, most residents seem willing to accept some additional complexity for this improvement in fairness.

Over two-thirds of respondents felt that targeted time of day discounts would help reduce overcrowding during peak times on transit. Over half of respondents stated that these discounts would also help to grow ridership.

# About the Transit Fare Review

In 2016, TransLink launched a comprehensive four phase review of the way we price transit. The current three-zone fare structure was implemented in 1984 and has remained largely unchanged for almost 35 years. In this time, the region has grown by over one million people, and the transit system has evolved from being based entirely on buses to one that includes an increasingly extensive rail rapid transit network.

The most frequent-fare related complaint that we receive is that the current three-zone system is unfair because of arbitrary zone boundaries. This causes some riders who travel shorter distances to pay more than riders traveling longer distances, simply because they happen to cross over a zone boundary. The desire for a fare structure that more closely reflects the distance travelled, combined with new technological capabilities offered by Compass has provided us with an opportunity to review the way we price transit in Metro Vancouver. By aligning fares more closely to what you use or how far you travel, we can respond to long-standing concerns and improve the overall customer experience when using transit.

## What we learned in previous phases

In Phase 1, respondents shared their concerns, issues and ideas, and we learned that a majority of Metro Vancouver residents think the current fare system does not work well. In Phase 2, we asked for input on how fares should vary by distance, time of day and service type. In Phase 3, we refined the options and asked about specific proposals for how to price by distance, which types of fare products to offer, and if changes should be made to customer discounts. In all phases, the majority of respondents told us they wanted a more fair fare structure: one that aligns fares more closely with usage.

You can read more about what we heard in previous phases in the Phase 1, 2 and 3 Summary Reports at [www.translink.ca/farereview](http://www.translink.ca/farereview).

## What we did

In Phase 4 we shared a full set of proposed recommendations and three key recommendations with the public for input and feedback:

1. **Distance and Fare Products:** Eliminate zones and shift to pricing by the distance between stations on SkyTrain, SeaBus, & future rapid transit and update pre-paid passes to reflect this change. Maintain flat fare on bus.
2. **Time of Travel:** Expand targeted off-peak discounts and/or rewards to better manage overcrowding on the system.
3. **Discounts:** Expand discounts for children, youth, and low-income residents if funded by Senior Government.

Over 11,000 residents shared their input and feedback on these proposed recommendations through public engagement in Phase 4. For these recommendations, we asked each respondent what they liked and disliked in terms of fairness, simplicity, affordability, personal benefit, transit use and ability to manage overcrowding, in addition to any other likes and dislikes they wanted to share.

# What we heard & learned

## Distance

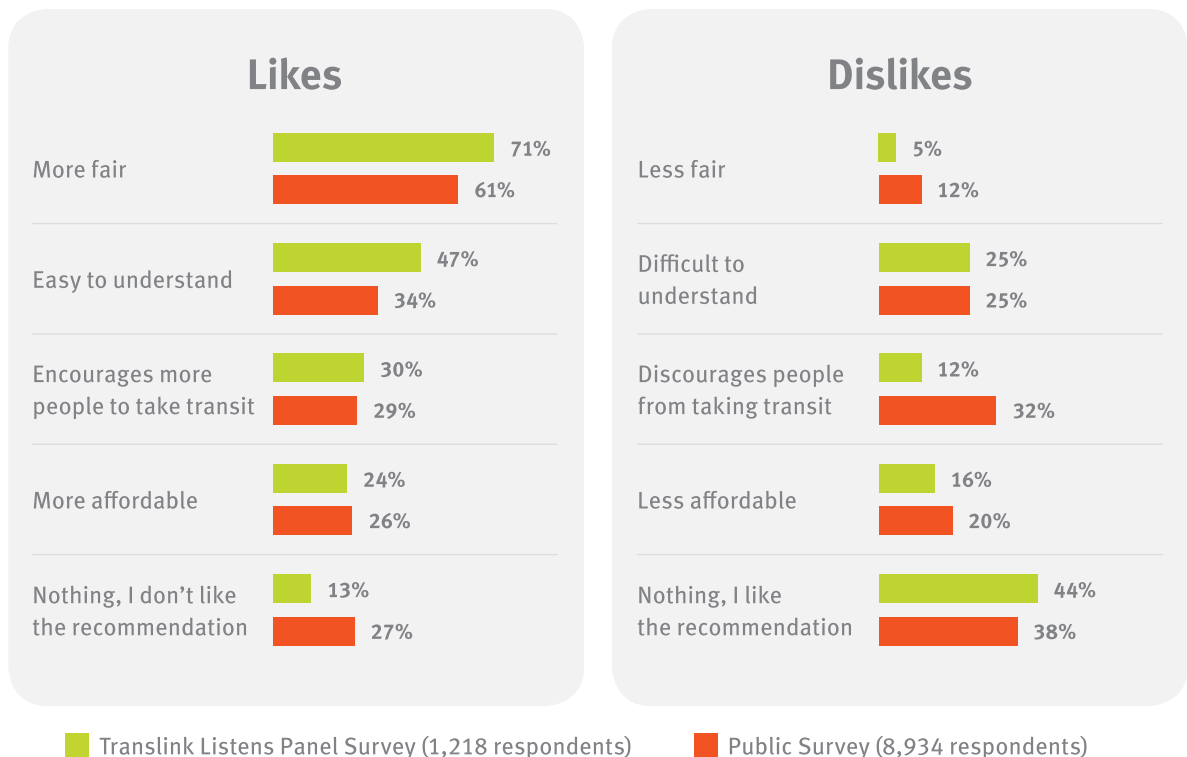
A reoccurring theme that we have heard throughout all four phases of our Transit Fare Review is that residents feel that the current three-zone structure is unfair. Support for replacing the current fare system has consistently increased throughout the phases.

Consistent with levels of support evident in previous phases, in Phase 4, 71% of participants said that pricing by distance makes the system more fair.

In Phase 4, we proposed the following recommendation:

*Eliminate zones and shift to pricing by the distance between stations on SkyTrain, SeaBus & future rapid transit and update pre-paid passes to reflect this change. Maintain flat fare on bus.*

- *Maximum fare would be equivalent to a three-zone fare*
- *Evening and weekend off-peak discounts would be maintained.*



*The results of the TransLink Listens panel survey were weighted by age, gender, area of residence, and primary mode of transportation in order to generate findings that are more statistically representative of the region's adult population.*

Generally more respondents felt that this proposal was easy to understand, but there is some concern regarding the simplicity, affordability, and the role the recommended fare structure will have in encouraging people to take transit. If the recommendation is approved, we will need to address these concerns by working to ensure wayfinding, communication, and the user interface on the Compass Vending Machines clearly communicates new fares and product offerings.

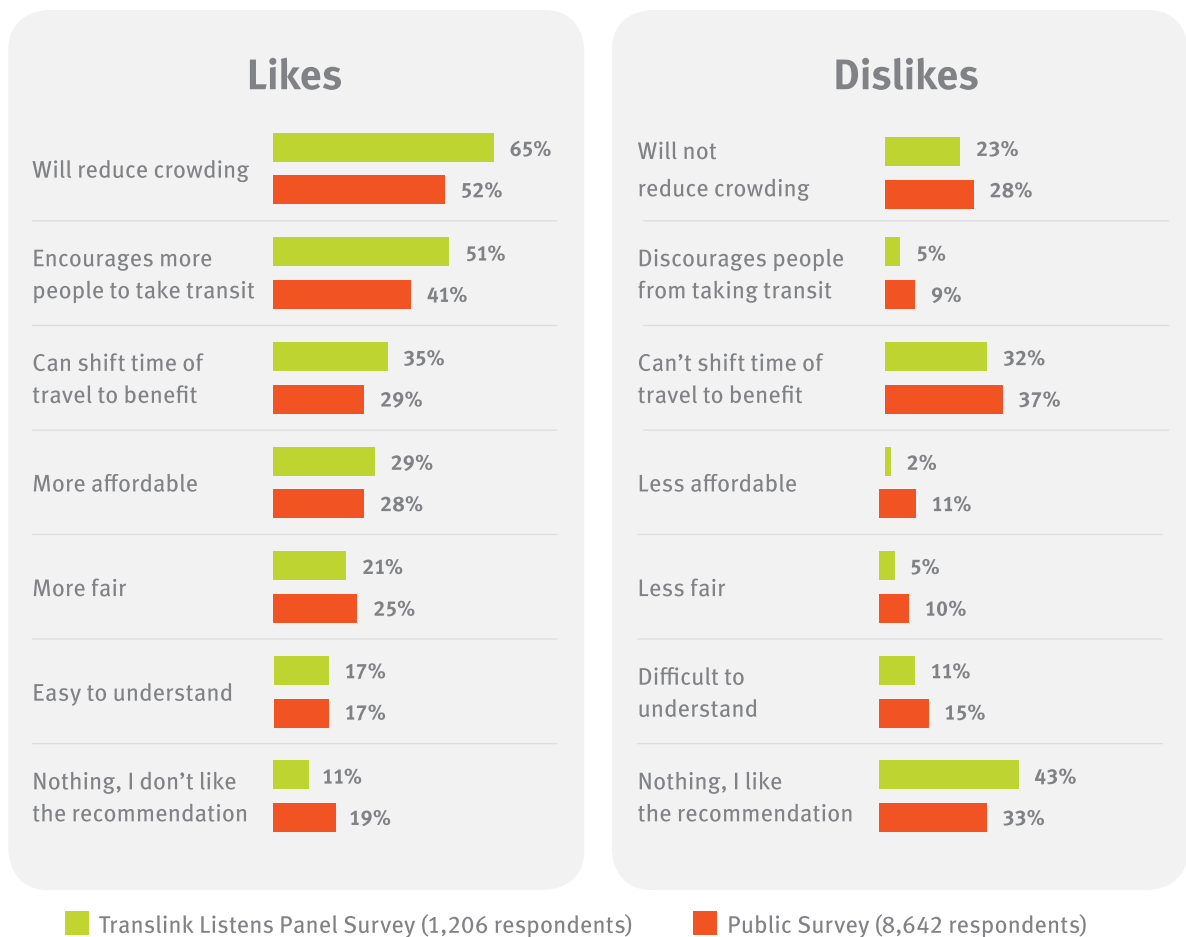
## Time of Day

Currently our time of day policy offers travel across the system for a 1-zone fare to those who travel on weekday evenings after 6:30 PM and on weekends. Our current proposal recommends maintaining today's discount while also exploring targeted discounts in specific regions at specific times. Congestion and overcrowding generally occur at peak times, which can vary depending on where you start your trip and the direction you travel. Pilot studies would need to be undertaken to understand the best times and places to target off-peak discounts

Residents responded favourably to this recommendation overall, especially regarding the positive effects these discounts would have on reducing overcrowding and encouraging more people to take transit. While many indicated they would likely not be able to take advantage of the discount, **over two-thirds of residents believe that this would help reduce overcrowding and over half believe that it will encourage more people to take public transit.**

We asked the public about the following proposed recommendation:

*Expand targeted off-peak discounts and/or rewards to better manage overcrowding on the system.*



Over two-thirds of residents believe that targeted discounts will help to reduce overcrowding during peak periods. Over half of residents believe that these discounts would encourage more people to take transit.

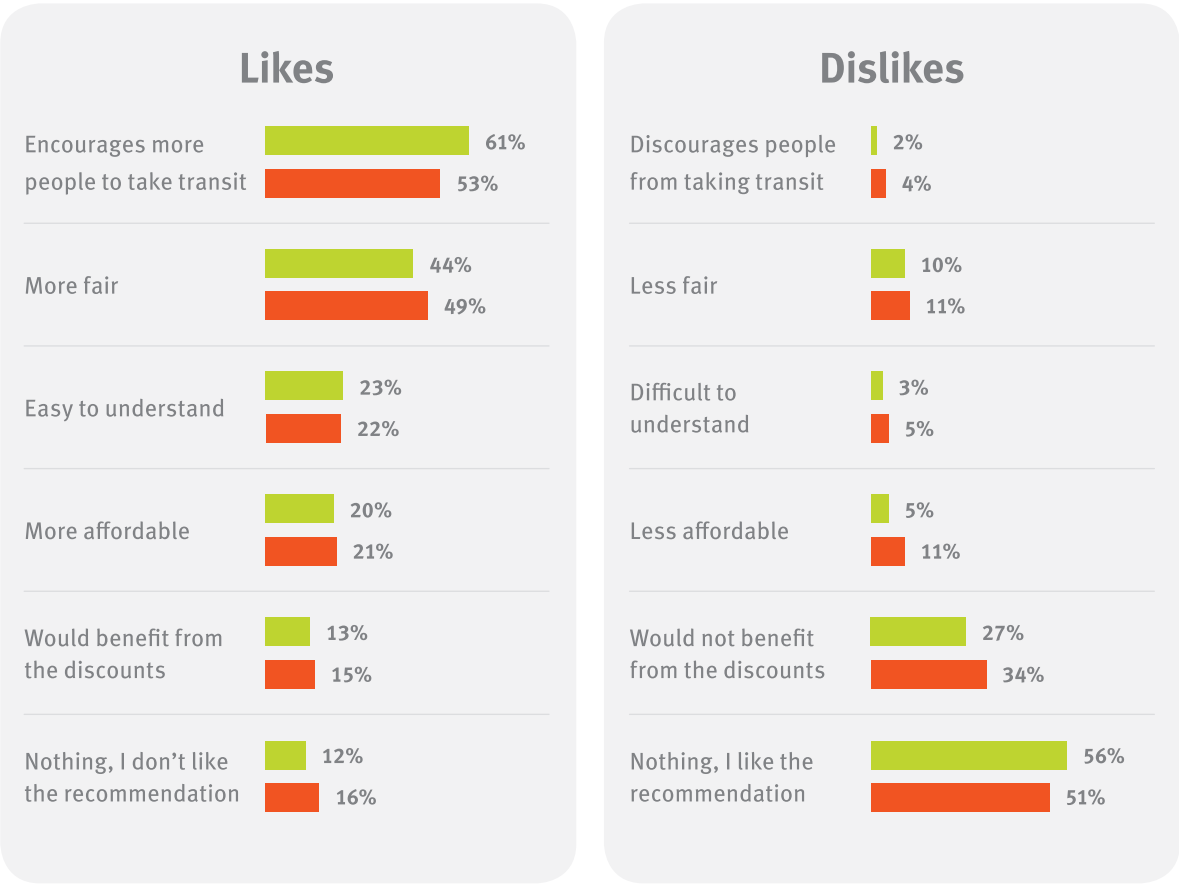
## Discounts

TransLink currently offers discounts for children, youth and seniors. In Phase 3, we asked about whether or not we should also offer discounts for low-income individuals who are not already receiving a discount. Two-thirds of residents felt that these individuals should receive a discount, however less than half of residents supported increasing transit fares overall in order to fund these discounts.

In previous phases, we also analyzed expanding youth discounts in order to make transit more affordable for families to travel together and encourage ridership for youth.

We received a great deal of support for this recommendation due to its ability to increase ridership. **Nearly two-thirds of resident’s think that this recommendation would increase transit use.**

**We asked the public for input on the following recommendation:**  
*Expand Discounts for children, youth, and low-income residents through partnerships with Senior Government*



■ Translink Listens Panel Survey (1,206 respondents)    ■ Public Survey (8,642 respondents)

Nearly two-thirds of residents believe that expanding user discounts for youth and low-income would encourage more people to take transit, though over one-quarter would not benefit from these discounts.

# Phase 4 Activities

## Public Engagement

- We sought feedback from the public between June 18th and June 29th, 2018 via an online **public survey** completed by 9,745 respondents and a parallel market research panel survey with the **TransLink Listens Panel**, completed by 1,388 respondents.
- The results of the **TransLink Listens** panel survey were weighted by age, gender, area of residence, and primary mode of transportation in order to generate findings that are more statistically representative of the region's adult population. The full report on both the public survey and the panel survey is included in Appendix A.
- One **Stakeholders Forum** included key stakeholders across multiple sectors including labour, business, environment, health, faith, people with disabilities, students, children, youth, and seniors to share their perspectives on the options.
- Two **Elected Officials Forums** focused specifically on the perspectives of elected officials from local, provincial and federal levels of government.
- Six **Public Information Sessions** were held at community events and transit locations across the Metro Vancouver region to promote participation in the survey, answer questions and provide information about the components and process of the Transit Fare Review.
- The proposed recommendations were presented and explained in the **Phase 4 Draft Report on Recommendations** and a short **video** posted on the TransLink website. This provided information regarding each aspect of the proposal, divided between recommendations that would be implemented first and later, after funding and technological capacity became available.

## Technical Analysis

- Undertook ridership and revenue modelling to both inform the illustrative prices presented in the Phase 4 Draft Report on Recommendations and understand impacts on overall transit costs of new fares and fare products.
- Conducted a scan of the time of day impacts from other agencies around the world as well as review of relevant conditions in Metro Vancouver.

## Next steps

The results from Phase 4 will be used to refine and update our final recommendations for the Transit Fare Review. We will then seek endorsement of the recommendations from the Mayors' Council and TransLink Board before moving into implementation.

Keep up to date on the final recommendations at [www.translink.ca/farereview](http://www.translink.ca/farereview)