



PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA

Revised: March 30, 2021

April 1, 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	<i>Technology Test: Members please connect to the meeting early, by 8:50AM, to provide time to trouble-shoot any connection problems.</i>	
9:00AM	1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS	
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	1.2. Approval of Minutes (February 25, 2021)	2
9:05AM	2. PUBLIC DELEGATES	6
9:20AM	3. REPORT OF TRANSLINK MANAGEMENT	
	3.1. COVID-19 Ridership Update	24
	3.2. Update on Printed Transit Schedules	7
9:45AM	4. REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE	
	4.1 COVID Impacts on Long-Term Planning	11
10:00AM	5. OTHER BUSINESS	
	5.1. Next Meeting (via videoconference) – April 29, 2021	
10:00AM	6. 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, February 25, 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
(arrived at 9:18 a.m.)
Mayor Malcolm Brodie, Richmond
Mayor Linda Buchanan, North Vancouver City
Councillor Craig Cameron, West Vancouver
(arrived at 9:22 a.m.)
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
Councillor Christine Boyle, Vancouver
(alternate)
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
Gigi Chen-Kuo, Interim Chief Executive Officer, TransLink
Geoff Cross, Vice-President, Transportation and Planning, TransLink
Daniel Freeman, Senior Manager, Bus Priority Programs, TransLink
Andrew McCurran, Director, Strategic Planning and Policy, TransLink
Sarah Ross, Director, System Planning, 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 Sḵwxwú7mesh 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.

Chair Coté welcomed Mayor Jamie Ross to his first Mayors' Council meeting and acknowledged the efforts of Sany Zein, Vice-President, Infrastructure Management and Engineering, who will be departing TransLink on February 26, 2021.

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1. Adoption of the Agenda

Draft agenda for the February 25, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, version dated February 19, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the agenda of the February 25, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation be adopted, as presented.

CARRIED

1.2. Approval of Minutes (January 28, 2021)

Draft minutes of the January 28, 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 January 28, 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 February 19, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.

2.1. Joe Kunzler

Mr. Kunzler provided the following comments:

- Endorsement for the work on bus priority
- Concern regarding the neighbourhood resistance to the Burnaby gondola project
- Concern regarding the consultation undertaken with TransLink with respect to the anticipated increased transit demand to serve a proposed women's shelter in North Vancouver.

3. REPORT OF TRANSLINK MANAGEMENT

Gigi Chen-Kuo, Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO), TransLink, led the review of the presentation titled "TransLink Management Report" and highlighted:

- Federal government announcement of funding for public transportation projects over the next eight years
- Updates on capital projects
- Participation in the One Million Masks initiative.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation receive this report.

CARRIED

4. REPORT OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING COMMITTEE

4.1. Update on Bus Priority Rapid Response

The following documents were provided with the agenda material:

- *Report titled “Item 4.1 – Progress update for “Improving Travel Times for Bus Customers: Bus Priority Rapid Response Assessment””, dated February 11, 2021*
- *Presentation titled “Bus Priority Rapid Response Update”, dated February 25, 2021.*

Sarah Ross, Director, System Planning, TransLink, led the review of the presentation provided with the agenda material and highlighted:

- Rapid response bus priority projects completed in 2020 and to be completed in 2021

Members Arrived

Chief Ken Baird and Councillor Craig Cameron joined the meeting at 9:18 a.m. and 9:22 a.m., respectively.

- Additional opportunities to advance bus priority in 2021.

Discussion ensued on:

- Support for investments in bus priority projects to increase transit ridership
- The process and timing to convert temporary bus priority projects into permanent changes:
 - The need to adjust metrics used to determine the effectiveness of a bus priority project to reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on transit ridership
- The need to change networks to support businesses and to focus on moving people on public transit
- The importance of integrating investments in bus priority projects with fleet electrification.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation receive this report.

CARRIED

4.2. Update on TransLink Tomorrow

Report titled “Item 4.2 – TransLink Tomorrow program update”, dated February 19, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.

Andrew McCurran, Director, Strategic Planning and Policy, TransLink, highlighted the new partnerships implemented as a result of proposals received through the 2018 and 2019 Open Innovation Calls:

- PidgeonBox
- UmbraCity
- Shared Mobility Compass Card (SMCC)
- Vanpool prototype in partnership with Modo.

Discussion ensued on:

- The methodology used to select areas for pilot projects
- Whether partners can be added to SMCC in the future
- Suggestions to increase the number and breadth of responses to the Open Innovation Calls.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the Mayors Council on Regional Transportation receive this report.

CARRIED

5. REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

5.1. Surrey-Langley SkyTrain (SLS) Project

5.1.a. Project Update

Geoff Cross, Vice-President, Transportation and Planning, TransLink, provided an update on the status of the SLS project:

- The provincial government committed to delivering the project to Langley as part of its 2020 election platform
- The Province will assume the lead for construction SLS project, after which it will be operated by TransLink
- The federal funding announcement for public transit infrastructure improves the prospect of the successful delivery of the project.

5.1.b. Supportive Policies Agreement

Report titled "Item 5.1.b. – Update on Surrey Langley SkyTrain Supportive Policies Agreements", dated February 1, 2021, was provided with the agenda material.

Ms. Ross summarized the report provided with the agenda material.

In response to a question from the Mayors' Council, staff advised that the terms of the transfer of responsibility for the construction of the SLS project to the Province is under negotiation.

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 April 1, 2021 and will be held via videoconference.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the February 25, 2021 Public Meeting of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation was adjourned to a Closed Session at 9:59 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: March 23, 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: Steve Vanagas, Vice-President, Customer Communications & Public Affairs
DATE: March 25, 2021
SUBJECT: **Item 3.2** - Printed Timetables

RECOMMENDATION:

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

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to update the Mayors' Council on TransLink's plans to provide timetable information to customers.

BACKGROUND:

Prior to three of the four seasonal service changes (Spring, Fall and Winter, but not Summer), 75,000 transit service timetables are printed and distributed to 155 partner locations throughout Metro Vancouver – community centres, colleges and universities, as well as public libraries.

Route schedules are grouped by region into seven timetables along with a reference binder that includes all schedules ("master copies" of the timetables).

- There are seven regional editions of the printed timetables:
 - Burnaby and New Westminster
 - Tri-Cities, Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge
 - North Vancouver
 - Richmond and South Delta
 - Surrey, North Delta, White Rock, and Langley
 - Vancouver 1
 - Vancouver 2

The most recent Fall and Winter Service Changes timetables were not printed and distributed. Many of the partner locations that normally receive timetables were closed due to COVID. Information that appeared in the timetables at the time of print was outdated due to changes in service and the extent of trip cancellations that occurred last year.

In addition to the challenges of distributing printed material during a pandemic, printed timetables have also been the subject of customer dissatisfaction – due to the time lag between when the timetables have to be sent to the printer, and when the time sheet goes into effect, there are often changes to the schedule that cannot be captured in the printed material.

The total cost of printing and distributing timetables is approximately \$200k per year.

DISCUSSION:

While the number of customers that rely on paper timetable books is small, we want to work with those customers to ensure they are not negatively impacted by the suspension. The following discussion section outlines how we did the research, what we heard, the challenges we identified and how we propose to move forward.

How we conducted customer research & engagement

TransLink Listens Survey

We launched an online engagement survey to canvass how many customers use a printed timetable, where they normally pick it up and how often, where they access bus schedules if they can't get it from a printed timetable, and whether they'd prefer it be mailed or emailed to them if the printed version is unavailable at a distribution centre.

Customer Letter & QR codes

A letter was distributed for posting at all 155 locations informing customers of the reason for the absence of timetables and including a QR code that directs customers to the online PDF version of the timetables, as well as the Customer Information (CI) contact number to express any concerns or to request a printed timetable.



Stakeholder Outreach and Communications

The survey and request for feedback was sent in an email to stakeholder groups to pass to their networks and include in their monthly newsletters. These stakeholder groups include our Access Transit Customers, the Municipal Roundtable Group focused on travel engagement, Seniors on the Move, United Way, BC211, Caregiver Associations, and Senior Living Centres.

Travel Training Webinars

TransLink's TravelSmart & Training team that specializes in travel training for seniors and new Canadians solicited feedback on our printed timetables at the following webinars:

- Nov 18 – Update at Municipal Workshop with BEST and TravelSmart
- Nov 23 – Recovery Workshop with Minoru Activity Centre, Richmond
- Nov 24 – Travel Training Workshop with ICBC for Semiahmoo Seniors Planning Table, Surrey
- Nov 25 – Travel Training Workshop with ICBC for Seniors on the Move
- Nov 30 – Recovery Workshop in Cantonese with Minoru Activity Centre, Richmond
- Dec 8 – Disability Foundation

Local Paper Ads

TransLink took out half page ads in four local papers (North Shore News, Burnaby Now, Richmond News, Surrey Now) driving readers to our survey and prompting them to contact Customer Information if they'd like to request a printed timetable be mailed directly to them.

Customer Feedback

TransLink Listens Survey

295 surveys have been completed to date. 201 respondents (69 per cent) said they use printed timetables. When asked where they normally pick up a printed timetable, 68 per cent of respondents selected the library. When asked where they'd get it from if it wasn't in a printed timetable, the most selected response was Trip Planner or a copy of the schedule on the TransLink website. Participants were also asked if they would prefer a timetable be emailed or printed and mailed directly to them (should it not be available at the distribution locations), 58 per cent of respondents preferred to receive the timetable via email.

Access Transit Customers

The Access Transit Team circulated an email to Users' Advisory Committee members soliciting feedback about a potential suspension and discontinuation of the printed timetables. Most Access Transit Customers do not rely on the printed timetables; however, members who submitted feedback unanimously agreed that before discontinuing the distribution of printed timetables, they would like to see some mitigation measures put in place for those who do rely on them (i.e. QR code linked to the online version, the ability for CI to print and mail upon request).

Travel Training Webinars

Many seniors expressed they hadn't been on transit for some time, but they did like and use the printed timetable books. Participants were pleased to learn that a direct mail option was available to them. Several seniors expressed that they were not familiar with QR codes. QR code usage has now been incorporated in the training program. The team will continue to gather feedback and communicate the alternative options to getting schedule information in upcoming webinars.

Customer Information Contact Centre

Feedback and complaints from customers received in the last three years on printed timetables have primarily been around incorrect information. Often service adjustments and changes are made past the printing deadlines. In 2020, there were a total of 26 requests to mail a copy of a printed timetable.

Identified Challenges

TransLink wants to ensure that all customers have easy access to transit schedules by providing those schedules in ways that meet their needs. Through the research process, TransLink identified the following barriers:

- Access to data or the internet while travelling
- Unfamiliarity with QR codes and/or Trip Planner
- Identifying customers who rely on printed timetable books - mass distribution makes it challenging to accurately determine how many of these timetable books are being used and how many customers rely on them.

New Focused Distribution

TransLink will proceed with a new plan for the distribution of timetables that includes additional distribution channels, while still maintaining availability of printed versions, albeit in lower quantities. Beginning with the Fall service changes, TransLink transit schedules will be available through the following channels:

- **Email Subscription:** Customers will have the option of subscribing to a quarterly email that attaches a PDF of the timetables and Service Change information. PDF versions of the timetables will continue to be available on our website.
- **Mailed by request:** Customers can contact TransLink Customer Information to request a timetable book to be mailed directly to them. CI will have 10,000 copies printed on hand to distribute by mail.
- Scanning QR codes at key locations linking to our website: QR Codes in key locations that lead customers directly to our bus schedule webpage. The Travel Training team will also include a tutorial on using QR codes at their training sessions.
- Available at select partner locations: TransLink will work with libraries and community centres to find the most convenient locations for our customers to access a printed timetable book. We will be sending out letters to libraries, community centres and other key locations across the region to provide the option of ordering timetable books to locations that have the demand. We will provide timetable supply out of the same batch of 10,000 that will be ordered for distribution by mail.



Customer Education Campaign

TransLink will launch a customer education campaign using traditional tactics (social media, media, stakeholder outreach, etc.) to communicate these new alternative options for getting a transit schedule and ensuring those who require a printed version know they can still get one.

CONCLUSION:

As we move towards a more digital-first experience for customers, we are mindful that there are customers that are not comfortable with technology or do not have access to digital platforms. The proposed mitigation measures will allow for us to work directly with any customers who may be negatively impacted by the discontinuation of the mass distribution of our timetable books. The cost savings will also allow for us to reallocate some of these resources and funds to a customer education campaign.

TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation

FROM: Geoff Cross, Vice President, Transportation Planning and Policy

DATE: April 1, 2021

SUBJECT: **ITEM 4.1 – Response to COVID-19 Impacts – Progress Update on Near Term Actions**

RECOMMENDATION:

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

PURPOSE:

To provide a progress update on actions endorsed by the Board and Mayors' Council in September 2020 from the report titled "Transport 2050: COVID-19 Impacts and Opportunities – Update on Near Term Actions". This report is for information purposes only.

BACKGROUND:

In June 2020, the Mayors' Council received a report titled "Transport 2050: COVID-19 Impacts and Opportunities" which described the impact that COVID-19 has had on the region's transportation objectives. The report highlighted the need to proactively seize this temporary window of openness to change to build upon the positive pandemic impacts that support our region's long-held city-building and sustainable transportation objectives and to mitigate the negative impacts that run counter to our region's goals.

In September 2020, staff presented a list of possible near-term actions that are achievable within the next one to three years and which support the emerging goals of Transport 2050 and respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on the regional transportation system. Out of this list of near-term actions TransLink, together with its partners, have made progress on initiatives as detailed in this report. The full list of near-term actions that was endorsed in September 2020 is in **Attachment A**.

DISCUSSION:

The near-term initiatives identified respond to six key observations on ways the pandemic has impacted the regional transportation system.

These six observations are:

1. Reduced transit ridership
2. Increased walking and cycling:
3. Increased driving
4. Increased remote work and remote learning
5. Increased e-commerce
6. Increased unemployment & household financial strain

1. Rebuilding Transit Ridership

As transit ridership slowly recovers, continued efforts to improve customer experience are required to ensure new and returning customers feel safe and comfortable riding transit, while supporting public health objectives. Improving transit reliability and travel time continue to be key initiatives to ensure transit remains competitive with cars and help recover transit ridership across the region.

Rebuild trust in transit with the Safe Operating Action Plan (SOAP)

In May 2020 TransLink introduced the Safe Operating Action Plan featuring increased cleaning and sanitizing, physical space management and access control measures, and active monitoring of passenger loads. Management continues to expand on these initiatives, with a pilot now underway featuring the use of bacteria and virus killing copper on high-touch transit surfaces.

Make transit more reliable and competitive with rapid deployment of bus priority measures

Since July, TransLink has worked with municipal partners to advance near-term, quick-win opportunities to reduce delay for bus customers using bus priority measures. Several projects were delivered in fall and winter of 2020 with additional bus priority projects anticipated to be completed in 2021.

A report titled “Progress update for Improving Travel Times for Bus Customers: Bus Priority Rapid Response Assessment” that provides a comprehensive update on the completed and anticipated bus priority projects was presented to the New Mobility Committee on February 11, 2021.

Projects completed in fall/winter 2020 include:

Project Category	City	Corridor	Location	Bus Network Kms (or # of Projects)
Priority Lane	Vancouver	Georgia St *	Nicola St to Richards St (WB), Denman to Hornby (EB)	2.8 kms
Priority Lane	Vancouver	Granville St	SW Marine Dr to 16th Ave	11 kms
Priority Lane	Vancouver	Kingsway & Main St	Fraser St to Terminal Ave	4.5 km
Tactical	Vancouver	49th Ave	Main St to Boundary Rd	3.5 km
Tactical	Burnaby	Edmonds St	Griffiths Dr to Canada Way	3.4 kms
Bus Bulb	City of North Vancouver	Lonsdale Ave	15th to 18 th St	(3)
Bus Bulb	New Westminster	8 th St	8 th Ave	(1)
Bus Stop Balancing	Vancouver	Macdonald	Line 2 - Downtown Vancouver via Macdonald	(1)

*project under development prior to pandemic

Set the stage for post-pandemic ridership growth

TravelSmart is developing new programs in early 2021 to engage businesses and developers in helping rebuild longer-term transit ridership growth, including:

- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) toolkits tailored to individual businesses
- *TDM Guidelines for New Developments* (completed by Q2 2021) with guidance for developers and municipal development approvals processes.

2. Supporting Walking and Cycling

As many people continue to work from home, walking and cycling for discretionary trips continue to be popular as a safe and physically distanced activity. The following actions are intended to leverage this momentum and further encourage walking and cycling during and after the pandemic.

Rapidly expand safe infrastructure for active transportation

In December 2020 TransLink conducted some exploratory work to assess opportunities for rapid deployment of separated bikeway networks in Urban Centres and along the Major Bikeway Network (MBN). Through this work, rapid deployment concepts were developed for bikeway networks in 6 Urban Centres and for filling 29 strategic gaps in the Major Bikeway Network that would see eight MBN corridors completed. Work is underway to amend existing cycling capital cost-sharing program guidelines to support 2021 regional cost-share funding towards such rapid deployment projects.

To support municipalities in this rapid deployment approach, in 2020 the TravelSmart team produced a *Tactical Urbanism Toolkit*. In addition to design guidance, the toolkit provides ideas for promotion activities to boost usage of new projects.

Make e-bikes more widely accessible

In 2021, the North Shore municipalities are aiming to launch an e-bike-sharing pilot. TransLink has provided some support and is actively working to ensure these shared bike docking stations are well integrated with transit facilities. A shared micromobility roundtable will be held quarterly with interested municipalities to continue inter-municipal coordination on topics including data sharing, payment, and cross-boundary operation.

Invest in data collection to track use of active modes

To ensure data-driven active transportation planning, TransLink is coordinating the installation of pedestrian and bicycle counters across the region, including 15 counters in the first phase in Q1 2021.

3. Discouraging More Driving

Travel data reveals that traffic volumes are down about 10%¹ while transit ridership is down about 60% which implies that some shifting away from transit towards personal automobiles may be occurring. This movement is understandable given public concerns around virus transmission on shared modes of transportation. A key regional priority is to minimize the number of people who resort to purchasing an automobile as a result of the pandemic, given that auto ownership is the single greatest predictor of traffic levels and transit ridership. Once you own a car, you are much more likely to use it and much less likely to use transit for many years into the future.

Increase access to automobile travel without needing to own a car

Management is building on the successful 10-van vanpool prototype currently in operation at UBC in partnership with Modo and will be expanding in 2021 to a larger pilot focusing on workers at industrial parks poorly served by conventional transit. The pilot will introduce a customer-facing app that provides vanpool participant matching and payment solutions.

¹ Based on traffic counts over the Golden Ears, Knight Street, and Pattullo bridges comparing summer 2020 over summer 2019.

Make it easier to use and seamlessly transition between all shared-mobility options

Building on a prototype in 2020, the Shared Mobility Compass Card pilot will launch in the second half of 2021. This pilot aims to provide pilot participants with a single app and a seamless experience for planning, booking, paying, and transferring between transit, walking, biking, bike-share and car-share services.

4. Supporting Digital Trip Substitution

If employees and students are able to work or learn remotely for even one day per week, they reduce their transportation demand by 20%. If we can work with workplaces and schools to coordinate and synchronize these practices on a regional level after the pandemic – we can ensure we’re making best use of our transportation capacity moving forward.

Expand free public Wi-Fi networks across the region.

On October 1, 2020, the Mayors’ Council passed a resolution to “send a letter to Metro Vancouver to request that it engage in a discussion on the development of a regional public Wi-Fi network.” This letter has been sent and follow-up discussions are being scheduled.

Work with employers to support and coordinate remote working.

TransLink has developed a Remote and Flexible Work Toolkit which includes resources for businesses and post-secondary institutions to implement effective remote work programs. TransLink staff also coordinated with the Province to support development of their provincial TDM guidelines.

5. Ensuring E-Commerce is Delivered Smartly and with Less Impact

E-commerce and home deliveries have rapidly increased since the beginning of the pandemic. As this trend continues, more effective regulation is needed to help ensure best use of scarce transportation system capacity, reduce neighbourhood and curb-side impacts, and help support brick-and-mortar retail establishments which are the foundation of walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods.

Centralize e-commerce deliveries in neighbourhood hubs

From early 2020 to mid-2021, TransLink is partnering with Pigeon Box, a local logistics company, to pilot the technical feasibility and public interest in having home deliveries shipped instead to a safe and secure locker at a convenient nearby transit station.

More effectively manage the curbside

An approach to digital curb management is being developed in collaboration with researchers at UBC. As part of this project, pilots are underway with municipalities including North Vancouver, New Westminster, and the City of Vancouver to implement digital tools to manage curb-side parking and pick-up and drop-off for all users.

6. Mitigating the Negative Household Financial Impacts of COVID-19

Public health restrictions have led to an economic slowdown, with the unemployment rate remaining high at 8% compared to the same time last year (4.5%). Households are feeling the financial strain.

Ensure that transit remains affordable.

TransLink's relief funding Contribution Agreement with the Province includes funding support to keep fare increases from 2021 through 2024 at inflationary levels.

Deliver free bikes, bike repair services, and rebates to low-income individuals.

The Bike Parkade cleanout is a program that removes and donates bicycles that have been abandoned or discarded in TransLink's bike parkades. As part of the program, 21 bikes were donated to the PEDAL Society's Pedals for the People Program. Online and in-person beginner maintenance tutorials and free tune-ups at events and activations were also completed to promote cycling.

CONCLUSION:

In June 2020, the Mayors' Council received a report titled "Transport 2050: COVID-19 Impacts and Opportunities" which described the impact that COVID-19 has had on the region's transportation and land use objectives. In September 2020, management proposed a list of concrete near-term actions responding to COVID-19 impacts, which was endorsed by the Mayors' Council. From the list of near-term actions, this update highlights actions that have been advanced with significant progress since September 2020. Staff intends to return with regular updates on the near-term actions until COVID impacts have been adequately addressed and the endorsed near-term actions have been advanced and/or delivered.

ATTACHMENTS:

- ATTACHMENT A: Response to COVID-19 Impacts – Near-Term Actions

ATTACHMENT A: Response to COVID-19 Impacts – Near-Term Actions

1. Reduced transit ridership

Actions	TL Urgent, Short-Term Initiatives	Status
1.1 Customer Experience Action Plan 2.0	Develop a 5-year strategy and roadmap for customer experience that will help rebuild ridership and establish long-term customer experience priorities	Underway
1.2 TDM Plans for Business and Development	Develop TDM plans, resources and programs to support ridership and engage with businesses and developers.	Underway
1.3 Bus Priority Rapid Response Assessment	Quick win projects including: Bus priority lanes, bus bulbs, tactical changes & bus stop balancing	2020 projects completed; additional projects identified for 2021

2. Increased walking and cycling

Actions	TL Urgent, Short-Term Initiatives	Status
2.1 Build out infrastructure for active modes	Support municipalities (through funding, increased cost-share, and planning/design support) to rapidly deploy slow streets through tactical urbanism	Underway
	Creation of 3-5 cycling showcases in the region (would involve rapid deployment of separated bikeway networks and bike parking within three to five Urban Centres)	Underway
	Identifying 3-5 Major Bikeway Network corridors that are "low hanging fruit" for completing, and fund rapid deployment to complete segments with either permanent or temporary (tactical) infrastructure	Underway
	Increasing BICCS/WITT funding (or cost share percentage) and promote awareness of funded projects	Underway
	Funding for pedestrian safety improvements addressing worst intersections for pedestrian collisions within Urban Centres	Underway
	Advocating to the Province for new funding to build more cycling infrastructure, such as AAA routes, secured bike parking, e-bike charging, and tactical (low-cost) interventions. In particular, funding to support infrastructure for students and youth walking and cycling to school and other destinations is critical post-pandemic.	To be addressed
	Coordinate with municipalities on deploying more slow speed zones in urban centres across the region	Underway
	Provide e-bike training and education	Underway

2.2 E-bike awareness, sharing and incentives	Advocate for BC Clean Energy Vehicle (CEV) rebate program to be expanded to include e-bikes	To be addressed
	Facilitate e-bike/e-scooter sharing across the region through active coordination of municipal initiatives to introduce e-bike and e-scooter sharing systems	Underway
2.3 Data collection of active modes	Invest in data collection to track use of active modes	Underway

3. Increased driving (including ride-hailing)

Actions	TL Urgent, Short-Term Initiatives	Status
3.1 Increase access to a vehicle without needing to own one	Partner with industry to co-promote solutions and increase access to membership (e.g. for non-English speakers, newer drivers, etc.)	To be addressed
	Work with municipalities to allocate more free or low-cost on-street parking for car share vehicles, particularly in neighbourhoods that are underserved	To be addressed
	Advance digital solutions that allow for easy transition between modes (e.g. expanding TransLink's MaaS pilot)	Underway
	Increase availability of vanpool and carpools	Underway
3.2 Support vehicle electrification	Investigate challenges and opportunities for transitioning to zero emission Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles (MHDVs) and advocate for the provincial zero emissions vehicle (ZEV) mandate to be accelerated and expanded to include more vehicle classes (namely, MHDVs)	Underway
	Advocate for provincial right-to-charge legislation which guarantees fair access to electric vehicle charging for condo-dwellers, who make up about half of Metro Vancouver residents	To be addressed
	Advocate for the BCs Scrap-It Program to be expanded to include newer vehicles.	Underway
3.3 Create financial disincentives to drive in peak conditions	Partner with a municipality to undertake a voluntary pilot to understand impacts and effectiveness of mobility pricing, or a Low Emissions Zone	To be addressed
3.4 Work with municipalities to develop a regional approach to on-street parking allocation		To be addressed

4. Increased trip substitution via digitization, telework, telemedicine, and e-learning

Actions	TL Urgent, Short-Term Initiatives	Status
4.1 Support remote work and remote learning post-pandemic	Address policy barriers to supporting remote work - identify policy barriers to remote work and advocate to the appropriate governing bodies to address those	To be addressed
	Create incentives to encourage remote work - advocate for tax credits, grants or other forms of incentives can support employers by offsetting costs associated with underutilized office space and increased expenses to support employees working from home	To be addressed
	Work with employers to encourage remote work	Completed
	Gather spatial data on remote work patterns to support transit service allocation and manage negative impacts (e.g. empty office buildings)	To be addressed
	Work with cities to expand free public Wi-Fi networks across the region	Underway

5. Increased reliance on e-commerce

Actions	TL Urgent, Short-Term Initiatives	Status
5.1 Ensure e-commerce is delivered smartly and with less impact	Work with municipalities to regulate the urban freight delivery sector through street and traffic bylaws	To be addressed
	Increase access to urban freight deliveries by biking, walking or transit, through efforts such as the potential to increase the number of commercial lockers at TransLink stations	Underway
	Pilot, with municipalities or at TransLink stations, digitally managed curbs across the region	Underway
	Pilot an e-freight hub with industry and municipality where vehicles can transfer to low emissions, right-sized or active mode delivery vehicles for last mile distribution	Underway

6. Increased unemployment & household financial strain

Actions	TL Urgent, Short-Term Initiatives	Status
6.1 Mitigate the effects of unemployment	Ensure that transit remains affordable through sustainable funding sources that does not depend as heavily on fare revenues	Underway
	Advocate to the province for free or discounted transit passes for low income individuals	Underway
	Deliver free bikes, bike repair services and rebates to low-income individuals	Completed
	Prioritize quick-build transit infrastructure to support economy recovery in the region	To be addressed



Response to COVID-19 Impacts: Update on Near Term Actions

Mayors' Council Meeting

April 1, 2021

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Background

- **June 2020** – The Mayors' Council received a report ("Transport 2050: COVID-19 Impacts and Opportunities") which described COVID-19 impacts on the region's sustainable transportation objectives
- **October 2020** – A list of possible near-term actions that support the Transport 2050 goals and respond to impacts of COVID-19 on the regional transportation system was endorsed by the Mayors' Council.
- **March 2021** – First progress update on near-term actions that have been advanced and new initiatives that have been introduced since September

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COVID-19 Impacts on the Regional Transportation System

Six key observations on ways the pandemic has impacted the regional transportation system were previously identified:

- Reduced transit ridership
- Increased walking and cycling
- Increased driving
- Increased remote work and remote learning
- Increased e-commerce
- Increased unemployment & household financial strain

Key Areas of Progress

Rebuilding Transit Ridership	Bus Priority Rapid Response Assessment Several bus priority projects including bus bulbs, tactical changes, bus stop balancing, and priority lanes delivered in fall and winter of 2020. Additional bus priority projects anticipated to be completed in 2021.
Support Walking and Cycling	Rapid Deployment of Major Bike Network and Urban Centre Bike Networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2020, analysis of potential opportunities for rapid deployment of separated bikeway networks in Urban Centres and along the MBN • Work underway to amend existing walking and cycling capital cost-sharing program guidelines to prioritize 2021 regional cost-share funding towards such rapid deployment projects
Discouraging More Driving	Shared Mobility Compass Card Pilot Shared Mobility Compass Card pilot to be launched in the second half of 2021 to provide a seamless experience when planning, booking, paying, and transferring between transit, walking, biking, and other shared mobility services

Key Areas of Progress

Supporting Digital Trip Substitution	Remote and Flexible Work Toolkit Resources for businesses and post-secondary institutions to implement effective remote work programs completed
Ensuring E-Commerce is Delivered Smartly with Less Impact	Commercial Lockers at TransLink Stations Partnership with PigeonBox to pilot technical feasibility and public interest in utilizing secure lockers at nearby transit stations for deliveries
Mitigating the Negative Household Financial Impacts of COVID-19	Keeping Fares Affordable With financial support from the Province, TransLink is reducing the planned annual fare increases through to 2025.

Highlight: Exploratory Work to Support Cycling

In December 2020, two exploratory studies conducted:

1. Major Bikeway Network (MBN)

- **Near-term action:** Rapid deployment of permanent or temporary infrastructure to complete 3-5 MBN corridors
- **Exploratory work:** Identify “low-hanging fruit” to turn MBN from concept to a reality
- **Key finding:** Addressing **29 gaps** would complete **8 MBN corridors**, creating a near-term network that connects **9 municipalities** across the region

2. Urban Centre Bikeway Networks

- **Near-term action:** Rapid deployment of separated bikeway networks and bike parking in 3-5 Urban Centres
- **Exploratory work:** Sketch out potential bikeway networks for rapid deployment in six Urban Centres
- **Key finding:** About **7-8 km** of bikeways would support a network of **3-4 corridors** to connect people to multiple destinations across an Urban Centre

Highlight: Re-directing some funding for regional cycling investments to support near-term actions in 2021

Program approach – Regional Cycling “Recovery” Stream

Funding amount	2021: Potentially up to \$3M; 2022: TBD
Funding approach	Competitive; regional funding covering up to 100% of project cost
Funding limits	Maximum 1 project per muni; up to \$1 million maximum award per project
Project timing	Projects must be completed by December 31, 2021 ; preference for implementing projects by summer 2021
Project eligibility	Two potential paths for projects: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major Bikeway Network: Rapid deployment of permanent or temporary infrastructure to strategically fill gaps on the MBN that will result in complete corridors. 2. Urban Centres: Rapid deployment of a bikeway network (e.g. 3-4 connected corridors) that is “comfortable for most people” and bike parking within an Urban Centre.

Highlight: Re-directing some funding for regional cycling investments to support near-term actions in 2021

Expedited timeline for engagement, development, and implementation of new program guidelines:

- Feb 11, 2021: Feedback on regional cycling “Recovery” stream, approach for partner agency engagement
- Feb 25, 2021: Feedback on draft guidelines
- Mar 11, 2021: Endorsement of proposed guidelines
- ➔ • **Apr 1-15, 2021: Application period (two weeks)**
- Apr 16-30, 2021: Review applications
- May 13, 2021: Endorsement of “Recovery” projects
- Jun 2021: Award notifications issued
- **Summer-Dec 2021: Implement approved projects**



Agnes Greenway (interim solution)
Location: New Westminster
Length: 1.2 km
Cost: about \$100k + design fees
Timing: Dec 2020; about 2-mos. to design, 2-days to implement
Materials: road markings, flexible bollards, strategic concrete barriers, signage

Opportunity to leverage new federal funding

New **federal active transportation fund** created to finance infrastructure for non-motorized modes of transportation across Canada

- **Types of infrastructure:** bridges, trails, bike paths, pedestrian walkways
- **Timing:** Over the next 5 years
- **Total fund:** \$400 million

Opportunity

- Develop a **regional proposal** that highlights active transportation investments / projects along Major Bikeway Network and within Urban Centres throughout the region.

TO: Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation
FROM: Geoff Cross, Vice-President, Planning & Policy
DATE: March 28, 2021
SUBJECT: **ITEM 3.1** – Ridership Update

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Mayors' Council:

1. Receive this report.
-

PURPOSE:

To provide an overview of updated ridership trends and forecasting.

BACKGROUND:

TransLink has been monitoring ridership on a weekly basis since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Starting in spring 2020, we started developing scenarios transit ridership and travel demand during and after the pandemic. The scenarios focused on plausible outcomes based on a range of travel demand factors such as employment levels, physical distancing requirements, work and school from home. This work informed the Safe Restart Contribution Agreement from Senior Governments for TransLink. The \$644 million in relief funding for 2020/21 announced last September was based on a medium scenario.

Since summer 2020, TransLink's forecasting group has developed and applied an additional modeling technique to refine the scenario ranges and to estimate the likelihood of different outcomes. This technique is called Exploratory Modelling. It uses TransLink's regional transportation model, and with the assistance of machine learning, simulates many future scenarios to understand the probability and distribution of outcomes. This approach allows us to incorporate deep uncertainty into our forecasts as opposed to setting on a single forecast or small set of alternatives. Beyond the current pandemic recovery, Exploratory Modeling can be applied to a variety of planning projects and initiatives.

The attached presentation will be covered during the April 1st Mayors' Council meeting. During the meeting, staff will present information on ridership trends and describe the current ridership scenarios for 2022 as we anticipate the transition out of the pandemic. These projections inform the revenue projections and can provide decision support for policymakers for the service and investment planning that is in currently in process.

ATTACHMENTS:

- ATTACHMENT A: March Mayors' Council Update on Ridership



COVID-19 Ridership Update

Mayors' Council, March 2021

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Purpose of Update

- Provide an overview of ridership trend and changes in underlying factors since last update in the fall
- Explain how these factors have been accounted for in our current ridership and revenue forecasts
- Highlight driving trends in the region
- Summarize the financial forecast scenarios over the 10-Year Plan Period

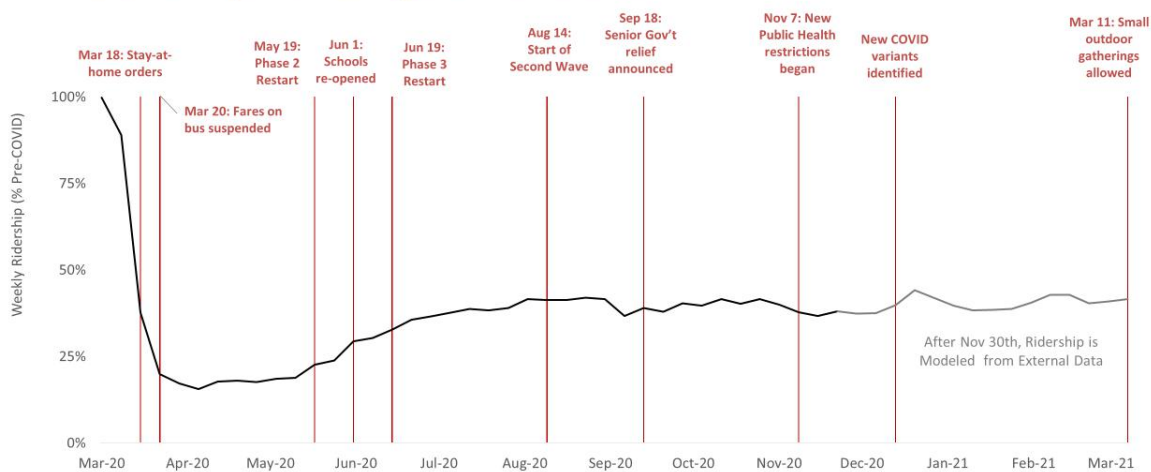
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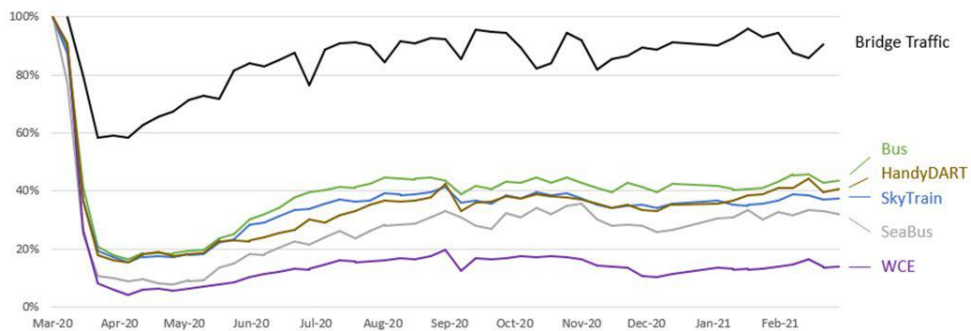
Introduction

- COVID-19 resulted in a precipitous drop in ridership last Spring and has recovered to around 40% of pre-COVID levels to-date
- TL needs an in-depth understanding of potential ridership (and revenue) changes at a time of high overall uncertainty
- A new forecasting approach has been deployed to provide decision support
- Resulting forecasts enable a higher level of confidence for TL to:
 - develop organizational readiness to deal with an uncertain future
 - plan transit service for the recovery and rebuild phases and make investment decisions
 - have the basis to discuss timing and scale of financial and other collaboration with partner agencies

Ridership Changes To-Date



Recovery of Ridership vs Bridge Volume



Notes

- Bridge traffic is estimated based on available volume counts from 3 bridges (Knight St, Pattullo, and Golden Ears)
- Ridership data based on preliminary estimates for both 2020 and 2021
- SkyTrain includes both Expo-Millennium Line and Canada Line estimated preliminary boardings
- Data between Dec 21, 2020 and Jan 4, 2021 is excluded due to the holiday period causing irregularities in weekly Pre-COVID comparison

March 12, 2021

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TRANS LINK

What is new in PANDARS “V4”?

- Scenarios no longer based on progression through phases of BC Restart Plan
- # daily new cases in BC much higher than levels seen at outset of pandemic
- 4 vaccines approved in Canada so far, with gradual roll-out this year
- Several COVID variants identified (3 in BC) which are significantly more transmissible

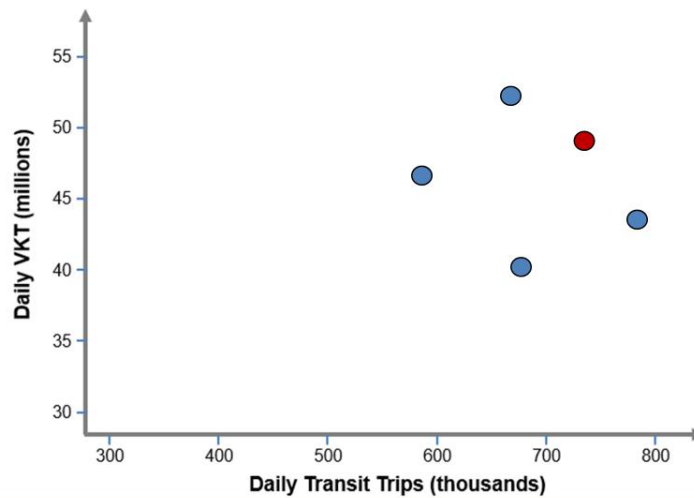
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TRANS LINK

Significant Uncertainties in Underlying Conditions

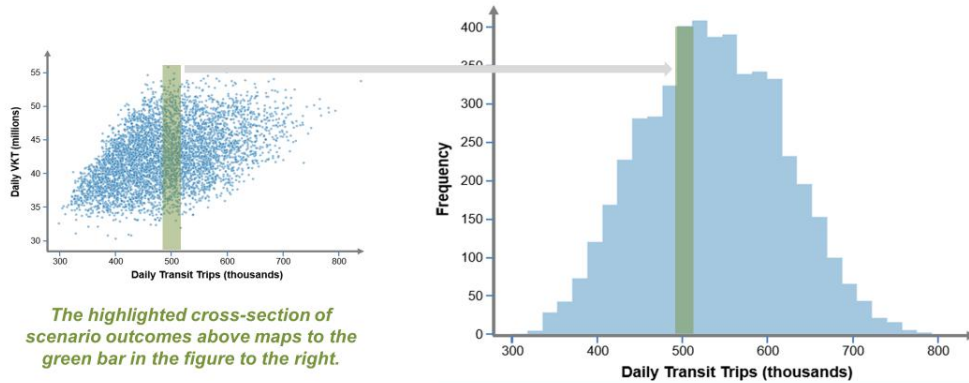


Traditional forecasting provides a single forecast and limited number of alternatives



New Approach Explicitly Considers Many Possible Outcomes

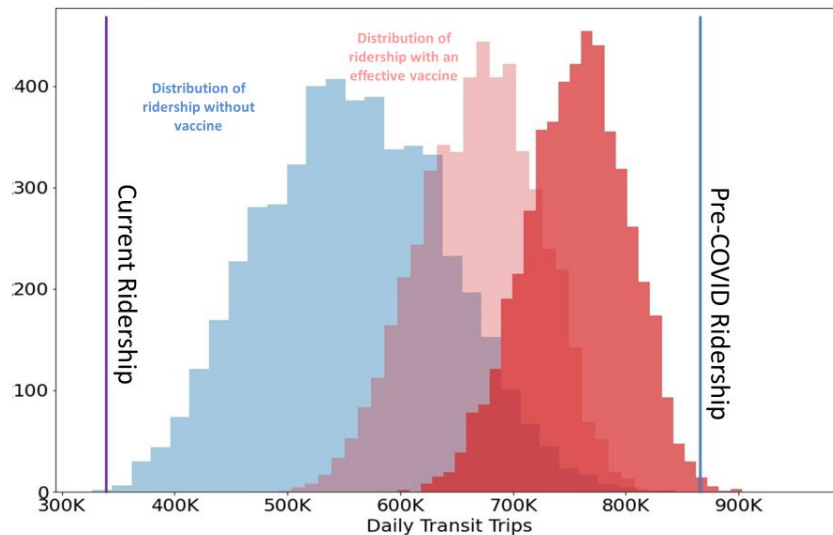
- Exploratory modeling helps manage uncertainties by simulating many future scenarios to understand the probability and distribution of outcomes



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Modeled ridership distributions with and without vaccine

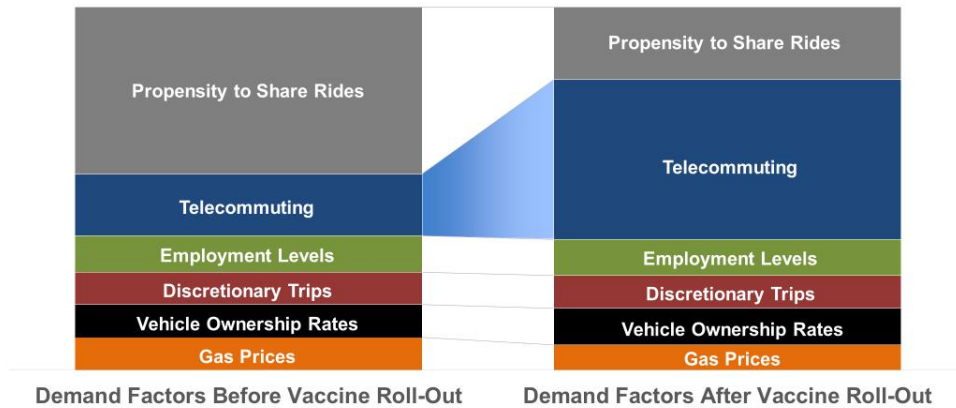


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Looking Forward to this Fall

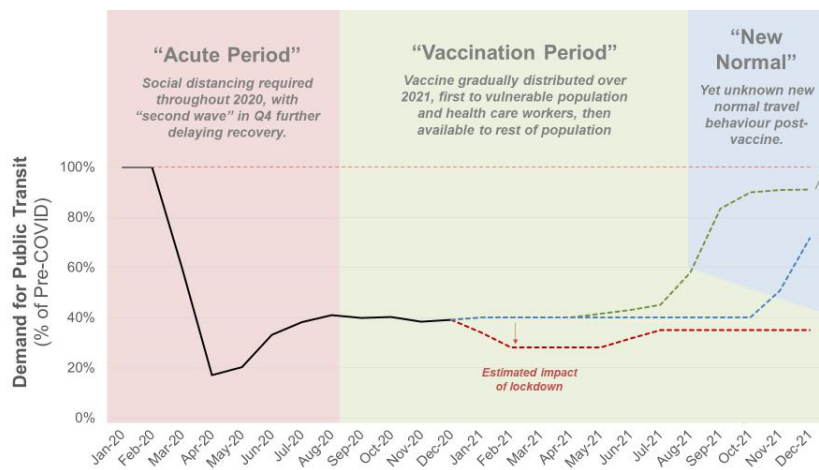
- Vaccine roll-out will drastically change the dynamics of ridership drivers, telecommuting trend will become the other key driver once community immunity is developed



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PANDARS V4 Ridership Scenarios



Scenario 1: "High Demand"

The vaccine is successful, providing lasting protection and is deployed on schedule– the "new normal" (P95) includes a relatively quick return to full employment with only limited additional working/studying from home compared to before the pandemic.

Scenario 2: "Medium Case"

Vaccines are successful, providing lasting protection, but are deployed with some delays – however it takes longer than expected to reach community immunity and socio-economic conditions in the "new normal" (P50) are less favourable than in Scenario 1.

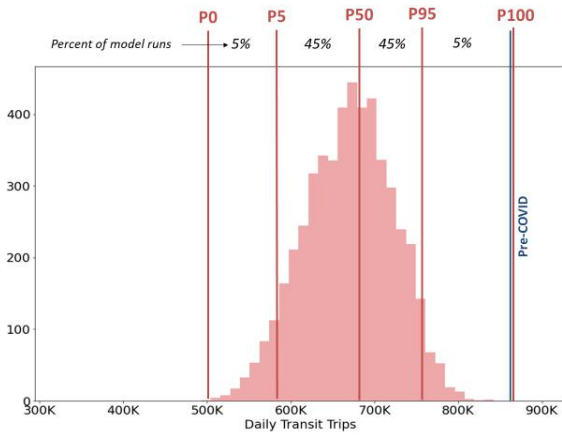
Scenario 3: "Low Demand"

Vaccines do not meet expectations in terms of efficacy and speed of delivery, providing only limited and temporary protection, leading to multiple recurrent outbreaks and deep socioeconomic consequences. The "New Normal" is not reached for several years and features a significant drop in demand.

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What will be “new normal” ridership after the pandemic?

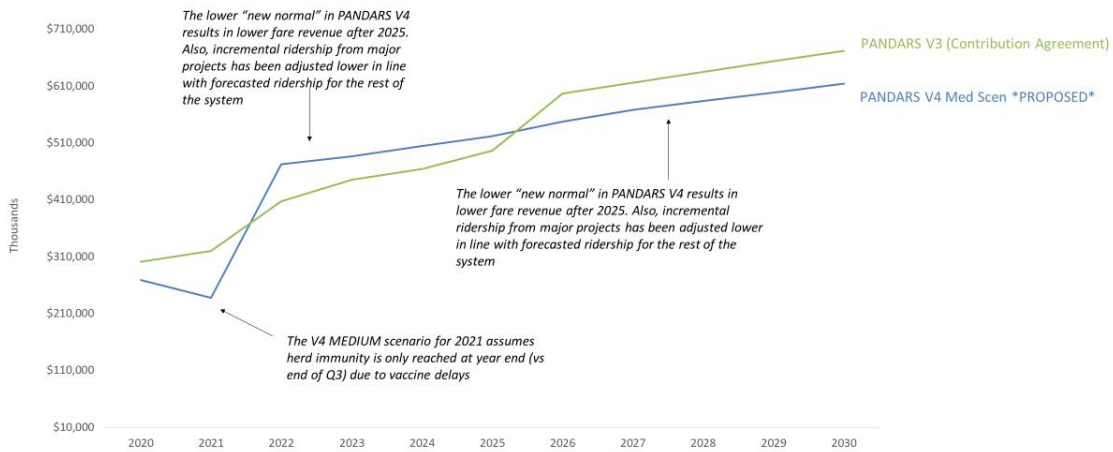


Distribution Percentile	2022 Ridership (% Pre-COVID)	Role in Recovery Scenarios
P0	60%	
P5	70%	Low scenario
P50	82%	Medium scenario
P95	91%	High scenario
P100	103%	

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Fare Revenue Forecast “Medium Case” V4 vs. “Medium Case” V3



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10-Year Revenue Loss & Expenditure Savings Forecasts

February 2021 Forecast (includes PANDARS V4)	2020	2021	2022-2030
Revenue Losses	-\$413M	-\$448M	-\$2,335M
Expenditure Saving	\$109M	\$57M	\$721M

Summary

- Latest forecasts incorporate near-term vaccine rollout, and longer-term “new normal” is in line with exploratory modelling work
- Ridership recovery may be stronger than anticipated in the near-term, but there are likely long-term structural impacts resulting in significant revenue loss over the next 10-years
- Forecasts will be adjusted as we gain new information on ridership return and the pandemic