

**SUBMISSION TO 2008 TAC SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSPORTATION AWARD
TRANSPORT 2040, TRANSLINK'S LONG TERM REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY
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INTRODUCTION

TransLink, the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority, is dedicated to creating and sustaining a transportation system that meets the needs of residents, businesses, and goods movers, in a manner that protects the environment and supports the economic and social objectives of the region. Created in 1998, TransLink is the transportation authority for the Metro Vancouver region, which consists of 21 municipalities with a total population of 2.2 million.

TransLink is the first North American transportation authority responsible for an integrated regional transportation system, including regional roads and public transit services. In addition, TransLink is responsible for regional cycling and commuting options, mobile emissions (AirCare), and Intelligent Transportation System programs, and has shared responsibility for the Major Road Network (MRN) with municipalities in the region. TransLink also has a real estate arm which allows it to influence development around rapid transit stations and generate revenue for the organization. TransLink's services are delivered through subsidiary companies and contractors including: Coast Mountain Bus Company Ltd., West Vancouver Blue Bus, B.C. Rapid Transit Company Ltd. (SkyTrain), and West Coast Express Ltd. Responsibility for these various components of the transportation network affords TransLink the opportunity to create a sustainable transportation vision that reaches across all travel modes and municipal boundaries.

Provincial legislation that came into effect on November 30, 2007, requires that TransLink have a long term strategy for the regional transportation system. Transport 2040 was adopted by the TransLink Board of Directors on July 31, 2008 as the strategy for the regional transportation system. Transport 2040 is the result of a concentrated effort to identify the key challenges facing the agency and region over the next 30 years and develop a bold vision, goals and strategies to address those challenges and set the course for the next three decades.

TRANSPORT 2040: A SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Transport 2040 serves as TransLink's long term strategy for building a sustainable transportation system within Metro Vancouver. The key focus of the document is sustainability, seeking to both enhance the sustainability and viability of Metro Vancouver's transportation network and the region as a whole. Transport 2040 is not a plan for investment. Rather, it provides the direction and the strategies that will provide the guiding framework for 10-Year

Transportation and Financial Plans. As a strategy, Transport 2040 is a high-level document that articulates a vision for TransLink and its role in the region, defining what it is to be a sustainable transportation system and setting out the goals and direction that will allow us to realize it. In order to achieve the goals, strategies and supporting initiatives have been established. The challenges which Transport 2040 seeks to address include an aging population, strong population growth, accommodating growth without encouraging urban sprawl, increasing transportation choice and reducing auto-dependency, supporting the regional economy, and the imperative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect air quality. Critically important to the strategy is the emphasis on integrating land use and transportation and having close coordination with Metro Vancouver's regional growth strategy. A core concept to create a more transit-oriented region is by concentrating growth in centres and transit-focused corridors.

Principles

The goals and strategies of Transport 2040 are based on key principles. At the forefront, is a commitment to sustainability as well as key sustainability concepts and a focus on collaborative processes. The principles behind Transport 2040, set out in the document are:

- Commitment to sustainability – social, economic, and environmental
- Commitment to partnerships and collaboration with relevant agencies and stakeholders
- Minimization of our environmental impact, especially related to carbon use
- Full lifecycle cost accounting and good value for money
- Willingness to consider new approaches and concepts and ask tough questions about assumptions
- Maximization of benefits to society
- Respect for prevailing social values
- Transportation use pays for transportation services and projects
- Focus on needs of transit users and general public first

Vision and Definition of a Sustainable Transportation System

TransLink's vision includes a descriptive word 'picture' of what a regional transportation system would be like in 2040. The vision incorporates key aspects of sustainability – economic, environmental and social. Also, located next to the vision is a definition of a sustainable transportation system to make it clear what this term means in a transportation context. The definition that TransLink has used is based on the Canadian-based Centre for Sustainable Transportation and the version that was adopted by the European Union Ministers of Transport in 2001 (see sidebar).

Goals

Transport 2040 makes a strong commitment to a number of bold goals. These goals reflect a desired future for the region, where challenges have been addressed through effective strategies that, in turn, translate into a series of linked plans. The goals expressed in Transport 2040 go beyond simply meeting the region's transportation needs. Our strategy also reflects transportation's critical relationship with goals for the environment,

the economy and our society. It is not enough to just provide transportation infrastructure and services, but we must do it in such a way that it also addresses all these goals. The six goals adopted within Transport 2040 are:

1. Greenhouse gas emissions from transportation are aggressively reduced, in support of regional, provincial, and federal targets.
2. Most trips are by transit, walking and cycling.
3. The majority of jobs and housing in the region are located along the Frequent Transit Network.
4. Traveling in the region is safe, secure, and accessible for everyone.
5. Economic growth and efficient goods movement are facilitated through effective management of the transportation network.
6. Funding for TransLink is stable, sufficient, appropriate and influences transportation choices.

The first three goals are particularly bold. For example, the goal to have most trips (i.e. 50% or more) by transit, walking, and cycling means more than doubling the 24-hour modal share from 2004 levels (at 23%), which will require a major departure from business as usual.

Strategies

TransLink's strategies to achieve our goals for the next 30 years are closely aligned with one another, meaning that by achieving one goal, we also make progress in achieving another. Four key strategies will be employed in pursuit of these goals:

TransLink defines a Sustainable Transportation System as:

One that allows the basic access and development needs of individuals, companies, and societies to be met safely and in a manner consistent with human ecosystem health, and promotes equality within and between successive generations.

It is affordable, operates efficiently, offers choices of transportation, and supports a competitive economy as well as balanced regional development.

It limits emissions and waste within the planet's ability to absorb them, uses renewable resources at or below their rates of generation, and uses non-renewable resources at or below the rates of development of renewable substitutes while minimizing the impact of the use of land and the generation of noise.

Source: adopted by the Ministers of Transport of the European Union, 2001

1. Make early investments that encourage development of communities designed for transit, cycling, and walking
2. Maximize the use of the region's transportation assets and keep them in good repair
3. Build and operate a safe, secure, and accessible transportation system
4. Diversify revenue sources and pursue new and innovative ways to fund transportation

Each strategy is supported by and articulated through a series of more specific initiatives and actions.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

The development of Transport 2040 was launched externally in fall 2007. In September of that year TransLink commissioned papers from eight stakeholder groups representing economic, social, and environmental perspectives. These groups were asked to identify the most important issues facing the regional transportation system, the transportation needs of their members/stakeholders, the types of strategies TransLink and other agencies should consider, the difficult choices and trade-offs, and their vision of a successful regional transportation system.

A number of consistent themes emerged from the stakeholder papers. While the degree of emphasis varied between the papers, there was a high degree of synergy in the views. Nine key challenges were identified, with the major themes being:

- the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change;
- the need to reduce congestion and facilitate goods movement; and
- the need to plan for the significant population growth and the expected demographic and geographic distribution of that growth.

There was similar consistency in the strategies proposed in the papers with strong support for the need to invest in transit and put in place demand management measures and supportive land uses to maximize transit usage as well as walking and cycling. There was also a clear recognition that TransLink will need secure and stable financing.

A Discussion Guide entitled *Transport 2040: Now is the Time* was published in October 2007 to inform the consultation process. The purpose of this document was to engage participants in the consultation process and initiate discussion of the issues and challenges that will affect transportation in Metro Vancouver over the next thirty years. The Discussion Guide also set out a possible view of the future in 2040 and proposed strategies to guide development of the regional transportation system. A backgrounder of key facts was also distributed.

Consultation on drafts of the policy framework was undertaken with elected officials from the region, the public, regional stakeholders, regional and municipal staff, BC Ministry of Transportation staff, staff from TransLink and subsidiary companies, and a working group of

regional Mayors and the TransLink Board. This was done in a variety of formats, including presentations and discussions through large forums, the regional committee structure, stakeholder meetings and open houses. Formal submissions from municipalities were also received.

Throughout the process, TransLink paid careful attention to engaging local elected officials to ensure the emerging strategy would reflect municipal perspectives and achieve support from the local municipalities.

INNOVATION AND TRANSFERABILITY

Transport 2040 is innovative in many ways. A number of elements are transferable to other transportation or transit agencies in Canada.

Multi-modal, integrated focus

The innovative nature of Transport 2040 is a reflection of the responsibilities entrusted to TransLink. An integrated transport authority with a multimodal focus, TransLink had the opportunity to create a strategy that touches on all aspects within its sphere of influence, creating a comprehensive transportation strategy for the region. Transport 2040 acknowledges and highlights the contribution of each travel mode and the key role of regional land use to a sustainable transportation system.

Addressing Emerging Issues and Challenges

Transport 2040 acknowledges key challenges of our time and does not shy away from them. The strategy recognizes key financial issues and funding constraints and that these are critical to the future of the organization and achieving the vision. It also acknowledges that climate change and peak oil are real and the latter may have a significant impact on the transportation system in the region. These are not passing issues but will be the central drivers of changes to the transportation system in the decades to come. While we do not have solutions for all these issues, we do acknowledge their importance and that addressing them will not be easy and require significant changes to the transportation system.

Key concepts

There are many innovative concepts embedded in Transport 2040. The Frequent Transit Network concept is a key example. The Frequent Transit Network will provide frequent (every 15 minutes or better) and reliable service on designated corridors throughout the day and into the evening, everyday, making it possible for individuals to use transit services at their convenience and for a wide variety of trip purposes. The areas serviced by the Frequent Transit Network will be those that have transit supportive land use development, higher densities, and mixed-use areas that facilitate both walking and cycling as transportation choices. The Frequent Transit Network recognizes the interconnectedness of transportation outcomes with urban

form and density, providing TransLink with the means to engage with the municipalities in an effort to influence land use development to increase its support of walking, biking and transit use. This concept also helps to direct future internal transportation investment choices and provides a powerful communication tool that can be used to increase the ease and efficiency with which the public understands and uses the transit network. As such the Frequent Transit Network is designed to both serve and shape land use in the region.

Focus on sustainable funding

Key for all agencies, stable funding sources allow the organizational focus to be on delivering the programs and services which promised. Central to the goals of Transport 2040 is the need for sustainable funding, the concept that stable and sufficient funding is necessary to provide the services and programs that TransLink has committed to and which are supported by the public. Further, the approval of Transport 2040 by TransLink's Board of Directors allows TransLink to pursue new and *stable* funding sources, the lack of which is a problem for transportation agencies across Canada and the world. This strategy is increasingly seen as a model for other transportation agencies.

Partnership and process

Transport 2040 was developed through a partnership process. As discussed above, regional stakeholders representing economic, environmental and social perspectives provided key input to the development of the strategy. In particular, commissioning eight papers that were written by the stakeholders themselves established a meaningful level of engagement in the process from the outset. Developing the long term strategy in a constrained time frame required an innovative policy development process and the participation of TransLink's network of stakeholders.

Design and information graphics

The Transport 2040 document was designed to be highly appealing, visually attractive and accessible. Special attention was paid to presenting information graphically in new and innovative ways that promote increased understanding of the key issues. The Planning and Communication divisions of TransLink worked closely together from the beginning to ensure that Transport 2040 successfully communicated its message.

TransLink continues to emphasize the messages of Transport 2040 throughout our various processes. We reiterate the vision, goals, and strategies in presentations and documents, such as our 10-year plan. We developed an information card to distribute to staff, stakeholders and the public on the goals, strategies and principles of Transport 2040 to communicate our long term strategy.

Transferability

Key parts of the content and process of Transport 2040 is readily transferable to other Canadian jurisdictions. The challenges and issues facing the Metro Vancouver region, outlined in Transport 2040, are faced by many of Canada's urban regions. Transport 2040 offers a road map that municipalities and transportation authorities can rally around as they work together towards overcoming key challenges.

The Frequent Transit Network concept is highly transferable to other jurisdictions. It provides a framework which transit agencies can use to identify how well they are serving their existing demand while also shaping future demand. It also supports on-going dialogue with local and regional land use authorities.

The collaborative process of developing Transport 2040 as well as the design and use of highly accessible information graphics and layout will also be instructive to municipalities developing long range plans and strategies, where the degree of success is strongly tied to public and stakeholder support and understanding of the vision.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

As this policy document is a long term vision for Metro Vancouver's regional transportation system, its results will likewise be accomplished over the long term. Transport 2040 already serves as a guidepost for the annual development of TransLink's 10 year plans. The vision and goals of Transport 2040 are the cornerstone for discussion with the people in the region for investment over the next 10 years. The 2010 10-Year Plan, which aims to move forward on key aspects of Transport 2040, including identifying new and stable funding sources and developing and implementing the Frequent Transit Network concept, is currently being developed and will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval in July 2009 and the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation in Fall 2009. Each year, the strategy will guide the development of the 10-year plan to ensure that we keep the long-term vision and goals in mind as we design our projects, plans, and programs to be carried out in the shorter term.

Indicators are being selected to monitor the progress to implement the strategy. A set of sustainability indicators are in the process of being selected that are being informed by the Transport 2040 vision and goals as well as the definition of a sustainable transportation system that is being used in the document. In the workplan for the next two years, TransLink will be developing a monitoring and reporting program for Transport 2040. The monitoring and reporting program will provide feedback to both the review and update of the strategy as well as to inform the 10-year plans. Thus, TransLink and its stakeholders will be able to adjust implementation of the strategy using objective indicators and feedback on performance.