

June 3, 2009

To: The Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier, Province of British Columbia
Mayors Council on Regional Transportation, Members
Mr. Dale Parker, Chair, TransLink Board
Mr. Tom Prendergast, CEO, TransLink

Dear Honourable Mr. Campbell, Members of the Mayors Council, Messrs. Parker and Prendergast:

**Re: Sustaining a Dialogue about transit and transportation
funding for the Metro Vancouver Region**

We are writing to you as individuals with broad and diverse organizational connections, all of whom have a genuine interest in the future of the Metro Vancouver region, and the transportation system that will help shape it.

We have come together in a Stakeholder Roundtable at the invitation of TransLink to engage with each other to advise TransLink on long range and near term strategies for transportation planning and funding, most specifically the 2009 10-Year Transportation & Financial Plan that TransLink is required under its legislation to bring forward to the Mayors Council for approval.

Through our work together we have come to appreciate the complexity of the issues and the importance of the choices from many points of view. How we respond to the transit and transportation challenges that confront our region will be a decisive factor in determining whether we can live up to how we see ourselves (and how others around the globe see us) as one of the most livable regions of the world.

The choices we make now about how people and goods move across the region in the future will impact the region's economic prospects, our environment, and every other aspect of our quality of life. Funding and investing in that infrastructure will yield multiple benefits; not funding it appropriately will create a growing burden that we will all bear.

We have crossed the first hurdle with the development of the broadly supported 2040 Transport, "A Transportation Strategy for Metro Vancouver, Now and in the Future". Funding is the hurdle ahead of us now. The funding options are limited and the choices are difficult. Everyone with a stake in the future of the Metro Vancouver Region owns this challenge. With ownership comes responsibility.

We believe the issues concerning transit and transportation planning and funding are too important to end up in a collision between municipal and provincial leaders, as appears to have been the case during the past few months.

What we believe is critical at this stage is constructive dialogue with engagement at all levels – from senior political leadership to the public at large – on how best to fund this infrastructure. The stakes are too high to take any other course of action. Our conversations at the Roundtable have convinced us of the imperative of “getting this right”.

This is a time when leadership through open and determined dialogue is essential. Providing meaningful opportunities for the public to be involved is important, but not sufficient. Without leadership that is aligned around these goals, we will not meet these challenges as a community.

To that end, we urge the Province, TransLink, and the Mayors Council to commit to opening and maintaining a dialogue to reach innovative and workable solutions to Metro Vancouver’s transportation and funding challenges.

Within the Roundtable, we will do all that we can do in showing leadership by committing to working with the public and public leaders to sustain this dialogue. Nothing less is good enough if we believe that being the most livable region in the world is a reputation we want to protect, and a quality of life we want to ensure.

Signatories

Trace Acres, Director, Corporate Communications & Government Affairs, BC Automobile Association

Cam Brewer, Executive Director, Smart Growth BC

Ian Bruce, Sustainability Program Director, David Suzuki Foundation

Jon Garson, Vice-President, Policy Development, BC Chamber of Commerce

Paul Sullivan, Strategic Planning Committee, Building Owners & Managers Association (BOMA)

Gordon Harris, President and CEO, Simon Fraser University Community Trust

Nancy Henderson, Executive Director, Social Planning & Research Council (SPARC)

Ed Kolla, President, Langley Chamber of Commerce, Lower Mainland Transportation Table

Heather McCain, Vice-Chair, Access Transit Users Advisory Committee

Margaret Mahan, Executive Director, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)

Francois Morton, President, Consulting Engineers of BC

Jeff Rank, National Director, National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP)

Stephen Regan, President and CEO, Council of Tourism Associations

Bruce Rozenhart, CounterPoint Communications Inc.

Bob Wilds, Managing Director, Greater Vancouver Gateway Council

Ted Williams, Chair of Government Relations (BC), International Council of Shopping Centres

If you wish you may direct responses to the facilitator for the group, Glenn Sigurdson at cse@direct.ca. His contact information is on the bottom of the cover email.

Thank you.

cc Office of the Minister of Finance and Ministry Responsible for the Olympics
Office of the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure