

February 23, 2012



**BUILDING
OWNERS AND
MANAGERS
ASSOCIATION**
British Columbia

Suite 556
409 Granville Street
Vancouver, BC
V6C 1T2

TELEPHONE
(604) 684-3916
FASCIMILE
(604) 684-4876
WEBSITE
www.boma.bc.ca

**BOMA BC RESPONSE TO TRANSLINK JOINT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
REPORT:**

**'EVALUATION OF TRANSLINK REPORT
REVENUE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS
IN METRO VANCOUVER'**

The Building Owners and Managers Association of British Columbia is a not for profit organization which represents over 400 corporate members that own or manage in excess of \$ 10 billion of commercial real estate, the majority of which is located within Greater Vancouver.

BOMA has reviewed the aforementioned TransLink draft report with sixteen ranked funding options and their potential funding capacity in the short term and long term and submits the following position statement and recommendations for consideration:

BOMA BC supports the existing and continued growth of the Metro Vancouver transportation system through the services provided by Translink. BOMA BC believes that the funding of the transportation system should be based upon the principal of 'Equity' which balances the public benefit that the system provides to the region with the capacity of users of the system to pay for the services.

BOMA BC supports a 'Triple Bottom Line' sustainable approach for funding of the transportation system:

Social Sustainability – recognizing the public benefits that a comprehensive and efficient transportation system provides to the Metro Vancouver region, there should be a funding allocation from higher levels of governments via direct investment or tax allocations along with municipal government funding via residential and commercial property taxation. The principle of 'User Pay' should be maintained as a primary criterion for choosing funding mechanisms, so long as such costs are distributed in an equitable manner.

Environmental Sustainability – funding of the transportation system should be consistent with the goals of reducing road congestion, green-house gas emissions and environmental degradation.

Economic Sustainability – funding of the transportation system should facilitate the efficient movement of goods and people throughout the region and should be provided in an equitable manner so as not of unfairly over burden commercial tax payers and /or commercial users of the system.

Recommendations :

Based upon the afore-mentioned approach, BOMA BC recommends that the primary revenue sources for funding the Translink plan for transportation improvements be funded through the following measures:

1. That the Municipal governments maintain the 2% incremental property tax allocation that is currently set to expire in 2013 in order to meet Translink's short term funding requirement.
2. That the Provincial Government provide funding of the longer term requirements through new or re-allocation of fuel taxes, carbon taxes, sales taxes and /or vehicle registration fees.
3. That Translink adopt new or increases to 'User' funding mechanisms such as road pricing, project tolls and transit fares.

Further:

4. That Translink reduce or eliminate Parking Sales Tax on the grounds that it is inequitable, not transparent and not economically sustainable. If this is not acceptable to Translink in the short-term, BOMA BC would further recommend that Parking Sales Tax **not be increased** beyond its current rate of 21%.

The implementation of a 21% parking sales tax in 2010 is an inequitable funding mechanism as it has been disproportionately paid by parkers in the Central Business District, while car travelers to suburban destinations are not paying an equitable share of the cost of the transit system.

Parking sales tax is also not a transparent funding mechanism as there is no strong correlation between the amount of tax paid by the User and the amount of transportation services consumed.

Parking sales tax has reduced car travel to the CBD which has had a negative impact on commercial businesses and materially reduced parking revenues for property owners. While this may appear to have had a benefit in re-directing commuters onto public transit, there is also a risk that this tax will drive economic activity, and car traffic, to low density / low cost suburban alternatives.



Paul LaBranche
Executive Vice President

cc C Murray, BOMA BC President
R Kavanagh, BOMA Technical Committee Rep
BOMA BC Board of Directors