



Memo to Council

From the Office of Councillor Amy Lubik

Date: April 15, 2021

Subject: Request to Advocate for the Repeal of TransLink Fare Hikes

In 2019 Port Moody submitted a motion to UBCM asking the province to support the #AllonBoard Campaign for including an equity lens on all BC transit services, low or free transit for low-income residents, free ridership for under residents under 18, and while that is being done, restorative justice instead of fines for those who low income and will not be able to pay. We also requested that is be reconsidered at the 2020 UBCM conference, as access to transit is critical for people to get to work, school, medical appointment and other essential services. In this, Port Moody has been an advocate for transit equity.

Since our first ask, our circumstances have wildly changed. We know those who are most likely to take transit are those who have been hit hardest in the pandemic, low income, marginalized workers and families who are having more trouble making ends meet; we know car travel is not an option for many people. We know transit is critical for accessing resources, such and food, health, and social supports.¹

Currently transit ridership has changed dramatically, so it is urgent that TransLink bring back former users and attract new ones when it is safe to do so. TransLink recently approved an 2.3% fare increase, which will likely impact the most vulnerable in our population, as well as frontline workers. The increased cost burden of public transit would exacerbate the existing crisis facing many Canadians during the pandemic. The damage of lost transit access for carless and vulnerable households will likely spill over into other domains, such as employment and health care. It's critical that policy-makers do not leave these residents stranded.

ON April 5th, COPE Vancouver members wrote a letter calling on the Province to: rescind the fare increase, implement free transit for youth, end bus cancelations and restore service cuts: "Transit is a critical piece of Metro Vancouver's transportation infrastructure and one that must grow in ridership in order to support our workers and the economy, to provide equitable and affordable transportation options and to reduce our carbon footprint and address climate change," reads a statement from COPE. "Transit ridership has drastically decreased during the COVID Pandemic so it is urgent that TransLink bring back former transit users and attract new ones when it is safe to do so."²

¹ <https://theconversation.com/giving-up-public-transit-during-the-coronavirus-is-a-luxury-many-canadians-cant-afford-138875>

² <https://www.newwestrecord.ca/amp/local-news/translink-under-fire-over-service-cuts-fare-hikes-3629145>

A motion from COPE city councillor Jean Swanson was endorsed by Vancouver city council thereafter. As a city now heavily reliant on Transit and dedicated to taking an equity lens to service provision, now is the time to join our voices to those others calling to increase, not decrease, equitable access to transit.

Suggested Recommendation *(Adapted from April 2021 motion from Vancouver Council)*:

THAT TransLink be requested to consult with seniors and disability groups, neighbourhood houses, women's groups, community centres, and lower income and transit reliant workers who depend on buses before cutting the number of bus stops;

AND THAT staff be directed to report back on advancing other ways of speeding up buses, such as bus-only lanes and barring right hand turns by non-bus traffic, including any recommendations for accelerating that work, consistent with the declaration of a climate emergency;

AND THAT TransLink be informed that Port Moody does not support bus fare increases;

AND THAT TransLink be requested to embed an equity planning mandate in all transit planning and implement non-stigmatizing affordability measures without delay.
