

Statement by the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation in response to the BC Liberal platform

April 10, 2017 (New Westminister) -- The Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation is disappointed that the platform released today by the BC Liberal Party falls short of providing the commitments required to complete the 10-Year Vision for Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation.

“We believe the first priority of the provincial and regional governments should be to complete the 10-Year Vision, a comprehensive region-wide strategy to reduce congestion on our roads and overcrowding on our transit system,” said New Westminister Mayor Jonathan Cote, Chair of the Mayors' Council Funding Strategy Committee. “While the BC Liberals have made an important commitment to matching the \$2.2 billion in federal funding for Vancouver and Surrey rapid projects included in the 10-Year Vision, unfortunately their platform is silent on several other urgent transportation priorities for our region.”

The Mayors' Council is also seeking clarification from the BC Liberals and BC NDP on proposals to change the tolling system in Metro Vancouver, and is studying how capping or eliminating existing tolls will impact revenues and future transportation projects managed by TransLink.

The Mayors' Council has asked all major parties running in this election to respond to a [questionnaire](#) specifying their commitments to six key priorities outlined in the Mayors' Council [#CureCongestion campaign](#).

Here is how the BC Liberal platform responds, or does not respond, to the #CureCongestion platform:

1. Follow through on the commitment to match the federal government, dollar for dollar, in its investment of \$2.2 billion towards rapid transit improvements and the construction of Broadway Subway and Surrey LRT.

The BC Liberals have committed to follow through with matching funds to begin construction on the Millennium Line Broadway Extension and Surrey LRT.

2. Support essential upgrades to the existing SkyTrain network by investing a \$360 million share towards additional rail cars and station upgrades, to address overcrowding and ready the system for expected future demand.

No commitment.

3. Follow through on the existing provincial commitment to provide at least 1/3 of the capital costs towards replacing the aging Pattullo Bridge, and, on an urgent basis, assist in securing an additional federal share in the project.

Previously, the Minister responsible for TransLink indicated the Province was committed to providing a one-third share of funding for the Pattullo Bridge, however the Pattullo is not included among the BC Liberal platform commitments, and funds for replacement of the 75-year-old structure were not included in the most recent provincial budget. The Mayors' Council will seek clarification from the BC Liberal Party, as any delays in moving forward on this project could mean the current bridge would need to close before a replacement span could be built.

4. Develop a funding strategy with TransLink to deliver provincial financial support towards improving HandyDART service, in recognition of its critical role in providing access to the provincial healthcare system for residents who can't use conventional transit services.

The platform identifies additional funding support for HandyDART services provided by BC Transit (outside the Lower Mainland) but does not commit to any new funding for TransLink to improve access to this critical service in Metro Vancouver.

5. Commit to authorizing a development cost charge for transit in the fall legislative session so it can be enacted by TransLink by 2020, as one of the regional revenue sources for Phase One of the 10-Year Vision, to keep the plan on track and fairly funded.

No specific commitment, however the Mayors' Council will seek clarification that the BC Liberal commitment to “work constructively with the Mayors' Council to move forward on the 10-Year Vision” will include legislative support to implement a DCC.

6. Support the expansion of bus service region-wide, improvements to road conditions for drivers, and enhanced safety for cyclists and pedestrians — by working with the Mayors' Council to ensure that remaining operating and capital costs of the Vision are fully funded in a manner that is fair and equitable to Metro Vancouver taxpayers.

The BC Liberals have indicated a willingness to work with the Mayors' Council on the 10-Year Vision, but their platform does not specify whether provincial funding and other supports will be provided to fully realize all of the important initiatives outlined in the Vision.