



## Mayors' Council seeking extension of Federal pandemic relief funding for transit

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NEW WESTMINSTER, BC — The Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation is urging the Government of Canada to extend pandemic emergency funding for TransLink to help stem revenue losses of \$200 million expected in 2022-23 given the ongoing impacts of the pandemic.

In a formal [submission to the pre-budget consultation for the 2022 federal budget](#), the Mayors' Council warns that without additional relief funding from Federal and Provincial governments, TransLink faces difficult decisions. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to present the transit authority with significant financial challenges due to a reduction in revenues from transit fares, fuel and parking taxes.

The Mayors' Council is joining municipal leaders from other urban regions in British Columbia and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in asking the Federal Government to extend emergency relief beyond the funding of \$644 million provided to TransLink and \$394 million to BC Transit and BC Ferries through the 2020 [Safe Restart Agreement](#).

Additional federal support will enable TransLink – working in partnership with the Provincial Government – to remain resilient over the next two years as transit ridership recovers to 80-90% of pre-pandemic levels.

Senior government support to sustain transit service levels through the pandemic is also critical to meeting regional and national climate targets, supporting economic recovery, providing equitable access to transportation across the region and keeping life affordable for residents.

"In 2020, the B.C. Government was at the forefront securing much needed and welcome federal support for public transit in B.C. and continues to work in partnership with the Mayors' Council and TransLink to protect transit services," says Mayor Jonathan Cote, Chair of the Mayors' Council. "However, as the pandemic continues to challenge all essential services, we need the federal government to recommit to additional emergency support for transit in British Columbia. If the federal government doesn't extend this critical funding, we face making difficult decisions on service levels and future projects, or, shifting the burden of pandemic-related losses to more regressive local tax sources impacting already hard-hit businesses and residents struggling with affordability challenges."

"While TransLink's ridership recovery is out-performing expectations and surpassing most other urban transit systems in North America, we are not immune to the ongoing challenges of the pandemic," says TransLink CEO Kevin Quinn. "As we head towards a 'new normal' for transit ridership – with less revenue coming from transit fares – we will need continued support from senior governments as we work to identify alternative revenue sources."

"As the region's Mayors, we will not leave Metro Vancouver citizens, workers, students and visitors without reliable and sustainable transportation options," says Mayor Jack Froese, Vice-Chair of the Mayors' Council. "That is why the Mayors' Council is calling on the federal government to continue working with us and the Government of BC to help TransLink continue running our transit system



efficiently and reliably, and to keep expansion projects such as the completion of Surrey-Langley SkyTrain and our new long-range strategy, Transport 2050 on track.”

TransLink’s *Transport 2050* plan – which will go before the Mayors’ Council and TransLink Board of Directors tomorrow for final approval – sets out a roadmap for a future transportation network that meets the region’s goals to address climate change, social equity, and economic growth. Investment Plans developed by the Mayors’ Council with public input will continue to establish specific projects and expansion of services needed over the next 30 years to realize the vision set out in *Transport 2050*.

“We cannot meet the demand of our growing population over the coming decades and realize the goals set out in *Transport 2050* if we sacrifice the integrity of the transit system we have today,” added Cote. “What we’re asking is that the federal government continue to step up to support public transit, just like they have for other essential public services impacted by the pandemic.”

***About the Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation***

*The Mayors’ Council is the collective voice of Metro Vancouver residents on transit and transportation. Our members include representatives from each of the 21 municipalities in TransLink’s service area, as well as Electoral Area ‘A’ and the Tsawwassen First Nation. It is responsible for approving Trans Link’s transportation plans, identifying local funding and negotiating with other levels of government to make those plans a reality.*

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