



October 31, 2016

Board of Directors,
TransLink

Cc: Geoff Cross, Vice President of Planning and Policy

Cc: Jesse Koehler, Manager, Strategy and Plan Development

Re: TransLink Phase One of the 10-Year Vision for Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation

Dear TransLink Directors:

Introduction

HUB Cycling is a charitable organization that works to make cycling better through education, events and collaboration. We are Metro Vancouver's leader in making cycling an attractive choice for everyone. We have over 32,000 contacts throughout the region and active local committees in ten municipalities across Metro Vancouver.

We thank TransLink for the funding and effort that you have invested to improve cycling in Metro Vancouver. Your continued support has helped make cycling the fastest growing mode of transport in the region and there are more people riding their bikes than ever before. This growth is impressive but there is far more potential; continued development is needed if cycling is to become a safe and viable option for the mainstream. Currently, there is a need to UnGapTheMap - remove gaps in the fragmented cycling network across Metro Vancouver that are holding people back from riding safely more often. As well, many existing routes need to be upgraded so that they attract people of all ages and abilities, are suitable for safe efficient long distance commuting and have the capacity to safely accommodate rapidly growing demand. There is still a great deal to be achieved and, for this to happen, there needs to be sustained and comprehensive investment into cycling in our region.

Cycling as Mass Transportation

The City of Vancouver has demonstrated that a rapid rollout of a connected cycling network can dramatically increase cycling mode share. Cycling is now mass transportation with about 7% of trips and 10% of commutes being made by bike by city residents. The rapid increase in e-bike sales means that more people are taking up cycling and that many are making longer trips. A network of safe cycling routes encourages more people to cycle and thereby:

- Provides mobility options
- Reduces transit crowding and bus pass-bys
- Reduces motor vehicle congestion

We would see similar results for all of Metro Vancouver following a rapid rollout of safe and convenient cycling facilities including cycling highways, efficient routes that enable longer distance interregional cycling trips.

Investment in cycling will provide system wide benefits for TransLink

Phase One of your 10-Year Vision currently proposes a total investment of \$41.3 million into municipal and regional cycling infrastructure over the next three years. While we appreciate this proposed increase in funding, it still falls short of the figure needed to create a safe and fully connected cycling network that is suitable for all ages and abilities.



As stated in your 2013 [Regional Cycling Strategy Implementation Plan](#), if Metro Vancouver is to hit TransLink's target of 10% of all trips in the region being made by bike by 2040, an investment of \$18 million per year (\$54 million over three years) into cycling is required. Furthermore, the Implementation Plan recommends:

"Although an annual investment of \$18 million will achieve the RCS goals over a 25-year period, a more aggressive spending approach would accelerate the cycling mode shift, thereby achieving the mode shift and associated cost savings sooner, and releasing more funding for transit in the long-term."

We agree that a more aggressive funding level will help TransLink to reach its stated goals more quickly and will result in system wide cost savings. **We therefore recommend that TransLink's cycling investment be \$36 million per year, for at least the first three years of the 10-year plan.** Note that this is only ~2.6% of TransLink's estimated annual budget, which would finally bring investment close to the current share of transportation done by cycling in the region.

Currently, Metro Vancouver's cycling network is disconnected and features hundreds of gaps that inhibit journeys by bike. Over 40% of residents report that they want to cycle more often but are held back by these gaps, but municipalities are telling us they have limited resources and can only develop small segments of their cycling network. By increasing investment in the cost-sharing program, TransLink would help more people cycle, more often.

For many years, TransLink has had plans to provide safe walking and cycling routes to transit hubs. The investment in safe and convenient cycling and walking routes to Skytrain and Canada Line stations will benefit TransLink in the following ways:

- Reduce the requirement for bus service to access the stations
- Attract more people to use transit

Combined with improvements to the Central Valley Greenway and BC Parkway cycling routes, this will leverage investments in these greenways by encouraging many more people to use them.

HUB Cycling is appreciative of the provision of secure bike parking at transit hubs and fully supports TransLink's commitment to make improvements to the secure bike parking facilities at major transit stations. There is a particularly strong benefit to adding secure bike parkades at outlying stations that have relatively poor local neighbourhood transit options, including the Evergreen Extension.

Cycling education and promotion

The Discussion Guide for Phase One of the 10 Year Vision makes no reference to **cycling education and encouragement**. These non-infrastructure components are high return on investment for improving ridership; they improve respect and accountability on our roads, and are effective in shifting habits for a more sustainable overall transportation system. Research of North American cities demonstrates that adding promotion and education increased cycling mode share by 200% where infrastructure alone increased it by only 50%. Similar research showed that without education and promotion, cycling mode share wasn't increased at all by infrastructure additions because people didn't know they existed or how to use them, and weren't motivated to change their transportation habits. Promotion and education adds only



marginal cost to infrastructure development, but makes a big difference to how much infrastructure is used.

TransLink has supported such programs including Bike to Work Week, as well as school, community centre and workplace cycling education. In the 2013 Regional Cycling Strategy Implementation Plan, TransLink outlined a recommended combined investment of \$477,500 per year into education and encouragement. We strongly recommend that TransLink **adds adequate investment to cycling education and encouragement to Phase 1 of the 10 Year Vision.**

Conclusion

We greatly appreciate TransLink's continued investment and support for cycling across Metro Vancouver; you have played a significant role in getting more people cycling more often. The \$2 billion 10-year Vision offers the opportunity to continue building on all that has been achieved thus far but, if we are to fulfil Metro Vancouver's potential, and hit the targets set for 2040, greater investment is required. If TransLink increased bike-specific funding to \$18-36 million per year this would make significant progress to UnGaptheMap and connect the regional cycling network so people can take trips by bike safely and conveniently. Not only would greater investment be more equitable to current ridership, but would help realise the huge potential of increased ridership when people feel safe and connected enough to ride for more of their trips.

We look forward to continuing to work with TransLink to make Metro Vancouver one of the leading cycling regions in North America.

Sincerely,

Alexander Clarkson, President, HUB Cycling

Arno Schortinghuis, Co-Chair, HUB Regional Advisory Committee.