

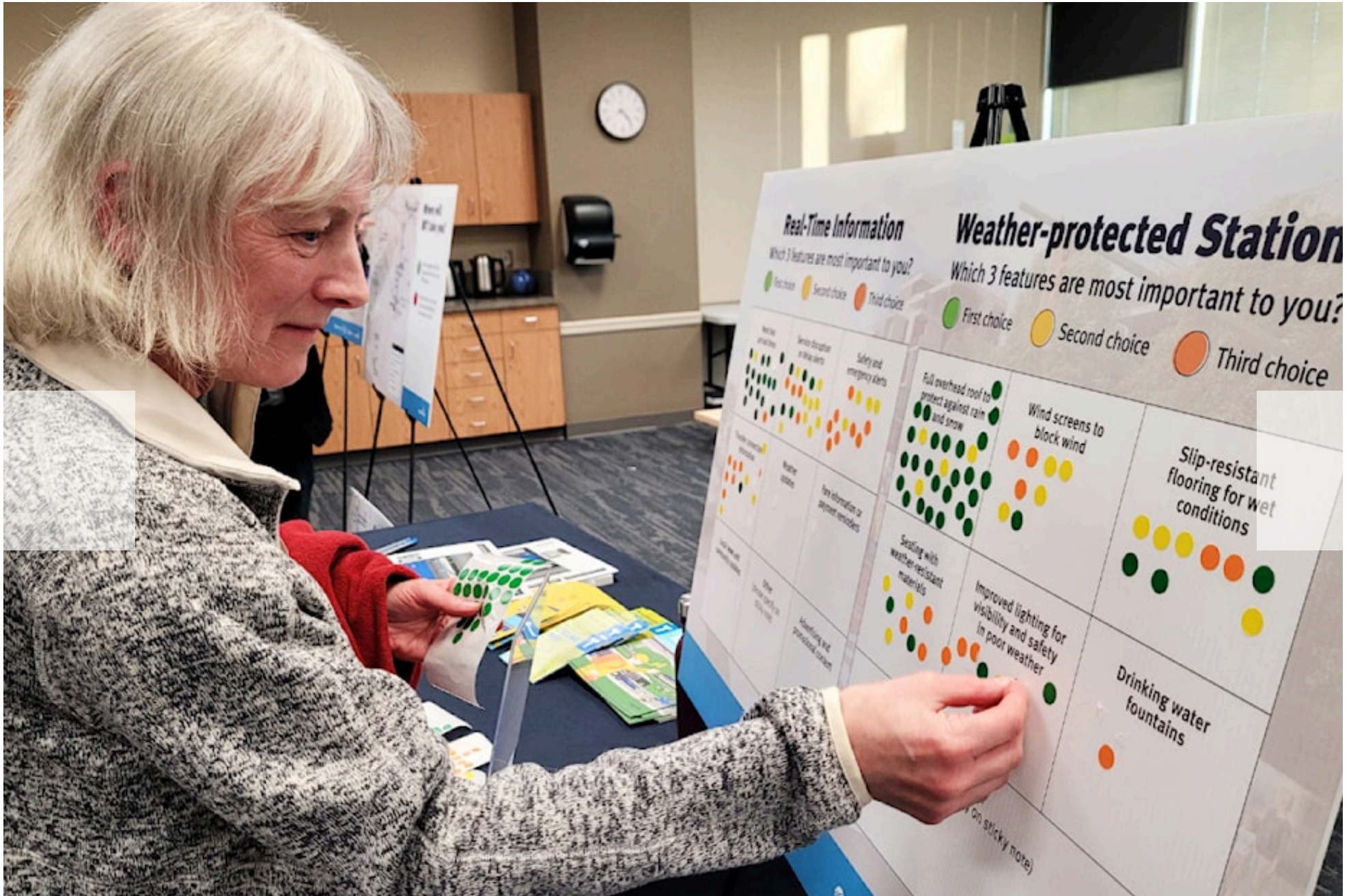
MAPLE RIDGE-PITT MEADOWS NEWS

Maple Ridge residents see TransLink's plan for Bus Rapid Transit



[Neil Corbett](#)

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1 / 3 Jackie Chow of Hub Cycling Ridge Meadows marks her priorities at the BRT open house. | (Neil Corbett/The News)

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A cycling enthusiast, a former Maple Ridge mayor, and a self-described "transit nerd" were a few of the people who attended a TransLink open house on the proposed Bus Rapid Transit line to Langley.

The event was held on Tuesday, Jan. 28, at the Maple Ridge Public Library, as the transit authority conducts various public engagements.

The route will start at Haney Place and follow the Lougheed Highway, with stops at 216, Laity, 207, and 203 Streets in Maple Ridge, and the 22-km route will connect with eight more Langley stops, ending at Willowbrook Shopping Centre. The run will take 40 minutes – 40 per cent faster than current service. High-capacity buses will arrive every 10 minutes during peak times.

Based on the stickers on poster boards, the public indicated top priorities include shelter from rain, and information about when the next bus is arriving. But conversations with those attending were more nuanced.

Jackie Chow of HUB Cycling Ridge Meadows wants to ensure the new system is served by good bike routes to the new stations, with places to leave bikes secured after boarding.

"Most people will walk about 400 metres to get to a transit station, if you make it possible to bike to the station, that really makes the catchment of a bus rapid transit station much larger," she asserted.

Chow said there should be bike paths on both sides of the Lougheed Highway, and noted the BRT route through Maple Ridge will be flat and bike-able.

"You need to give people the option of biking, because if you just give them a parking spot for their car, and cycling facilities, then they're going to be driving," she said.

The infrastructure will be added in a phased approach, but Chow wants cycling prioritized.

"We need to start thinking about building cycling infrastructure the same way we think about building infrastructure for cars," said Chow.

Al Hogarth was the mayor of Maple Ridge from 1999 to 2002, and was a councillor from 2005 to 2014. He supports the new transit option.

"Anything we can get in terms of giving people choices – I would love to see people getting out of their car said Hogarth.

Having lobbied senior government for the construction of the Golden Ears Bridge, Hogarth sees this project in its very early stages.

"It's good, but there's lots of work to come," he said. "I see on the news they don't seem to have the funding it."

TransLink estimates its first three BRT routes to cost between \$250 and \$300 million to build, including dedicated lanes and train-style stations, so the transit authority needs almost \$1 billion. Estimates are being

finalized.

The three BRT routes chosen so far are Metrotown to the North Shore, along King George Boulevard, and Langley to Haney Place.

Open house attendee Nate Orson calls himself a transit nerd, talks knowledgeably about rail systems in Japan, and throws out terms like "linear induction propulsion."

Where the rubber hits the road, Orson appreciates the way transit attaches the region's cities.

"I find it fascinating how transit is able to connect so many communities," he said.

"I look forward to how this will affect our communities for the better, and improve the housing situation," he added, explaining developers will build more housing units on the transit corridor, to meet demand.

The Maple Ridge resident and BCIT student predicts the coming Surrey-Langley SkyTrain project will make BRT line an important connector, depending on the time the trip takes.

"I do believe it's important for connecting Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows to the south of the Fraser, and I think it will help with people getting to work and school," he said.

A survey will be available at translink.ca/brt until Sunday, Feb. 9.



About the Author: Neil Corbett

I have been a journalist for more than 30 years, the past decade with the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows News.

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