

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL
PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE: 2019 May 29

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

FILE: 1750 20

SUBJECT: ALL ON BOARD CAMPAIGN

PURPOSE: To provide more details about the *All On Board* Campaign.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the Committee request Council to approve the resolutions contained in *Section 5.1* of this report, for submission to the 2019 Union of BC Municipalities Convention.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the All on Board campaign representatives and Burnaby MLAs for information.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its meetings of 2019 February 25, Council received a delegation from the *All On Board* campaign seeking support for their proposed fare reduction/restructuring initiative for low-income and/or young persons within the transportation network managed by TransLink (i.e. Metro Vancouver). Council endorsed the movement in principle and directed staff to provide more information to an upcoming Environment and Social Planning Committee meeting. This report responds to that request.

The *All On Board* campaign is a coalition composed of a number of Lower Mainland non-profits and alliances including the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, Burnaby Community Services, and the Society for Children and Youth of BC. Labour organizations are also supporters including the Burnaby Teachers' Association.

Specifically *All On Board* is advocating for:

- free transit for all children and youth 0-18;
- a sliding scale monthly transit pass system based on income; and,
- the immediate end to the fare evasion ticketing of minors, and the introduction of community service and restorative justice options for adults as an alternative to fare evasion tickets.

All On Board is specific in advocating that providing the above not result in higher fares for other users. A copy of the delegation request is **attached** as *Appendix 1*.

To date, the Campaign has focused on appearing as delegations to Lower Mainland City Councils asking for their support in advocating to TransLink, through their membership on the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, and to the Province. For example, the Cities of Port Moody, New Westminster, North Vancouver, and Vancouver have all indicated their support.

As well, on 2018 October 04, the TransLink Board received a delegation from *All On Board* youth representatives. According to the meeting notes, the delegation was advised that TransLink does not have the authority to subjectively forgive or reduce fare infraction ticketed amounts. However, it was also noted that one of the recommendations from TransLink's fare review (completed July 2018) is to work with the Provincial government to explore expanded discounts for low-income transit riders, children and youth.

2.0 CURRENT PRACTICE

The following section outlines the current fare and fare infraction enforcement practices of TransLink.

2.1 Fare Structure

Currently, TransLink operates with a geographically based zone fare system that charges all users (regardless of income), as per the following (from www.translink.ca):

Fare Product	Zones	Adult	Concession
Single/Cash Fares	1	\$2.95	\$1.90
	2	\$4.20	\$2.90
	3	\$5.70	\$3.90
Stored Value (Compass Card)	1	\$2.30	\$1.85
	2	\$3.35	\$2.85
	3	\$4.40	\$3.85

Fare Product	Zones	Adult	Concession
Monthly Pass (Compass Card)	1	\$95	-
	2	\$128	-
	3	\$174	\$54
DayPass	All	\$10.25	\$8
HandyDART Service	-	\$2.95	-

Zone 1 is the City of Vancouver and the UBC Endowment Lands. Zone 2 is Lions Bay, West Vancouver, North Vancouver (City and District), Burnaby, Richmond, New Westminster and Annacis Island. Zone 3 is composed of the cities and electoral areas beyond those listed above. After 6:30 p.m. on weekdays, and all day Saturday, Sunday and holidays, the system operates as one zone (so one-zone fares apply).

Concession Fares are available to HandyDART users, seniors 65 years and older, youth 14 to 18 years, and children 5 to 13 years. Children under 5 years ride free when accompanied by a passenger possessing Proof of Payment (maximum of 4 children per passenger). HandyDART is a door-to-door, shared ride service for passengers with physical or cognitive disabilities who are unable to use conventional public transit without assistance. Persons must apply to be eligible for this program, with forms completed by a medical professional.

As well, low-income seniors and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) have access to the BC Bus Pass Program. The pass is valid in communities served by BC Transit or TransLink. This program is administered by the Provincial Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. Persons with disabilities receive \$52 a month as a 'transportation stipend'. This can either be used towards the cost of a monthly pass (see above), or received directly on their disability assistance payment for use on other transportation needs (e.g. gas). Eligible seniors pay \$45 for an annual bus pass (no top up is required).

Individuals on Income Assistance currently receive up to \$760 a month: \$375 maximum shelter portion, \$385 support portion. The 'support portion' is intended to cover other costs including transit tickets – except for seniors and persons with disabilities as described above. Since 2017, Income Assistance rates have increased by \$150 a month. Individuals on Income Assistance are also eligible for premium-free medical services plan coverage and no-deductible PharmaCare prescription coverage.

2.2 Fare Infraction Enforcement Practices

TransLink's ability to issue fines if riders are identified to be using the transit system without a ticket originates in the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Amendment Act (2012)*, 'Fare Collection Regulation'. The original fine amount (\$173) is also outlined in the *Act* as well as the dispute and appeal process. No age limits for fare infraction enforcement are outlined in the *Act*. Unpaid fines are sometimes forwarded by TransLink to private collection agencies and the amount of the fine also increases over time if not paid.

3.0 PRACTICES IN OTHER CITIES

A number of other Cities have implemented a variety of reduced fare transit systems for low-income individuals and/or young people. To the knowledge of staff, all instances have occurred within transportation systems that are directly operated by the local government in question, rather than via a regional approach such as TransLink, and are paid for from City budgets with some support from Provincial/State governments in certain circumstances (e.g. London, Ontario / Seattle, Washington).

- The City of Seattle recently introduced free transit for young people under 18 years (June 2018);
- City of Portland offers a range of supports and discounts for low-income riders;
- A number of Cities (e.g. City of Edmonton, City of London, Ontario) have reduced fee transit pass programs for young people under 18;
- The City of Calgary has a sliding scale low-income transit pass program;
- The City of Kingston offers free transit passes for grade 9-12 students; and,
- The City of Toronto recently launched a 'Fair Fare Pass' program offering scaled reduced fares for eligible low-income residents.

As well, in 2019 February, the City of Victoria Mayor and Council directed its staff to investigate eliminating free parking on Sundays and funnelling the resultant revenue to BC Transit to subsidize transit for young Victoria residents. This investigatory work is still in progress.

4.0 TRANSLINK RESPONSE

TransLink's main sources of operating revenue come from fares, gas tax, development cost charges and a portion of regional property tax. Large infrastructure projects are usually also funded with contributions from the Provincial and Federal governments. A report received by TransLink's Board at its public meeting on 2019 April 25, which was developed in response to *All On Board's* delegation in 2018 October, estimates that providing free transit to those under 18 would cost \$40 - \$50 million per year. The report also estimates that providing free transit to low-income individuals would cost an additional \$25 - \$40 million per year.

As such, TransLink concludes that it is unable to generate the necessary funding via its existing mechanism without negatively impacting other transit users or stalling other priorities. However, the report recognizes the importance of access to transit – both personally for the individuals that

All On Board is advocating for, and societally as climate change mitigation. Accordingly, TransLink concludes that it will initiate conversations with the Province to fund such initiatives, in relation to the recently released BC Poverty Reduction Strategy, and as directed in its Transit Fare Review report, adopted by the Mayor's Council on Regional Transportation on 2018 July 26.

5.0 FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

In order to support TransLink's conversations with the Province as described above, the following actions are proposed for the consideration of the Committee and Council.

5.1 Resolutions to the 2019 Union of BC Municipalities Convention

It is recommended that the following resolutions be considered for submission to the 2019 Union of BC Municipalities Convention (taking place from 2019 September 23-27 in Vancouver).

The first recommended resolution pertains to recommended changes to the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Amendment Act (2012)*, 'Fare Collection Regulation' in order to enable consideration of *All On Board's* campaign items related to fare infraction enforcement.

Resolution: Amend the 'Fare Collection Regulation'

WHEREAS the levying of fare infraction tickets disproportionately impacts low-income and/or young persons who may not have access to means of payment;

AND WHEREAS the structure for fare infraction enforcement practices utilized by TransLink are outlined in the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Amendment Act (2012)*, 'Fare Collection Regulation';

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities request the Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and any other applicable Ministry or body, to consider the elimination or reduction of fine levying to those under 18 years of age.

AND THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities request the Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and any other applicable Ministry or body, investigate the option of restorative justice and community service option(s) for settling fare infraction tickets by low-income individuals.

The second recommended resolution relates to the very constrained 'support allowance' allocated to persons on Income Assistance, and the limited \$52 'transportation stipend' allocated to those on Disability Assistance.

Resolution: Increase Transportation Assistance for Low-Income Individuals

WHEREAS British Columbians receiving Income Assistance continue to struggle to meet their basic needs, despite recent needed increases to monthly rates, leaving little funds available for transportation, including transit;

AND WHEREAS the monthly \$52 ‘transportation allowance’ that British Columbians are issued as Disability Assistance, is not sufficient to off-set the costs associated with purchasing a monthly transit pass in most regions;

AND WHEREAS access to transit is vital to many individuals in accessing health care, seeking employment, and contributing to the community:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities call upon the Provincial government to investigate avenues of providing free or further subsidized transit passes, regardless of region, to those British Columbians receiving Income or Disability Assistance.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The *All On Board* campaign advocates regionally within Metro Vancouver for fare reduction/restructuring for low-income individuals and/or those under 18 years of age. This report provides an overview of *All On Board*’s requests and provides a broad outline of practices in other Cities as well as the current response from TransLink.

It is recommended that the Committee request Council to approve the resolutions contained in *Section 5.1* of this report for submission to the 2019 Union of BC Municipalities Convention. It is also recommended that a copy of this report be forwarded to Burnaby MLAs for information.



E.W. Kozak, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

RM:tn

Attachment

cc: City Manager
Director Corporate Services
Director Finance
City Clerk

DELEGATION
2019 FEBRUARY 25

#AllOnBoard

Mayor and Councillors
c/o The Office of the City Clerk
Burnaby City Hall
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, B. C., V5G 1M2

January 31st, 2019

Re: Request to Appear as a Delegation on February 25th, 2019

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am writing to request to appear as a delegation on Monday, February 25th, 2019. Along with a local resident, who is a volunteer with our #AllOnBoard campaign, I will be speaking about the #AllOnBoard campaign ask and motion, and how we can achieve an affordable and accessible transit system for Metro Vancouver that leaves no one behind.

Enclosed you will find supporting material related to the delegation, including the resolution that we would encourage council to endorse. This resolution has now been endorsed in New Westminster, Vancouver and Port Moody.

Sincerely,

Viveca Ellis

#AllOnBoard Campaign Coordinator

[Redacted Signature]

Email: viveca@bcpovertyreduction.ca

Copied to:
City Manager
Dir. Corporate Services
Dir. Planning and Building

City of Burnaby

Notice of Motion: #AllOnBoard Campaign

WHEREAS the City of Burnaby has recognized and has demonstrated over the past years its commitment to the health and well-being of its residents, and lack of transportation is one of the most common reasons for missing medical appointments and a significant barrier to social inclusion and labour market inclusion for low income adults and youth; and

WHEREAS the #AllOnBoard campaign, concerned agencies in Vancouver and through-out Metro Vancouver, and directly impacted youth and adult community members have brought to the attention of the City of Burnaby the direct harm that is brought to them through the bad credit ratings they develop due to fare evasion ticketing. Those living below the poverty line have brought forward that they cannot afford to pay the \$173 fines received individually, or the resulting accrued 'TransLink debt' from many unpaid fines; and

WHEREAS the City of Burnaby and other municipalities contribute to charities and non-profits which then out of necessity subsidize transit tickets for those who cannot afford to access crucial social services provided by the City of Burnaby and other municipalities, and sometimes pay off 'TransLink debt' and fare evasion fines to TransLink and external collection agencies;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Burnaby endorse the #AllOnBoard Campaign; the City write a letter to the TransLink Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, the Board of Directors of TransLink, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction asking TransLink to work with the provincial government to finalize and secure funding, and develop a plan that will provide free public transit for minors (aged 0-18), and reduced price transit based on a sliding scale using for all low-income people regardless of their demographic profile as soon as possible; and

THAT the City write a separate letter to the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation asking them to 1) require TransLink adopt a poverty reduction/equity mandate in order to address the outstanding issue of lack of affordability measures to ensure those who need public transit the most can access the essential service, and 2) to request the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation and TransLink immediately and without delay amend existing by-laws and cease ticketing all minors for fare evasion as the first step towards the full implementation of free transit for children and youth 0-18, unlink ICBC from fare evasion for youth and adults, and introduce options, including allowing low-income adults to access community service as an alternative to the financial penalty of a fare evasion ticket; and lower the ticket price substantially; and

THAT the resolution regarding support for the #AllOnBoard Campaign be forwarded for consideration at the 2019 Lower Mainland Government Management Association of BC (LMGMA) convention and subsequent Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) convention

AND THAT the #AllOnBoard forthcoming research report containing evidence and testimonies in support of the #AllonBoard Campaign be included in the submission to the LMGMA once available.