

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2021 Nov 17

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

**FILE:** 94000 20

*Reference:* Mayors' Council

**SUBJECT:** NEW TRANSLINK MAYORS' VISION

**PURPOSE:** To advise the Committee and Council of the process for the new TransLink Mayors' Vision

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **THAT** the Committee forward this report to Council for information.

**REPORT**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

TransLink has begun the process of creating a new *Mayors' Vision*, a key planning document that describes proposed improvements to the regional transportation system in the medium term. This report provides an introduction to that process, and key topics of interest to Burnaby.

**2.0 POLICY SECTION**

This report aligns with policies and direction provided by numerous Council policies including the *Climate Action Framework* (2020), *Corporate Strategic Plan* (2017), *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* (2016), *Social Sustainability Strategy* (2011), *Economic Development Strategy* (2007), and the draft *Burnaby Transportation Plan*, "*Connecting Burnaby*".

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

Under its' governing legislation, the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act*, there are two planning documents which TransLink is required to produce:

1. **Long-Term Strategy**, spanning at least 30 years. This document sets out the goals and directions for the regional transportation system, key initiatives, and a statement of underlying principles. The Long-Term Strategy is updated every five years. The current Long-Term Strategy is *Transport 2045*, and it is in the process of being updated to *Transport 2050*. A separate report updating the Committee and Council on the *Transport 2050* process is forthcoming.

2. **Investment Plan**, spanning ten years, outlines on a year-by-year basis where revenues will come from and how they will be spent. The Plan identifies the major actions to be undertaken, and must be guided by the Long-Term Strategy. An Investment Plan can remain in effect for up to three years, after which a new Plan is required.

In addition to the above, TransLink has a third key planning document, though not required by the *Act*. The Province held a referendum on TransLink funding in 2015 and, in preparation for that, asked TransLink to describe what improvements people would experience from the proposed funding. After an extensive process on Regional Transportation (Mayors' Council), *Regional Transportation Investments –a Vision for Metro Vancouver* was produced in 2014, covering a ten-year period. This is commonly referred to as the *Mayors' Vision* or *Ten-Year Vision*. This proved to be a useful forum for identifying and reaching consensus on appropriate regional transportation priorities for the medium term, and has guided Investment Plans adopted since then. That is, the Investment Plans were the mechanism for implementing the *Mayors' Vision*. The *Vision* has also proved useful when lobbying senior levels of government.

As the ten-year horizon of the *2014 Vision* is approaching, TransLink has opted to continue this “middle” level of planning, and has begun the process to create a *New Vision*. This is described below.

#### 4.0 PROCESS

The *New Vision* will define, cost, and prioritize key TransLink initiatives and investments for the next ten years. It will consider the remaining (not yet implemented) projects from the *2014 Vision* as well as new initiatives being identified through the *Transport 2050* process. Projects included in the *New Vision* will be advanced to implementation via subsequent Investment Plans. Projects excluded from the *New Vision* are unlikely to be implemented within its ten-year horizon. The *New Vision* will thus form TransLink's focus for the next decade.

The transportation world has evolved in the last ten years, with increased emphasis on micro-mobility, shared mobility, people-first streets, safety, climate change, equity, reconciliation, and resiliency. These changing perspectives will help to shape the *New Vision*.

The *New Vision* process is structured around a series of joint workshops for the TransLink Board and Mayors' Council, of which one has already occurred at the time of this writing. The anticipated workshops and topics, including both completed and upcoming, are:

- 2021 September 29: Framework for prioritizing projects;
- 2021 November 25: Review of all modes and focus on options for major transit corridors;
- 2022 January 27: Begin developing portfolios (packages) of investments;
- 2022 March 31: Review the performance of portfolio options;
- 2022 April 28: Review engagement results and select a preferred portfolio;
- 2022 May: Review the preferred portfolio and prioritization of projects within it; and,
- 2022 July: Adoption of the *New Vision*

Two periods of stakeholder and Indigenous engagement are anticipated, in the fall and winter.

## 5.0 ISSUES FOR BURNABY

In the *2014 Vision*, the “headline” big-ticket projects were the major road and transit corridors: Pattullo Bridge, Light Rail Transit (as was then anticipated) in Surrey and Langley, and the Millennium Line extension westward to Arbutus Street. This report therefore examines major projects in Burnaby that could be considered for inclusion in the *New Vision*.

### 5.1 Burnaby Mountain Gondola

The *2014 Vision* included funding for additional planning work, but not construction, for the proposed Burnaby Mountain Gondola. Council received a report on this project on 2019 May 27 and expressed support in principle subject to certain Core Principles related to residential impacts, compensation, the environment, public consultation, and routes to be considered. The work was to focus on the three routes that, based on earlier analyses of a broader selection of routes, showed the most promise. These are shown in *Figure 1*.

TransLink followed those Core Principles and a subsequent report on 2021 July 12, advised Council of the outcomes of TransLink’s work to date. TransLink’s analysis found that Route 1, a straight line from Production Way / University SkyTrain Station to Simon Fraser University (in the general vicinity of the existing bus loop), had good financial performance, the highest societal benefits, lowest capital and operating costs, smallest footprint, best geotechnical conditions, fewest park impacts, and fewest environmental impacts. Route 2, aligned to the east with a mid-station bend near Stoney Creek, had significant challenges that cannot be mitigated: impacts to forests, parklands and the riparian area of Stoney Creek, as well as a lack public support. Route 3, aligned to the west with a mid-station bend near Centennial Way, had significant challenges that also cannot be mitigated: costs that exceed benefits and a resultant difficulty in attracting investment, forest and parkland impacts, proximity to Trans Mountain Pipeline's tank farm, and a lack of public support.

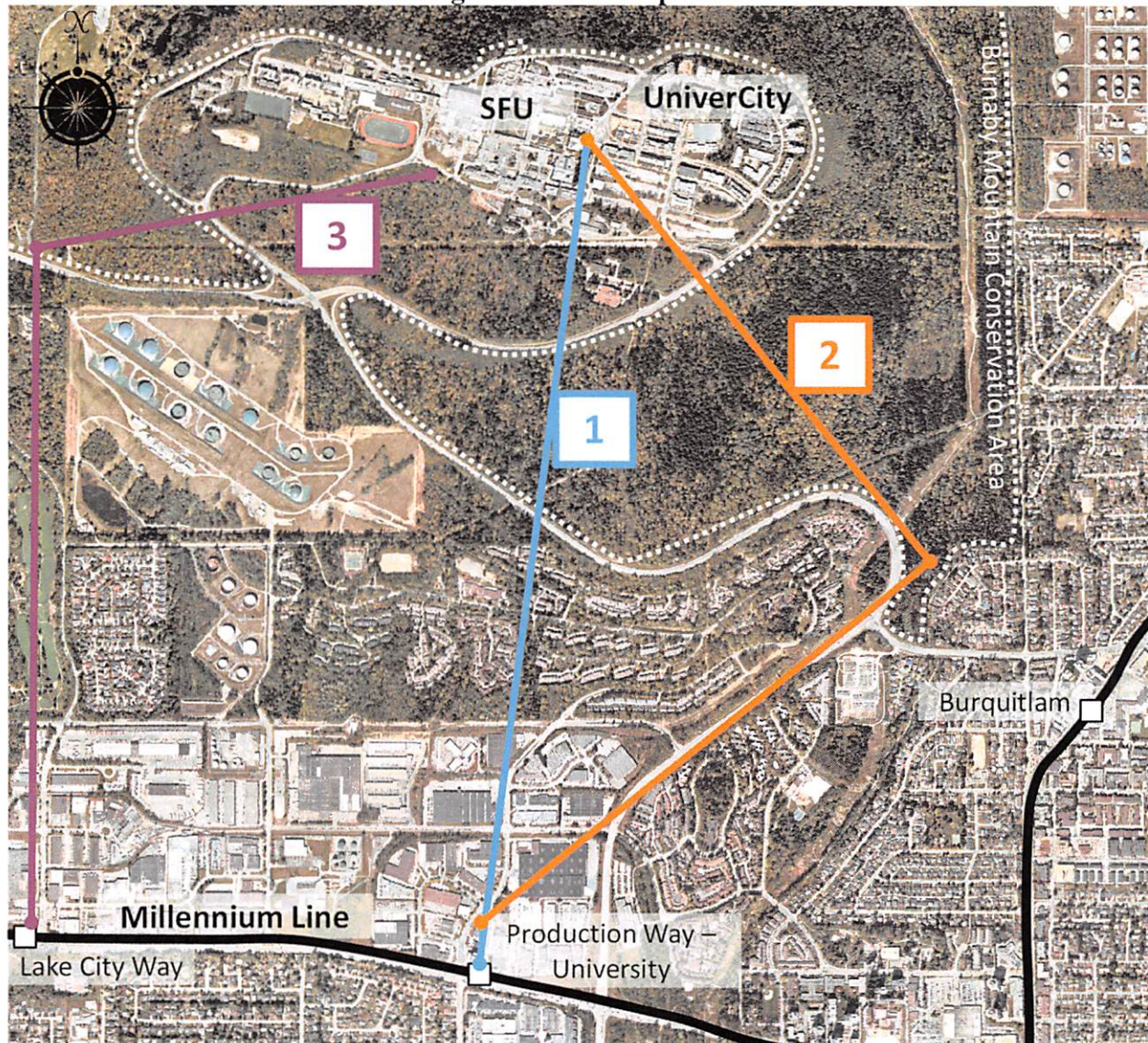
However, Route 1 passes over several homes in the Forest Grove neighbourhood, and residents of that community are generally opposed to the project, citing concerns such as:

- noise, privacy, visual presence, property impacts, and compensation;
- system safety and objects falling from cabins;
- environmental impacts including trees, streams, and land; and,
- exploring alternative transit solutions, including battery electric buses.

Subsequent to that Council report, the TransLink Mayors’ Council and Board have directed TransLink staff to pursue Route 1 for further study. The gondola could be considered in the *New Vision* for design and construction within ten years. However, Burnaby Council has not yet endorsed the project and route. TransLink will not include the gondola if the project is not endorsed by the host municipality.



**Figure 1: Route Options**



## 5.2 Burrard Inlet Rapid Transit

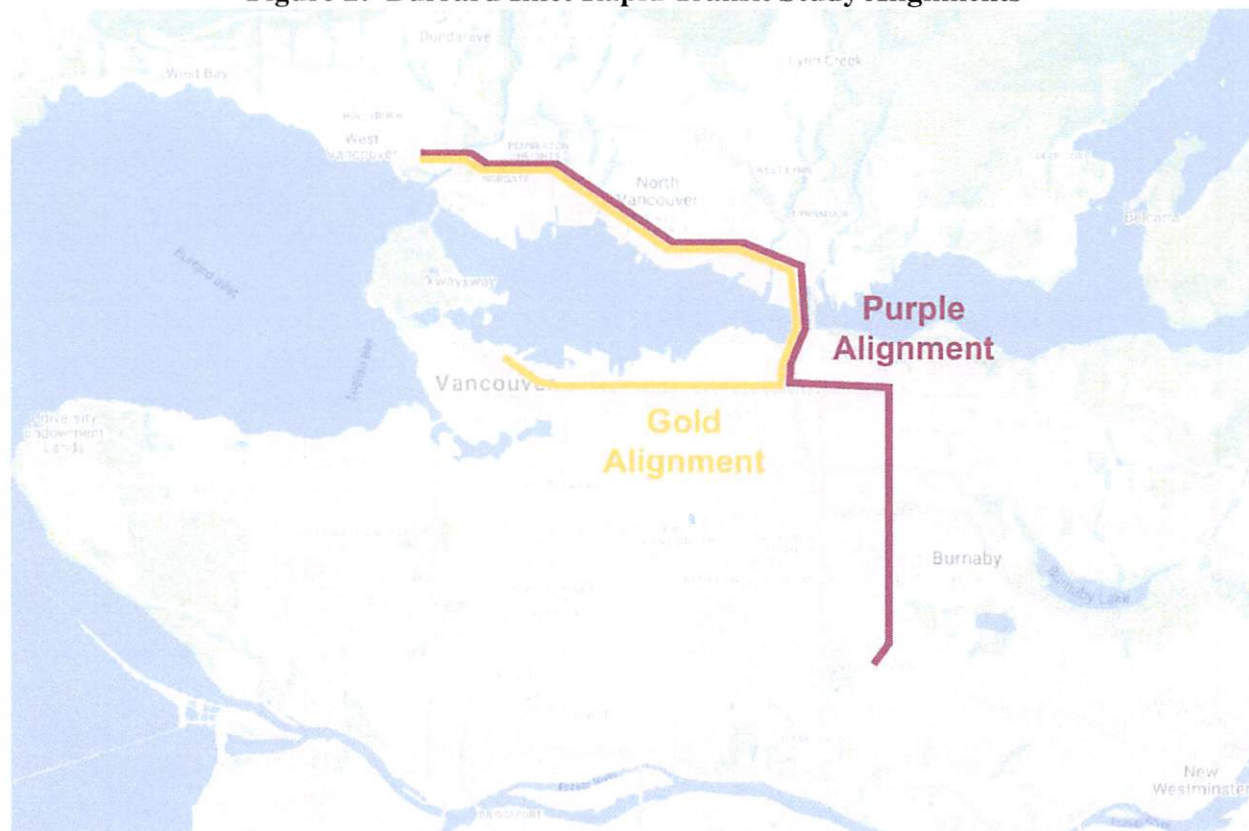
North Shore Connects is a partnership of the District of West Vancouver, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver and səliwətal (Tsleil-Waututh Nation), focusing on improving inter-municipal transportation to, from, and on the North Shore.

One of their proposed projects is a rapid transit connection between the North Shore and the Burrard Peninsula. After consideration of a broader range of options, the most recent report (*Burrard Inlet Rapid Transit – Benefits Assessment*, 2021 August) focused on two alignments, as shown in **Figure 2**, to showcase the potential benefits. Both start in the Park Royal area west of the Lions Gate Bridge, proceed eastward across the North Shore and then southward at Second Narrows. From there, the Gold Alignment proceeds back westward to downtown Vancouver,



whereas the Purple Alignment proceeds south to Metrotown in the Willingdon Avenue corridor. A technology assessment has not been done, but SkyTrain was assumed for analytical purposes.

**Figure 2: Burrard Inlet Rapid Transit Study Alignments**



This was a “benefits” report rather than a benefit-cost comparison of multiple options, which has not yet happened. The project is seen as a way to strengthen the connection between the North Shore and the rest of the region, providing benefits such as: support for regional growth, mode shift to transit, rider affordability, economic stimulation, and emission reductions. Direct traveller benefits (travel time, out-of-pocket costs) were estimated to be in the range of \$571 – \$646 million in the report’s analytical year of 2050 (expressed in undiscounted 2020 dollars). The analysis found that the two alignments offered a similar magnitude of benefits.

The study treated these routes in isolation of any other routes that might be constructed in the Burrard Peninsula after the Millennium Line extension to Arbutus (which was included). The Gold Alignment would appear to be disruptive to existing and possible future east-west transit services in the Hastings corridor, forcing a mode change in the Second Narrows area, whereas the Purple Alignment helps to create a more grid-like network of key transit routes, allowing for a broader range of connections than the Gold Alignment.

This analysis took place outside TransLink’s normal business case process. Additional, more rigorous analyses would be needed before making any recommendations on alignment or technology. However, this preliminary analysis of benefits is promising.

To: Planning and Development Committee  
From: Director Planning and Building  
Re: New TransLink Mayors' Vision  
2021 Nov 17..... Page 6

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATION

This report has provided an introduction to TransLink's process to create a *New Vision* for the next decade. Subsequent report(s) will provide an opportunity for Council to take a position on which major project(s) to support for inclusion in the *New Vision*.

It is recommended that the Committee and Council receive this report for information.



for. E.W. Kozak, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

SR:tn

cc: Chief Administrative Officer  
Director Engineering

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