

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: 2021 Nov 17

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

FILE: 2156 20

SUBJECT: TRANSPORT 2050 -
TRANSLINK'S NEW REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

PURPOSE: To advise Committee and Council of the process and content of the draft Regional Transportation Strategy, *Transport 2050*.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the Committee forward this report to Council for information.
2. **THAT** Council forward a copy of this report to C. Cooper, Project Manager, Regional Transportation Strategy, TransLink, #400 – 287 Nelson's Court, New Westminster, BC V3L 0E7.

REPORT**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

At its meeting of 2021 October 25, Council received a delegation from TransLink presenting on *Transport 2050* (www.Transport2050.ca), the draft Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS). As the emergent 30-year regional transportation blueprint, the RTS sets out the goals and directions for the regional transportation system, key initiatives and a statement of underlying principles.

This report provides background information on the process and content of the draft RTS for the Committee's consideration. It provides a summary of the key elements of the draft strategy and highlights where it is in alignment with City policies. It also identifies regional transportation network priorities and implications for networks within 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) and the *Economic Development Strategy* (2007). Furthermore, this report indicates how the draft Strategy corresponds to directions in the draft *Burnaby Transportation Plan*, "Connecting Burnaby."

3.0 BACKGROUND

Under its legislation, the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act (SCBCTA Act)*, TransLink is required to prepare a Long-Term Strategy setting out a thirty year outlook. The Regional

Transportation Strategy (RTS), which acts as a roadmap of transportation priorities and investments, is updated every five years. It is followed by a 10-year Investment Plan which outlines year-by-year actions and financials in support of the RTS, and remains in effect for up to three years, after which an update to the Investment Plan is required.

To meet its statutory obligation to update the strategy, the existing 2013 RTS *Transport 2045* was re-adopted in 2018, with a comprehensive update launched in 2019.

4.0 OVERVIEW OF THE DRAFT REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY

In early 2019, TransLink launched the process to update the RTS, entitled *Transport 2050*. *Transport 2050* is an opportunity to map a shared transportation and mobility strategy for Metro Vancouver. It provides a high level vision for the future while considering the need for flexibility in an era of rapid change, and considers such factors as climate change, emerging technologies and automation that will fundamentally change how citizens of the region will move about.

Initially planned to be advanced prior to the adoption of Metro Vancouver’s update of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), the timing of the RTS update was extended due to COVID-19. This has resulted in the parallel development of the thirty-year RGS *Metro 2050* and the regional climate strategy towards carbon neutrality, *Climate 2050*. The concurrent progression of these regional strategies has provided a unique opportunity for synergies and alignment, including co-studies on overlapping issues such as social equity and resiliency. The combined effect of these strategies will shape the region’s transportation, land use and climate well into the future.

4.1 Transport 2050 Timeline and Process

Transport 2050 is being undertaken in three phases of technical work, supported by broad engagement:

- Phase 1: Values, Vision and Ideas
- Phase 2: Trade-Offs
- Phase 3: Draft Strategy

Public engagement and consultation has been a critical component of the RTS’s development, with public input shaping the strategy.

The first phase identified the values, visions and ideas to ground the strategy. It included the largest engagement process in TransLink’s history (*May – September 2019*), with public input influencing the development of the draft goals and objectives of the draft RTS. An engagement report was released in Fall 2019 summarizing the public input.

The second phase of technical work focused on key policy levers and actions that would advance the draft goals and targets, including network concepts for transit and cycling. The public engagement process (*April – May 2021*) sought input on the draft goals and a series of high level transformative actions that could transform mobility in the region. Further, public input was requested on two network concepts for a fast and frequent rapid transit system that would provide a competitive choice for longer distance trips for most people in the region. A Phase 2 engagement report summarizing what was heard was released in July 2021.

The third and final phase, currently underway, includes the drafting of the strategy and refinement of the transit network concept. This phase included two streams of engagement (*Summer 2021 - October 2021*):

- A deep engagement process held in Summer 2021 with three key groups: TransLink’s Indigenous Advisory Council comprised of representatives of each of Metro Vancouver’s Indigenous Nations and representatives of urban Indigenous populations; social equity groups; and goods movement partners.
- A broad public engagement process in October 2021 on the comprehensive draft strategy which outlined a 30-year vision for transportation and mobility in the region. It was as part of this stream of engagement that Council received the TransLink delegation on 2021 October 25.

With the completion of the third phase of engagement, TransLink will incorporate feedback received and finalize the draft strategy, prior to advancing it for approval by the Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation in January 2022. This report provides opportunity for Burnaby Council to provide comment on the draft strategy should it wish to do so.

4.2 Draft Transport 2050 Strategy

The draft RTS is centred on a vision of *Access for Everyone* “where every person in Metro Vancouver, no matter who they are, where they live, or how they choose to get around, can easily connect to the opportunities they need to thrive.”

Transport 2050 is grounded in three strategic lenses which advance the key drivers of reconciliation, social equity and resilience as cross-cutting principles:

- The RTS recognizes that in planning and managing the region's transportation system, there is an important role to play in supporting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, through concrete actions.
- The RTS provides the first opportunity to explore regional transportation planning and policy decisions through a structured and systematic equity lens.
- The RTS acknowledges the importance of resiliency in an uncertain future where the regional transportation system is able to thrive in a world of shocks and disruptions.

To make progress towards the vision, while considering these strategic lenses, the RTS includes five goals focused on choices for everyone:

- **Goal 1 – Convenient Choices:**

This RTS goal aims to provide universally accessible choices allowing all to conveniently connect to opportunities without needing to rely on a car. It aims to increase the convenience of active transportation modes and public transit to advance a regional mode share of at least 50% of all trips by these modes by 2050. However, where citizens need to drive, the RTS aims to support ways where people can conveniently make the occasional car trip without needing to own a car, through the expansion of shared-use vehicles. Finally, this goal is supported by a strategic approach to providing many different choices conveniently together in one place, including through multi-modal hubs and with digital tools that can enable seamless travel across modes.

- **Goal 2 – Reliable Choices:**

Reliable transportation choices that enable all to get to where they need to go on time is the objective of this RTS goal. Strategies aimed at reducing the impact of congestion and making travel more reliable are expected to only partially address the challenge of achieving this goal. A more transformative policy such as a region wide approach to road use pricing remains a potential tool to address traffic congestion and improve travel time reliability for people and goods in the region.

In support of this goal, the RTS aims to: improve the reliability of transit through widespread transit priority measures; enhance the reliability, efficiency and competitiveness of goods movement; implement a real-time mobility management system to make driving and parking more reliable; and provide a focus on maintaining all transportation systems in a state of good repair.

- **Goal 3 – Affordable Choices:**

Recognizing the challenges of affordability in Metro Vancouver, this goal aims to ensure all have access to affordable choices that allow people to easily live and move in the region. To support this goal, the RTS includes four strategies that aim to address the desire for individuals not to spend more than 45% of household incomes on housing and transportation combined. Specific strategies include provision of affordable transit oriented housing, prioritizing investment in the most cost-efficient and affordable modes of walking, cycling and transit, ensuring that a basic level of mobility is affordable to all and supporting regional prosperity and quality economic growth.

- **Goal 4 – Safe and Comfortable Choices:**

The fourth goal proposes that all have safe and comfortable choices that makes them healthier and happier. By addressing the key barriers that limit freedom of movement and the ability to access the opportunities people need to thrive, this goal focuses on strategies that improve safe and comfortable ways of getting around.

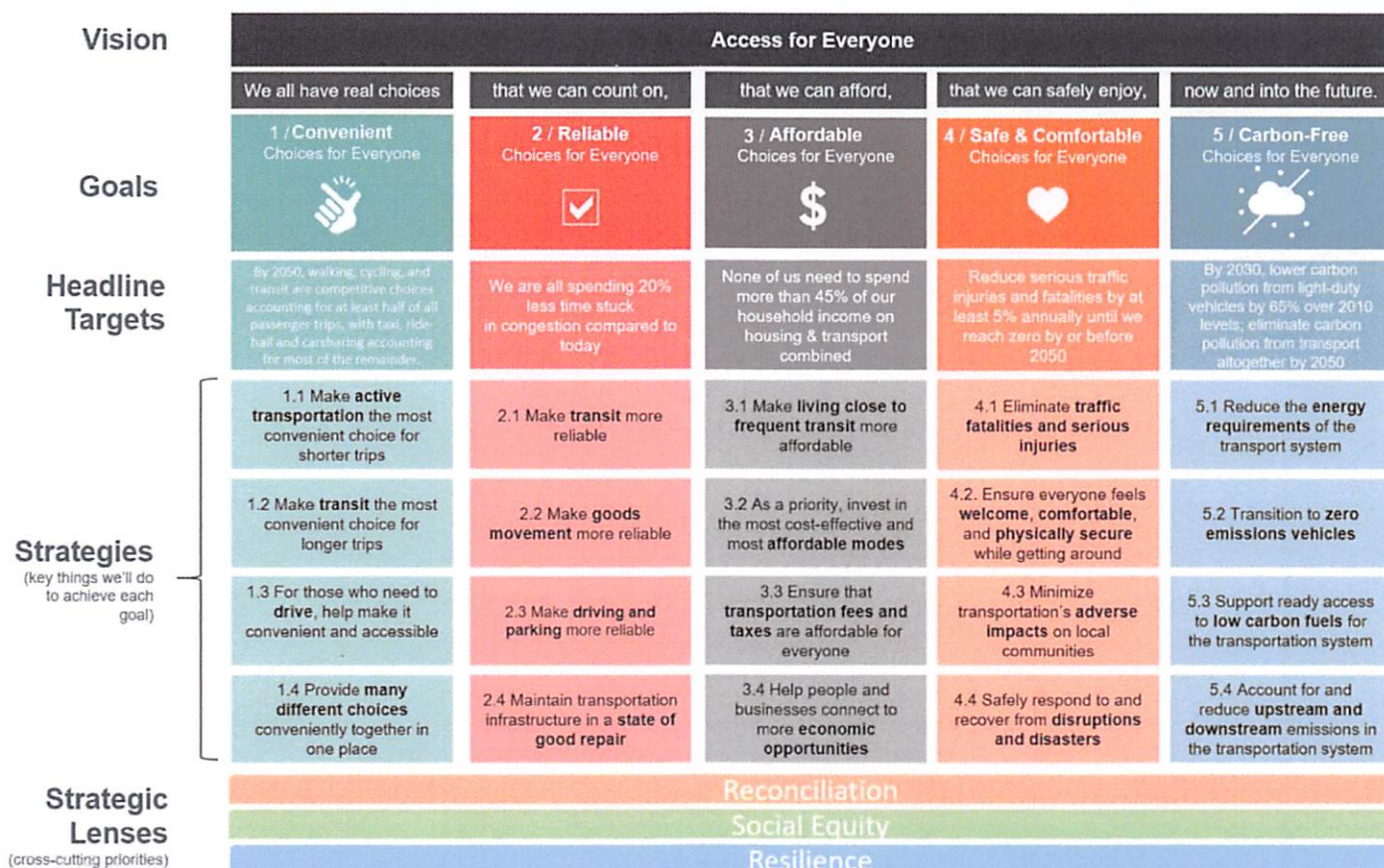
It is supported by four strategies working to: eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, ensure welcoming, comfortable and security while getting around; minimize the adverse impacts of transportation on local communities; and provide resiliency in safely responding to and recovering from disruptions and disasters.

- **Goal 5 – Carbon Free Choices:**

The fifth and final goal of the RTS aims to ensure that Metro Vancouverites all have many transportation choices which are carbon-free, supporting local and global efforts to tackle climate change. By reducing the energy requirements of the transport system, transitioning to zero emission vehicles and supporting access to low carbon fuels, this goal proposes to eliminate greenhouse gases stemming from regional transportation.

Strategies associated with the goals include headline targets (illustrated in *Figure 1*), will define the future direction of the region, municipalities and other governments and agencies in supporting the implementation of the RTS. Supported by additional sub-strategies and over one hundred actions in the RTS, these key elements will interact with and support each other to achieve the stated vision and goals.

Figure 1 Transport 2050 Framework



4.2.1 Priority Actions and Networks

TransLink acknowledges that the strategies and actions outlined in *Transport 2050* will need to be undertaken in partnership with municipalities, Metro Vancouver, other levels of government and agencies, and with Indigenous partners.

While the draft RTS includes many detailed actions in support of the 20 key strategies illustrated in **Figure 1**, it also identifies 10 key transformative actions that can fundamentally change how Metro Vancouverites live and move in the region. These are (quoting):

1. **Supporting walkable, complete, and affordable communities** where it's easy to access most of your daily needs within a kilometre of home and without having to drive.
2. Transforming roads that have been designed primarily for cars into **people-first streets** designed for everyone. Where all road users, including people with disabilities and people using transit, cycling, walking, or rolling, feel safe, comfortable, and connected.
3. Implementing complete networks of **traffic-protected bikeways within every urban centre**, an **850-kilometre network of major bikeways** connecting every urban centre, and abundant bicycle parking everywhere in order to provide active transportation and recreation options that are comfortable for most people to use.

4. Delivering **frequent local transit service** to within a 5-minute walk of nearly all communities within the urban parts of the region.
5. Serving more people in more parts of the region with **fast and reliable transit service** by adding 310 kilometres to our existing 100-kilometre rapid transit network and working with partners to implement new express and interregional connections.
6. **Prioritizing the movement of transit** on roads through more extensive provision of dedicated transit lanes, priority at intersections, and sidewalk extensions at bus stops. This will enable transit users to quickly and reliably get to where they need to go without getting stuck in traffic. It will also allow us to achieve our bold vision for expanding the rapid transit network primarily in dedicated lanes at street level.
7. Expanding **shared mobility** options across the region so that no matter who you are, where you are, or where you need to go, you’ll have access to a shared bike, e-scooter, or car when you want one.
8. Changing our vehicles and how we fuel them: we’ll support the move to **zero emission vehicles** with more charging options and make it easier to use electric bikes and other micromobility devices. Managing the safe and equitable introduction of **automated, connected, electrified, and shared vehicles** so that they work in support of our region’s goals.
9. Using the power of new **digital tools** to work towards an efficient, reliable and easy-to-use transportation system. Where everything is seamlessly integrated, everyone can easily plan and make trips that involve multiple modes, curb-side spaces are available when you need them, and traffic headaches are a thing of the past.
10. Ensuring that everyone can afford to get around, with a commitment to **universal basic mobility** where fares and fees are based on an individual’s ability to pay.

The draft RTS also includes several network concepts for cycling, transit and driving:

- **Regional Cycling Network:** shown in *Figure 2* incorporates TransLink’s Major Bikeway Network (MBN) and Metro Vancouver’s Regional Greenway Network (RGN). The MBN identifies corridors representing desire lines that connect Urban Centres across the region, and the RGN connects to parks, open spaces, natural areas, and scenic pathways.
- **Fast and Reliable Transit Network:** shown in *Figure 3*, includes existing and committed corridors (thick lines) and two classes of proposed services: the Major Transit Network (MTN) has the highest-demand corridors, while the “express / interregional” are somewhat quieter (though still busier than local bus service). Numbered projects on the map are those where grade separation may be required, typically due to high forecast demand. In Burnaby, this includes Hastings Street, Willingdon Avenue, Imperial Street (41st Avenue), and the Burnaby Mountain Gondola. Other MTN routes, presumably without grade separation, are proposed on Canada Way, Edmonds Street, and Marine Way. However, some form of separation from traffic would be critical for maximizing transit competitiveness in these corridors. The only express / interregional route in Burnaby is the existing West Coast Express along Burrard Inlet.
- **Major Road Network (MRN):** consisting of municipally-owned arterial streets spanning the region that carry the majority of the region’s commuter, transit, and truck traffic. The RTS acknowledges TransLink’s responsibility for the ongoing operation, maintenance and rehabilitation of the MRN across the region. The MRN was last amended in 2018, and no changes are proposed at this time.

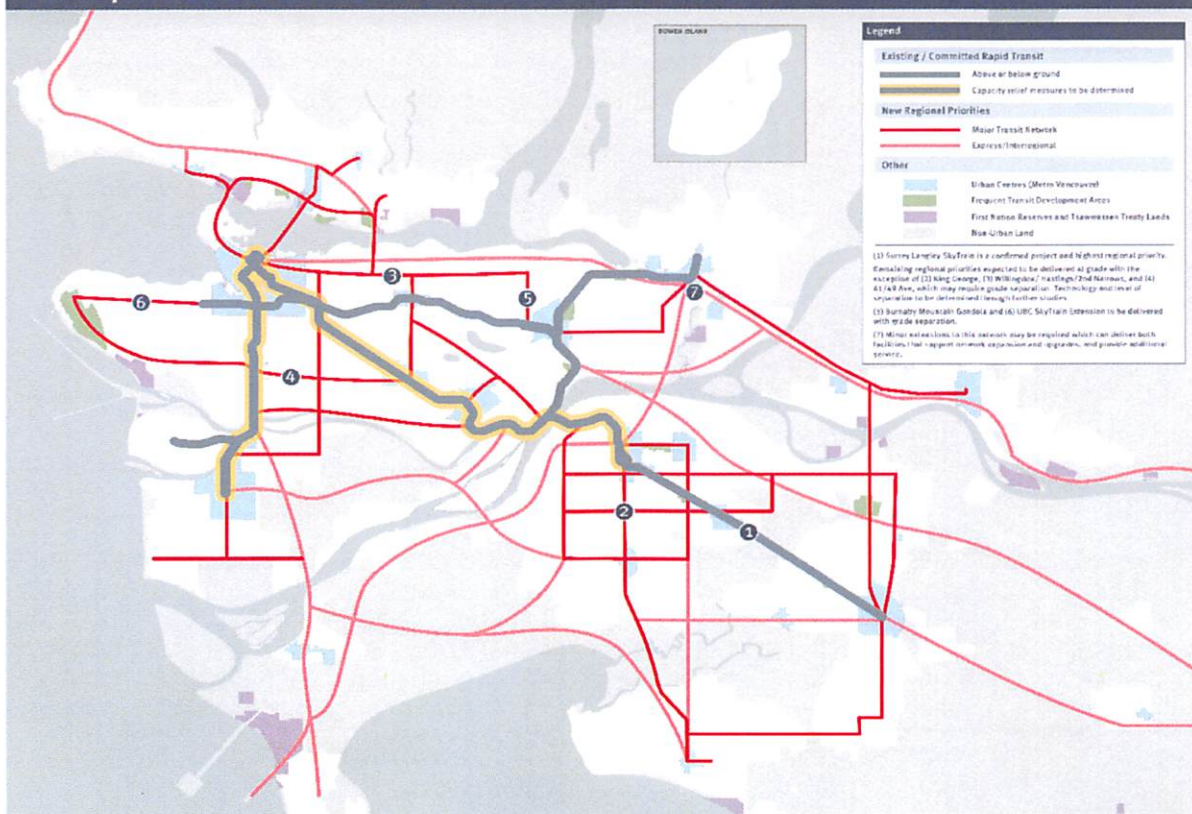
Figure 2: Regional Cycling Network

Transport 2050 Regional Cycling Network



Figure 3: Fast & Reliable Transit Network

Transport 2050 Fast & Reliable Transit Network



4.2.2 Implementation and Funding

To advance the goals, strategies and transformative actions of the RTS, TransLink proposes a suite of implementation actions that describe how it will plan, make decisions, fund, and organize itself to deliver *Transport 2050*. The same principles that guided the development of the RTS will steer its delivery.

While the RTS provides high level direction, the task of prioritizing the type and timing of investments and service projects will be undertaken through the next TransLink *Mayor’s Vision*, currently underway. A separate report updates the Committee and Council on that process.

5.0 DISCUSSION

City and TransLink staff have liaised with each other as *Connecting Burnaby* and *Transport 2050* have developed in parallel. As such, the two draft plans are generally aligned with each other at a high level. Specifically, the RTS and *Connecting Burnaby* have complementary goals related to access to transport options and choices, affordability, community prosperity, safe and secure mobility, and green mobility. The three targets within Burnaby’s *Plan of Vision Zero*, Mode Split and Zero Emissions also parallel the headline targets and directions within the RTS.

The actions contained within *Transport 2050*, which include policy direction, investment and service objectives will assist the City of Burnaby in advancing sustainable transportation and development objectives as outlined in various adopted Council policies and the forthcoming *Connecting Burnaby*.

The long-range cycling network from *Connecting Burnaby* is understandably much more fine-grained and detailed than TransLink’s MBN, providing more connections and more options at the local level. In scale, the MBN is comparable to the Phase 1, ten-year network proposed for immediate implementation in *Connecting Burnaby*. There are some differences between the two: *Connecting Burnaby* favours the Gilmore corridor over Willingdon for the western-most north-south route, and favours an almost-abandoned east-west rail corridor in the Big Bend rather than Marine Way. Staff will draw these differences to TransLink’s attention.

For transit networks, the two plans are again well-aligned. The TransLink MTN generally corresponds to the corridors where *Connecting Burnaby* identifies the need for higher-order transit, and both acknowledge the need for more work to determine the specific technology that would be most suited to each corridor. The primary difference is that *Transport 2050* identifies TransLink’s preferred alignment for the Burnaby Mountain Gondola, whereas *Connecting Burnaby* shows the zone encompassing the three routes that were most recently evaluated.

This comparison demonstrates that the City and TransLink are moving in the same direction, with similar plans and policies for improvements to the transportation system. Upon adoption of both plans, continued liaison will be essential as both organizations take on the challenge of implementation.

To: Planning and Development Committee
From: Director Planning and Building
Re: Transport 2050 – TransLink's New Regional Transportation Strategy
2021 November 17 Page 9

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

This report provides an overview and comments on the draft *Transport 2050* prepared by TransLink in support of the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) update. The 30-year outlook contains five regional goals, three key drivers and over 100 actions that will shape future investments, services, and policies on transportation in Metro Vancouver. It retains transportation networks that will shape the region, and City of Burnaby, for the next thirty (30) years.

The RTS is well aligned with Council adopted policies including *Climate Action Framework* and the *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* as well as the draft *Burnaby Transportation Plan*, “*Connecting Burnaby*.”

It is recommended that the Committee and Council receive this report for information and that a copy be provided to TransLink.



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

LL:sa/tn

cc: Chief Administrative Officer
Director Engineering
City Clerk