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South Coast British Columbia
Transportation Authority

January 15, 2024

Mayor Hurley & Council
Burnaby City Hall
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC V5G 1M2

Via Email: mayor@burnaby.ca

RE: Expo Line SkyTrain Service Pattern Changes due to Operations and Maintenance Centre Construction

Dear Mayor Hurley & Council,

Beginning on Saturday, February 10, 2024, TransLink will implement SkyTrain single-tracking for a period of approximately two years between Braid Station and Lougheed Town Centre Stations to support the construction of a new Operations and Maintenance Centre (OMC 4) in Coquitlam. This new facility will provide much needed storage and maintenance space for SkyTrain and is needed to meet service requirements for the Broadway Subway extension of the Millennium Line, the Surrey—Langley SkyTrain extension of Expo Line, and to replace retiring Mark I SkyTrain cars.

The single-tracking required for the construction of OMC 4 means that customers will experience a change in service levels during construction. Expo Line trains travelling between Waterfront Station and Production Way—University Station will run every 12 minutes for the duration of the service day. Currently, these trains operate every six minutes during the day, and 8-10 minutes late evenings. Some Expo Line trains, which usually travel all the way to Production Way—University, will instead terminate early at Braid Station and then return to Waterfront Station. Service levels remain unchanged on Canada Line, Millennium Line, and for customers on Expo Line not travelling specifically to either Production Way—University Station or Lougheed Town Centre Station outside the late evening periods.

Starting on January 15, 2024, TransLink will be undertaking a three-week communications campaign to inform customers of the service change and prepare them for the service change before it takes effect. This campaign will deliver messaging about the service change through online channels including the website, social media, and media ads, and through media outlets including radio.

TransLink will also be implementing significant in-station communications efforts with new directional signage using sandwich boards, in-system advertising placements, and “street teams” who will be engaging with customers to answer questions and hand out information.

After the service change is implemented on February 10, 2024, train destinations will be communicated on the train destination signs, electronic passenger information “Next Train” displays, and through onboard announcements. SkyTrain wayfinding maps will be updated to reflect the service change across the system operations. We will be increasing the presence of SkyTrain Attendants at affected stations to support customers as they navigate the new service pattern.

TransLink Public Affairs is also working with stakeholders to ensure that the service changes are communicated with as many customers and businesses as possible. Key partners in the communications efforts include Simon Fraser University and Douglas College, who will be sharing messaging through their channels to ensure that students, staff, and faculty are aware of the changes. Business Improvement Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, and major employers will also be engaged to help distribute messaging in the vicinity of the impacted stations.

For further information on the project, we have attached a memo that was sent to the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee on January 11, 2024. You can also learn more about the project by visiting translink.ca/skytrainexpansion.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact TransLink Public Affairs at governmentrelations@translink.ca.

Sincerely,

Jessica Fletcher
Director, Public Affairs
TransLink

Attachments

1. January 11, 2024 – RTAC Memo – Expo Line SkyTrain Service Pattern Changes due to OMC4 Construction

DATE: January 3, 2024

TO: Regional Transportation Advisory Committee – January 11, 2024

FROM: Robert Willis, Sr. Manager, Capital Project Communications, TransLink
Aaron Demes, Sr. Advisor, Government Relations, TransLink

SUBJECT: Expo Line SkyTrain Service Pattern Changes due to OMC4 Construction

AGENDA ITEM: For Information

PURPOSE

The purpose of this item is to inform RTAC of the two-year long service pattern change on the Expo Line SkyTrain between Production Way-University Station and Sapperton Station to accommodate the construction of the new SkyTrain Operations and Maintenance Centre (OMC4) project, and the related communications and engagement activities.

BACKGROUND

Starting Saturday, 10 February 2024, TransLink will implement single tracking for a period of approximately two years between Braid and Lougheed Town Centre SkyTrain stations to support the construction of a new Operations and Maintenance Centre (OMC 4) in Coquitlam. This new facility will provide much needed storage and maintenance space for SkyTrain including up to 170 new train cars currently in production and which began arriving in Metro Vancouver late 2023. These additional train cars are needed to meet service requirements for the Broadway Subway extension of the Millennium Line, the Surrey-Langley SkyTrain extension of Expo Line, and to replace retiring Mark I trains.

As part of construction, BCRTC, the TransLink subsidiary that operates the Expo and Millennium lines, will need to close the inbound and outbound SkyTrain tracks, one side at a time, near Braid station for approximately two years. This is to allow the guideway structure to be modified to accommodate the installation of two track connections between the existing tracks and the OMC4 site, and a revision of the existing track layout to facilitate access to and from OMC4 from the existing westbound (north) track. This means there will be service pattern changes on Expo Line at Production Way-University, Lougheed Centre, Braid, and Sapperton stations.

Expo Line trains travelling from Waterfront and Production Way-University stations will run every 12 minutes for the duration of the service day. Currently, these trains run every six minutes during peaks midday, and 8-10 minutes late evenings. Some Expo Line trains, which usually travel all the way to Production Way-University, will instead terminate early at Braid Station and then return to Waterfront.

DAILY UNTIL 9:30PM	AFTER 9:30PM
Waterfront ↔ Production Way-University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service every 12 minutes, instead of 6 	Waterfront ↔ Production Way-University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunday – Thursday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every 12 minutes, instead of 10 Friday – Saturday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every 12 minutes, instead of 8
Waterfront ↔ Braid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional train Service every 6 minutes 	No additional train to Braid
<i>Together, trains run every 6 minutes through Braid</i>	
Waterfront ↔ King George <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change in service 	Waterfront ↔ King George <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunday – Thursday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every 12 minutes, instead of 10 Friday - Saturday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternate between 4- and 8-min headway
Millennium, Canada Lines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change in service 	Millennium, Canada Lines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change in service

Image 1: SkyTrain frequency breakdown during single-tracking Jan 2024 – 2025

As a result, customers travelling on the Expo Line to and from Production Way-University and Lougheed Town Centre stations should allow for an extra 12 minutes of travel time, given fewer trains will be serving these stations during construction. Customers boarding at Sapperton and Braid stations may have to use a different platform than they usually would, however the overall frequency of trains remains almost the same at most times. Extra signage and SkyTrain staff will be in place to assist customers at these stations. Late evening Expo and Millennium Line service will be revised system-wide, as shown in Image 1.

Service levels remain unchanged on Canada Line, Millennium Line, and for anyone on Expo Line who is not travelling specifically to either Production Way-University or Lougheed stations outside the late evening periods.

DISCUSSION

Communications Campaign

Starting on January 15, 2024, TransLink will be undertaking a three-week communications campaign to inform customers of the change and prepare them for the service change before it takes effect. This campaign will deliver messaging about the service change through online channels (website, social media and ads) and media outlets (including radio).

TransLink will also be implementing significant in-station communications efforts with new directional signage using sandwich boards, advertising space, and “street teams” who will be engaging with customers to answer questions and hand out paper brochures.

After the service change is implemented on February 10, 2024, train destinations will be communicated on the train destination signs, electronic passenger information “Next Train” displays, and through onboard announcements. SkyTrain wayfinding maps will be updated to reflect the service change across the system and BCRTC will be increasing the presence of SkyTrain Attendants at affected stations to support customers as they navigate the new service pattern.

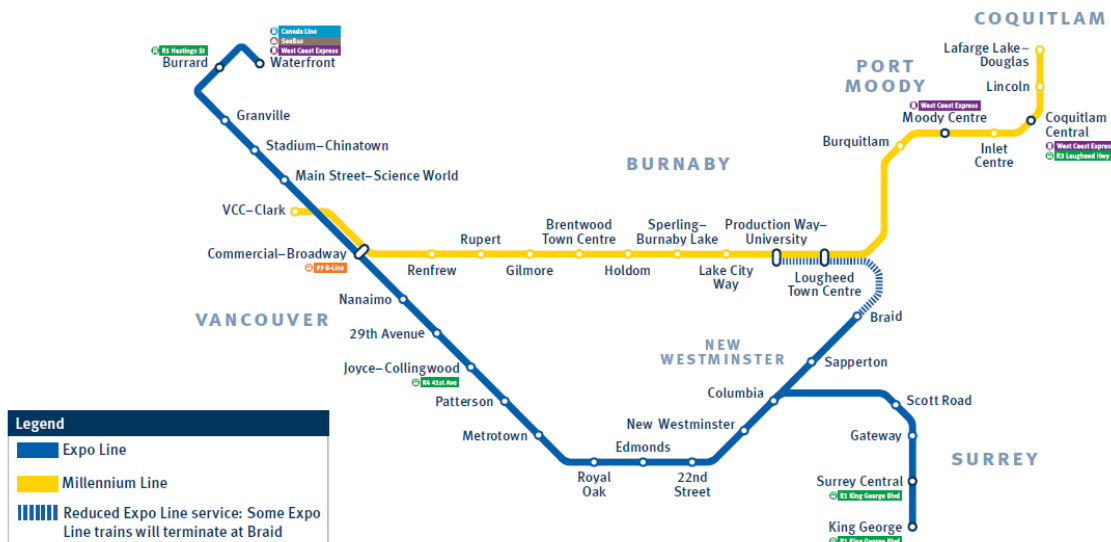


Image 2: Modified Wayfinding map of service pattern change on Expo Line for OMC 4 single tracking

Stakeholder Engagement

TransLink Public Affairs is working with major stakeholders to ensure that the service changes are communicated with as many customers as possible. Key partners in the communications efforts include Simon Fraser University and Douglas College, who will be sharing messaging through their channels to ensure that students, staff and faculty are aware of the changes. Business Improvement Associations, Chambers of Commerce/Boards of Trade and major employers will also be engaged to help distribute messaging regarding changes to major employers in the vicinity of the impacted stations.

Government Relations

TransLink Government Relations will be informing Coquitlam, Port Moody, Burnaby, New Westminster and Surrey City Councils, MLAs, and MPs of the service changes via letter on January 12, 2024. Should there be a desire for a presentation to City Council on the service changes and the communications and engagement activities, the Government Relations team is prepared to attend a council or committee meeting to provide further information and answer questions.

CONCLUSION

On February 10, 2024, a new service pattern will be implemented on the Expo Line SkyTrain to support the construction of OMC4. TransLink will be undertaking communications and engagement activities, starting on January 15, 2024, to inform customers about the two-year service change on the Expo Line. Elected officials in impacted communities will be informed of the change and campaign on January 12, 2024. TransLink Public Affairs is available to provide further information to elected officials upon request.

ATTACHMENTS

- SkyTrain Expansion Program Track Maintenance Alert Rack Card