Your **Cycling** Connection

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Mayors' Council Transportation Plan Committee

cc:
Mayors' Council
Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation
Honourable George Heyman, Transit Critic, MLA for Vancouver-Fairview
Honourable Claire Trevena, Ministry of Transportation Critic, MLA for North Island
Board of Directors, TransLink

Re: Cycling and the Regional Transportation & Funding Plan

HUB: Your Cycling Connection is a charitable organization that works to get more people cycling for transportation through education, events and collaboration. Attached, please find our submission on how investment into cycling infrastructure would enhance the regional transportation and funding plan which is being developed by the Mayor's Council Transportation Plan Committee. We are also available to be a resource for further discussions on cycling in Metro Vancouver.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors & local committee chairs
HUB : Your **Cycling** Connection
Board@bikehub.ca

Lisa Slakov HUB Vancouver/UBC Chair	Dennis Hansen HUB Burnaby Chair	Andrew Feltham HUB New Westminster Chair	Tim Yzerman Surrey/White Rock/North Delta Chair
Ivan Chow HUB Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows Chair	Antje Wahl HUB North Shore Chair	Derek Williams HUB Richmond Chair	Simon Watkins HUB Tri-Cities Chair

Your Cycling Connection

HUB Submission to the Mayor's Council on the Cycling Component of the Regional Transportation and Funding Plan

HUB: Your Cycling Connection is a charitable organization that works to get more people cycling for transportation through education, events and collaboration. We are Metro Vancouver's leader in making cycling an attractive choice for everyone. We have approximately 1200 members around the region, active local committees in most municipalities of Metro Vancouver and an email list with over 20,000 contacts.

We are encouraged that the Mayors' Council is working on a Regional Transportation Plan building on the past transportation planning processes. We want to ensure that cycling is funded appropriately as it has significant value to add to the efficiency of the Metro Vancouver transportation network.

Aside from transit and the major road network, TransLink is also responsible for cycling, which **provides an affordable part of the solution to the current financial and mobility predicaments.** Currently there is no connected cycling network. Large gaps exist where there is no reasonably safe way to cycle between certain major regional hubs in Metro Vancouver, and within communities. This is a huge inequity and missed opportunity to relieve transportation network pressure. To realize these benefits, the planning for Metro Vancouver's short term transportation future should significantly increase annual funding for cycling and walking, above historical levels. Currently, TransLink's Bicycle program makes up 0.2% of its budget, which is less than 1/10th of the transportation mode share of people currently cycling. Investment should be increased significantly. TransLink has recommended $34 million ($14.70 per person) annual cycling funding cost shared with municipalities in their 2013 Regional Cycling Strategy Implementation Plan to maximize the investment timing and progress towards their mode shift goals. HUB recommends **$36 million annual cycling funding** for these purposes.

More investment in cycling will get more people riding bikes, and has the potential to provide:

- **congestion relief** on the busiest transit segments, potentially delaying or mitigating the need for additional transit spending to increase capacity in some areas, and **reducing user wait times and pass-ups**; congestion relief on roads: bikeways move 9 times as many people as cars in the same amount of arterial roadway space[1]
- **better financial and taxpayer value** than investing in road construction and maintenance at a benefit ratio of at least 13 : 1[2]
- **Improved access** to outlying transit stations where low-level feeder bus service is inadequate
- **Increased transit fare revenue in outlying areas** due to increased access and convenience of cycling to stations
- A **more affordable transportation option** for the region's residents (saving ~$1100/year from monthly transit passes or ~$10,100/year from owning and operating a car) that may allow them to live closer to their destinations and **reduce total travel time on the network**

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[1] Per the TransLink Regional Cycling Strategy, a typical street travel lane has the capacity to move 170 cars per hour per metre-width of roadway, while a bike lane or path can move 1,500 bicycles per hour per metre-width

[2] http://www.vtpi.org/tca/tca0506.pdf

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TransLink has committed to important quality of life and sustainability goals both as part of its own Regional Transportation Strategy Strategic Framework, Transport 2040 plan and as part of its requirements to support Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy. HUB is very supportive of these commitments to a better quality of life for our region's residents and a more efficient transportation network to support our economy and people's livelihoods. We urge implementation of these important plans in the near future.

Please refer to the Appendix (below) on how cycling contributes to the attainment of TransLink's transportation goals.

Strong Business Case for Cycling

Cycling is a fiscally prudent and effective way to achieve TransLink's goals. There is a strong business case for investment in cycling both for TransLink through increased transit revenues and reduced costs and senior levels of government through reduced health care costs, increased productivity, increased efficiency of transportation investments and improved economic growth.

Infrastructure for cycling is the most economical for of transportation infrastructure - typically 10% of costs for automobile traffic on an external cost per vehicle-km driven basis[3]. Incremental investments in cycling will pay off in the long term much more than in road and transit infrastructure. Utilizing more space-efficient forms of transportation such as cycling will be required as our region's population increases but our land base does not. We will need to move more people in a fixed amount of space. Relying on the status quo, with the focus mainly on motor vehicles, we will end up in gridlock.

To put the cost of cycling and the carrying capacity in perspective, TransLink counted the number of cars/trucks using the Pattullo bridge as well as the number of people cycling for transportation in the region. In 2008 those cycling outnumbered Pattullo motor vehicles by 25%, yet numbers in the range of $780 million (some estimates are much higher) is earmarked for Pattullo and currently only $2 million/year is earmarked for cycling. There is a huge inequity here.

Cycling Potential

We can easily achieve large increases in cycling mode share if we make the effort. The average trip length in Metro Vancouver is about 9 km[4], which is a comfortable cycling distance. It is realistic to expect portions of Metro Vancouver, especially the more urban centres, to dramatically increase cycling mode shares. For example, Eugene, Oregon has a cycling mode share of over 10% thanks in large part to the provision of safe cycling infrastructure. With modest investment in cycling infrastructure, cycling mode share for all trips in Metro Vancouver has increased from 1.5% in 2008 to 1.8% in 2011. This is a good indication that recent investments are paying off.

From an equity perspective, it is interesting to note that those who choose to cycle do not receive investment in cycling at a rate that is up to their current mode share of 2%. For example, TransLink's investment in cycling is only 0.25% of their budget. We note that TransLink's 2011 Trip Survey reveals that cycling is the fastest growing mode of transportation in Metro Vancouver, surpassing both increases in private vehicle and transit modes. We also

[3] http://www.vtpi.org/tca/tca0506.pdf Transportation Cost and Benefit Analysis - Page 5.6-24
[4] TransLink 2011 Trip Diary Survey

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note that the subsidy provided to transit riders is about $400 million per year[5] while the transit mode share is about 15%. By proportion, cycling should receive about $53 million (400*2/15). With this amount of support, cycling mode would increase rapidly and everyone in the region would enjoy the benefits of increased cycling much more quickly.

Completion of a Regional Cycling and Walking Network

Cycling mode share will increase rapidly after the completion of a safe and convenient AAA (suitable for All Ages and Abilities) cycling network connecting urban centres, which is complemented by finer grained municipal cycling networks. Outside of regional town centres, the urban core of Vancouver and away from major destinations, often pedestrian traffic levels are low enough for well designed shared paths with bicycle friendly intersection treatments to be an acceptable solution for accommodating cycling and walking. Indeed, much of TransLink's cycling funding has been invested in shared facilities including the Central Valley Greenway, the path on the Canada Line Bridge, the Spirit Trail and the BC Parkway. Other improvements for cycling such as signals and traffic calming also benefit pedestrians. In order to complete a regional cycling network, higher levels of funding are required but much of the infrastructure could be shared by cyclists and pedestrians.

Cost Effective Cycling and Walking and Wheelchair Access to Transit

A cost effective way of improving transit efficiency is by building safe and convenient cycling, walking and wheelchair routes which allow for improved access to transit hubs. Funding invested in access to transit will increase ridership revenues, increasing TransLink's funding available for transit, walking and cycling improvements. The majority of funding for roads likely does not increase transit ridership revenue and may even decrease ridership by making driving faster relative to transit. In many cases, these cycling improvements are badly needed connections in the cycling network or local connections to regional cycling routes that will also increase the number of cycling trips not linked to transit.

Leveling Demand on Busy Transit Segments

Targeted cycling investments also have great potential to reduce demand for transit on high demand segments of the system thus possibly delaying the need for expensive service or infrastructure upgrades enabling funds to be invested in priorities elsewhere in the region. In London, hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested in bicycle routes to reduce demand on the busy transit system. The bicycle routes are even being named after the transit lines. For example:

- Upgrades to cycling routes parallel to the Expo and Millenium Lines such as the BC Parkway and Central Valley Greenway could reduce transit demand on the busy Commercial - Waterfront segment.
- Upgrades parallel to the Canada Line such as separated bike lanes on Cambie and improvements to the Cambie Street Bridge could also delay the need to purchase more trains, buy more service from InTransit, and upgrade stations to handle the higher than expected ridership.

HUB's recommendations

Regional decision-makers know that the current system of investment is not working. We are not on the path to achieving our vision for the region. Here are HUB's recommendations:

[5] TransLink's 2014 Base Plan

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1. Metro Vancouver residents should have access to cycling funding at levels enjoyed by people in cities with world-class cycling infrastructure, namely $40 per person per year from all levels of government. This would amount to total funding for cycling from all levels of government of about $100 million per year. TransLink's adequate support of cycling is imperative to a healthy network. Municipalities rely on TransLink cost-sharing to complete their cycling facility improvements. Without regional cycling planning and funding, progress on the cycling network will be sorely stunted, and may never achieve a connected network. TransLink oversight and regional planning is integral to form cycling routes that transcend municipal borders. Many smaller municipalities do not have the staff capacity or skills to properly plan for cycling. Many communities have planned cycle networks but the timelines are very long and most of the networks are only built with development or redevelopment which will likely end up with a patchwork of separate segments that will take many decades to be connected. This is where TransLink plays an important oversight role. Annual funding in the short term should be higher until a regional cycling network is completed. We recommend that the TransLink contribution be not only reinstated to previous levels, but increased due to the high return on investment and goal attainment. With municipal cost-sharing, further cost-efficiencies may be available to reduce the TransLink contribution.

2. Funding for cycling and walking should be prioritized based on an initiative's ability to achieve increased mode share for sustainable transportation. In particular, the following types of initiatives should be prioritized and funded by TransLink each year as follows.

a. **$24 million - Cycling and walking infrastructure that completes the cycling network within and across the region's communities.** People will not use a form of transportation that does not safely and conveniently get them from point A to point B. To ensure that cycling is viewed as convenient and accessible to all, we need to complete the regional network of cycling infrastructure. Connectivity gaps mean that many well built facilities are underutilized, particularly in the suburbs.

b. **$2 million - Cycling, walking and access to transit**. TransLink has no current funds dedicated to improving cycling or walking access to transit stations or stops. This is an area that can improve circumstances for users of all types of sustainable transportation. The 2012 plan had a $30M budget for transit station area upgrades of this type, but this has unfortunately been cut. Cycling improvements within a 5km (average 20 minutes cycling) radius of rapid transit stations and bus exchanges are suggested. A region wide secure bike parking system should be a priority. Bike theft is a reason why people do not bike for transportation. This could be included in station budgets.

c. **$6 million - Cycling infrastructure improvements in areas that parallel peak demand sections on transit lines.** By replacing ridership on these sections, costly capacity expansion could be delayed, enabling funds to be invested in badly needed transit improvements elsewhere; this potentially could generate incremental transit ridership revenue. As mentioned earlier, these improvements could be applied to Cambie Street to alleviate demand on the Canada Line and between Commercial Drive and Main Street to alleviate demand between the busy Commercial Drive Station and downtown Vancouver. Already, over 10% of trips in the Commercial drive area are by bike. A high quality safe, direct and convenient cycling highway parallel to this skytrain route would encourage many more people in the Commercial Drive area to use a bicycle instead of

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taking skytrain along this busy segment. The new Evergreen line offers great potential for parallel cycling/pedestrian infrastructure.

d. **$3 million - Cycling and walking education, awareness and promotion.** These areas are historically underfunded. It is critical to parallel all cycling infrastructure upgrades with education and awareness campaigns to ensure that the investment is fully taken advantage of. Research shows that education and promotion can quadruple ridership, whereas infrastructure alone sees half of that result.[6] Cycling education and promotion is also essential for increased safety and improved interactions between all road users. Also, cycling education for school children will prepare them for lifelong cycling.

e. **$1 million for Enforcement, Planning, Monitoring.**

Much of this funding could be leveraged by cost sharing with municipalities. TransLink should take the lead in setting standards for cycling infrastructure, designing a connected regional cycling network and providing cost share funding with municipalities on projects which have the most promise of increased levels of cycling.

Thank you for your consideration of our input at this important time in determining TransLink's future and its impact on our region. HUB is here as a resource and welcomes any questions, comments, or further discussion so we can reach our shared goals of a healthy, prosperous, mobile region.

Appendix: How Cycling Supports TransLink's Transportation Goals

TransLink's Regional Transportation Strategy Strategic Framework States:

Goal 1.2
Make early investments to complete the walkway and bikeway networks
Walking and cycling are low cost, emission free, energy efficient, and space efficient. Walking and cycling also lead to better public health and safer roads for all users. Parts of this region still have major gaps in the walkway network. The region was also late to invest in cycling infrastructure, so there is a shortage of traffic-protected bikeways, which are needed to support cycling by people of all ages and abilities. While walkways and bikeways are predominantly on municipal networks, TransLink can play an important role by coordinating and supporting municipal investments.
Key actions include working with partners to:

- As a near-term regional priority, invest in the walkway network to improve connectivity, especially connecting to and within the Frequent Transit Network.
- Make significant and early investments to define and complete the Major Bikeway Network (MBN), as outlined in the Regional Cycling Strategy (Figure 17), with a

6 http://policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher/TRA960_01April2011.pdf

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focus on Class 1 facilities in Urban Centres and other high cycling potential areas.

Goal 2.5
Manage parking for fairness, efficiency and revenue

Key actions include working with partners to:

- Install sufficient bicycle parking in Urban Centres and Frequent Transit Development Areas.

The TransLink Transport 2040 plan has six high level goals. Increased cycling mode share supports all of the high level goals and is an especially important tool in achieving the first, second and fifth goals:

GOAL 1
Greenhouse gas emissions from transportation are aggressively reduced, in support of federal, provincial and regional targets
GOAL 2
Most trips are by transit, walking and cycling
GOAL 5
Economic growth and efficient goods movement are facilitated through effective management of the transportation network

More cycling can also play a direct and critical role in achieving the other three goals in the Regional Growth Strategy:

GOAL 3
Protect the environment and respond to climate change impacts
GOAL 4
Travelling in the region is safe, secure, and accessible for everyone
GOAL 6
Support sustainable transportation choices

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