



## HUB's support of the proposed sales tax increase to fund TransLink

Submitted to the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation  
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HUB: Your Cycling Connection is a charitable organization that works to make cycling better through education, events and collaboration. We are Metro Vancouver's leader in making cycling an attractive choice for everyone.

HUB offers its support of the recent proposal by the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation to increase the sales tax in Metro Vancouver by 0.1% to 0.5% in order to fund TransLink. Specifically, it is important that this funding go towards the implementation of cost effective and sustainable transportation strategies such as public transit, cycling and walking. TransLink's 2011 Regional Cycling Strategy sets out appropriate objectives and actions outlining our desired use of these funds for cycling.

Funding challenges over the last few years at TransLink have been very problematic; funding is not at the level needed to support important regional goals. TransLink, Metro Vancouver and some member municipalities have important goals with respect to getting more people to choose sustainable transportation, and TransLink and the province have committed to goals to cut GHGs from transportation and provide excellent customer service to all road users. In particular, HUB is concerned with the level of funds being allocated to cycling – the current plan sets the amount at or below \$3M annually, which retracts on previous plans to restore funding for cycling upgrades to \$6M, and comes nowhere close to the approximately \$26M that should be invested to accomplish the goals of TransLink's Regional Cycling Strategy.

The Mayors' Council has exhaustively studied the possibilities to improve this situation and found many possible revenue sources to have legislative issues or implementation issues. A sales tax like the one proposed is a solution that is common in many US jurisdictions and can be applied without being overly burdensome from an administrative perspective. It is appropriately fair, since transportation issues affect everyone and a sales tax broadly affects everyone. While it is true that being a heavy consumer does not necessarily correlate to being a heavy transportation user, HUB notes that any revenue source has its trade-offs in terms of being exactly fair versus being practical and cost-effective.

Funding TransLink's work is too important an issue to allow these problems to persist. HUB encourages an increase in sales tax in Metro Vancouver as recommended by the Mayors' Council, and would like to then see work on implementing long-term, economically efficient solutions such as road pricing.

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