



For Immediate Release: Thursday, November 12, 2009
*(replaces the release dated Wednesday November 11, 2009,
correcting two tables in the attached Backgrounder)*

TransLink Commission Seeks Public Comment On Proposed Fare Increases

The South Coast British Columbia Regional Transportation Commission is seeking public comment on TransLink's recent applications for:

- a new \$2.50 Canada Line YVR Add Fare for passengers travelling between Bridgeport and Templeton stations in either direction, effective January 1, 2010; and
- increases of up to \$4.00 for FareSaver 10-ticket books, effective April 1, 2010.

These increases would make room for TransLink to raise the price of other fares including **monthly passes**, but **cash fares would not be affected**.

How to Comment

Comments can be e-mailed to comments@translinkcommission.org or mailed to TransLink Commission, PO Box 1497, Comox BC, V9M 8A2. Deadline for submissions is November 30, 2009.

For more information, please see the attached backgrounder or visit What's New at www.translinkcommission.org.

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Established under the SCBCTA Act in June 2008, the Regional Transportation Commissioner is the independent regulator of TransLink, and is separate from the Mayors' Council, TransLink's Board of Directors and TransLink staff.

Contact for Information on this News Release

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BACKGROUNDER

The Process

On 23 October 2009 the Mayors' Council approved supplementary fares (within a TransLink 10-year plan called Funding Stabilization). One of these is the proposed Canada Line YVR Add Fare. Another is an increase on the price of books of 10 FareSaver tickets. TransLink cannot charge passengers these fares without the further approval of the Commission. TransLink applied for this at the end of October 2009.

Under the section 223 of the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act, after 30 days for public comment, the Commission may decide to hold a public hearing. In its final decision on whether to approve the fares, the Commission must weigh four considerations:

- maintain financial stability of TransLink;
- allow TransLink to provide planned services;
- encourage TransLink to minimize expenses; and
- keep fares as low as possible.

Canada Line YVR Add Fare

Five years ago, TransLink proposed an Airport Special Zone Fare to help fund the Canada Line, then at the planning stage. The TransLink Board approved the new fare in 2004. The fare would:

- be levied for trips to and from Sea Island (on which Vancouver Airport sits) via an "add-fare";
- target air passengers who would be receiving a significant benefit from the Canada Line – the alternatives being Taxi (then \$24), Airporter (then \$12) or Airport Parking;
- yield an estimated incremental ridership revenue to TransLink of \$3.3M (in 2003 dollars) per annum, growing with ridership;
- be adjusted from time to time within a range of \$2 to \$4 (in 2003 dollars).

The above approval was given before the amending legislation of 2007 which created the Mayors' Council and an appointed board of directors for TransLink.

In April 2009, before the Canada Line was put into service, TransLink asked the Commission to determine whether a YVR Add Fare was a decision of a previous board that did not require additional approval. The Commission found that, as far as it was concerned, this was indeed the case (as detailed in Commission Order 09-01 of 30 April 2009 at http://translinkcommission.org/Order_09-01_YVR_Zone_Fare.pdf).

Nonetheless TransLink, possibly acting with an abundance of caution, subsequently included the YVR Add Fare in the Funding Stabilization Supplement for approval by the Mayors' Council, drawing it into a further approval process under the 2007 SCBCTA Act. While awaiting new approvals, the TransLink has not charged the YVR Add Fare to passengers since the Canada Line began operating.

FareSaver Ticket Books and Certain Other Fares

If TransLink wishes to increase the price of "short term" fares (e.g. cash fares and FareSaver ticket books) faster than 2% per year, the law requires that it must first obtain the Commission's approval.

As defined by the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act, a **short term fare** means "a user fee for a revenue transit service, but does not include (a) a fee charged for a pass that authorizes the holder, for a period of more than 3 days, to use one or more revenue transit services, or (b) a toll" such as a road or bridge toll.

TransLink has applied to the Commission for approval to increase the price of books of ten FareSaver tickets faster than 2% per year on April 1 2010 as follows:

Price of a FareSaver Book of 10 Tickets		
	Current Price 2009	Proposed Price Starting April 1 2009
1 Zone Adult	\$19.00	\$21.00
2 Zone Adult	\$28.50	\$31.50
3 Zone Adult	\$38.00	\$42.00
All Zone Concession	\$16.00	\$17.00

Cash fares (or single ticket prices) will be unchanged as TransLink has not applied to increase them.

The above increases would create room for TransLink to increase monthly pass prices as well, while still keeping the passes an attractive option, relative to 10-ticket FareSaver books, for frequent transit customers. Monthly passes are not a "short term fare" under the law and as such are not directly regulated by the Commission. Customers should be aware, however, that if FareSaver increases are approved, TransLink proposes to make the following increases in Monthly FareCard prices:

Price of a Monthly FareCard		
	Current Price 2009	Proposed Price Starting April 1 2009
1 Zone Adult	\$73.00	\$81.00
2 Zone Adult	\$99.00	\$110.00
3 Zone Adult	\$136.00	\$151.00
Concession-all zones	\$42.00	\$46.50.
FastTrax Student – All Zones	\$73.00	\$81.00

TransLink proposes to increase certain other fares on April 1 2010. These include annual employer passes on conventional transit and, on West Coast Express commuter rail, weekly, 28 day and employer passes. Full details can be found in a detailed table of all proposed TransLink fare increases at http://translinkcommission.org/Appendix_9_of_FS_Plan.pdf.

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