

Drastic Cuts



2010
10-Year Transportation
and Financial Base Plan
Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Overview

This document is the 2010 10-Year Transportation and Financial Base Plan, known as a Base Plan, under the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act (the SCBCTA Act)*. The *SCBCTA Act* requires TransLink to annually prepare a Base Plan that uses only established funding resources within the current borrowing limit.

If the Mayors' Council does not approve a Supplemental Plan the Base Plan becomes TransLink's Strategic Plan and will be implemented, beginning immediately, requiring substantial cuts in services, programs and investments.

This 10-Year Base Plan:

- Identifies what would be required to be on track to the goals of Transport 2040;
- Identifies that there is a funding gap to sustain existing investments and services, well short of achieving the Goals;
- Identifies reductions in investments and substantial cuts in transit service that are required to fulfil TransLink's statutory obligation to operate within existing resources.

Transportation Program

The Base Plan outlines the actions TransLink will take to reduce investments and cut services in order to match expenditures with revenues. Notwithstanding TransLink's commitment to maintain existing services, TransLink also has the responsibility to ensure that its assets are kept in a state of good repair. This plan maintains existing assets but services would need to be substantially cut in order for revenues and accumulated surpluses to match expenditures, as required by the *SCBCTA Act*. TransLink will be required to eliminate approximately 40 per cent of bus service in the region and will dispose of assets that are not required. While TransLink would immediately begin implementing the Base Plan, it would also undertake efforts to establish new funding to support appropriate investments in capital and service and would bring forward supplemental plans in the future.

Basic components of the Base Plan are summarized in Figure A1.

Figure A1 – Summary of Base Plan



i.e. patullo
bridge design
and
construction is
included

In addition to the initiatives summarized above, TransLink would also continue to pursue its other responsibilities. TransLink will continue to collaborate with its partners to improve the movement of goods and freight and will pursue development of a regional goods movement strategy. Although this Base Plan does not have the necessary supply-side initiatives to complement demand-side management measures, TransLink will investigate and seek the demand-side tools that are necessary to implement broad and effective measures in support of the region's long-term goals.

Inclusions and Exclusions

The 2010 10-Year Base Plan provides for costs of state-of-good-repair projects and costs of some upgrade projects, while eliminating or extensively cutting a number of programs and services.

The 2010 10-Year Base Plan includes:

- Bus fleet replacement.
- SkyTrain fleet refurbishment.
- SeaBus replacement.
- Transit infrastructure maintained in good order.
- Cycling Program funding of \$1 million per year.
- New Pattullo Bridge funding to take the project to the procurement stage.
- Smartcards and gating systems.
- Major road projects already committed (Fraser Highway Widening, Coast Meridian Overpass and Roberts Bank Rail Corridor Grade Separation).
- SkyTrain fleet expansion (48 vehicles previously ordered) to address system overcrowding and passenger safety issues, and an expanded operations and

maintenance centre to accommodate fleet growth.

- SkyTrain stations maintained in a state of good repair.

The 2010 10-Year Base Plan excludes:

- Detailed design and construction of the rapid transit lines identified in the Provincial Transit Plan (Evergreen Line, Surrey Extension and Broadway West).
- Pattullo Bridge design and construction, as it is assumed these costs will be recovered through tolls.
- Addition of seven West Coast Express bi-level cars.
- Bus fleet expansion and related facilities.
- SkyTrain fleet expansion.
- Major Road Network Minor Capital Program annual allocation of \$20 million per year.
- Major Road Network Major Capital Program annual allocation of \$35 million per year.
- Major road projects (Main Street Widening and Murray-Clark Connector)

Funding Sources Summary

The funding sources and proposed rate increases for the Base Plan are summarized below:

- Fuel tax revenues at existing rates.
- Property tax revenues inflated by 3 per cent annually.
- Fare revenues with short-term (cash and FareSaver ticket) fare rates inflated by 2 per cent annually and potential increases in long-term fares.
- Replacement tax revenues at a maximum of \$18 million.

why POTENTIAL
increases in long
term fares?

- Parking sales tax at the current 7 per cent rate.
- Other estimated revenues, including advertising, real estate and non-short term fares.
- Federal and provincial capital contributions which may be at risk due to lack of matching local funds.

The Base Plan has been developed using revenue projections that reflect inflation and natural growth, and account for risk factors including fuel tax revenue, ridership, economic and other factors. While these are relatively predictable over the short term, the ability to predict outcomes over ten years is limited. During the Plan period TransLink will retain annual minimal operating reserve managed from year to year.

Plan Development and Consultation

The annual 10-year base and supplemental plans are the key mechanisms for achieving the goals and implementing the strategies of Transport 2040, the long-term strategy for the regional transportation system, adopted in 2008 and based on the principles of sustainability.

Development of the 2010 10-year plans involved research on funding sources, development of a new financial model, and comprehensive analysis of existing and required transportation services and investments.

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Extensive consultation was conducted through various in-person and on-line methods as part of the development of the 2010 10-year plans and in compliance with the SCBCTA Act. This included:

- The public in the transportation service region;
- The Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation;
- Metro Vancouver;
- Any municipality, stakeholder or other organization considered to be affected.

Overall, the public and stakeholders were supportive of a 10-Year Plan which would strive toward the goals of Transport 2040, a path that requires an additional \$450 million of funding annually. This Base Plan would be unable to achieve the expressed objectives of the region and would reverse the gains made toward these goals.

TransLink's plans are developed in context with the Regional Growth Strategy (Metro Vancouver) and the Provincial Transit Plan. There is a strong link between land use and transportation but under this Base Plan TransLink is unable make the necessary investments or provide the required services to advance the objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy.

Is the assertion re "strong link" in the above paragraph supported I wonder

what evidence is there that the FTN has a land use shaping effect

Outcomes under the Base Plan

Although the most productive services will be prioritized, the Frequent Transit Network (FTN) corridors will experience substantial service cuts. The long-term impact of reducing the coverage and service levels of the FTN may have the largest impact. The land use shaping function of the FTN would be largely lost as the length and scope of the service remain at a reduced level. Under the 2010 10-Year Base Plan, the proportion of people living within walking distance to the FTN would decrease by 15 per cent by 2019 from current levels. With lower service levels, there will be fewer incentives and opportunities for land use development within FTN designated and conceptual corridors, diminishing future real estate opportunities.

Under this plan, transit's share of total trips is expected to drop by 18 per cent from the 2009 level of 11 per cent to under 9 per cent

by 2019. This plan will also accomplish little in terms of reducing GHG emissions, though advances in vehicle technologies and fuels will result in minor reductions in GHGs from vehicles. The safety and security of the users of the transportation system will also decline as much needed maintenance and upgrades to the infrastructure are deferred indefinitely.

In summary, under the 2010 10-Year Base Plan, the regional transportation system will regress, falling further behind the regional aspirations for achieving a sustainable region. The curve to get back *On Track to a Sustainable Region* will be much steeper and the necessary land use changes are less likely to occur in this environment. In response to inadequate funding in all areas of the transportation system, travel in the region will remain auto-dependant; congestion will increase and continue to impact the region's ability to move people and goods efficiently and hinder its ability to compete in the global economy. Furthermore, the condition of the Major Road Network can be expected to decline, resulting in impacts to safety, operational efficiency and the economy.