

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

For consideration at the Standing Committee meeting of City Council on July 24, 2024

2. Taking Urgent Action to Boost Street Capacity and Speed up Transit Service for Vancouverites

Submitted by: Councillor Boyle

WHEREAS

1. In November 2023, City Council unanimously committed to addressing delay and overcrowding on transit by investing in cost-effective transit priority measures¹. Since November, ridership and overcrowding have continued to grow resulting in bus riders throughout Metro Vancouver spending over 28,000 hours stuck in traffic every weekday;
2. Crucial bus routes in Vancouver are getting slower, increasing operating costs and diverting resources away from addressing crowding despite Vancouver being more reliant on buses than almost any other city in Canada or the US, having the second highest ridership per capita²;
3. Dedicated bus lanes are a quick and inexpensive solution allowing the City to quickly increase the capacity of the transportation system to quadruple the carrying capacity of a single travel lane³, as demonstrated during the 2010 Olympics⁴;
4. Slow transit travel times are one of the top reasons Metro Vancouver residents choose to drive. Transit priority projects across the Lower Mainland have consistently resulted in 5-35% reductions in travel time⁵, a difference significant enough to typically increase ridership by 4% to 6%⁶;
5. Transit delays do not impact everyone equally. 24% of households in Vancouver have no car access at all. This number is much higher among those with lower income, recent immigrants, and certain visible minority groups⁷. South Vancouver is one of the most diverse parts of the region⁸ and is one of the most reliant on public transit⁹;

¹ *Advancing Rapid Transit and Priority RapidBus upgrade Projects in Vancouver to Support Complete Communities, Livability and Growth* (2023) <https://council.vancouver.ca/20231004/documents/a2.pdf>

² Freemark, Yohan (@yfreemark) (2024) <https://x.com/yfreemark/status/1785796351051051432>

³ National Association of City Transportation Officials, *Transit Street Design Guide: Designing to Move People* (2016) <https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/introduction/why/designing-move-people/>

⁴ Host City Olympic Transportation Plan (2009) <https://www.cbc.ca/bc/news/bc-090311-vanoc-olympic-transportation-plan-maps.pdf>

⁵ Translink. *2023 Bus Speed and Reliability Report*. Pg. 60-61 (2024) <https://view.publitas.com/translink/bus-speed-and-reliability-report-2023/page/60-61>

⁶ Victoria Transit Policy Institute. *When are Bus Lanes Warranted?* (2016) <https://www.vtpi.org/blw.pdf>

⁷ City of Vancouver. *2022 Vancouver Transportation Fall Survey Final Report*. (2023) <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2022-transportation-survey-report.pdf>

⁸ CensusMapper. *Visible Minority* (2022) <https://censusmapper.ca/maps/3604#11/49.1783/-122.9525>

⁹ <https://censusmapper.ca/maps/3719#10/49.2432/-123.1252>

6. The demand for transit will continue increasing in the coming years, with the City population expected to grow by about 1% (approximately 7,000 people)¹⁰ annually. In addition to projected population growth, the 2026 FIFA World Cup will necessitate infrastructure to support moving hundreds of thousands of additional people over the 2-week tournament;
7. In order to reach the City's commitments of 2/3 of trips being made on foot, bike or transit by 2030 outlined in Transportation 2040¹¹, a mode shift of approximately 2% per year away from personal motor vehicles to walking, cycling, or transit is required;
8. Offset Bus Lanes can be implemented¹² where bus lanes run through commercial zones. This preserves space for loading, parking, and patios in the curbside lane, improving transit while also supporting local businesses;
9. TransLink has identified eight corridors in Vancouver as top priorities¹³ for bus lane improvements. Funding available for this work is currently being left on the table. These solutions are an excellent investment, with most projects paying for themselves within 10 years and many within 2 years¹⁴.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

A. THAT the City of Vancouver work with TransLink to design and implement dedicated bus lanes, as outlined in TransLink's 2024 Bus Speed and Reliability Report¹⁵, along the eight priority corridors in Vancouver¹⁶, including along the routes where ongoing speed and reliability planning work was initiated by the motion "Advancing Rapid Transit and Priority RapidBus upgrade Projects in Vancouver to Support Complete Communities, Livability and Growth" passed in 2023:

- a. Southeast Marine Drive
- b. 49th Avenue
- c. Hastings Street
- d. Main Street / Kingsway

As well as the four additional TransLink top priority routes not covered in the previous motion:

- e. Broadway
- f. King Edward Avenue
- g. West 4th Avenue

¹⁰ <https://metrovancover.org/services/regional-planning/Documents/metro-vancouver-growth-projections-tables.pdf>

¹¹ https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/Transportation_2040_Plan_as_adopted_by_Council.pdf

¹² National Association of City Transportation Officials, *Transit Street Design Guide: Offset Bus Lanes* (2016) <https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/transit-streets/two-way-streets/offset-bus-lane-street/>

¹³ Translink. *Translink Identifies 20 Corridors that need bus priority*. (2024) <https://www.translink.ca/news/2024/april/translink%20identifies%20%20corridors%20that%20need%20bus%20priority>

¹⁴ Translink. *2023 Bus Speed and Reliability Report*. Pg. 60-61 (2024)

¹⁵ Translink. *2023 Bus Speed and Reliability Report*. Appendix B (2024)

¹⁶ <https://www.translink.ca/news/2024/april/translink%20identifies%20%20corridors%20that%20need%20bus%20priority>

- h. Downtown to the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge (Powell, Cordova, and others)

FURTHER THAT the City of Vancouver commit to completing the above improvements at a rate of at least 2 corridors per year beginning in 2025; and that the City work together with TransLink to determine the optimal order;

AND FURTHER THAT where new proposed bus lanes would run through commercial areas, City staff work with TransLink and local Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) to address concerns and maintain loading access and patio space where that is a BIA priority.

- B. THAT Council direct the City Manager to allocate sufficient planning and engineering resources to access additional TransLink funding for implementing these transit priority measures.
- C. THAT Council request the Mayor write a letter to the Province advocating for automated bus lane enforcement within the City of Vancouver.

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