

Newsletter

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2010 – A Year in Review

After a successful 2009 – with the openings of the Canada Line, Golden Ears Bridge and Central Valley Greenway and the expansion of capacity on SkyTrain's Expo/Millennium Lines - TransLink had its work cut out to meet or exceed high expectations in 2010 – but exceed expectations is what we did!!!

Gold Medal Performance

TransLink was called on to “Move The World” during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and that's what

happened. Bus, SeaBus and rail services saw an average of 1.58 million boardings ***per day***; 31 percent more than the normal weekday average. The transportation plan, which had been in the works since 2003 when Vancouver was announced as the host city, was executed smoothly.

The Olympic Legacy

The “Olympic Legacy” of the transportation plan has been increased awareness of what the transit system can do in our everyday lives. Since the Games, transit use continued to run well ahead of 2009 levels across the board. The system carried 18 million rides in March 2010 – 19.3% more than in March 2009. Removing the statistic for February, which was skewed because of the Games, revenue ridership through August 2010 was still 11.5% higher than the same period (minus February) in 2009.

The Canada Line surpassed its Year One goals long before its first anniversary. Recording a total of 38 million boardings by August 2010, the average weekday ridership topped 104,000 for the first time in May and has continued over that mark ever since. The business case for the Canada Line had suggested the hundred-thousand mark would not be reached until three years into the operation. While the numbers seem large and the growth rapid, the Canada Line is nowhere near its peak-period capacity of 300,000, and an increase in service is set for fall of 2011.

Also marking its first anniversary in the summer of 2010 was the Golden Ears Bridge. Usage is gradually increasing as motorists come to recognize how the bridge fits into their transportation needs, in particular the potential savings in time, cost and environmental impact.

Service Hours & New Additions

Even though TransLink placed greater emphasis in 2010 on working within its existing resources and keeping services in a state of good repair, the number of service hours increased again. Through the first nine months of the year, TransLink's companies

had provided 32,000 more hours than initially planned, and the total for 2010 is projected to be 4.93 million service hours – about 25 percent more hours than in 2006.

TransLink continued to put new equipment into service, both increasing capacity and providing new, better-equipped buses that are more attractive and pleasing to ride. 2010 was the first year since 2002 that the bus fleet did not expand, but 25 brand-new buses went into service, replacing others that had reached the end of their service lives; many of those “retiring” buses stayed in service for one last ‘victory lap’ during the Olympics.

The last of the order of 48 new SkyTrain cars arrived from Bombardier in time for the Olympics; seven new railcars – also built by Bombardier – went into service in the fall on West Coast Express.

Social Media

In 2010, TransLink also made great strides in public communications. With so many people relying on transit and on connections, keeping up to date on transit service conditions is vital. In addition to advisories sent to the mainstream media,

TransLink now employs a variety of social media:

Twitter (@translink), both with a fulltime Twitter correspondent at Customer Information and with the Communications Department. Twitter has proven to be not just a valuable tool for “pushing” information but also for two-way conversations with customers

Mobile site (**m.translink.ca**), where service updates can be received on a personal mobile device

Digital Commuter Network – large video screens on SkyTrain platforms, which deliver service alerts as necessary

Trip Planner and the Trip Planner widget, which can be embedded free of charge on websites and blogs

Next Bus, in which customers can send an SMS text message to Customer Information to receive the next six scheduled arrival times at a given bus stop

Next Bus on Facebook – an application that enables a user to get customized transit information specific to their particular trip(s)

What’s in store for 2011?

The 2010 Winter Olympics provided TransLink with the ideal opportunity to demonstrate how efficient public transportation options within Metro Vancouver can influence and actually change travel behaviour. Now the challenge for TransLink is to build on the lessons learned and offer customers **TravelSmart** options that can integrate transportation modes to find the combination(s) most appropriate for a situation. Achieving the goal of reducing single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips region-wide to less than 50% by 2040 cannot be achieved by simply buying more buses etc.

More innovation is in store for 2011, as TransLink continues to refine its schedules to get the best possible use of its resources. The North Shore Area Transit Plan, which began work this past summer, will be completed by fall, as will studies into future transit expansion in Surrey and along the Broadway corridor to UBC.

As we work together to take the region’s transportation strategy to a new level, our customers can continue making choices that both suit their lifestyles and maintain Metro Vancouver as one of the most livable regions in the world.

Accessible Bus Stops in Metro Vancouver

In December 2010, the total percentage of accessible bus stops in Metro Vancouver was 57.2%. A detailed comparison of the accessible bus stops for the month of December 2009 and December 2010 is outlined below.

	Active Stops 2010	% Accessible Dec 2009	% Accessible Dec 2010
Belcarra/Anmore	28	17.4%	28.6%
Bowen Island	1	100.0%	100.0%
Burnaby	946	44.7%	46.9%
Coquitlam	549	42.6%	44.3%
Delta/TFN	530	40.5%	42.6%
Langley - City	117	70.1%	70.9%
Langley - Township	339	45.6%	57.5%
Maple Ridge	306	29.8%	40.5%
New Westminister	258	64.0%	69.4%
North Vancouver-City	166	69.3%	69.3%
N. Vancouver-District	435	48.8%	49.7%
Pitt Meadows	52	48.1%	53.8%
Port Coquitlam	229	20.7%	22.3%
Port Moody	163	38.7%	38.0%
Richmond	711	53.0%	55.4%
Surrey	1334	64.9%	70.8%
Vancouver/UBC	1946	67.2%	69.1%
West Vancouver	4	57.1%	75.0%
White Rock	107	33.0%	39.3%
Total	8221	53.8%	57.2%

Candidate Names for TransLink's Smart Card

Metro Vancouver residents are being encouraged to go online to www.translink.ca or to TransLink's Facebook to pick their favourite name from three finalists: **Starfish**, **Compass** and **TPass**. Mail-in votes

will also be accepted. The three name finalists were selected from the more than 56,000 entries received in the naming contest late last year and faced extensive market research, focus groups and legal and trademark searches before being brought forward to a public vote.

The voting period will end on Friday, January 28. Once the votes are tallied, TransLink will work to create the look and feel of the card based on the winning name. The final card name and brand, along with the contest winner who submitted it into TransLink's name the fare card contest, will be announced at the end of March. The contest winner will receive an iPad and a smart card loaded with a year's worth of transit, to be used on the system in 2013. Make sure to cast your vote before the 28th!

Connecting Communities: BC Youth Summit for Sustainable Transportation

From August 19 to 21, 2011, we're inviting youth from all over B.C. to a summit on sustainable transportation in Vancouver, sponsored by TransLink, B.C. Transit, and the Canadian Urban Transit Association.

Here's what to expect from the summit:

- You'll attend sessions and workshops that will teach you the concepts behind urban planning and engage you in current transportation issues, plus practical skills to put your knowledge to work.
- You'll meet a range of dynamic young people interested in transportation, sustainability, and urban planning.
- You'll take tours to gain a broad understanding about Vancouver's public transportation system.
- You'll learn about careers in urban transportation and how you can reach them.
- **We'll pay for your travel to Vancouver, your accommodations, most meals, and your conference experience!**

How to attend

If you're interested in attending, please submit an application following the instructions below. Successful applicants will be notified in spring 2011.

Application Deadline: All applications must be received by email no later than 11:59:59 p.m. January 31, 2011.

Age Restrictions: Applicants must be between the ages of 18 and 30.

Residency: Applicants must reside in the province of British Columbia. Travel will only be provided within the province.

Past Delegates: Participants from previous CUTA youth summits are not eligible to participate, however, they may be considered as speakers, volunteers or facilitators. Interested Alumni can send an email to the contact information below.

To apply

Please send the following information to bcyouthsummit@translink.ca:

- First and Last Name
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Mailing Address
- Phone Number(s) (Home, Work, Cellular as applicable)
- Primary Email Address
- Most recent CV
- A letter of intent. The letter of intent must not exceed 250 words and should address why you think transportation is important for creating sustainable communities in the future.

Good luck: we hope to see you at Connecting Communities!

Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee will be held on February 10, 2011.

Please forward these updates on to others within your organizations or to other individuals who may find them of interest.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the status of the Access Transit project, please contact: access.transit@translink.ca