

## Overview



*Total SkyTrain ridership increased by 30% in September 2003 with the opening of the new Millennium Line*

SkyTrain is a key component of the region's public transit system and through an extensive network of bus, SeaBus and commuter rail connections provides access to jobs, schools, shopping and leisure activities. The SkyTrain system has helped to meet the region's land use goals by attracting high-density development to town centres along the Expo Line. With the opening of the Millennium Line to Commercial Drive Station in August 2002, SkyTrain carries approximately 195,000 passengers on an average weekday or 25% of the transit system's boardings.

SkyTrain is operated by BC Rapid Transit Company, a TransLink subsidiary.

## Current Situation

During the past five years (1997 to mid-2002), ridership grew by 13%. The operating cost per passenger boarding remained below \$0.95, highlighting the productivity of the automated train system. In 2002, TransLink's revenue allocation for SkyTrain exceeded the direct operating and maintenance costs.

SkyTrain ridership rebounded quickly following the April-August 2001 bus strike. In the first eight months of 2002, following the opening of the Millennium Line to Braid Station in January 2002 but prior to the opening of the full line, total boarded passengers were up 3% from 2000. This increase is attributed to new customers attracted by the extension to Braid Station, combined with improved service levels on the western section of the Expo Line and strong special event ridership during the summer. Since the opening in late August 2002 of the full Millennium Line, SkyTrain ridership has further increased with September-October 2002 boarded passengers up 30% compared to 2000.

Customers generally rate SkyTrain service as very good. Customers like its frequent service, on-time reliability and its competitive travel times. One area where customers have indicated some significant improvement is needed is the perception of security on board the trains and at stations. Recently, the greater presence of security personnel and station attendants on the SkyTrain system and the high visibility design of the new Millennium Line stations have contributed to improved customer ratings for security.

## Millennium Line

On August 31, 2002, nine new stations opened on the Millennium Line extending service from Braid to Commercial Drive Station in Vancouver. A new intermediate station at Lake City Way in Burnaby is expected to open in late 2003. Translink is also pressing the province to fulfill its commitment to complete the line to Vancouver Community College, and construction is expected to start in 2003.



*SkyTrain service levels (revenue-train hours) increased by over 45% in 2002*

## 2003 Service Strategy

The introduction of the Millennium Line, which has increased peak hour capacity to and from downtown Vancouver, has provided a significant opportunity for TransLink to increase ridership and market share. This is true particularly for work and post-secondary trips in Burnaby and the Northeast Sector. A total of 54 trains (mix of 4-car Mark I's and 2-car Mark II's) are now in peak service, yielding an average frequency of a train every 108 seconds between Waterfront and Columbia Stations. Off-peak capacity has also increased with mid-day and evening service improving from a 4-5 minute service, to a train every 3-4 minutes.

The proposed strategy for 2003 focuses on maintaining the increased capacity and service levels in anticipation of ridership growth as customers' travel and commute patterns adapt to the new system, including the opening of Lake City Way Station later in the year.

## 2003 Service Plan

For the most part, service levels through 2003 will remain as established in fall 2002. Weekday peak period service will be maintained at 54 trains from January through August. Peak service is proposed to increase by 3 trains (an additional 5.5% capacity) in September 2003. Other periods of the day and weekends will be monitored for adjustments in capacity as appropriate.

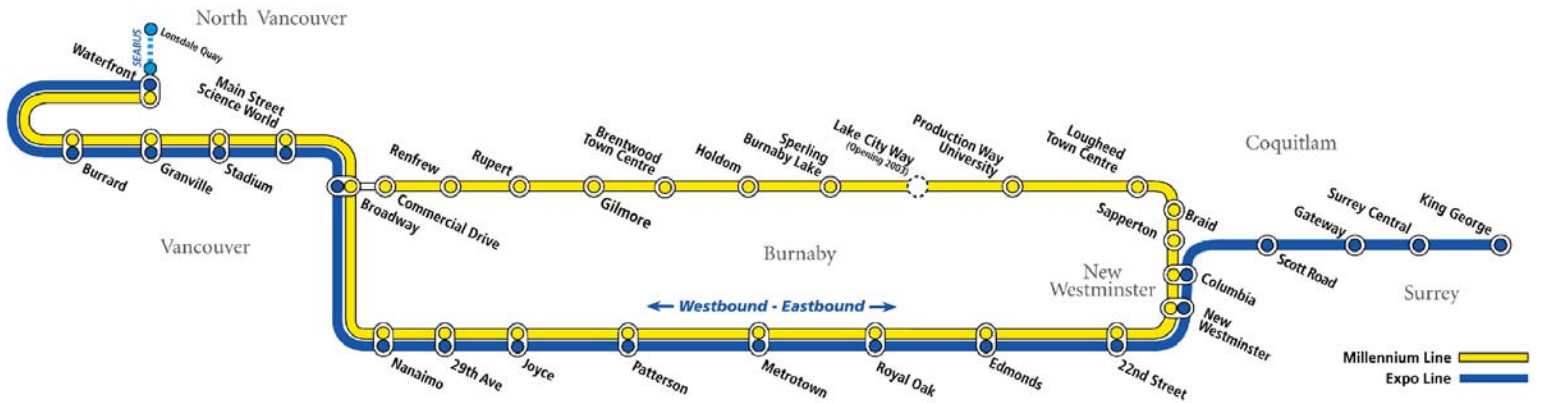
### **Introducing Bicycles on-board**

TransLink has applied to the Provincial regulatory agency for permission to allow bicycles on SkyTrain. If the Province grants permission, bicycle access would be limited to off peak periods in 2003, in order to reduce potential conflicts during crowded periods of the day.

### **Fare Collection**

New ticket vending machines (TVM's) were installed at the Millennium Line stations for the start of service in late August 2002. These new units vend magnetic stripe tickets compatible with the electronic fareboxes on buses, will accept new generations of bank notes (\$5, \$10 and \$20), have credit/debit card capability, and feature a colour touch-

screen user interface. In late 2002 and early 2003, the new machines will be installed to replace old machines at all remaining SkyTrain stations and Lonsdale Quay (SeaBus).



## Budget & Performance Measures

The Millennium Line in September 2002 was carrying approximately 37,000-boarded passengers each weekday. This ridership is forecasted to approach 50,000 boarded passengers per weekday by the end of 2003 as service ramps up, and customers become more aware of the improved reliability and speed of trips using the Millennium Line. In 2003, the first full year of operation of the new line, the incremental ridership to the transit system is projected to be 4 million.

Overall, SkyTrain service in 2003 is budgeted to increase by 42,943 train-hours (19% above 2002 budget). Compared to service levels in fall 2002, service will be increased by 2.6% in 2003 due to expanded peak period service starting in September 2003.

As the Millennium Line is intended to shape future development over the long term, the cost per passenger boarding during the short to medium term will be higher than previous years in which only the Expo Line was operated. This is shown by the cost per boarded passenger increasing from \$1.02 in 2000 to a projected \$1.04 in 2003. This will drive down the overall performance of SkyTrain during the next few years.

<b>SKYTRAIN BUDGET &amp; PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>			
	2001 Actual	2002 Projected	2003 Projected
Average Weekday Passenger Boardings	145,000 (1)	176,000 (3)	224,000
Annual Passenger Boardings	43,453,190 (2)	52,720,000	67,210,000
Annual Operating Costs	\$44,637,981	\$57,799,000	\$69,968,000
Cost per passenger Boarding	\$1.02	\$1.10	\$1.04
Cost per Service Car-Hour	\$70.81	\$76.47	\$91.72
Boardings per Car-Hour	69	69	87
Revenue Train-Hours	157,603	228,006	270,949
Revenue Train-Kilometres	6,351,381	9,188,625	10,919,255
Revenue Car-Hours	630,410	755,809	762,836
Revenue Car-Kilometres			
Mark I	25,405,524	24,025,231	17,148,109
Mark II	0	6,364,634	13,594,167
Total	25,405,524	30,389,865	30,742,278
Overall Customer Satisfaction Rating	8.2	N/A	8.3

(1) Fall 2001, post TransLink/CMBC strikes

(2) Reduced by 4 month TransLink/CMBC strikes

(3) Average for calendar year; observed rate of approximately 200,000 per weekday in first week of September 2002 with opening of Millennium Line