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## BACKGROUND

2007TRAN0008-000232  
March 8, 2007

Ministry of Transportation

### **REPORT ON TRANSLINK REORGANIZATION RELEASED**

- TransLink was established by the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act in 1999.
- TransLink was formed primarily to develop regional transportation plans, manage and expand transit services and oversee a Major Road Network in Greater Vancouver.
- In 2006, a three-person independent panel was appointed to review the existing TransLink governance and funding structure.
- The panel received more than 120 written submissions from the public and held more than 30 meetings with stakeholders.

#### **Key Findings**

- TransLink should continue with the responsibility for planning, constructing, and operating the regional transportation system.
- A new governance structure should be established. It would include:
  - A Council of Mayors to set high-level direction through approval of a 10-year strategic plan, and authorize the required tax measures and borrowing to achieve the goals;
  - A new TransLink board of professionals, with appropriate expertise to provide effective governance, to oversee planning, construction and operation of the regional transportation system in line with the strategic plan. They would not be elected officials.
  - An independent TransLink Commissioner to authorize transit fare increases and to provide checks, balances and transparency.
- A sustainable funding framework should be put in place to provide the revenues needed by TransLink to achieve its strategic goals. It would include:
  - Providing the Council of Mayors with the authority to increase fuel taxes within TransLink's service area by up to three cents per litre in the coming years, on the condition that additional revenues from any increase in fuel taxes is balanced with increases in property taxes and other revenues (including fares), ensuring funding requirements are met for the next two decades and balanced fairly between road users, transit riders and property tax payers (all subject to the advice of the board and the Commissioner);
  - Eliminating the parking site tax, saving taxpayers about \$3 million per year in administration costs alone; and
  - The need for increases would be mitigated by federal government contributions.
- This funding framework would avoid the need to increase TransLink's portion of property taxes by 40-to-50 per cent over the next four-to-five years, which would be on top of the over 150 per cent increase in these taxes in the last five years.

### **Environmental Benefits**

- The proposed funding framework would provide TransLink with access to sufficient revenues to proceed with the Evergreen Line Project and re-establish a comprehensive express bus service across the Port Mann Bridge to serve commuters on both sides of the Fraser River.
- The increase in the fuel tax would act as traffic demand measure, reducing congestion, fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions while encouraging other forms of transportation.
- The fuel tax would also more fairly allocate transit costs to road users and not just property tax payers.
- The provincial contributions would be conditional on increased zoning densities around rapid transit stations to result in better utilization of expensive transit facilities, increased transit ridership, significant environment benefits, and additional revenues to help defray capital costs.

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