

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
**CITY OF WHITE ROCK**  
CORPORATE REPORT



**DATE:** October 16, 2023

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Jim Gordon, P.Eng., Director of Engineering and Municipal Operations

**SUBJECT:** Support for Bus Rapid Transit

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council receive the corporate report dated October 16, 2023, from the Director of Engineering and Municipal Operations, titled “Support for Bus Rapid Transit” for consideration; and

1. Endorse TransLink in its implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route between White Rock and Surrey; and
  2. Endorse the resolution on the Bus Rapid Transit Action Plan attached as Appendix A.
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

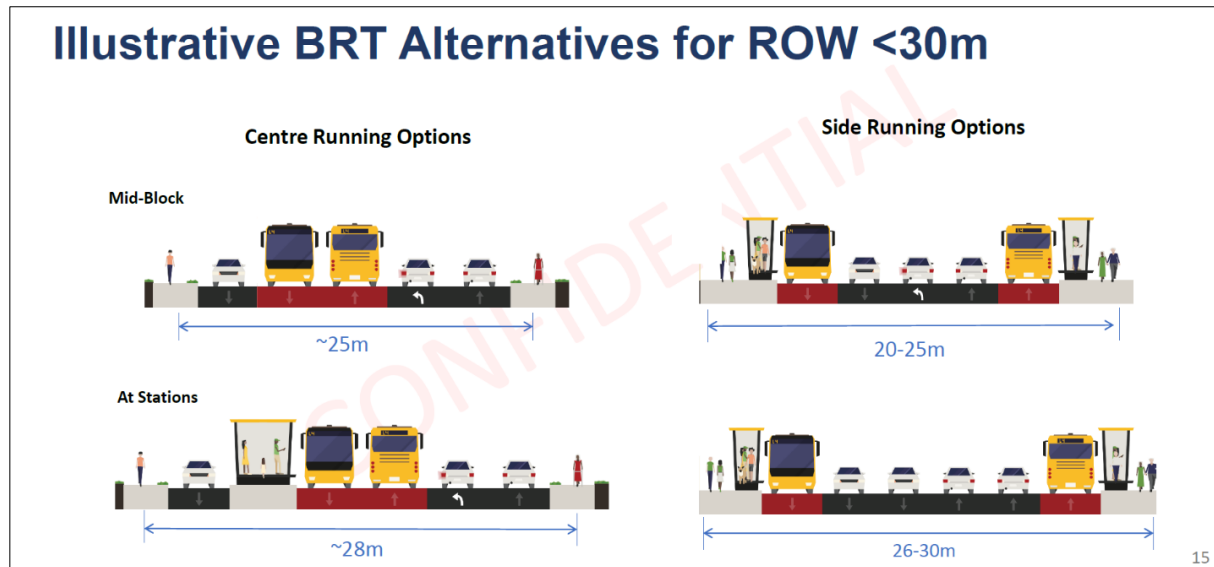
The Mayors Council on Regional Transportation (MCRT), representing local governments in TransLink’s service area, meets monthly with TransLink. Mayor Knight is White Rock’s representative. MCRT discussed long-term planning at its July 21, 2023 meeting as part of the TransLink 2023 Bus Speed and Reliability report. Future conceptual routes for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) were proposed as part of the report, as BRT is faster and more efficient than conventional transit services.

The purpose of this report is to follow up on the July 21, 2023 BRT discussions, by proposing motions of Council support for TransLink’s early development of a BRT route between White Rock and Surrey.

**INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

**BRT Overview**

BRT is fully traffic separated rapid transit that provides high-frequency, high-capacity service on high demand corridors. Buses travel on dedicated lanes and have signal priority at intersections. Passengers pay at stations and enter through multiple doors, much like on SkyTrain.



Implementation of BRT transitions existing car centric roadway priorities to transit and pedestrian priorities. In addition to user benefits, BRT systems are more cost effective than Sky Train or heavy transit options and support climate action initiatives through the use of electric or hydrogen fuel buses. BRT provides fast, high-capacity travel options that enable removal of vehicles from travel corridors.

#### **BRT Challenges – White Rock Support**

Although BRT will provide significant long-term user benefits, there are challenges that need to be addressed through municipal support. These include:

- Corridor Right of Ways – Dedicated lane space will be needed for BRT, either through repurposing existing travel lanes or widening right of ways through property acquisitions or dedications.
- Roadway Priorities – Signal priority for BRT along with vehicle turning restrictions and other traffic control measures shift priority from vehicles to transit but could generate pushback from roadway users.
- Supportive Infrastructure – Partnering in the proactive completion of connecting sidewalks, cycling network, station areas, and public realm.
- Staff and Elected Official Support – Staff and elected official support presents challenges given the other significant demands at the Local Government level.

Attached as Appendix B is a status of municipal motions supporting BRT, RapidBuses and Bus Priority as of September 28, 2023, received from TransLink.

#### **Next Steps**

TransLink's 10 Year Priorities calls for implementation of nine BRT corridors that will be prioritized by the MCRT. A White Rock to Surrey BRT connection is one of the identified corridors; however, it is important that Council demonstrate support for BRT so that this connection is among the first to be developed. Attached as Appendix A is a request from TransLink for a resolution in support of BRT.

A proposed resolution showing Council's support for BRT is included in the October 16, 2023 Regular Council Meeting Agenda.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no immediate direct financial implications resulting from BRT support. White Rock collects taxes on behalf of TransLink. For a residential property, these typically amount to approximately 10% of General Municipal Taxes. In 2023 the total amount collected by White Rock for TransLink was \$3.282M.

Increases to overall TransLink budgets are generally reflected in the contributions to TransLink from local governments in the TransLink service area as well as contributions from senior governments and bus fares.

The council motion is intended to be a good faith agreement to the BRT project implementation. Further specificity and detailed planning will be outlined through the project development phase, including contribution agreements for major projects, including BRT.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The motion of support for BRT proposes subsequent development of contribution and other legal agreements.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

If Council supports BRT as discussed in this report, communication will be placed on the City website and in social media.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS**

Staff from Planning and Development Services will work with Engineering and Municipal Operations staff in assisting TransLink with transit planning affecting White Rock residents.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

Conventional transit systems using buses produce less greenhouse gas per passenger mile than cars. BRT systems produce less greenhouse gases than conventional buses, particularly if new vehicle technologies such as hydrogen buses are utilized.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Support for BRT aligns with Council's Strategic Priority:

Community - We foster a livable city with connected residents enjoying distinctive places and activities – Objective - **Expand walking, cycling and transit opportunities.**

### **OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES**

Council may decide not to approve the resolution of support for BRT discussed in this report. This could potentially delay the implementation of a BRT line between Surrey and White Rock and leave White Rock residents with less efficient and less desirable transportation options.

### **CONCLUSION**

BRT has cost and environmental benefits over other transit options and fits into the transit hierarchy between rapid buses and Sky Train. BRT is the logical next step for improving transit options along the busy White Rock to Surrey corridor.

Council approval of the resolution of support provided by TransLink will ensure that White Rock maintains priority for participation in BRT.

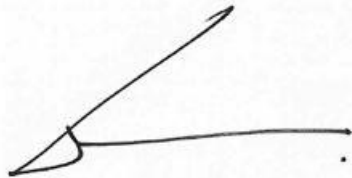
Respectfully submitted,

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Jim Gordon, P.Eng.,  
Director of Engineering and Municipal Operation

**Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer**

I concur with the recommendation of this corporate report.

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Guillermo Ferrero  
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: TransLink Briefing Note to Metro Vancouver Municipalities dated September 7, 2023, and Template Resolution

Appendix B: Status List of Municipal Motions Supporting BRTs, RapidBuses and Bus Priority as of September 28, 2023