



To: Mayor and Councillors
From: Harold Steves
Councillor
Date: February 10, 2016
File: 10-6350-05-08
Re: **George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project**

Richmond Council is concerned about the abrupt change in direction from upgrading the George Massey Tunnel to building a bridge. Richmond Council was fully consulted on the publicly announced plan to twin the tunnel. Richmond Council was not consulted on the decision to change the plan to building a bridge.

The following attachments show how the project changed abruptly from a tunnel to a bridge:

1. July 15, 2004 Massey Tunnel seismic upgrade. Province to spend \$22.2 million on seismic upgrade for the Massey Tunnel.
2. Feb. 16, 2006 Twinned tunnel part of Victoria's long term plan, "expanding Highway 99 on both sides of the tunnel from four lanes to six." "The project is on the back burner in part because it would put pressure on traffic bottlenecks to the north requiring expansion of the Oak Street and Knight Street bridges into Vancouver or a new bridge into Burnaby.
3. Feb. 18, 2006 Massey Tunnel to be twinned and "widened from four lanes to six once the provinces more pressing transportation projects are complete." "Twinning the tunnel would also require improvements to other crossings over the North Arm of the Fraser, such as Oak Street and Knight Street bridges, or a new crossing to connect with growing central Burnaby."
4. Dec 11, 2008 Bus lane will speed transit commute along Highway 99 with " high quality, point to point service ... between White Rock and Richmond. A "\$4.7 million contract" was awarded "to build the four metre wide shoulder bus lane.
5. Feb. 2, 2012 "BC Government meets with Port Metro Vancouver, Surrey Fraser Docks and Engineers to plan George Massey Tunnel Replacement Bridge"
6. Nov. 19, 2012 "Clearances for potential new river crossing" "We should consider future terminals. For example liquid bulk tankers, with large air draft requirements (e.g. LNG)" "We need to consider future terminals such as VAFFC, Lehigh, and possible terminal at our Richmond properties."

7. Dec. 4, 2012 "Tunnel: Depth required is 15.5 metres below geodetic datum for 50 year life expectancy and 18.5 metres below for 100 year life expectancy."
8. March 19, 2015 The 14 billion transit plan the BC Liberals conveniently forgot.
9. Nov. 5, 2015 Stone insists Massey bridge process is proper.

The Province spent \$22.2 million on a seismic upgrade on the Massey Tunnel in 2004, announced the tunnel would be twinned in 2006, and announced rapid bus in 2008. Studies were done that justified twinning the tunnel and improving public transit. It was noted that the carrying capacity of the Oak Street Bridge and other bridges was limited and therefore the tunnel should only be six lanes. Rapid Bus would reduce traffic and reduce GHG's. Richmond Council was opposed to both a No. 8 Road Bridge to Delta and a bridge to Boundary Road in Burnaby because it would do irreparable damage to Richmond East farmland. The Rapid Bus system resolved that problem.

What caused the province to suddenly change from a tunnel with public transit to a bridge without it?

The FOI information from Doug Massey shows a concerted effort was made in 2012 by Fraser Surrey Docks and Port Metro Vancouver and others to have the tunnel removed to accommodate deep draft Panamex supertankers. The BC Government met with them to discuss tunnel removal on Feb 2, 2012, future terminals at VAFFC, Lehigh and a new one in Richmond, including liquid bulk tankers (e.g. LNG); and the need to dredge the river to 15.5 metres on Dec. 4, 2012.

Secondly the more conservative members in the Liberal Caucus appear to have gained control in the 2013 election.

On Nov 5, 2015 Todd Stone admitted that they did not yet have a business case for a bridge, Now the reason is clear. It appears that the province changed their plans to permit the industrialization of the Fraser River by Port Metro Vancouver. They did not have a business plan for a bridge because the business case was for twinning the tunnel and providing Rapid Bus.

Recommendation:

That the City of Richmond request that the Provincial Government provide copies of all reports and studies - including but not limited to business plans, feasibility studies, technical studies, seismic studies, and/or environmental impact studies - that relate to the original plan to twin the George Massey Tunnel and/or provide Rapid Bus service that were considered during the period from 2006 to 2008; and that if necessary, that the foregoing request be made as an official Freedom of Information request.

Harold Steves
Councillor
Att. 9

Attachment 1

Massey Tunnel Seismic Upgrade Review – News briefs July 15, 2004

Province to spend millions on seismic upgrade for the Massey Tunnel

Work will begin next month on ensuring the George Massey Tunnel doesn't collapse in the event of an earthquake.

Kenaidan Contracting has been awarded the \$22.2 million contract to improve the tunnel's safety, reinforcing the structure in order to avoid a collapse and reduce structural damage should the big one hit the West Coast. The project is expected to wrap up in March 2006.

"These improvements are designed to make the tunnel safer in the event of a major earthquake," Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon said.

The upgrading work will include the tunnel's pumping system, pipes and emergency power supply, which is designed to remove large volumes of water in the event of flooding inside the tunnel.

The scope of the work also includes Rice Mill Road Bridge, which will have its concrete surfaces repaired and cleaned, while deck joints will be retrofitted.

New lights will also be installed in the tunnel.

Source:

<https://www.yourlibrary.ca/community/richmondreview/archive/RR20040715/newssum.html>

Attachment 2



Twinned tunnel part of Victoria's long-term plan

The provincial government's long-term road-building plans include a second mega-project on the scale of the \$3-billion Gateway Program, studies done for the Gateway plan show.

BY THE VANCOUVER SUN FEBRUARY 16, 2006

The provincial government's long-term road-building plans include a second mega-project on the scale of the \$3-billion Gateway Program, studies done for the Gateway plan show.

The second project would include twinning the George Massey Tunnel under the south arm of the Fraser River between Richmond and Delta, expanding Highway 99 on both sides of the tunnel from four lanes to six, and building a new four-lane expressway to connect Highway 99 with the Trans-Canada Highway.

However, there are no immediate plans to build it.

The Gateway Program calls for the Port Mann Bridge over the Fraser to be twinned, widening of the Trans-Canada Highway on both sides of the bridge and building new truck routes on both shores of the river.

The longer-term plan -- dubbed "the H99 project" by British transportation consultants Steer Davies Gleave, who did the major studies for the Gateway plan -- "is still in the early stages of development for possible future long-term implementation," their report notes.

The report -- not yet public but obtained by The Vancouver Sun -- says the H99 project is similar to the Gateway plan "in that it assumes a widening of both the Fraser River crossing, in this case the new bore next to the existing George Massey (Deas) Tunnel, and widening of a length of the existing highway to both the north and south of the crossing."

The project is on the back burner in part because it would put pressure on traffic bottlenecks to the north, requiring expansion of the Oak Street and Knight Street bridges into Vancouver or a new bridge into Burnaby.

Gateway Program executive director Mike Proudfoot said Wednesday the Highway 99 plan is one of many proposals for the region.

"That would be part of our longer-term strategy," he said. "The Gateway Program corridors are the priority ones."

The Steer Davies Gleave report is one of several "companion documents" to the Gateway plan. It is the only major document not yet posted on the Gateway Program's website, Proudfoot said.

In the report, the consultants envision a much more extensive tolling system than the one announced at the end of January by Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon.

Falcon's plan calls for a \$2.50 one-way toll to cross the twinned Port Mann Bridge, but no other tolls.

Most of the traffic models studied by the consultants included a lower toll on the Port Mann plus "distance tolls" on the expanded section of the Trans-Canada Highway and on the new South Fraser Perimeter Road.

The consultants' "preferred scenario" included a \$1 toll on the Port Mann for cars, plus distance tolls of 10 cents per kilometre on the expanded section of the Trans-Canada and on the South Fraser road.

Light trucks would pay 1 1/2 times as much as cars, and heavy trucks twice as much. The tolls would be collected electronically and vehicles would not have to stop to pay. They would rise with inflation.

The consultants envisioned similar tolls on the Highway 99 project: \$1 to use the Massey Tunnel and distance tolls on an expanded Highway 99 and the Highway 99-Trans-Canada connector.

The tolls could fluctuate with time of day or with the level of traffic congestion, and other "road-pricing" measures could include allowing single-occupant vehicles to use priority lanes if they pay an additional toll.

The Gateway project definition report, released earlier by Falcon, says a toll on the South Fraser road was rejected because it would encourage some drivers to find alternate routes through the local road network in Delta and Surrey.

"We have no intention of tolling the South Fraser Perimeter Road, period," Proudfoot said, describing the consultants' report as "one of many pieces of technical information."

However, it is the only one of the newly posted reports that includes detailed traffic forecasts based on various tolling scenarios. But those scenarios do not include the one announced by Falcon: the \$2.50 toll on the Port Mann and no distance tolls.

Falcon said earlier that without tolls, the new road capacity created by the Gateway project would be filled up and current congestion levels would return in five to 10 years after the project is built.

With the Port Mann toll, Falcon said the project will serve the region's needs to 2031 "and beyond."

But the documents do not include a specific study to support that claim.

"There isn't such a thing at this point, I think," NDP transportation critic David Chudnovsky said.

Chudnovsky said Falcon had assured him last fall such information would be posted. "Well, it's not there."

Falcon could not be reached Wednesday.

Chudnovsky said he also looked in vain for studies on the project's effects on air quality, workable public transit options, and a long-term strategy for regional transportation demand management.

"There's nothing on transportation demand management, there's nothing on the environment, and there's nothing on public transit except vague references to 'somewhere down the line,' " he said.

Proudfoot said the tolling plan for the Gateway Program was based on "analysis in that over-all report and additional technical work that we have done," including forecasts of traffic volumes, population and employment growth and working with municipal governments.

The government rejected tolls on the North Fraser perimeter road and on the new Pitt River bridge because TransLink's Golden Ears Bridge across the Fraser will be tolled, and provincial policy requires there be a "reasonable" free alternative before a route can be tolled.

The nearest free alternative to the Trans-Canada-Port Mann route is the Pattullo Bridge between New Westminster and Surrey, but it is old, narrow and seriously congested at peak times. The consultants said that in the case of the Pattullo option, "the definition of reasonable is subjective."

The report points out the province's tolling policy is in conflict with TransLink's transportation strategy, which calls for tolls and other "road pricing" measures to manage transportation demand, while the ministry sees tolls principally as revenue generators to help pay for projects.

The consultants said an extensive system of road pricing and region-wide tolling in Greater Vancouver "is only likely in the medium to long term."

The Gateway plan does include measures the government says will help control traffic demand, such as new HOV (high occupancy vehicle) lanes that will be shared by transit buses, and "ramp metering" at interchanges to limit the number of vehicles that can enter the highway, depending on traffic conditions.

The interchanges will have "truck friendly geometry" to allow big trucks to merge with highway traffic, and queue jumpers -- bypass lanes -- that can be used to give transit, commercial vehicles and high-occupancy vehicles priority over other traffic.

The consultants advised the government that regional tolling can be sold to the public if it is clearly seen as a way to manage traffic and control congestion, rather than as just another set of taxes.

"Road pricing aims to reduce congestion, improve environmental conditions, generate revenues and provide a system of fairer taxation," they said, "whilst tolling is generally regarded as a revenue-generating tool to finance the construction and maintenance of new or enhanced infrastructure."

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Tunnel will be twinned

Matthew Hoekstra, Staff Reporter

The George Massey tunnel will be twinned and both Highway 99 approaches widened from four lanes to six once the province's more pressing transportation projects are complete, Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon said Thursday.

Ministry officials considered adding the massive project to its recently announced \$3-billion Gateway Program, but left out upgrades to the 47-year-old link—for now.

"What we have done is noted that that is part of our longer range plan. So post-Gateway, the next project that would come onto the radar screen would be the Massey Tunnel," Falcon said.

The Gateway Program includes the twinning of the Port Mann Bridge, the widening of the Trans-Canada Highway on each side of the Fraser, building new perimeter roads on both sides of the river and erecting a new Pitt River Bridge.

Falcon said the twinning the tunnel isn't an immediate priority of government since tunnel bottlenecks occur only during the morning and afternoon commutes.

"The latest numbers show us that that's not the crisis point. In fact when we go ahead with the Gateway Program, especially the new South Fraser Perimeter Road, we believe we will see increased flows of traffic through the Massey Tunnel because of traffic diversion."

The Gateway Program definition report says twinning the tunnel would also require improvements to other crossings over the North Arm of the Fraser, such as the Oak Street and Knight Street bridges, or a new crossing to connect with growing central Burnaby.

Falcon said the plan is to twin the tunnel—and pay for it in part through tolls—after the Gateway project and other major infrastructure projects, such as the Sea-to-Sky Highway widening and Golden Ears Bridge, are complete. That puts tunnel upgrades at least 15 years away.

But veteran Richmond Coun. Harold Steves said the time to move on the tunnel expansion is now.

"I wanted Richmond council to get involved a year ago and insist that they should twin the tunnel. Instead we end up with a motion of council that we tabled saying we should twin the Port Mann Bridge," he said, referring to a Jan. 15, 2005 motion supporting the bridge project.

"Why are we worried about the Port Mann when we've got an opportunity of twinning the tunnel?"

Steves said he discovered two years ago the Transportation Ministry was considering twinning the tunnel, largely due to the impact of the Vancouver Port expansion at Roberts Bank, which would add a third berth to the existing two-berth Deltaport terminal, in addition to a new three-berth terminal.

Steves said a tunnel expansion wouldn't impact farmland as another idea floated years ago would—a bridge connecting with No. 8 Road. And now that it's part of the province's long-term plans, the city should go "full out" in trying to secure the project, including expanding and elevating Highway 99, which could also act as a mid-island dyke.

A twinned tunnel could also incorporate light rail transit, said Steves, and ultimately connect with the Richmond's future Canada Line.

"I don't think it's a matter of the money or when to do it, because they're looking to do it with tolls."

To solve the problem of getting traffic out of Richmond, Steves suggested the idea he floated last year—a ferry terminal at Iona Island. That would put less traffic on the highways, and a new bridge connecting Iona with Vancouver would alleviate stress on other links, he said. Otherwise a new bridge to Burnaby could be built.

"The sad part of the Gateway Project was it's been so secret," he said. "On the Gateway Project we've had no role on it, and I think it's time we did."

Falcon said he's willing to sit down with Richmond council and discuss the timing of the tunnel project. But he cautioned the province can only take on so many projects at one time or risk straining the workforce and drive up prices.

Mayor Malcolm Brodie said any step to create more capacity over the Middle Arm of the Fraser is "important." He said twinning the tunnel is the logical solution, but might not be the only one—although he ruled out a new bridge that would drive highways through farmland.

"To me, the biggest need in terms of decongesting that corridor is in relation to the movement of goods, because we have the land in the Fraser Port in the southeast corner of Richmond, and we're hoping as part of any kind of major improvement that they would put in a Blundell interchange. That will enable the land to be fully developed."

Progress on a new Highway 99 interchange at Blundell Road has stalled, as a provincial feasibility report is already a year behind schedule.

Brodie fears provincial transportation planners might wait until the tunnel is twinned before building the Blundell interchange.

Public works and transportation committee chair Coun. Linda Barnes said she's skeptical of massive road improvement plans. She said a balance needs to be struck between new roads and bridges with rapid transit and dedicated truck lanes for goods movement.

"I'm not sure at this point that just simply twinning is going to make a difference, whether it's twinning the Port Mann, or twinning the tunnel."

Source:

<https://www.yourlibrary.ca/community/richmondreview/archive/RR20060218/news.html>

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2008TRAN0097-001880
Dec. 11, 2008

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

BUS LANE WILL SPEED TRANSIT COMMUTE ALONG HIGHWAY 99

RICHMOND – Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Kevin Falcon, along with Richmond East MLA Linda Reid, officially broke ground today on the shoulder bus lane project along Highway 99 in Richmond, which will eventually carry transit commuters from White Rock to the Canada Line.

“This dedicated bus lane will move transit riders past rush-hour congestion on one of the busiest stretches of Highway 99 northbound,” said Falcon. “When we provide transit options like this that are quicker and more convenient than the single-occupant vehicle, we’ll get people out of their cars and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

“Transportation infrastructure projects like this bus-only lane will give commuters more reasons to take transit,” said Reid. “With this new bus lane, and the Canada Line’s estimated 100,000 riders daily, improved transit connections to and through Richmond will provide tremendous benefits to our local economy.”

The shoulder of Highway 99 northbound from Westminster Highway to Bridgeport Road, a distance of 2.8 km, will be widened to create a bus-only lane. Warning signals at on-ramps along the route will be automatically activated to provide priority for bus transit. The lane will be used by current northbound transit service, and will also be used by RapidBus BC service, once in operation, to carry commuters to the Canada Line’s Bridgeport Station.

“The new bus lane will offer superior travel time reliability for south of Fraser commuters connecting to the Canada Line and we appreciate the province's initiative to move quickly on this project,” said Tom Prendergast, CEO of TransLink. “There's no doubt that motorists will notice how well the bus-only lanes help our highway coaches avoid the heavy traffic line-ups and we expect this is going to entice quite a few more Vancouver-bound commuters onto transit.”

RapidBus BC is a key pillar of the Provincial Transit Plan. Commuters riding RapidBus BC will get high quality, point-to-point service with minimal stops along a number of high-profile corridors in the Lower Mainland, including Highway 99 in both directions between White Rock and Richmond.

-more-

Jacob Bros. Construction Ltd. of Surrey was awarded a \$4.7-million contract to build the four-metre-wide shoulder bus lane, which will be complete in summer 2009.

Media Jeff Knight
contact: Public Affairs Bureau
 Ministry of Transportation and
 Infrastructure
 250 356-7707

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Christy Clark announces Massey Tunnel to be replaced by bridge

By JEFF LEE, DERRICK PENNER AND BRIAN MORTON, The Vancouver Sun **September 21, 2013**

<http://www.vtace.org/content/pdf/VFPA%20Massey%20Tunnel%20Plan%201.pdf>

B.C. Government meets with Port Metro Vancouver, Surrey Fraser Docks and Engineers to plan George Massey Tunnel Replacement Bridge (GMT) – February 2, 2012

Jurgen Franke: Director, Engineering and Maintenance at Surrey Fraser Docks

Jeff Scott: President and CEO of Surrey Fraser Docks

Patrick Livolsi: Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Infrastructure Division, Government of B.C.

Lina Halwani: Regional Manager Engineering, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Infrastructure Division, Government of B.C.

Hisham Ibrahim: Vice-President, Technical Director, Buckland and Taylor Ltd., Bridge Engineer

CCIP Project Team: Container Capacity Improvement Program – Port Metro Vancouver’s long term strategy

Curtis Cloutier: Project Engineer, Port Metro Vancouver

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Patruk, Wendy

Subject: FW: GMT meeting with Jurgen Franke
Location: Patrick's office - 7818 6th St, Burnaby - 3rd floor

Start: Thu 2/2/2012 2:00 PM
End: Thu 2/2/2012 3:30 PM *Feb 2, 2012*

Recurrence: (none)

Organizer: Livolsi, Patrick C TRAN:EX

Meeting with MoT to discuss navigational channel options at the GM tunnel.

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Livolsi, Patrick C TRAN:EX [<mailto:Patrick.Livolsi@gov.bc.ca>]
Sent: January-19-12 8:34 AM
To: Halwani, Lina TRAN:EX; Hisham Ibrahim; CCIP Project Team; Curtis Cloutier; Jurgen Franke; Jeff Scott; Livolsi, Patrick C TRAN:EX
Subject: GMT meeting with Jurgen Franke
When: February-02-12 2:00 PM-3:30 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada).
Where: Patrick's office - 7818 6th St, Burnaby - 3rd floor

Meeting to discuss options and considerations surrounding the George Massey Tunnel and a sustainable navigational channel.

Lina please have info on the tunnel prepared for the meeting.

Expired

From: Natland, Jennifer
Sent: Monday, November 19, 2012 03:42 PM
To: Hart, Dave
Cc: Wellstood, Chris; Leclerc, Yoss
Subject: RE: Clearances for potential new river crossing

Attachment 6 and 7

Thanks Dave. Much appreciated. You're quite right we should consider future terminals. For example, liquid bulk tanks with larger air draft requirements (e.g. LNG) should be considered.

Jennifer

AGE 47/72

Jennifer,

Got your messages.

I should be able to provide you with some clearance information but it might take a couple days

I understand FSD has been working with the Port on possible future vessels and I need some confirmation from those working with FSD about vessel sizes being considered. Also, I heard the Auto terminals are considering larger vessels. In addition to the current terminals, we need to consider future terminals such as VAPFC, which and possible terminal at our Richmond Properties

Regards,

Dave Hart

From: Hart, Dave
Sent: December-04-12 9:58 AM
To: Natland, Jennifer
Cc: Wellstood, Chris; Leclerc, Yoss
Subject: Re: Clearances for potential new river crossing

Jennifer,

I haven't had a chance to discuss with Yoss and Chris yet.

However, based on what I've heard I think a reasonable starting point for discussion at this time is as follows:

Short Version:

- 1). Tunnel - 15.5 to 18.5m deep (invert of tunnel including ballast and/or protection rock.
- 2). Bridge - 322m wide x 65m high (sloped navigation envelope - see more detail below)

Slightly longer version:

1). Tunnel: Depth required is 15.5m below Geodetic datum for 50 year life expectancy and 18.5m below for a 100 year life expectancy.

2). Bridge:

a). Width - no in river piers is preferred...primarily due to concerns of changes to local river hydraulics. If piers are necessary, then a minimum width of 322m between piers (200m navigation channel with 61m safety zone on both the North and South sides) is required. A detailed hydraulic study including 3D modeling will be required and a commitment from the bridge owner to implement, fund and administer a robust on-going river survey program and responsive annual mitigation program to address any in fill as a result of the piers. Also, real time water level and velocity

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The \$14 billion transit plan the B.C. Liberals conveniently forgot

BY KENNETH CHAN
11:55 AM PST, THU MARCH 19, 2015

NEWS | OPINIONS & RANTS | POLITICS | TRANSPORTATION | Comments

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Image: Bombardier / TransLink

Seven years ago, the governing B.C. Liberals unveiled an ambitious \$14 billion public transit plan for the province, with the bulk of the new infrastructure slated for the Metro Vancouver region.

Gordon Campbell and Kevin Falcon, then-Premier and then-Transportation Minister, announced the sweeping plan during a press conference on January 14, 2008 as a key initiative to achieve the provincial government's greenhouse gas reduction targets.

The so-called "Provincial Transit Plan" outlined a \$10.3 billion strategy to build three new rapid transit lines in Metro Vancouver – the \$1.4-billion SkyTrain extension to Coquitlam (Evergreen Line), \$2.8 billion to extend the Millennium Line to UBC under Broadway, a reaffirmation of the \$2 billion Canada Line being built, and \$3.1 billion to double the capacity of the Expo Line, including station and control system upgrades, platform extensions to accommodate six-car trains, and a six kilometre extension in Surrey.

"One new transit line was committed to in each of the previous three decades," said Falcon in 2008. "This plan delivers three lines in the next decade."

The \$14 billion transit plan the BC Liberals conveniently forgot



Image: Government of B.C. Released in 2008.

Another \$1 billion was highlighted for hundreds of new SkyTrain cars to provide greater capacity and replace aging rolling stock.

The plan also included communities outside of the Metro Vancouver region. It proposed an investment of \$1.6 billion to purchase 1,500 new, clean energy buses for use in the Metro Vancouver TransLink network and province-wide B.C. Transit system.

The government at the time earmarked an additional \$1.2 billion for nine high capacity rapid bus routes across the province, including a route in Kelowna (Westbank to UBC-Okanagan campus) and Victoria (Downtown Victoria to Langford).

The remaining seven rapid bus routes would have been located in Metro Vancouver, along Highway 1 across the new Port Mann Bridge, Hastings Street from downtown Vancouver to SFU, 41st Avenue from Joyce Station to UBC, Highway 99 from White Rock to Bridgeport Station, King George Highway from Surrey City Centre to White Rock, Fraser Highway between Langley and the Expo Line in Surrey, and Highway 7 from Coquitlam Central Station across the new Golden Ears Bridge.



Image: Government of B.C. Released in 2008.

All of the projects would have been completed over a 12-year period for a completion by 2020. With the full implementation of the plan's components in Metro Vancouver, it was envisioned that regional transit usage would increase from 12 per cent in 2008 to 17 per cent in 2020 and 22 per cent by 2030.

Of course, the big question everyone had then was how the mega project was to be funded.

Campbell said his government was willing to contribute \$4.75 billion towards building the new infrastructure, including \$435 million that was already dedicated for the Canada Line.

The \$14 billion transit plan the BC Liberals conveniently forgot

The remaining gap in funding would be covered by the federal government, TransLink and municipal governments, pending negotiations after the Olympics.

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As we enter further into 2015, only a few elements of Campbell's much-touted Transit Plan have been achieved – a rapid bus service that runs across the Port Mann Bridge opened in 2012, Surrey's first B-Line rapid bus service kicked off the following year, and the 11-kilometre long SkyTrain Evergreen Line is now 60 per cent complete and steering towards a fall 2016 completion.

As one would expect from a complete change in government leadership and cabinet, policies often shift drastically as they did with the B.C. Liberals' continued governance under Christy Clark's premiership.

In 2013, she made an election campaign promise to determine a solution for Metro Vancouver's public transit funding woes through a regional public vote – a decision that angered regional mayors as the vote was originally scheduled to coincide with the 2014 municipal election.

The vote was ultimately delayed until after the municipal elections, but the region's Mayors' Council was given a June 30, 2014 ultimatum to finalize a detailed, fully costed vision of what the transportation improvements would entail.

The outcome, the **\$7.5 billion Mayors' Plan**, consists of major elements from the B.C. Liberals' transit plan from just six years before, which includes fragments of long-term visions already drafted by TransLink.

If the transit plebiscite receives a 'Yes' majority, it will provide the provincial government with the mandate to move forward with legislation to implement the 0.5 per cent transit tax.

But the transit tax will only partially fund the full cost of the \$7.5 billion Mayors' Plan. The tax will raise \$250 million in new revenue on annual basis totalling \$2.5 billion over 10 years.

Another \$5 billion will need to be raised if the projects are to be built within the short term: there is a need for the provincial and federal governments to become key partners and fill the funding gap.

On Wednesday, Stone announced that Victoria would commit one-third of the costs to fund the projects, provided the investments are supported by a business case. Another one-third could arrive from the federal government's \$75 billion infrastructure fund over the next 10 years.

Without funding commitments from senior government, only a few minor elements of the Mayors' Council plans can be delivered without delay despite the need to have all the projects built today.

Major capital projects in B.C. have normally been delivered with the help of the provincial government and in many cases these projects were spearheaded by the Premier's Office.

For instance, the last B.C. NDP government initiated the construction of the SkyTrain Millennium Line in the late-1990s, which became TransLink's first major infrastructural project.

In 2003 and 2004, Falcon pushed TransLink's elected panel of local politicians to approve the Canada Line (RAV). The issue of building the line to Richmond and the airport was divisive: there were squabbles between board members over the cost of the project, "inflated" ridership projections, and the prioritization of the project with some believing the Evergreen Line should come ahead of RAV.

Senior governments became major funding partners for the Canada Line, with the province committing \$435 million and Ottawa with \$450 million of the \$2.05 billion needed.

Campbell's provincial government also revived the Evergreen Line in 2008 by cancelling light rail technology in favour of an extension of the SkyTrain Millennium Line infrastructure. A

The \$14 billion transit plan the BC Liberals conveniently forgot

business case report conducted by the government revealed SkyTrain would cost \$1.4 billion, just \$150 million more than the locally-preferred light rail option while also providing a far greater capacity, higher service frequency, lower operational costs, and a convenient transferless "one-train ride" to Vancouver.

The province is contributing \$583 million towards the Evergreen Line while Ottawa will contribute \$417 million and TransLink with the remaining balance.

Aside from major transportation infrastructure projects, senior governments were responsible for other capital projects such as the Vancouver Convention Centre expansion, the sports venues for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, the Sea to Sky Highway and the Gateway Program, with the largest components of the project being the new Port Mann Bridge, Highway 1 widening and new South Fraser Perimeter Road.

Local agencies and municipal governments do not have the financial capacity to proceed with mega projects on their own. In addition, some of the most challenging barriers proposals face is when municipal politicians are more concerned about the short-term costs projects bring on the micro (local) level rather than the benefits within the macro (regional and provincial) point of view.

It was last June that 20 of the 21 mayors of Metro Vancouver's municipalities agreed to a thoughtful, comprehensive transportation strategy – an exceptionally rare cohesive moment of progressive, long-term thinking for the region's economic, health and environmental well-being.

If Metro Vancouver residents want better transit, the solution might not be a 'Yes' vote in the transit plebiscite but rather a new provincial government that cares about Metro Vancouver and its transit network aspirations.

The B.C. Liberals lost five key ridings in Metro Vancouver after the 2013 provincial election, including the much-coveted Vancouver-Point Grey riding. Campbell first won the riding in 1996 when he was the Leader of the Opposition for the B.C. Liberals, and he secured it again in subsequent general elections in 2001, 2005 and 2009.

Clark also won Point Grey's 2011 by-election following Campbell's resignation, but she was unable to reclaim the seat during the 2013 election, forcing her to seek a seat in Kelowna through a by-election.

Ever since the B.C. Liberals lost their footing in some of the most urbanized areas of Metro Vancouver, their policies have shifted towards being more rural focused (George Massey Tunnel replacement to serve B.C. Liberal ridings in the south of Fraser) and they have kept their distance from TransLink, even though the regional transportation authority is an entity of the provincial government.

Both Clark and Transportation Minister Todd Stone have also been relatively silent in public on their "support" for the 'Yes' side: their response to the Mayors' Council request for necessary supplemental provincial funding can be described as cold and indifferent.

Even if the transit plebiscite receives its 50 per cent plus one 'Yes' result, popular projects like the SkyTrain Millennium Line extension under Broadway and rail rapid transit in Surrey could still be many years away.

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Stone insists Massey Bridge process is proper



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by [Jeff Nagel - BC Local News](#)
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Transportation Minister Todd Stone is defending the province's method of planning major projects like the Massey Bridge, saying it is standard procedure to announce the government's intent to proceed before a business plan is fleshed out.

The government has been under fire after information requests failed to turn up any preliminary rationale to justify Premier Christy Clark's announcements in 2012 and 2013 that the George Massey Tunnel would be replaced with a new bridge.

"It always starts with a statement of political intent," Stone said, referring to the premier's announcement. "You put your marker down. You establish your political intent. You then engage the public and the stakeholders extensively, refine the scope. Then build your business case from there. You release all that and you then get on with building the project."

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Independent MLA Vicki Huntington [argued](#) it defies logic that the government could embark on a \$3-billion project without any supporting reports or analysis.

Asked if that type of material exists, Stone said there would be cabinet advice documents.



Stone said hundreds of pages of documents have been posted to the [project website](#) as part of two rounds of consultation on



whether a replacement was needed and then what configuration it should take.

He said it would be "simply wrong" to proceed in reverse order with a business case first because that would mean announcing "fully baked projects" without any chance for the public or stakeholders

to shape the outcome.

There is still [no business case](#) for the project, but Stone said that will be released "very soon" as part of a project definition report that will also spell out a price tag, the size of the bridge and whether it will be tolled.

The province is aiming for a 2017 construction start and 2022 completion date for the Massey Bridge

The provincial budget included \$53 million in planning work on the Massey project this year and next year but indicated the project remains subject to Treasury Board approval of the business case and funding strategy.

Stone said the government will soon make a final "go or no go decision" that will be the last of multiple stages of approval. "Once that decision is made then construction will begin."

The ministry says \$30 million has been spent so far.

NDP MLA George Heyman pointed to a 2012 memo from then-Finance Minister Kevin Falcon that cautioned his cabinet colleagues against major spending announcements without a business plan being vetted and approved by Treasury Board.

"We didn't have a business case in 2012. We didn't have one in 2013. We were promised one in 2014. It's now 2015 and we still don't have it," Heyman said.

"The transportation minister's definition of due diligence is that after the premier makes an announcement that she scribbled on the back of a napkin, salute it and go out and try to sell it and then create a business case to support it later."

B.C. Auditor General Carol Bellringer has taken an interest in the process, announcing an audit to evaluate the quality of evidence to support the decision to replace the tunnel.

Canadian Taxpayers Federation B.C. director Jordan Bateman said it's "troubling" that the business case is taking so long and that the province failed to publicly release the basis for Clark's announcement when it was made.

"If she was floating an idea that a Massey Bridge would be good and 'We're going to look into it' - if that was the statement, that's one thing. But she very clearly made the commitment," Bateman said.

"It flies in the face of what the BC Liberals practised when they first came to power, which was trying to make business-style decisions."

He said the province should have developed some sort of preliminary business case to determine the project appeared viable and then announce a process to explore the options to replace or rehabilitate the tunnel rather than firmly declaring from the outset it would be replaced.

He noted some material was prepared before Clark's announcement - artist's renderings of what the new bridge might look like, backdrops for the premier to stand in front of and promotional signs on Highway 99. "There has to be paperwork somewhere."

Bateman said he is not yet convinced the bridge is needed, since the Pattullo Bridge will be replaced first and it's not yet clear how that and the South Fraser Perimeter Road will alter future traffic patterns.

"I want to see evidence that this expenditure is absolutely necessary before it proceeds."

Stone said he's "very disappointed" Huntington created a public impression that she'd been kept in the dark on the project.

He said ministry staff have met with her repeatedly and provided her office access to much detail on the project.

"It reflects a significant degree of confusion on her part or at worse a sense of misrepresenting the facts, which I think is irresponsible."