



POLICY REPORT
URBAN STRUCTURE

Report Date: April 12, 2010
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Meeting Date: April 22, 2010

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment

FROM: Director of Planning and General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Revised Rapid Transit Principles for the Broadway Corridor and the UBC Line Rapid Transit Study

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve Vancouver's revised rapid transit principles, as contained in this report, to guide staff involvement in the planning and future implementation of a rapid transit solution for the Broadway Corridor.
- B. THAT staff use these principles to guide participation in the TransLink-led UBC Line Rapid Transit Study and report back at key milestones including: after development and public review of the short-listed options; and upon the identification of a preferred option for rapid transit technology(ies), alignment and general station locations.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of A and B.

COUNCIL POLICY

Transportation priorities (1997): Pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users; access for goods movement; and less reliance on cars.

Principles for rapid transit provision: Council approved principles for the Millennium Line (1998) and Canada Line (2003), to provide City input in the planning stages of these rapid transit lines.

Rapid transit in the Broadway Corridor:

- *1997: Council approved the City Transportation Plan which includes a rapid transit line along the Broadway Corridor with possible extension to UBC. The line should serve the needs of city riders as well as others regional users, and should not result in a loss of local transit service.*

- *March 2000: (Phase II Commercial Drive West) Council recommended that the SkyTrain continue west from Vancouver Community College, via the False Creek Flats and Broadway to Granville Street as part of the Millennium Line Construction Program, with a rapid bus extension to UBC.*
- *April 2002: (Vancouver Transit Strategy) Council reaffirmed its support for the Millennium Line extension as a subway serving the Central Broadway Corridor to Granville Street.*
- *January 2008: Council passed a motion that the City of Vancouver opposes cut and cover construction for the completion of the Millennium Line through commercial, congested or confined rights-of-way.*
- *In 2009, the Greenest City Action Team (GCAT) unveiled “Vancouver 2020 - A Bright Green Future: An Action Plan for Becoming the World’s Greenest City by 2020” which includes targets for Greener Communities. This includes green mobility (majority of trips on foot, bicycle and public transit) supported by increased density and proximity to services and amenities.*

PURPOSE

This report summarizes the response to Council’s request for additional public input on the City’s Draft Rapid Transit Principles for the Broadway Corridor and the UBC Line Rapid Transit Study, and seeks Council endorsement of the revised draft principles.

BACKGROUND

January 19th Principles Report

On January 19th, 2010, staff presented a set of draft rapid transit principles to Council for endorsement (RTS 08164). The principles are intended to guide City involvement in the planning and implementation of a rapid transit line that serves the Broadway Corridor from Commercial Drive to UBC. The first opportunity to apply these principles is to guide City input into the TransLink-led UBC Line Rapid Transit Study to evaluate rapid transit options and determine a preferred approach for the corridor.

The draft principles presented in January were based on previous rapid transit principles and criteria, experience from the recent Canada Line planning and implementation, comments heard through the City’s participation in TransLink’s Phase 1 stakeholder consultation, and current Council priorities.

At the January meeting, Council expressed support for the draft principles, but requested that they be sent for public consultation and brought back, with revisions as appropriate, for approval by April 30th, 2010. In the interim, Council directed staff to use the draft principles to guide City participation in the TransLink-led study.

The Need for Rapid Transit in the Broadway Corridor

Rapid transit is needed in the Broadway Corridor for several reasons:

- *To meet existing and future demand.* The corridor links several important areas in the region, including Central Broadway—the largest employment generator in the Province after Downtown Vancouver—as well as Mount Pleasant, Fairview, Kitsilano, West Point Grey, and UBC. Transit improvements have not been able to keep pace with growing demand.

- *To serve future planned growth.* Significant unbuilt capacity exists under current zoning. Even greater employment and population growth is expected in the corridor resulting from new planning initiatives now underway. These include the Metro Core Jobs & Economy Land Use Plan—which will significantly increase job capacity in Central Broadway—and the ongoing Mount Pleasant Community Planning Program and West Point Grey Community Vision, among others.
- *To achieve environmental and transportation targets critical to the health and well-being of the region.* The City and Province have set emissions and travel mode targets that rely on a significant reduction in driving. A dramatic increase in transit capacity and quality of service is needed in the Broadway Corridor for Vancouver to meet these goals and ensure a more sustainable, green future.

UBC Line Rapid Transit Study

A major study to determine a preferred approach for rapid transit in the Broadway Corridor from Commercial Drive to UBC is now underway. Led by TransLink and jointly sponsored by TransLink and the Province, it consists of three phases (times tentative):

- Phase 1 - Shortlist Identification (Spring 2009 - Spring 2010);
- Phase 2 - Option Development and Evaluation (Spring 2010 - Winter 2010); and
- Phase 3 - Detailed Design Development (timing to be determined).

The City of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, UBC, and the University Endowment Lands are directly involved as partner agencies. Stakeholder consultation is taking place throughout the study, with broader public consultation beginning in Phase 2.

DISCUSSION

The proposed revisions of the principles are described below, preceded by information on the Council-instructed public consultation.

Consultation Process

Following the January 2010 Council meeting, staff added a “UBC Line Draft Principles” page (vancouver.ca/ubcline/principles) to the City’s Rapid Transit Office (RTO) website. This page provides an overview of the principles, describing their intent and basis, and lists each principle under its broader theme (Environmental Sustainability, Financial Affordability, Transportation, Urban Development, Economic Development, and Social / Community).

Online visitors were encouraged to fill out an online feedback form that stepped through each principle and accompanying “key considerations”, allowing for specific comments or concerns to be expressed. The feedback form also provided an opportunity for participants to note any general comments and to provide contact information if they wanted to be notified of any related rapid transit events. The website also noted that staff could be contacted directly with questions or comments.

Upon going live on February 5th, the feedback form was promoted as follows:

- online via the City’s “Have Your Say” and Rapid Transit Office UBC Line webpages;

- via email to a list of people who had expressed interest in rapid transit-related activities and events, speakers from the January 19th Council meeting, and stakeholders involved in the Phase 1 TransLink consultation; and
- through print ads placed in the Vancouver Courier, the Ming Pao, the Sing Tao, and Business in Vancouver.

The website, email, and print advertisements also noted that an open house would take place in late March. The open house was held on March 25th to allow the public to discuss and review the principles in person. Staff presented an interim revision of the draft principles based upon early feedback received online, through letters and emails, and from speakers at the January 19th Council meeting. Approximately 100 people attended. After the open house, the interim revisions to the principles were posted on the RTO website.

A close date of March 30th was set for comments, to allow sufficient time for review prior to Council's April 30th report-back date.

Summary of Public Feedback & Revisions

Approximately 260 feedback forms were completed, including 240 online and 20 at the March 25th open house. Staff also received several letters and emails from various stakeholder groups. Roughly two-thirds of respondents provided personal contact information, with the vast majority identifying themselves as residents of Vancouver.

Taken as a whole, the responses suggest strong support for rapid transit in the Broadway Corridor, and broad support for each of the draft rapid transit principles.

The feedback included considerable commentary on issues that go beyond the principles, including suggestions for detailed approaches that might help meet the principle objectives, and advocacy for a particular technology, route, or development strategies. While not applicable at this stage, these comments will be taken forward for consideration as the work moves ahead.

There were some specific suggestions for changing individual principles or associated considerations. Some common themes and staff responses include:

- **Theme:** Focus on the long term (e.g., ensure the system has sufficient capacity and can be expanded to meet long-term demand)
- **Response:** Revised the transportation principle to better reflect a system that is resilient to support future targets and needs (Principle 3)

- **Theme:** Ensure transit is better than the driving alternative
- **Response:** Inserted considerations in support of a transit approach that compares favourably to driving (Principles 3 & 8)

- **Theme:** Recognize the regional significance of rapid transit in the corridor
- **Response:** Added considerations to ensure the needs of local and regional transit users are met (Principle 8)

- **Theme:** Allocate more right-of-way for pedestrians, cyclists, and/or transit

- **Response:** Added considerations to recognize potential road space reallocation opportunities towards pedestrian, cyclist, transit, and/or public realm improvements (Principles 3 & 6)
- **Theme:** Recognize development and place-making opportunities near rapid transit
- **Response:** Strengthened a consideration to ensure rapid transit stations provide a positive legacy to the surrounding neighbourhood (Principle 6)

- **Theme:** Respect local diversity, values, and plans;
- **Response:** Added references to Community Visions (e.g. West Point Grey), other local plans, and the importance of neighbourhood diversity in future planning (Principle 5)

- **Theme:** Support and protect local businesses, especially through the construction process
- **Response:** Added specific reference to local businesses in the principle related to consultation on project impacts and mitigation options (Principle 10)

The complete set of revised principles are located in the **Appendix A**. All comments and letters received are available online at vancouver.ca/ubcline/principles and copies are available at the City Clerk's Office on request.

CONCLUSION

In response to Council's request for additional consultation on the City's Draft Rapid Transit Principles for the Broadway Corridor and the UBC Line Rapid Transit Study, staff actively promoted and sought feedback on the draft principles through an online feedback form and an open house. Input received through comment forms, discussions with open house participants and letters and emails from various stakeholder groups have guided revisions to the principles. Overall, the draft principles received a high degree of public support. Suggestions for changing and clarifying specific principles focused on a few key themes. Based on the input received staff propose changes to both strengthen and improve the principles, and are now seeking Council endorsement of the revised draft Rapid Transit Principles.

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Recommended Vancouver Rapid Transit Principles for the Broadway Corridor
April 2010

The following principles and key considerations are intended to guide City involvement in the planning and implementation of a rapid transit line that serves the Broadway Corridor from Commercial Drive to UBC. The first opportunity to apply these principles is to guide City input into the TransLink-led UBC Line Rapid Transit Study to evaluate rapid transit options and determine a preferred approach for the corridor.

The principles reflect the City's interests while also recognizing regional rapid transit and land use planning initiatives. They are based on: previously approved rapid transit principles and criteria; experience from Canada Line planning and implementation; comments heard through the City's participation in TransLink's Phase 1 stakeholder consultation; public feedback received in early 2010; and Council priorities related to sustainability, climate change, transportation, and land use.

The principles support the integrated land use and transportation approach described in the Greenest City Action Plan (2009). The principles are also broad and as the work progresses, the final recommendation for a preferred option will most likely need to reflect some choices and trade-offs.

The principles fall into six themes listed below.

THEME	DRAFT PRINCIPLE
	<i>The rapid transit approach should:</i>
Environmental Sustainability	1. <i>Significantly support GHG reduction and related environmental targets and objectives established by the Province, regional agencies, and the City (e.g., Greenest City Action Plan).</i>
Financial Affordability	2. <i>Provide an affordable, cost effective, and timely rapid transit solution for both construction and operation.</i>
Transportation	3. <i>Provide transit capacity, service quality, and system resilience to support existing and future transit targets and objectives.</i> 4. <i>Integrate rapid transit with walking, cycling, and local transit, while accommodating goods movement needs.</i>
Urban Development	5. <i>Serve existing and planned land use including major destinations, and help shape future land use policies, including higher densities where appropriate.</i> 6. <i>Provide a consistently high standard of urban design and amenity, and significantly improve the public realm for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.</i>
Economic Development	7. <i>Promote a diverse, healthy, and green economy, improve local access to major commercial and institutional destinations, and support the concentration of jobs on Central Broadway.</i>
Social / Community / Business	8. <i>Address the needs of local and regional transit users, neighbours and adjacent communities, and businesses.</i> 9. <i>Minimize and mitigate construction and operation impacts.</i> 10. <i>Provide opportunities for meaningful engagement of stakeholders and the general public.</i>

Each principle contains key considerations, described in detail on the following page.

The following version of the principles highlights changes made to the original January 19th draft version. Additions are highlighted in *bold italic*. Subtractions are highlighted in ~~strikethrough~~.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

1. Significantly support GHG reduction and related environmental targets and objectives established by the Province, regional agencies, and the City (e.g., Greenest City Action Plan).

Key Considerations:

- Reduce pollution and congestion by shifting private auto trips to transit trips;
- Provide levels of transit service that support environmental targets to:
 - Reduce GHG emissions 33% below 2007 levels by 2020 (City and Province, 2007); and
 - Reduce GHG emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 (City, 2008);
- Ensure construction of transit infrastructure meets the goals and objectives of the City's Green Building Strategy;
- Ensure the review of rapid transit options includes an evaluation of energy reduction strategies;
- *Favour approaches that reduce local emissions;*
- Include full life-cycle environmental costs (e.g. emissions, construction materials) in the project evaluation criteria; and
- Minimize impacts on, and create new opportunities for street trees, public plazas and other open spaces.

FINANCIAL AFFORDABILITY

2. Provide an affordable, cost-effective, and timely rapid transit solution for both construction and operation.

Key Considerations:

- Provide a cost-effective solution for both initial capital and ongoing operating expenditures within the regional system;
- Consider full life cycle costs, including construction, operation, and maintenance costs, in the project evaluation criteria;
- Capitalize on the opportunity to develop a revenue-generating (i.e., high ridership at opening) rapid transit service for a large and growing market;
- Enhance the ability to attract private and/or senior government capital funding to meet city and regional transportation objectives;
- Ensure that rapid transit project costs (capital and operating) do not result in cutbacks to the basic transit system; and
- *Consider affordability in the context of a project that will deliver a legacy of lasting benefits for the city and region.*

TRANSPORTATION

3. ~~Provide transit capacity and service quality to meet mode split targets for current and future demand.~~ *Provide transit capacity, service quality, and system resilience to support existing and future transit targets and objectives.*

Key Considerations:

- Ensure transit capacity is resilient to support transportation targets as demand increases over time:
 - Double provincial transit ridership by 2020 (Province, 2008);
 - *Achieve over 50% non-auto mode share in the city by 2020 (City, 2009 Recommended GCAT target);*
 - Achieve *over* 50% non-auto mode share in the region by 2040 (TransLink, 2008);
 - Achieve a corridor transit mode share of at least 25% (24 hours) and 38% (peak periods) by 2021 (City, 1997); and
 - *Achieve emerging corridor, city, and regional targets currently under development by the City, TransLink, and Metro Vancouver;*
- Ensure that initial implementation and ultimate capacity of the system includes expansion plans to meet medium term (20 years) demand and the long term (50 years +) demand for the corridor;
- Enhance transit, walking, and cycling within and between neighbourhoods, Central Broadway, and the Downtown;
- Provide regional travel times that are reliable and **competitive compare favourably** to the private automobile;
- Provide safe access to the system and ensure **ride-space-quality comfort** (e.g. reduced crowding) and convenience are better than the existing bus system;
- Provide a solution that is affordable for **"captive"** users who lack viable alternatives, and attractive to **"choice"**-riders who might otherwise drive;
- Ensure the system is accessible, including to those with higher mobility challenges and needs, and well-connected to the broader regional transit system; and
- Meet Vancouver Transportation Plan directions by limiting street expansion and by allocating more street space to *pedestrians, cyclists, and/or* transit.

TRANSPORTATION

4. Integrate rapid transit with walking, cycling, ~~local transit, and goods movement~~ *and local transit, while accommodating goods movement needs.*

Key Considerations:

- Enhance the pedestrian environment to accommodate increased volumes of pedestrians;
- Create effective connections between local service and longer distance travel to key destinations (e.g. Downtown, Central Broadway, neighbourhood business areas, and UBC);
- Ensure full integration with cycling and other non-motorized modes of transportation, including provision of safe connections with neighbourhood networks, wayfinding signage, fully-accessible station design, and secure bicycle end-use facilities;
- Maintain local transit service; and
- Accommodate goods movement needs.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

5. Serve existing and planned land use including major destinations, and help shape future land use policies, including higher densities where appropriate.

Key Considerations:

- Support the City's planned development patterns (*e.g., community plans and Community Visions*) and recognize new land use patterns will be considered based on future planning (*e.g., transit-oriented planning that recognizes neighbourhood diversity*);
- Contribute to implementing city-wide land use objectives by supporting:
 - The concentration of activities and development Downtown, along Central Broadway, at major institutions, in neighbourhood business areas, and near rapid transit stations;
 - The take-up of existing residential and employment capacity and creation of redevelopment opportunities where appropriate; and
 - The development of compatible new projects;
- Contribute to implementing regional land use objectives by supporting:
 - The "Metropolitan Core" of the region (Regional Growth Strategy, 1996);
 - Transportation services required to meet population and employment growth targets; and
 - Population and employment transit-supportive densities;
- Enhance existing and emerging neighbourhood business areas that provide residents with shops, services, public places, and jobs close to home;
- Link neighbourhood business areas, the Downtown and Central Broadway; and
- Provide sufficient capacity to serve expected and potential growth (population, jobs, and other users) in the corridor.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

6. Provide a consistently high standard of urban design and amenity, and significantly improve the public realm for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.

Key Considerations:

- Support Broadway becoming a 'great street' with a high quality public realm that promotes distinctive neighbourhood character;
- Provide links to City and neighbourhood greenways/bikeways to integrate walking, cycling, and transit;
- Achieve improved landscaping and create new and more diverse public places;
- Coordinate public realm improvements with transit construction to reduce overall costs;
- *Consider strategic opportunities to reallocate road space away from motor vehicle use towards improvement of the public realm;*
- Provide new opportunities for public art; and
- ~~Ensure that rapid transit station location and design considers safety, enhances neighbourhood character, and provides appropriate amenities (e.g. public plazas).~~
- *Ensure that rapid transit stations provide a positive legacy, establishing community focal points that enhance neighbourhood character and safety through high quality design and the provision of public amenities (e.g., plazas, public art, and retail that supports "eyes on the street").*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

7. Promote a diverse, healthy, and green economy, improve access to major commercial and institutional destinations, and support the concentration of jobs on Central Broadway.

Key Considerations:

- Promote the diversity of existing and future economic activities in the Corridor (major office and other commercial, health and education, industrial, high-tech and emerging industry) by improving marketability and accessibility for customers, workers, suppliers, visitors, students, etc.;
- Improve access to city and regional centres for people, goods and services; and
- Enhance the attractiveness of the Corridor for existing and new businesses.

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY / BUSINESS

8. Address the needs of local and regional transit users, neighbours and adjacent communities, and businesses.

Key Considerations:

Local and regional transit users:

- *Provide transit service that is:*
 - *Fast, providing regional travel times better than those currently afforded by private automobile or existing public transit;*
 - *Frequent;*
 - *Reliable, achieving consistent travel times and keeping on schedule;*
 - *Safe to use and access;*
 - *Comfortable, with sufficient capacity to ensure a comfortable level of service during normal busy periods;*
 - *Accessible, including to those with higher mobility challenges and needs;*
 - *Well connected to the broader regional transit system;*
 - *Integrated with walking, cycling, and transit, and with provisions to support intermodal trips; and*
 - *Affordable to those who lack viable transportation alternatives.*

Neighbours and adjacent communities:

- Enhance connectivity of residential neighbourhoods to jobs, shopping, recreation, and services;
- Enhance safety adjacent to the system and at stations;
- Minimize transportation disruptions caused by the system (e.g. street/lane closures, reductions to sidewalk widths, and increased vehicle traffic on residential streets); and
- Minimize system impacts such as: noise/vibration, *local emissions*, visual intrusion, and reduction of privacy; loss of views, valued community spaces, and heritage assets; and number of persons and properties displaced.

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Business community and commercially zoned property owners:

- Increase business opportunities by improving transit access to commercial sites;
- Enhance access for customers and workers to commercial locations;
- Minimize transportation disruption (e.g. street/lane closures, reductions to sidewalk widths);
- Enhance public realm;
- Consider street space requirements for commercial purposes (e.g. curbside parking, loading, and commercial truck deliveries); and
- Minimize *negative* impacts to commercial properties.

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY / BUSINESS

9. Minimize and mitigate construction and operation impacts.

Key Considerations:

- *Ensure that adverse construction and operation impacts (including visual, noise, vibration, safety, and traffic impacts) to residents, businesses, and people traveling in the corridor are included in the options evaluation process; and*
- ~~Ensure that adverse impacts such as visual, noise, vibration and safety impacts to the community, businesses, pedestrians, and traffic for both construction and operation are included in the evaluation process of rapid transit planning for the corridor; and~~
- Ensure that potential *adverse* impacts ~~to residents and businesses~~, identified during the planning phases, are addressed in the implementation of the rapid transit solution.

10. Provide opportunities for meaningful engagement of stakeholders and the general public.

Key Considerations:

- Work closely with study sponsors and partners to ensure timely and thorough public and stakeholder involvement in the planning, evaluation, selection, and implementation of a preferred solution for the Broadway Corridor;
- Consult with communities, *local businesses*, and *other* stakeholders to address the different ways that they may be affected by the project and examine options to mitigate system construction and operating impacts;
- *Provide information on all aspects of the project, including the need for rapid transit, how the project fits into the regional long-term vision, technology and alignment options, and costs of construction and operation;*
- *Ensure information is accessible, and presented in a way that is clear and understandable to the general public; and*
- ~~Provide information about the project that is understandable by the general public, including costs of construction, and operation; and~~
- Consult with residents and businesses on setting regional transit priorities for major capital projects.