

From: **"Mochrie, Paul"** <[Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)>

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 11/15/2021 5:10:25 PM

Subject: **TransLink's Upcoming Bus Stop Balancing on Routes 4 and 7**

Attachments: **[EXT] Bus Stop Balancing & Bus Priority on #4 & #7.msg**

**Memo - TransLink's Upcoming Bus Stop Balancing on Routes 4 and 7.pdf**

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- ☐ TransLink is initiating the next round of Bus Stop Balancing on Route 4 (Powell/Downtown/UBC) and Route 7 (Nanaimo Station/Dunbar), and are launching a six-week public engagement period on November 15, inviting over 675 stakeholders, transit customers to comment on the proposed bus stop changes.
- ☐ Bus stop changes on Routes 4 and 7 will be trialed for 6-weeks starting January 17, 2022. TransLink estimates the changes will save about 4 to 6.5 min per round trip, and about 90% of transit riders can continue to use their existing bus stop.
- ☐ Staff are upgrading several bus stops for wheelchair accessibility, and adding 8 new bus stops for more even stop spacing during the trial. Staff plan to upgrade accessibility and customer amenities at the remaining bus stops after the TransLink's decision on the final routes in Spring 2022.
- ☐ At Council's direction to advance other measures to speed up buses, staff are planning a bus-priority pilot on West 4th Ave in Kitsilano, for bus bulbs and intersection improvements in Spring 2022.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca).

Best,  
Paul

**Paul Mochrie** (he/him)  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver  
[paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca)



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

## MEMORANDUM

November 15, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Maria Pontikis, Director, Civic Engagement and Communications  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Paul Storer, Director, Transportation  
Steve Brown, Manager, Transit Integration and Projects

FROM: Lon LaClaire  
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: TransLink's Upcoming Bus Stop Balancing on Routes 4 and 7  
and West 4<sup>th</sup> Ave Bus-Priority Pilot

RTS #: N/A

Staff are working in partnership with TransLink to implement bus-priority measures for more reliable and faster bus service; an accelerated action to increase the City's sustainable transportation mode share in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

This memo provides an update on TransLink's process for the next round of bus stop balancing on Route 4 (Powell / Downtown / UBC) and Route 7 (Nanaimo Station / Dunbar), along with a bus-priority pilot on West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Kitsilano.

### **Bus Stop Balancing on Routes 4 & 7**

TransLink's bus stop balancing program is a regional initiative to provide faster, more reliable, and cost-effective transit service, while carefully considering the trade-offs of shorter walking distances between bus stops. These efforts can encourage more people to take transit, which helps to advance our Climate Emergency goals.

The previous rounds of bus stop balancing had measurable travel time savings for transit riders:

- On Route 2 (Macdonald / Downtown), each roundtrip saved 4-6 minutes in the AM and PM peak periods and during weekends;
- On Route 17 (Oak / Downtown), each roundtrip saved 3-5 minutes during weekdays, and up to 8 minutes during weekend; and

- On Route 25 (Brentwood Station / UBC), each roundtrip saved 4-10 minutes (about 4-6 minutes in the AM peak period, 5-7 minutes midday, 6-10 minutes in the PM peak period, and about 8 minutes on weekends).

After these rounds of bus stop balancing, Council directed staff to advance other measures to speed up buses, and for TransLink to increase consultation with seniors and disability groups, neighbourhood houses, women's groups, community centres, lower income and transit-reliant workers. For the upcoming round of bus stop balancing on Routes 4 and 7, staff are incorporating additional bus-priority measures and TransLink has expanded their outreach and engagement program.

Routes 4 and 7 currently have some of the closest stops in the region, which has contributed to unpredictable and longer travel times for 8.5 million annual transit trips (based on 2019 ridership). Although TransLink's recommended stop spacing is 300m to 800m, 65% of the stops on Route 4 and 77% of the stops on Route 7 are spaced less than 300m apart. TransLink is proposing the following stop changes, which will be refined through an engagement and trial period in the coming months:

- On Routes 4 and 7, reduce the total combined stops from 192 stops to 155 stops, by removing 45 stops and adding 8 new stops for more balanced bus stop spacing. Many factors were considered such as the safety, accessibility, slope, nearby destinations, and impacts to different customer groups.
- On Route 4, the proposed average stop spacing would increase from 290m to 340m (about 2 to 3 blocks). It is expected that 92% of passengers can continue to use their existing bus stop, while enjoying a faster and more reliable trip. About 7% will have access to another bus stop within a block away, and 1% may need to walk or roll to further than a block away.
- On Route 7, the proposed average stop spacing would increase from 250m to 310m (about 2 to 3 blocks). It is expected that 87% of passengers can continue to use their existing bus stop, while enjoying a faster and more reliable trip. About 7% will have access to another bus stop within a block away, and 6% may need to walk or roll further than a block away.
- Overall, the round trip savings are estimated to be about 4 min on Route 4 and 6.5 min on Route 7, which could save TransLink 1,900 annual revenue hours that could be reinvested and reallocated to routes that need it most.

On November 15, 2021, TransLink is launching a six-week public engagement period, reaching out to 675 stakeholders and notifying transit customers by posting signs at every stop along the routes. Members of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) will receive emails and voicemails. The City's Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, Senior's Advisory Committee, and the Transportation Advisory Committee, and TransLink's Users Advisory Committee will be engaged.

On January 17, 2022, TransLink will launch a six-week trial period, temporarily removing and instating new stops. To improve accessibility during the trial, several bus stops will be upgraded for wheelchair accessibility with TransLink funding support.

In March 2022, TransLink will review the service performance and evaluate all feedback to inform the permanent decision on final stop locations along Routes 4 and 7. With TransLink funding support, staff will improve customer amenities at the remaining stops, by relocating shelters, providing more benches, and upgrading bus landing areas for wheelchair accessibility.

The attached email from TransLink provides additional detail on the engagement and process for bus stop balancing on Routes 4 and 7. Residents can learn more about the bus stop balancing projects on TransLink's website ([www.translink.ca/busstopbalancing](http://www.translink.ca/busstopbalancing)) and provide feedback to TransLink via email ([busstopbalancing@translink.ca](mailto:busstopbalancing@translink.ca)).

### **West 4<sup>th</sup> Bus Priority Pilot**

In line with Council direction, staff are planning other bus-priority measures on West 4<sup>th</sup> Ave in Kitsilano to further the benefits of bus stop balancing on Routes 4 and 7. TransLink awarded the City \$130,000 for a bus-priority pilot on West 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, through the Bus Speed and Reliability cost-sharing program.

Along this corridor, buses experience delay and unpredictable travel times from entering and exiting bus stops, vehicles parking on-street, and conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians at intersections. Staff are in the early design and engagement phase for improving bus-priority on West 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, between Burrard St and Balsam St, and are considering the following measures:

- Bus bulbs that widen the sidewalk and allow buses to stop in the travel lane, therefore reducing the time for pulling in and out of a bus stop. Bus bulbs would be piloted using temporary materials, similar to those installed on Robson St and Main St in summer 2021. Bus bulbs also improve public realm and public space, complementing other street uses, such as curbside patios, parklets, and side-street plazas.
- Extended corner clearances that provide more space for right-turning vehicles to reduce delay for buses and vehicles at intersections.

Staff are currently engaging with the Kitsilano West 4<sup>th</sup> BIA and affected businesses, and targeting installation in Spring 2022 following TransLink's decision of the final bus stops on Routes 4 and 7.

Other types of bus-priority measures along other portions of Routes 4 and 7, such as on Dunbar St, Powell St, Cordova St and Nanaimo St, will be explored in the future.

If you have any questions about these bus-priority projects and their implementation in the coming months, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.  
General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7336 | [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca)

ATTACHMENT: Email from TransLink re: Bus Stop Balancing & Bus Priority on #4 & #7



From: ["Freeman, Daniel" <daniel.freeman@translink.ca>](mailto:daniel.freeman@translink.ca)

To: ["Brown, Steve" <Steve.Brown@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Steve.Brown@vancouver.ca)

["Storer, Paul" <paul.storer@vancouver.ca>](mailto:paul.storer@vancouver.ca)

Date: 11/10/2021 1:12:32 PM

Subject: [EXT] Bus Stop Balancing & Bus Priority on #4 & #7

Attachments: Summary of Engagement Routes 4 & 7.docx

[TL Public Engagement Notification.docx](#)

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Paul & Steve

**I am pleased to provide you with a memo in advance of TransLink and City of Vancouver's Bus Stop Balancing project, beginning January 17, 2022. As discussed, please forward this letter and attached engagement summary to COV Mayor and Council before November 15.**

Starting on Nov 15, TransLink and the City of Vancouver are working together to conduct another round of bus stop balancing, this time on Routes 4 and 7 and constructing a select number of bus bulbs along West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Kitsilano. The proposal has been developed in consultation with City staff and based on input from key community stakeholders.

Upcoming milestones include:

- November 15, 2021 – Notification Period: Public consultation starts, signs are posted at bus stops, email and voicemail notifications through partnership with Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- January 17, 2022 – Implementation Period: Bus Stop Balancing pilot launch
- Early Spring 2022 – Bus Bulb Design Engagement
- Spring 2022 - Bus Bulb Construction

We expect that customers will save over 6 minutes per round trip in the busiest times of day with the improvements.

We have carefully developed our proposal in consultation with City staff and key community stakeholders to maximize travel time savings and accessibility. Having carefully considered the trade-offs of closing each stop, we estimate that **92% of customers on Route 4 and 87% of customers on Route 7 are able to use their existing bus stop and enjoy a faster, more reliable trip.**

Balanced bus stops and bus bulbs on Routes 4 and 7 mean:

- Faster and more reliable commutes, with improved overall trip times and fewer delays,
- Safer and smoother rides, with more space on buses and less stopping, starting, and lane changing,
- More space for walking and shopping where bus bulbs are installed, and opportunities for public space amenities (e.g. patios, bike racks, seating, etc.)

**What's different about this round of Bus Stop Balancing:**

- Broader consultation with stakeholders
- New stops being built will allow us to consolidate stops that would otherwise be too far apart to close
- Two stops will be upgraded to allow the bus' ramp to be deployed, ensuring the 4 and 7 remain accessible to people with mobility impairments

**Quick facts:**

Of 192 stops on routes 4 and 7,

- 45 will be removed,
- 8 new stops will be added to ensure balanced spacing,
- 16 shelters and 2 benches will be moved,
- 2 will be upgraded to ensure accessibility,
- The number of bus bulbs will be confirmed once the unit cost is determined.

As supported by the City of Vancouver Council motion of April 14, we have expanded our outreach and engagement efforts to even more communities and stakeholders for upcoming bus stop balancing and bus bulb construction. We encourage any feedback you may have in terms of who we ought to reach and we will be diligent in building on the lessons learned through this past program.

**We are making significant efforts to consult with and inform customers of our bus stop balancing initiatives.** Those efforts include:

- **Consulting with citizen advisory committees** such as TransLink's User Advisory Committee and the City of Vancouver's Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, Senior's Advisory Committee, and Transportation Advisory Committee;
- **Proactively contacting 675 stakeholders** including community organizations, health organizations, seniors' centres and residences, faith organizations, schools and parent advisory groups, disability groups, social services, Indigenous groups, women's groups, childcare centres, lower income and transit reliant workers, and business associations to advise of project activities, timelines and invite comments;
- **Partnering with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)** to send emails and voicemails to their membership along the routes; and
- **Posting signs at every stop** of Routes 4 and 7 to notify customers of the proposal and invite comments.

Public engagement begins November 15, with a six-week notification period. Temporary trial closures of the least used stops will begin on January 17 for an additional six weeks. In early spring, all feedback will be evaluated prior to making permanent decision on stop closures. Bus bulb consultation will be led by the City of Vancouver with support from TransLink. Feedback on bus bulb design is ongoing, with construction taking place in Spring 2022.

Bus Stop Balancing and constructing Bus bulbs are just a few of the Bus Speed and Reliability (BSR) and RapidBus projects being delivered in partnership with the City of Vancouver. Since 2019, TransLink has committed more than 5.15 million in funds to support projects in the City of Vancouver to make transit competitive with driving by implementing bus lanes, signal and regulatory enhancements, bus bulbs, and more. These include bus lanes on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue; bus priority pilot projects on Main Street/Kingsway, 49th Avenue and South Granville; red paint enhancements in eight bus-only zones; and upcoming projects on East Broadway and West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

We thank you for your partnership for this critical program to ensure our customers and City of Vancouver transit riders receive fast, frequent, and reliable service.

Daniel

**DANIEL FREEMAN** (he/him/his)  
 Senior Manager  
 Bus Priority Programs  
 Transportation Planning & Policy Division  
[translink.ca](mailto:translink.ca) [\[can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com\]](mailto:can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com)



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Routes 4 & 7 Bus Stop Balancing  
Summary of Engagement/Outreach

Routes 4 and 7 notifications sent	Number contacted (as of Nov 15)
Letters to businesses & BIAs	613
Childcare Service providers	2
Community Organizations, Neighbourhood houses, social services, women’s groups	19
Healthcare Services	2
Faith Community	9
Seniors Organizations & Residences	10
Schools & PACs	26
Outreach to specific stakeholder groups	Number contacted (as of Nov 15)
CNIB- email blast for clients in designated postal codes	TBC
CNIB- call blast for clients in designated postal codes	TBC
Disability Alliance BC	TBC
CoV Transportation Committee	
CoV Senior’s Advisory Committee, Transportation sub-committee	
TransLink User Advisory Committee	
Aboriginal Mother Centre Society	
May MacLean Housing	
Warriors Against Violence	
MST Development Corporation	
Kiwassa Neighbourhood House	



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Daniel Freeman  
Senior Manager, Bus Priority Programs  
TransLink