

## MEMORANDUM

March 20, 2014

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Penny Ballem, City Manager  
Sadhu Johnston, Deputy City Manager  
Janice MacKenzie, City Clerk  
Mike Magee, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Rena Kendall-Craden, Director of Corporate Communications  
Kevin Quinlan, Director of Policy and Communications, Mayor's Office  
Lynda Graves, Administrative Manager, City Manager's Office

FROM: Peter Judd, P.Eng., General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Update on Downtown Bus Service Review - Phase 2 Consultation

TransLink and the City of Vancouver (the City) are continuing to partner on a review of local bus services within downtown Vancouver and develop a shared vision for the near future (1-5 years). The downtown has experienced significant increase in population and employment over the last 20 years, but the bus network has not adapted to reflect these changes. Similarly, the opening of the Canada Line in 2009 has created entirely new destinations for residents and visitors to downtown Vancouver. Also, as the City looks to introduce better public spaces through the activation of streets, it is important to fully understand the impacts to transit.

In the summer of 2013 staff met with the public during Phase 1 of the Downtown Bus Service Review (DBSR) and interacted with over 400 residents through a series of open house events. Several thousand engaged the process online. Over 600 questionnaires on how local bus service in the downtown could be improved were completed. Based on their feedback, staff and consultants developed new concepts in response to resident concerns.

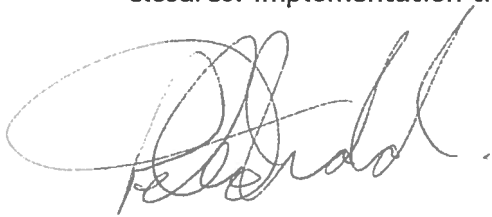
With the assistance of City staff, TransLink is now finalizing Phase 2 of the DBSR which includes public consultation on bus routing alternatives for downtown Vancouver. The purpose of this consultation is to get feedback on the most promising alternatives that have been short-listed to address the key themes identified in Phase 1. The Phase 2 consultation period is April 2 to April 22, 2014 and will involve 4 open house events in the downtown, as well as

engagement with the other City Committees and community groups within the study boundary. Starting April 2, information on the proposed concepts will be made available through the project website ([translink.ca/downtownbusreview](http://translink.ca/downtownbusreview)). Social media and other online tools will also be used extensively to engage with the public, building upon the success in the first phase of consultation for this project. Participants will also be encouraged to complete a questionnaire in order to gauge public acceptability for the different alternatives presented to them. TransLink will take the lead on media relations for this phase of the project and the City will provide support, as necessary.

While these new bus route concepts will achieve some of the key objectives identified in Phase 1, such as better connections between neighbourhoods and to rapid transit stations, we expect that the proposed changes will impact some transit users and their current route. We also anticipate there will be significant interest in the #5 bus re-route, as a result of the upcoming VIVA street activation on 800 Robson Street, adjacent to the Art Gallery. City Engineering staff have been working with TransLink to make the necessary infrastructure changes to improve the current seasonal re-route to allow eastbound #5 buses to turn left from Robson to Burrard and avoid the circuitous routing along Thurlow and Smithe used in previous years. This work is set to be complete by June 21, in coordination with the Jazz Festival and VIVA summer activation.

The information gathered from both consultation phases of the Downtown Bus Review, along with the VIVA program evaluation, and other downtown planning processes, will be used to report back to City Council on the potential for a permanent plaza on the 800 block of Robson later this year.

Following the Phase 2 Consultation, the study team will refine the set of promising network design concepts using the feedback received from the public and stakeholders. This summer, City staff will work with TransLink to develop a set of recommendations, including a shared five-year vision for the downtown local bus network and near-term and medium-term priorities to achieve that vision. This vision will help guide decision-making and investment by both TransLink and the City over the next five years. The recommended vision will account for multiple future scenarios to allow for decisions that are yet to be made regarding street closures. Implementation timeframes will be subject to resource availability.



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PJ/np