

GVCSS Supports Access Transit Plan

On June 27, 2007 GVCSS Executive Director Ron McLeod appeared as a delegate at the business meeting of the TransLink Board. In his capacity as delegate, Mr. McLeod endorsed the recommendations made by TransLink staff with regard to their proposed restructuring initiatives to improve the current custom transit services in the Lower Mainland. McLeod conveyed his appreciation to the TransLink Board for engaging the community in a broad consultative process which was conducted over a two year period, and for ensuring that all stakeholders had a say in formulating the future Access Transit Plan.

On behalf of GVCSS, McLeod also pointed out several key recommendations from the Access Transit Plan which are listed below. These recommendations will greatly benefit users of the transit system, and in particular, help make custom transit service more responsive to people with disabilities:

1. Custom transit service levels are to be increased by 30% over the next three years.
2. TransLink intends to create a User's Advisory Committee to screen service complaints and generally ensure better service accountability.
3. TransLink will implement Universal Accessibility Guidelines to cover all aspects of the transit fleet including infrastructure; thus reducing barriers to the use of the transit system.
4. TransLink plans to create a more flexible booking and registration system for custom transit users to facilitate easier and quicker trip bookings.
5. The TransLink Board has decided to allow time for an orderly transition to new contract arrangements (i.e. fewer service providers). This approach will minimize disruption to the custom transit system, and promote better cooperation and collaboration between the existing service contractors while the system-wide changes are being implemented.

In conclusion, GVCSS believes that TransLink and its custom transit operators are delivering an excellent service now; however the changes that have been proposed by TransLink staff will make the system even better.