

#CURECONGESTION VOTERS' GUIDE

April 26, 2017










On May 9, when Metro Vancouver residents cast their ballots in the B.C. general election, they need to know what each of the provincial parties will do to address congestion on our roads and overcrowding on public transit in Metro Vancouver. The fact is, transit service has struggled to keep up with the region's fast growing economy and population, and traffic is not only frustrating for drivers – it's affecting our health, environment and quality of life. There's a lot at stake in this election, and the next provincial government has a critical role to play.

As mayors and community leaders responsible for setting transportation priorities for the region, the [Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation](#) has embarked on a public outreach campaign so residents can learn about the [10-Year Vision](#), our comprehensive plan to improve transit, roads, and active transportation infrastructure. Through our [#CureCongestion](#) campaign, we're asking political parties aspiring to form the next provincial government to tell voters how they plan to work with the Mayors' Council to complete the 10-Year Vision.

This voters' guide includes responses to the #CureCongestion Questionnaire from the three political parties – the **BC Green Party**, the **BC Liberal Party** and the **BC NDP** – that had nominated candidates in the majority of seats in Metro Vancouver at the outset of the provincial election period (April 11). The Mayors' Council has asked all three parties to commit to the following actions by Fall 2017:

1. Follow through on the current government's commitment to match the federal government, dollar for dollar, in its investment of \$2.2 billion towards rapid transit improvements and the construction of Broadway Subway and Surrey LRT;
2. Support essential upgrades to the existing SkyTrain network by cost-sharing additional rail cars, new storage and maintenance facilities and station upgrades, to address overcrowding and ready the system for expected future demand;
3. Follow through on the existing provincial commitment to provide at least 1/3 of the capital costs towards replacing the aging Pattullo Bridge, and, on an urgent basis, assist in securing an additional federal share in the project;
4. Develop a service improvement strategy with TransLink to deliver provincial financial support towards improving HandyDART service, in recognition of its critical role in providing access to the provincial healthcare system for residents who can't always use conventional transit services;
5. Commit to authorizing the Mayors' Council's request for a development cost charge for transit in the fall legislative session so it can be enacted by TransLink by 2020, as one of the regional revenue sources for Phase One of the 10-Year Vision, to keep the plan on track and fairly funded; and,
6. Support the expansion of bus service region-wide, improvements to road conditions for drivers, and enhanced safety for cyclists and pedestrians by working with the Mayors' Council to ensure that remaining operating and capital costs of the Vision are fully funded in a manner that is fair and equitable to Metro Vancouver taxpayers.

Completing the 10-Year Vision: Comparison of major party commitments

			
Match \$2.2-billion federal funding for new Rapid Transit Projects	✓	✓	✓
Upgrades to SkyTrain to meet growing demand (\$360 million)	 Not specified. Will “promote investment in clean transportation initiatives and technology” and “will support the Mayors Council 10-year plan to upgrade Metro Vancouver’s transportation system.”	 Not specified, however states commitment to “continuing to work with all of our partners to finalize important details about new rapid transit and other projects.”	 Commits to fund “the full 40 per cent provincial capital share of the Mayors’ plan, all three phases.”
Replacing the aging Pattullo Bridge (one-third of capital costs and assist with securing federal contribution)	 Not specified. “We support the Mayors’ Council’s plan and will match Federal funding for the plan.”	 Committed to funding one-third, “subject to a strong business case.” Will continue to work with mayors and the federal government to explore funding options.	 Will fund 40 per cent provincial capital share
Funding to expand HandyDART service	 Supports “expansion of transit service that improves accessible public transportation, including improving HandyDART.” Phase Two commitment not specified.	 Will “continue to work with the Mayors’ Council and TransLink to bring further improvements to HandyDart services.” Phase Two commitment not specified.	 Commits to the province playing a “bigger role” and “working with TransLink to find long and lasting solutions to improve HandyDART.” Phase Two commitment not specified.
Support completion of the 10-Year Vision (new DCC, work with Mayors’ Council to identify regional funding sources)	 Will “empower mayors to implement a regional green transportation plan... and give local governments greater certainty and predictability in Provincial support for their transit plans.”	 Legislative requirement that any new revenue source will require holding a referendum.	 Committed to “working with Mayors to find a fair and equitable long-term solution to fund transit.” Supportive of studying mobility pricing. “We welcome the Mayors to bring any funding options to the table going forward.”

The Mayors' Council requested responses from the three parties to a #CureCongestion campaign questionnaire. Responses to the questions are provided in their entirety, starting on page 4, below.

The focus of the #CureCongestion campaign is to raise awareness of urgent transportation priorities in Metro Vancouver, and the investments and other support needed from the next provincial government to complete the 10-Year Vision. As of the date of publication of this Voters' Guide (April 26), an issue has emerged in the election campaign that was not included in the Mayors' Council platform and questionnaire. We are addressing it here in order to provide voters with a regional perspective and provide important background information.

On April 9, the B.C. Liberal Party proposed capping tolls charged for crossing the Golden Ears and Port Mann bridges at \$500 per vehicle per year, and the B.C. NDP proposed eliminating tolls for at least three years. The Mayors' Council has expressed concern that neither policy would help affordability of transportation over the long term, nor improve our region's quality of life. In fact, the proposals are an acknowledgment that the current tolling system is broken and in need of a re-think.

In response to the proposals, the Mayors' Council published an [article in the Vancouver Sun](#) suggesting that instead of implementing short-term policy changes, the next provincial government should be working with the region to introduce more equitable and affordable solutions for reducing traffic congestion, improving public transit and paying for the transportation infrastructure we will need to serve our ever-growing population.

We believe that elected leaders who have a role in shaping the future of transportation in Metro Vancouver must agree on some key principles that should guide all of the decisions we make — independently and collectively. These principles are:

- 1. Mobility.** Changes to our transportation network must improve mobility for people and goods in the region, by providing more choices, reducing travel times and improving the experience of users.
- 2. Accountability.** Every dollar raised from fares, fees, taxes or other revenues intended for transportation must contribute to improvements that benefit the travelling public and that will help meet our objective of reducing congestion.
- 3. Fairness.** Benefits of new transportation infrastructure and services, and revenues to support them, should be applied in an equitable way throughout the region. Our transportation network is integrated — all users should contribute to maintaining it.
- 4. Affordability.** A high-quality transportation network that improves mobility gives residents more choice where to live and work, which helps combat the region's housing affordability challenges. At the same time, building and maintaining this network must respect taxpayers by making smart choices to keep costs low, and maximize return on investment.
- 5. Engagement.** Metro Vancouver residents and businesses should have a say in establishing priorities and making choices about transportation improvements, and how those improvements are paid for.

An important study is about to begin later this spring that will provide recommendations on a made-in-BC solution for pricing transportation in this region, and will tackle the issue of tolling head-on. The Mobility Pricing Independent Commission — led by experts and local community leaders — will

undertake extensive research and public consultation, and look at best practices from other jurisdictions around the world.

The commission will recommend ways to improve our current approach to pricing roads, bridges, and public transit to ensure we have a system that is fair for residents across the region, contributes to reducing traffic congestion, and helps us fund new transportation services. Once the commission completes its work and residents have had their say, the Mayors' Council and provincial government can then make decisions about the best way forward.

More information about the role of mobility pricing in completing the 10-Year Vision is available on [our website](#).

#CURECONGESTION QUESTIONNAIRE

<i>1. Do you agree that reducing congestion in Metro Vancouver — for the benefit of the region's economy, health and environment — should be a priority for the next provincial government?</i>	
BC Green Party	The BC Green Party is committed to reducing congestion as part of our transportation strategy. Any attempt to deal seriously with climate change and air pollution must address the transportation sector. The BC Green Party's plan is designed to transition the province to a low carbon economy, and sustainable transportation is a key piece of this plan. Existing planning by the Ministry of Transportation is heavily focused on roads and bridges, with greenhouse gas emissions reductions and pollution control as an afterthought. The BC Green Party's transportation plan puts sustainability as a primary consideration for planning. We will develop criteria for sustainability analysis of transportation investments, which will include consideration of cumulative impacts. A BC Green Government will promote investment in clean transportation initiatives and technology that creates jobs and economic activity without increasing greenhouse gas emissions, and we will promote choices with a lower carbon footprint. Initiatives will include transportation demand management strategies to reduce driving and encourage modal switching.
BC Liberal Party	Absolutely. British Columbia is Canada's Pacific Gateway and Metro Vancouver is one of the fastest growing regions in the country so it is critically important that we invest broadly in our transportation network. As we invest unprecedented dollars in Metro Vancouver transit, we have an opportunity to ensure we do so in the smartest way possible, for the 21 st century and beyond. Today's BC Liberal vision is to build communities connected by transit, with affordable housing, leaving a smaller environmental footprint. We're also committed to resolving the single largest point of congestion in the province by replacing the George Massy Tunnel. The replacement bridge will be built to modern seismic standards, include

	dedicated transit lanes, permit cycling and future rapid transit and be built upon the existing right of way to reduce agricultural impacts. By investing to deliver the 10-Year Vision and upgrade provincial infrastructure, we will help ensure Metro Vancouver grows in a way that creates jobs, limits congestion, cuts emissions, and gives people more time with their families.
BC NDP	<p>Yes, reducing congestion in the region will be a top priority for a John Horgan BC NDP provincial government. Public transit is the key to get people moving, cure congestion, get people home faster to their families, grow our economy, fight climate change, and create good jobs and livable communities</p> <p>For 16 years, Christy Clark and the BC Liberals ignored public transit in the region, forced us into a made-to-fail referendum, put unfair tolls on key commuter bridges that forced traffic to the untolled bridges, creating critical congestion and stalling the economy. Christy Clark put her pet projects first – projects that communities do not want, and are not part of the regional plan. The result? More congestion and gridlock in the region, commuter frustration, and setting the region back in moving forward with transportation planning.</p>
2. What is your vision for the British Columbia government’s responsibility to work with other levels of government to reduce traffic congestion and improve public transit across Metro Vancouver?	
BC Green Party	The BC Greens believe that the Provincial government should work collaboratively with other levels of government, and give local governments greater certainty and predictability in Provincial support for their transit plans. We are committed to reducing traffic congestion and increasing sustainable, clean transportation for British Columbians. We will use tools such as mobility pricing to manage congestion and generate funds for public transportation upgrades. A BC Green Government will empower Greater Vancouver mayors to implement a regional green transportation plan. A BC Green government will promote investment in clean transportation initiatives and technology that creates jobs and economic activity without increasing greenhouse gas emissions. A BC Green government will promote choices with a lower carbon footprint. Initiatives will include transportation demand management strategies to reduce driving and encourage modal switching.
BC Liberal Party	Today’s BC Liberal government has always recognized the need for the provincial government and local governments to work together on major infrastructure projects, and has partnered with local governments in a variety of ways to ensure local governments have revenue sources they can rely on for current and future needs. We have a positive working

	<p>relationship with the federal government and will continue to work closely with our federal counterparts to secure ongoing infrastructure funding for local governments. Today's BC Liberal government was pleased to be the first jurisdiction in Canada to sign a transit agreement with our federal partners. As a result, investments in Phase 1 of the 10-Year Vision for Transit and Transportation in Metro Vancouver are now underway. This \$2 billion expenditure includes: Additional SkyTrain vehicles for the Expo, Millennium, and Canada Lines; A new West Coast Express locomotive; A new SeaBus; Upgrades to SkyTrain stations; and Design and planning for Rapid Transit South of the Fraser and the Millennium Line Extension along Broadway. We are committed to working with the Mayor's Council and our federal counterparts to deliver further improvements to transit services.</p>
<p>BC NDP</p>	<p>After 16 years of the BC Liberals it's time we had a government that worked with mayors and other levels of government on a fair plan for transit. Enough with the games, the delays, and fighting with mayors at every turn. We commit to be full partners with mayors and other levels of government on transit. Where the BC Liberals have quibbled and delayed, we will extend a helping hand and take immediate action to relieve congestion get people and goods moving in Metro Vancouver.</p> <p>The mayors have a 10 year transit plan. A John Horgan BC NDP government will be a full partner in that plan.</p> <p>But we need to go further than that. These commitments are just a first step. They are the bare minimum that needs to be done to address critical congestion and mobility in the region.</p> <p>We can do so much more to alleviate congestion and get people and goods moving. As the region grows – by 2040, the region anticipates 1 million new people, and 3 million new daily trips – we need to plan for the future. The cost of doing nothing is the highest cost of all. We need to ensure we are planning ahead to protect our economy, our quality of life, and the environment.</p> <p>We need a bold vision for transit that will serve us 30, 40, 50 years into the future. Imagine the future we can build together. Now is the time to work together -- with mayors and communities - to build that vision. So that when the 10 year plan is completed, we have shovels in the ground on the next 10 years.</p>

3. How will you work with the Mayors' Council to deliver the 10-Year Vision for Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation?	
BC Green Party	A BC Green Government will empower Greater Vancouver mayors to implement a regional green transportation plan: we will support the Mayors Council's 10-year plan to upgrade Metro Vancouver's transportation system. A BC Green Government would work with Metro Vancouver Mayors to develop and implement a rational tolling system to manage congestion; to amortize the cost of the Port Mann and Golden Ears bridges; and to finance the region's share of the Mayor's plan. A BC Green Government will match Federal funding for the Mayors Council's plan. We would suspend work on the Massey Tunnel replacement pending a comprehensive and transparent review of alternatives, in cooperation with the Mayors' Council.
BC Liberal Party	Today's BC Liberal government has a proven track record working with local governments and organizations like the Mayors' Council. As noted, we were pleased to be the first jurisdiction in Canada to reach an agreement with the Government of Canada on Phase 1 improvements. We're committed to matching the federal government's contribution for Phase 2. With this historic level of funding from senior levels of governments for Phase 2 (\$4.4 billion), Today's BC Liberals are committed to continuing to work with all of our partners to finalize important details about these new rapid transit and other projects so that we can move forward and get 'shovels in the ground' as quickly as possible.
BC NDP	We are committing to fund the full 40 per cent provincial capital share of the Mayor's plan, all three phases. Our platform provides the needed 40 per cent of capital - \$300 million per year over ten years. We are also committing to working with mayors to find a long-term solution to fund transit and transportation in the region that is equitable and fair. Everyone agrees the current model is not fair and it is not working. We welcome the mayors to bring funding options to the table going forward. We are committed to breaking the gridlock.
4. If elected, will your government follow through on the current government's commitment to match the federal government's investment of \$2.2 billion towards rapid transit service expansion, including the Broadway Subway and Surrey LRT?	
BC Green Party	Yes, a BC Green Government will match Federal funding.
BC Liberal Party	Today's BC Liberals will match the federal government's \$2.2 billion investment in Metro Vancouver transit projects over 11 years. We are committed to negotiating with all three

	levels of government on project specifics, with the Surrey LRT Project and the Broadway Line our top two priorities.
BC NDP	Yes, we are committing to fund the full 40 per cent provincial capital share of the Mayor's plan, all three phases. We will build light rail in Surrey. We will build the Broadway SkyTrain. We will add more B-lines and buses across the region. And unlike Christy Clark, we will work with the mayors to get people moving, and we'll get started right away.
<i>5. If elected, will your government follow through on the current government's commitment to provide at least one-third of the capital costs towards replacing the aging Pattullo Bridge, and assist in securing an additional federal share in the project?</i>	
BC Green Party	We support the Mayors' Council's plan and will match Federal funding for the plan. We will invest an additional \$152 million in capital expenditures to fully match the federal contribution of \$460 million for public transit infrastructure.
BC Liberal Party	Today's BC Liberals believe we have a shared responsibility to all British Columbians to make sure these projects are managed well and delivered at the best cost to taxpayers. The safety of the travelling public is a key priority for us, as it is for the Mayors' Council and TransLink. Not only will the new bridge bring major relief for traffic in the area, it will meet modern seismic, wind and other safety standards as we ensure all of our crossings, including both the Pattullo Bridge and George Massey Tunnel, are as safe as possible for the travelling public. Today's BC Liberals have committed to fund one-third of the cost of the Pattullo Bridge Replacement project, subject to a strong business case, and we will continue to work with the mayors and the federal government to explore funding options.
BC NDP	Unlike Christy Clark, we are committing to fund the full 40 per cent provincial capital share of the Mayor's plan, all three phases, which includes the Pattullo bridge. The aging Pattullo Bridge is in critical condition and needs to be replaced. An engineering report to TransLink warned the bridge may not be able to withstand an earthquake or even a powerful wind storm and must be replaced, or closed, in less than a decade. The report says that if procurement work isn't started by fall 2017, replacement won't be done in time, and the bridge will have to be closed before construction of the new one is complete. It would be a critical situation if this vital connection was closed permanently, or for any prolonged duration. As drivers know, even short maintenance closures of the Pattullo Bridge cause gridlock and traffic chaos.

	Christy Clark has fought Mayors every step of the way and refused to provide the needed funding to replace the Pattullo Bridge. The BC Liberals have not provided funding for Pattullo bridge or the expanded bus/train network in Phase 2 or Phase 3 of the Mayor's Plan.
6. What role should the Province of BC play in improving HandyDART service?	
BC Green Party	The BC Greens believe that the Province has a role to play in supporting expansion of transit service that improves accessible public transportation, including improving HandyDART services. We will invest an additional \$152 million in capital expenditures to fully match the federal contribution of \$460 million for public transit infrastructure, which includes funding for new and more efficient buses, including cleaner burning CNG---fueled buses, and new buses for HandyDART service expansion.
BC Liberal Party	Last summer TransLink undertook a comprehensive review of HandyDart policies and services, working with relevant stakeholders to improve the system. We are pleased to see many positive findings, including that: 98% of all clients would recommend HandyDART services to those who need it; 95% of clients are very satisfied with their experiences (including vehicle suitability and driver behavior); and 91% of respondents are satisfied with the overall quality of HandyDART services. In collaboration with our partners - the federal government, BC Transit, TransLink and local governments across the province - we continue to look for ways to help meet the diverse transportation needs of British Columbians. That is why, last year, Today's BC Liberal government announced significant funding to expand HandyDART service in BC Transit communities across B.C. In addition, our government's recent \$246 million investment in TransLink Phase One projects in Metro Vancouver has enabled a 15% increase in HandyDART service expansion in the region. In Metro Vancouver, there will be an increase of 85,000 trips, resulting in greater trip availability for customers. Today's BC Liberals will continue to work with the Mayors' Council and TransLink to bring further improvements to HandyDart services in Metro Vancouver and across British Columbia.
BC NDP	HandyDART has been severely underserved by the BC Liberals. Every day in British Columbia, seniors and people with disabilities are denied HandyDART service, and are left stuck without the ride they desperately need, resulting in missed medical appointments and social isolation. HandyDART service hours were frozen by Christy Clark and the BC Liberals in 2009, and as a result, trip denials went up over 600 per cent. Service quality has also deteriorated, with riders routinely forced to wait for hours.

	<p>The province needs to play a bigger role. We are committed to working with TransLink and BC Transit to find long and lasting solutions to improve HandyDART service, reduce trip denials, and ensure that seniors and people with disabilities get the rides they need.</p>
<p>7. What should the Province of BC do to ensure that the remaining operating and capital costs of the Vision are fully funded in a manner that is fair and equitable to Metro Vancouver taxpayers, in order to enable the region to improve road conditions and expand bus and rail service to meet the needs of our growing population?</p>	
<p>BC Green Party</p>	<p>The BC Greens believe that the Provincial government should give local governments greater certainty and predictability in Provincial support for their transit plans. We have committed to supporting the Mayors Council's plan. A BC Green Government would work with Metro Vancouver Mayors to develop and implement a rational tolling system to manage congestion; to amortize the cost of the Port Mann and Golden Ears bridges; and to finance the region's share of the Mayor's plan.</p>
<p>BC Liberal Party</p>	<p>Today's BC Liberals are focused on creating jobs, growing a diverse economy and controlling government spending and our plan is delivering results - British Columbia's economy is the strongest in Canada. By keeping our fiscal house in order, we are able to invest in the priorities that matter most to British Columbians, including transit improvements and expansions in Metro Vancouver. We remain committed to matching dollar-for-dollar the federal government's \$2.2 billion investment in the capital costs of new transit projects in Metro Vancouver over the next 11 years, including our commitments to new rapid transit projects in Surrey and Vancouver. This is in addition to the almost a quarter of a billion dollars (\$246 million) committed by our government for Phase 1 of the Mayors' Ten-Year Vision. With this historic level of funding from senior levels of governments for Phase Two (\$4.4 billion), Today's BC Liberals will continue to work with all of our partners to finalize important details about these new rapid transit and other projects so that we can move forward and get 'shovels in the ground' as quickly as possible. Our government has consistently said to the Mayors' Council that they need to ensure that the public fully understands both the plan and the funding mechanism. We believe that it is critical that this process includes public engagement. Today's BC Liberals respect the outcome of the 2015 transit referendum. The legislative requirement is that any new revenue source must receive a mandate from those who would pay for it. We remain committed to working with mayors and will hold a second referendum at their request. As the Mayors themselves have pointed out, subsequent referendums on transit matters often find more success.</p>

BC NDP	We are committing to working with Mayors to find a fair and equitable long-term solution to fund transit in the region. Everyone agrees the current model is not working. It is unfair. It is driving traffic to untolled bridges and creating critical congestion. The Mayors are set to begin their long-term funding study and consultation this summer. We welcome that work and we welcome the Mayors to bring any funding options to the table going forward. Unlike Christy Clark, we are committed to breaking gridlock in the region.
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ABOUT #CURECONGESTION

The Cure Congestion campaign, an initiative of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, aims to educate the region's voters about the 10-Year Vision for Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation and ensure transportation is a key issue in the lead up to the May 9th B.C. election.

<http://www.curecongestion.ca>

ABOUT THE 10-YEAR VISION FOR METRO VANCOUVER TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION

Phase One of the 10-Year Vision, a \$2 billion plan, includes more frequent public transit service, road improvements and active transportation infrastructure. Phase One was approved in November 2016 and is being rolled out by TransLink starting this year. Two-thirds, or \$1.3 billion, of the total capital and operating costs of the plan was funded from TransLink's existing funding sources, cost savings and efficiencies, and new regional revenue sources.

Phase Two of the 10-Year Vision includes urgently-needed infrastructure such as the Millennium Line Broadway Extension in Vancouver, a new LRT system in Surrey, and replacement of the aging Pattullo Bridge, as well as additional road improvements and expansion of bus, rail and HandyDART services to meet the needs of our region's growing population.