



Metro Vancouver Mobility Pricing Independent Commission Minutes – Meeting 5 February 14, 2018

Minutes of the Metro Vancouver Mobility Pricing Independent Commission (MPIC) Meeting held Monday, February 14, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. in the Health Room, Doctors of BC, 1665 West Broadway, Vancouver, British Columbia.

PRESENT:

Allan Seckel, Chair

Joy MacPhail, Vice-Chair

Jennifer Clarke

Harj Dhaliwal

Graham McCargar

Lori MacDonald

Gavin McGarrigle (departed at 4:58 p.m.)

Michael McKnight

Bruce Rozenhart

Philip (Pip) Steele

Grace Wong

REGRETS:

Iain Black

Paul Landry

Elizabeth Model

ALSO PRESENT:

Andrew Devlin, TransLink (Item 3)

Ilan Elgar, TransLink

Lee Falling, Compass Resource Management

Daniel Firth, Executive Director, Mobility Pricing Independent Commission Staff

Vincent Gonsalves, Mobility Pricing Independent Commission Staff Secretariat

Raymond Kan, Mobility Pricing Independent Commission Staff Secretariat

Fearghal King, Mobility Pricing Independent Commission Staff Secretariat

Adrian Lightstone, WSP Group (via teleconference)

Lindsay Neufeld, Mobility Pricing Independent Commission Staff Secretariat

Sally Rudd, Compass Resource Management

Don Buchanan, City of Surrey

PREPARATION OF MINUTES:

Rae Ratslef, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

1. Chair's Welcome

Allan Seckel, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m. Commissioners were advised that the minutes of the prior meeting would be considered at the next meeting.

The Chair referred to a distributed paper titled “Commissioner Profile Piece”, and asked that Commissioners complete and submit it for use by staff in communicating to the public about MPIC and its membership.

In response to an invitation to provide feedback on the workshop held January 31, 2018, comments included:

- Reminder of the many and varied influencers/allies that can play a role in deepening the conversation
- Observation that there was no reporting out following the table breakouts
- Several commissioners moved from table to table to listen to the conversations
- Confirmation that any formal submissions from groups are provided to the MPIC
- Meeting with the BC Trucking Association will be held the following week
- To date the only formal submission has been from the City of New Westminster
- Appreciation for the level of engagement and recommendations received.

2. Structured Decision-Making Part A

Sally Rudd, Compass Resource Management, reviewed an overhead presentation titled “Round 2 Scenarios”, and highlighted:

- SDM Process – Objectives for Today
- SDM Session Outline
 - Part A: Round 2 Scenarios
 - Part B: Direction for Round 3
- Role of the MPIC members during the SDM process.

Lee Falling, Compass Resource Management, reviewed a presentation titled “Baseline 2016 vs. Baseline 2030”, and highlighted:

- Map and data on a.m. peak, off-peak, p.m. peak and total million minutes/day
- Average time in congestion (min/day per household) by home zone area based on a one day, mid-week trip diary
- Round 2 Scenarios and key learnings relative to each:
 - 2 Central Business District (CBD) Cordon Scenarios
 - Bridges Scenarios: Bridges (\$5), Bridges Time of Day (TOD), Bridges TOD and Direction, and Bridges (MSC)
 - Distance-based Charging Scenarios.

Discussion ensued on:

- Interest in data on the types of peak period trips in order to assist in determining what percentage of travellers have flexibility

- 2 Central CBD Cordon Scenarios pricing and impact on congestion
- Whether to include a daily cap for the Bridges Scenarios
- Lack of a good model to reflect weekend behaviour
- Interest in data on what percentage of commuters need to be taken off the road to significantly reduce congestion, and what system would drive that outcome
- Recognition that there is also mid-day congestion, not just am/pm peak
- Potential to increase DBC for areas where there is good transit access.

Ms. Rudd led the review of an on-table document titled “MPIC Hand-Out: Summary of Evaluation Criteria, Round 2 Scenarios”, and displayed a consequence table illustrating objectives, units, Base 2030, CBD (MSC) and Bridges (\$1).

Discussion ensued on:

- Interest in the costs and technology of collecting on the options
- MSC shows the alignment of charges from a congestion perspective
- Interest in the proportionate jump in costs for options as compared to income, and specifically, whether some scenarios are less regressive
- Interest to see the impact of options on different income groups
- Implications of different bridge crossing costs
- Need to focus on reducing congestion, which may mean increasing transit use
- Confirmation that in all scenarios the transit was held constant
- Whether an improvement to the transit system would translate to increased use
- Note that some scenarios have a fixed cost of collection
- Importance of considering the timeline for implementation of scenarios
- Mayors’ Council target of 2021 to implement mobility pricing
- Interest in framing options from the perspective of implementation
- Note that some options may be possible but not possible to implement today
- Clarification on the amount of money that needs to be raised.

Ms. Failing provided each commissioner with a Direct Ranking Questionnaire to complete. An example ranking form was reviewed.

3. TransLink’s Transit Fare Review

Andrew Devlin, TransLink, referred to a presentation titled “Transit Fare Review” and highlighted:

- Rationale, goals and objectives for a fare review
- Current three-zone fare system for SkyTrain and SeaBus
- Completion of Phase 3, and plans to finish the review by mid/late 2018
- Key learnings in Phase 1 – discovering the issues and opportunities
- Key learnings in Phase 2 – exploring options for pricing by distance, time of travel and service type

- Focus in Phase 3 on seeking public and stakeholder input on distance travelled, fare products, and customer discounts
- Shortlisted options for pricing by distance structure consulted on in Phase 3.

Discussion ensued on:

- Real vs. theoretical options
- Ability to upgrade the Compass system to base fares on km travelled
- Direction from the Board to maintain revenue from fares
- MPIC's mandate
- Need to find a way to cap fares so it is affordable for people to take longer trips
- Need to flag options that would be worse than the current system
- Inequities in the current fare system
- Suggestion that growing transit ridership should be one a key objective.

4. Structured Decision-Making Part B

Ms. Failing displayed a chart titled "Direct Weighting" indicating directors' responses to the earlier ranking exercise.

Discussion ensued on:

- CBD (MSC)
 - People could see it as a "tax grab" if there are no alternatives
 - Preference to start small where there is the most congestion
 - Does not suit the mandate of reducing congestion
 - Would create a fortress around the most expensive real estate in Canada and protect the "wealthiest of the wealthy"
- DBC TOD (2 zones)
 - There is a lot of congestion from travel that does not cross a bridge
 - Sympathetic to the idea of geographic fairness for people further east
 - There is a lot of congestion that is not in downtown Vancouver, but that relates to getting in/out of Vancouver
 - Support for a compromise/blend, e.g. distance based and point charge
 - Support for moving to 12 zones
- Bridges (TOD)
 - Seems to find the "sweet spot" in all the criteria
 - If the objective is to reduce congestion there should not be a charge during off-peak hours, it makes the most sense to charge during peak periods only and on all the bridges
 - Bridges (MSC) gives you more variables with more of an impact
 - Interest in a lower cost, e.g. \$0.10/km vs. \$0.15/km
 - Interest in a simple solution that elected officials can support
- DBC TOD:
 - TOD is more consistent with focusing on congestion

- Raises enough money to deal with other issues, e.g. low income tax break
- Flat DBC:
 - At \$0.15 raises a lot of money
 - Has a lot of support in general
- Packaging DBC and TOD:
 - Support for reducing congestion with this option, so long as there are offsets, e.g. eliminate fuel tax and lower fares
 - Need for a cap for those commuting from the northeast sector
 - Fairness, equity and affordability are key considerations
- TOD:
 - Allows some people to have the discretion to avoid the charge.

Ms. Failing led commissioners through a voting exercise at www.menti.com through which they provided individual responses to the following (Ranking of 0 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree):

- **What principles should guide regional mobility pricing policy for motor vehicles?**
 - User pay ONLY (1.1)
 - User cost ONLY (1.3)
 - User pay AND user cost (4.7)

Agreement: The system should be a combination based on user pay/user cost.

- **How much net revenue should we design for?**
 - Just enough to finance the MC 10-Year Plan (2.1)
 - More than the MC 10-Year Plan (3.5)
 - Just enough to replace the fuel tax (1.5)
 - No target – design for congestion (2.5)

Agreement: Support for raising more than is needed for the Mayors' Council 10-Year Plan, which could be used to offset costs for low income rides, provide cheaper transit, etc.

- **If revenue raised exceeds 10-year plan needs, what should it be used for?**
 - Invest in the transportation system (4.6)
 - Offset costs for low income group (4.3)
 - Other (1.2)

Action: Staff to report back with a "snapshot" of information on what other jurisdictions have done if revenue exceeds more than what is required to fund the system.

Agreement: Interest in learning more about ways to invest to benefit both transit users and drivers.

- **By 2030, what's the target geographical scale for reducing congestion?**
 - Small scale (1.2)
 - Medium scale (2.1)
 - Large scale (4.5).
- **Could it start out small and expand?**
 - It could make sense to start small and expand (1.7)
 - It should be region-wide from the start (4.4).
- **Would you rather...**
 - Save one minute for a million trips (1.5)
 - Save 10 minutes for 10,000 trips (4.4).
- **What is a reasonable upper limit on net household cost?**
 - 0.5% of annual income - \$300/yr (2.2)
 - 1% - \$600/year (2.4)
 - 3% - \$1,800/year (2.3)
 - 5% - \$3,000/year (1.4).
- **How simple or complex should the charging system be?**
 - Simple – no variation (1.5)
 - Somewhat complex – variation in one or two levers (3.3)
 - It depends – as much variation as warranted by the benefits (3.5).
- **To guide us in the next round of scenarios, what's more important?**
 - Achieving congestion benefits (4.5)
 - Generating revenue for the transportation system (3.9)
 - Minimizing net costs for those charged (2.5)
 - Minimizing differences in cost across users (2.7).

Action: Commissioners were asked to email any additional feedback/questions/comments to Daniel Firth.

5. Washington Road User Charging Pilot

Don Buchanan, City of Surrey, referred to a website (<https://waroadusagecharge.org>) providing information on the Washington Road Usage Charge Pilot Project, highlighted:

- An invitation will be sent to all local MLAs and MPs, Mayors' Council and TransLink Board members, MPIC, professional associations and media to

participate in the pilot

- A dongle can tie into a vehicle diagnostic port or an app will report on driving
- Option of having the Department of Motor Vehicles read the vehicle odometer, or paying up front for three months of driving based on the 98th percentile
- Confirmation that the technology exists to do DBC
- The U.S. is framing the discussion as revenue replacement instead of fuel tax
- The Washington pilot is for one year; the objective is to involve 2,000 Washington drivers and 200 British Columbians
- Pilot participants will receive a mock bill

Gavin McGarrigle departed the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

- The U.S. Road User Charge Commission has been operating for four years; it meets quarterly and is televised
- Oregon is on its second pilot; California, Hawaii and Washington are doing pilots
- There is federal funding for implementation
- Washington held a Hack-a-thon to develop the app
- The Washington pilot will run February 1, 2018 to February 1, 2019
- There will be distinct reporting on the Canadian participants.

6. Closing and Other Business

The February 14, 2018 meeting of the Mobility Pricing Independent Commission concluded at 5:04 p.m.

Certified Correct:

Allan Seckel, Chair

Rae Ratslef, Recording Secretary
Raincoast Ventures Ltd.