



Mobility Pricing Independent Commission releases public engagement findings and shortlist of decongestion charging approaches for Metro Vancouver

Phase 1 of the It's Time project included international and local research; engagement with more than 6,000 residents and stakeholders across Metro Vancouver

January 16, 2018 (Vancouver, B.C) -- The Mobility Pricing Independent Commission today released a [report on the first phase of the It's Time project](#), including research on Metro Vancouver's traffic congestion issues and possible decongestion charging approaches, key learnings from other jurisdictions around the world, and feedback from public and stakeholder engagement conducted in fall 2017.

"This report is part of our commitment to being transparent throughout the *It's Time* project as we evaluate options for introducing decongestion charging in Metro Vancouver," said Allan Seckel, Chair of the Commission. "We're very pleased with the response we've received so far, with thousands of people taking time to learn about the project and give us their feedback."

The first phase of research confirmed that congestion is a significant and widespread problem throughout Metro Vancouver. Stakeholders, elected officials and members of the public who participated in surveys and workshops confirmed the Commission's initial findings that there are various traffic 'hot spots' throughout the region, and congestion is having an impact on quality of life, the environment and the economy.

"We want to thank the more than 6,000 Metro Vancouver residents and stakeholders who participated in workshops and in our online engagement," said Joy MacPhail, Vice Chair of the Commission. "Public feedback is important to us and is helping to shape the Commission's work. I would urge anyone interested in the future of transportation in this region to sign up at ItsTimeMV.ca or follow us on [social media](#), so they can provide feedback as we move into our next phase."

During the **fall 2017 public engagement**, the most common feedback received through responses to online questions and in stakeholder workshops included:



- Residents and businesses say they would benefit from **consistent, reliable and predictable travel times**, and would expect to see improvements in these areas if some form of decongestion charging is implemented in Metro Vancouver;
- A decongestion charging policy needs to reflect the unique needs of this region, including: our **geography**; our **multiple urban centres**; our **travel patterns** between home, work, and leisure activities; and, the **varying levels of access to transportation options** across Metro Vancouver;
- **Expanding public transit services and routes** is critical to improving the region's economy and quality of life, by providing more choices for getting around; and,
- People are concerned about **fairness, affordability and impacts to marginalized communities** – all important considerations that the Commission will be taking into account in evaluating decongestion charging approaches.

Research into the **experiences of other jurisdictions around the world**, which is explored in detail in the report, suggests decongestion charging has great potential for reducing congestion but people tend to be skeptical of such systems until they are actually implemented and traffic eases. In other cities, once the public has experienced these systems in action, support tends to increase substantially.

The project team tested **reactions to several different approaches to decongestion charging**, as a way of beginning to understand public preferences. Among the preliminary approaches presented in the online engagement and in workshops, stakeholders and the public indicated that the most preferred approach would be to charge less in areas with fewer transit options. The least preferred approach would be to charge based on the number of kilometers driven.

The *It's Time* team studied how Metro Vancouver residents are already paying for mobility pricing in various forms such as fuel taxes, transit fares, parking charges and more. Taking those into account, the team **evaluated 10 different decongestion charging approaches**. The following **two approaches** were determined to have the greatest potential for further study:

1. **Congestion point charges**, an umbrella term that includes a system of point charges (which involves charging vehicles when passing a defined point or location, such as a busy



section of road, a bridge, or tunnel), and cordon charges (which involves charging vehicles when passing through entries and/or exits to and from a defined area); and,

2. **Distance-based charges varying by time and location**, meaning that some locations and times could have a higher \$/km charge at busy times of day.

In the next phase of the project, the Commission will be sharing more specific information about the two approaches and seeking additional input from the public and stakeholders, beginning in late January. The research team will perform a deeper analysis on these approaches by comparing them against a baseline or 'status quo' scenario in which the fuel tax would continue to be used as the primary mobility pricing mechanism, as it is today.

In addition to a [summary report](#) on Phase One of the project, a more [detailed report](#) on research and engagement findings is also available. The summary report is also available in Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, and Punjabi.

Dates for the next phase of the *It's Time* project will be published over the coming weeks at www.ItsTimeMV.ca.

[About the Mobility Pricing Independent Commission](#)

The Mobility Pricing Independent Commission is overseeing a public engagement and research project studying how we price transportation in Metro Vancouver. The Commission will look at ways to reduce congestion, promote fairness, and support continued investment in transportation infrastructure, and will report on its findings in spring 2018 to the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation and the TransLink Board of Directors. The Commission is made up of 14 community leaders from across Metro Vancouver. www.ItsTimeMV.ca

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