



Mobility Pricing Independent Commission delivers final report to TransLink and Mayors' Council

Eight-month research and public engagement project reveals potential for decongestion charging to dramatically reduce Metro Vancouver's traffic bottlenecks; equity and affordability identified as concerns requiring further study

May 24, 2018 (Vancouver, B.C.) – Today, the Mobility Pricing Independent Commission presented its final report to the Mayors' Council and TransLink Board of Directors. Based on extensive public feedback as well as local and international research, the 14-member citizens' panel is recommending a set of principles to be followed when designing a mobility pricing policy for Metro Vancouver. The Commission's eight-month study found that decongestion charging could reduce traffic congestion in the region by up to 25%, while providing sustainable revenues to allow for continued improvements to roads and transit.

The Commission recommends more detailed study before decision-makers can consider next steps in designing a mobility pricing policy that is fair and affordable for Metro Vancouver residents.

The Commission's report ([Metro Vancouver Mobility Pricing Study: Findings and Recommendations for an Effective, Farsighted, and Fair Mobility Pricing Policy](#)) details mobility pricing concepts that could:

- Reduce traffic congestion in Metro Vancouver by up to 25% and create 20% more reliable journey times;
- Introduce a fairer way of paying for transportation;
- Reduce or eliminate the need for fuel taxes and other charges; and,
- Allow for ongoing improvement of the transportation network by providing a stable source of regional revenue to match Provincial and Federal funding.

“Efficient, affordable and sustainable mobility will be key to ensuring our region can continue to thrive as our population grows and new technologies change the way people and goods will get around,” said Allan Seckel, Chair of the Mobility Pricing Independent Commission. “By moving towards a coordinated mobility pricing policy that includes decongestion charging, we can bring relief from traffic congestion while maintaining freedom of choice and delivering net economic benefits to the region.”

The Commission's report represents the first stage in a longer feasibility and policy design process. Rather than recommend a particular model of decongestion charging, the Commission's report explores two concepts – based on an evidence-based analysis – that have potential for further study and refinement in order to fully optimize the benefits for the people of Metro Vancouver:

1. A regional congestion point charge with charge points at, or close to, some or all of the regionally important crossings, complemented by further point charges at locations within the Burrard Peninsula; and,
2. A distance-based charge with two or more zones with varying charge rates throughout Metro Vancouver.



The concepts show promising results, and they will require more analysis, including further study of the potential for decongestion charging to coordinate with transit fares and other forms of mobility pricing. The Commission is also recommending further assessment of affordability and equity impacts, an assessment of available technology for distance-based charging, and a study of impacts for business, particularly transport-intensive businesses.

“I’ve worked in public policy for nearly my entire career, and I haven’t seen another policy that has the potential to be as transformative for the quality of life in Metro Vancouver as mobility pricing could be,” said the Commission’s Vice-Chair, Joy MacPhail. “There is no doubt that changing the way we pay for transportation will be politically difficult, but the opportunity is too great to end this conversation now.”

In its report, the Commission suggests foundational principles to guide the next steps in designing a mobility pricing policy. These include the need to ensure that:

- Congestion benefits are meaningful;
- The ways we pay for mobility are fair and replace other less productive, less transparent ways of paying;
- Decongestion charges are aligned with access to transit, and targeted improvements in transit services are considered when a charge is introduced; and,
- Revenues are used wisely and in an accountable manner, but that revenues should not be the primary motivation for introducing mobility pricing.

The Commission’s recommendations follow a period of extensive engagement, including more than 17,000 survey responses from the public, meetings with nearly 200 stakeholders and elected officials, and a series of workshops with a 15-member user advisory panel representative of Metro Vancouver’s diverse population and geography. The Commission was unanimous in their support of the report.

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

Comments from stakeholders involved in the *It’s Time* engagement process:

- *“BCTA members grapple with Metro Vancouver’s increasing traffic congestion every day, making the goods British Columbians rely on less affordable. We have long advocated for implementation of a mobility pricing framework, and support the Mobility Pricing Independent Commission’s core recommendation to move forward with a feasibility study. We look forward to quickly beginning a consultative process to further examine options to alleviate congestion in Metro Vancouver’s overtaxed transportation system.”* – **Dave Earle, President & CEO, British Columbia Trucking Association**
- *“The Mobility Pricing Independent Commission’s study offers Metro Vancouver valuable insights demonstrating that decongestion pricing—when done right—can be a highly effective tool to address traffic congestion, give people more time with their families, improve quality of life and strengthen the local economy. We encourage the Mayors’ Council to undertake a full feasibility study to explore how this pricing could be designed to be fair, affordable and effective.”* – **Ian Bruce, Director of Science and Policy, David Suzuki Foundation**



- *“We need a conversation – not an argument – about finding solutions that work to make transit and transportation in Metro Vancouver work better for all of us. The Mobility Pricing Independent Commission has started that conversation and we need to have the political courage to explore the next steps toward changing the way we pay for transportation to improve mobility. Different ways of paying can reduce gridlock and commute times while increasing our ability to move goods and workers efficiently so both our economy and our residents benefit.”* – **Peter Ladner, Director, Better Transit and Transportation Coalition**

About the Mobility Pricing Independent Commission

The Mobility Pricing Independent Commission was tasked by the TransLink Board of Directors and the Mayors’ Council on Regional Transportation to evaluate and make recommendations on how to develop and implement a regional road usage charging policy and system, and assess the implications for pricing of other types of transport and mobility. Between July 2017 and May 2018, the Commission led the *It’s Time* project, an extensive research and engagement program that studied ways to reduce congestion, promote fairness, and support continued investment in transportation. www.ItsTimeMV.ca

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