

Beat the Traffic Rush! The case for rapid transit
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COPY

Do the people of Vancouver and surrounding municipalities want a freeway system which will:

- criss cross and divide up residential areas with ugly structures of concrete and steel?
- funnel all automobile traffic from north, east and south into the narrow peninsula that comprises Downtown Vancouver?
- create unprecedented and impossible traffic congestion and traffic jams?
- pollute our air to the danger point until it becomes as bad here as in Los Angeles?
- saddle our citizens with an enormous debt which will burden homeowners with a huge boost in taxes, and tenants with still higher rents?

OR

Do we want to see a rapid transit system in the Greater Vancouver region which will:

- bring people instead of cars into Vancouver's downtown area and to places of employment?
 - move people quickly and efficiently at low fares, saving time and money for transit users?
 - keep down debts and taxes?
 - reduce air pollution?
- provide frequent and efficient service between municipalities and within each municipality so that everyone will have far greater freedom and ease of movement?

We can have one or the other.

We won't have both.

Which one we get — freeways or rapid transit — is not only important for the reasons given above. The undeniable fact is that the kind of transportation system we end up with will decisively shape the nature of the growth and development of our cities and municipalities for decades to come.

Our future is very much at stake in the choice and decisions that will be made.

You can help decide what that choice will be.

THE FUTURE

RUSH-HOUR TRAFFIC

Population by the year 2000 will have doubled.

1970	2,000,000
2000	2,000,000

Metropolitan employment will have more than doubled.

1970	2000
375,000	850,000

Downtown employment will increase by at least 50%, and possibly double.

1970	2000
93,000	143,000 - 205,000

The number of morning rush-hour commuter trips into downtown will increase accordingly.

1970	2000
39,000	61,000 - 88,000

Many of these rush-hour commuters will need public transit, for roads into downtown will have limited capacity.

1969	2000
15,700	29,000 - 56,000
	(bus riders)

(From Brochure By Greater Vancouver Regional District)

Freeways Are Already Here!

We will have to make a choice very soon because powerful interests are at work endeavoring to impose a freeway system on the Greater Vancouver area. The city of Vancouver is the local point. Here freeway plans are already well advanced—more so than most people realize. Vancouver City Council is trying to sneak in a freeway system piecemeal, one section at a time. This way the total effect will not be felt all at once. People will not know what is happening. The freeway sections are being planned and built in such a way that each completed section logically demands another.

This is of concern not only to Vancouver. While Vancouver cannot build freeways beyond its own boundaries, yet once these freeways are built in Vancouver you can be sure they will not abruptly end at city boundaries. They will be extended into adjacent municipalities. Then we'll all be saddled with freeways whether we like them or not.

Vancouver Transportation Study

The essential aspects of the freeway scheme were outlined in the Vancouver Transportation Study, 1968, prepared for Vancouver City Council by BBQ&D of San Francisco. It called for:

- a new Georgia Viaduct
- an east-west freeway continuing east from the Georgia Viaduct along Union and Prior Streets and connecting up with Highway 401.
- a north-south freeway in the Ontario and Quebec Street corridor, also linked up with Georgia Viaduct.
- a third crossing of Burrard Inlet (called Brockton crossing and located just east of Stanley Park).
- a Waterfront Highway, and going through the Brockton crossing to the north-south freeway, and going through the CPR's Project 200.
- a Taylor Expressway going along the north shore of False Creek where the CPR is planning another West End-type of apartment jungle.

The Vancouver Transportation Study studiously ignored the question of rapid transit. It stated that the City of Vancouver and B.C. Hydro agreed that no provision for rapid transit was required in the freeway system except for a 60 foot median strip in the centre of the east-west freeway from Gore Avenue eastward "for possible future grade-separated rapid transit facilities in this corridor."

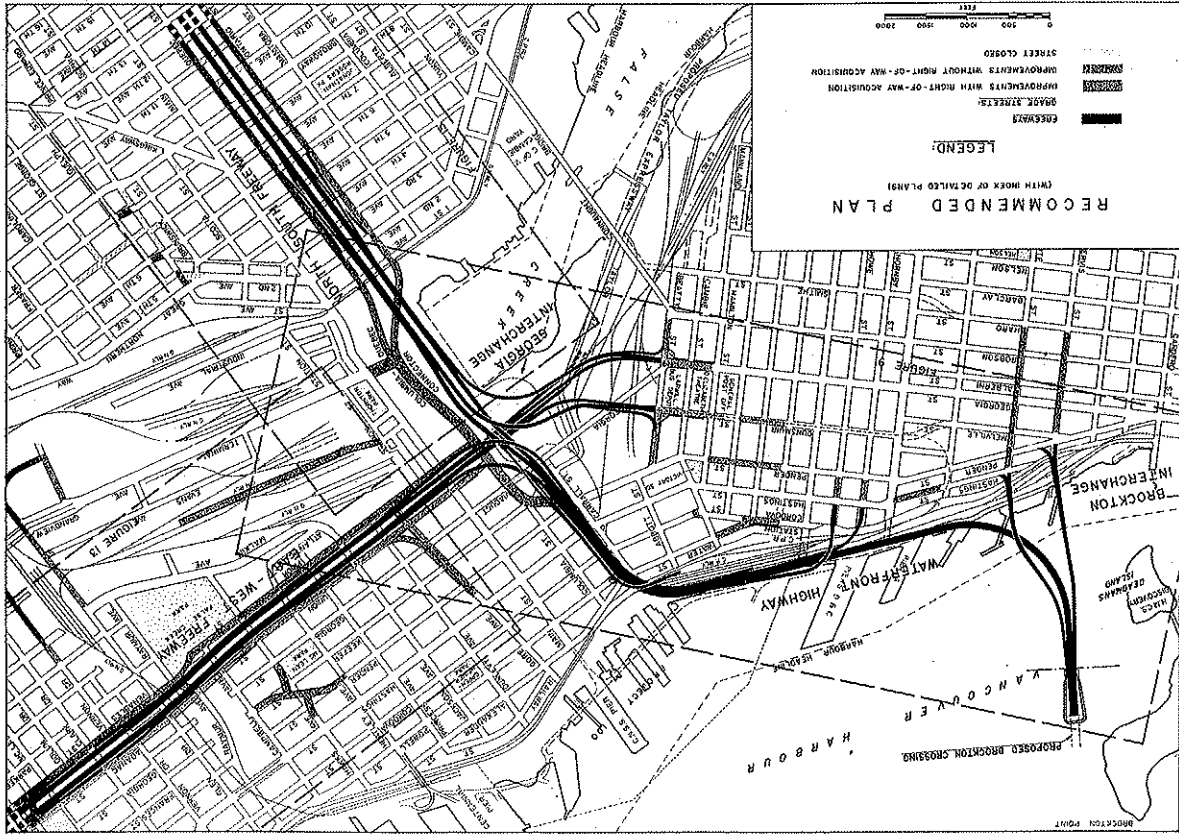
The Vancouver Transportation Study has never been officially adopted by Council. Yet a majority of Council is trying to implement the report, piece by piece.

The citizens of Vancouver met this report with open hostility.

The Chinese community vigorously protested the connection between the north-south freeway and the Waterfront Highway which would go along Carrall Street and cutup Chinatown. Council had to drop this plan and consider a connection along Gore Street.

The residents of the East End rose up in arms against the east-west freeway which would go through the heart of their area, cut their district in half and compel the expropriation (and removal of destruction) of about 1,200 homes. So Council had to drop this scheme too.

But Council didn't give up by any means. It went ahead with plans to replace the Georgia Viaduct, shelving some of the other sections for the time being. But what it built was much more than just a replacement. What we have now is a two pronged viaduct designed as the hub of a downtown freeway system. The Vancouver Transportation Study admitted (page 25) that "the Georgia Viaduct Replacement Project is in effect a western



Vancouver Freeway Plans

extension of the east-west freeway." There it now sits awaiting decisions about connector links at each end.

Compelled to drop its Union-Prior corridor route for an east-west freeway, Council's next step was to set up a Liaison Group to consider a new and, it hoped, a more acceptable route. It included Aldermen Wilson, Broome, Rankin, city officials, a team of consultants responsible for selecting a route, and representatives of five community organizations from the East End.

The study team of consultants has selected a new route that would go in a south-easterly direction from the east end of Georgia Viaduct, avoiding the densely populated areas, and linking up with Highway 401 in the vicinity of Boundary Road and the Grandview Highway. A conservative estimate places the number of homes that would have to be demolished at between 90 and 105. However, this does not take into consideration the construction of ramps that would bring this figure closer to 200. It is significant that the connector link they have selected makes no provision whatsoever for rapid transit.

The community representatives on this Liaison Group have given their views on the new alternative route. They have turned it down flatly.

"While the \$60 million freeway route now being proposed by the consultants is less reprehensible than the Union-Prior corridor earlier considered," they said in a statement to Council, signed also by Alderman Rankin, "it is still a freeway, and freeways our citizens don't need and don't want." They then proposed that Council drop all its freeway plans and get busy on a rapid transit system.

Council's unofficial plan is now to connect the west end of Georgia Viaduct via Georgia and Dunsmuir streets with a new freeway crossing of Burrard Inlet. Council has opted for a tunnel rather than a bridge. Ottawa has offered to pay the cost of the tunnel, but only on condition that its contribution will be recovered in tolls. The provincial government has pledged \$27 million for tunnel approaches.

But a third crossing, whether bridge or tunnel, is not the urgent need its promoters represent it to be. All surveys show that the bulk of the traffic entering Vancouver comes from the east and south, not from the North Shore. In fact, the traffic volume to and from the south and east is approximately twice the volume of traffic to and from the North Shore. But because Liberal politicians promised another crossing to North and West Vancouver business interests, and because of pressure from freeway promoters, plans for the crossing are being pushed ahead.

Other planned sections of the freeway system scheduled to come before Council sooner or later are links which will connect

Burrard and Granville bridges with Georgia Viaduct and with the third crossing, the north-south freeway along the Quebec Ontario Street corridor, a Waterfront Highway, and the Taylor Expressway.

Then our half a billion dollar eyesore and traffic congester would be complete — for a few years, that is, when inevitably there would be a demand for still more freeways. Once caught up in the freeway cycle, there's no escape.

That's the plan that is being implemented piecemeal. It is still in its initial stages, but every completed section makes other sections more certain. If we are going to stop it at all, the time is now before it has a chance to go much further.

Adverse Effects of Freeways

The adverse effects of freeways are obvious and numerous. If you want to see what Vancouver would be like five or ten years from now if it goes through with its freeway plans, just look at Seattle and Los Angeles.

Freeways are an eyesore which artificially divide up cities and municipalities.

It is fundamentally wrong to siphon all traffic into the narrow neck of land (bottleneck would be a better word) which constitutes Vancouver's Downtown area.

More and more of our choice land in Vancouver's Downtown would have to be taken over at great expense and used for parking lots, and many city streets widened to serve the freeway system. Freeways will further aggravate the lopsided growth of Vancouver where far too much development is going into the Downtown area.

Since the freeway system would be spread over the whole Lower Mainland, all its citizens would be saddled with enormous debts and increases in property taxes.

The experience of all cities which have freeway systems clearly proves that freeways solve nothing. They contribute to the very problem which they are supposed to solve — traffic congestion. And the accident and death toll from the hundreds of thousands of cars on our freeways will continue to mount, as will the already too high insurance rates.

Who Wants Freeways?

Why then, are freeways being promoted by Vancouver City Council?

The answer is that powerful special interests want them. They are the business interests who stand to profit directly from them. First among them are the big real estate interests and developers. The CPR has Project 200 — the complex of hotels, apartments and offices — which includes 5,000 parking stalls to be linked to the freeway. The CPR is also building a huge apartment complex on the north shore of False Creek;

Taylor Expressway was designed to service this area. The Bronfman interests, Eatons, and the Toronto Dominion Bank want traffic directed to Block 42-52. Near Stanley Park the Four Seasons and Bayshore Inn interests want the freeways to serve them.

Then there are the car manufacturers and the oil interests who push for freeways everywhere, and the big construction firms looking for lucrative multi-million dollar contracts.

These are the private interests that want the government and the public to spend half a billion dollars on freeways just to serve them! No matter where you live in the Lower Mainland — these selfish interests are determined that you must foot the bill for freeways to enhance their profits.

No wonder the citizens of the Lower Mainland in increasing numbers are saying NO! We're not going to subsidize the freeways with our hard-earned dollars and pensions!

The majority of our citizens are already opposed to freeways and their number is growing constantly. They include a wide variety of community organizations, ratepayer and tenant groups, trade unions, anti-pollution groups, an increasing number of city planners and aldermen — in fact, citizens from almost every walk of life.

For the most part the groups and individuals opposing freeways are also supporting rapid transit. They look upon it as the only realistic alternative. It's a view I wholeheartedly share.

We can't ignore the fact that the number of motor vehicles is growing twice as fast as the population in the Vancouver region. If we don't take control of this situation now, the demands of the car will soon control us completely!

The Phoney "Balanced Transportation System" Theory

Some politicians and municipal officials, feeling the pressure of the opposition to freeways and the support for rapid transit, have come out with a "compromise." They say we don't need to choose freeways or rapid transit, and that we can have both. This argument they clothe in the fine sounding phrase, "a balanced transportation system."

I want to say without equivocation or hesitation that this is a lot of nonsense. It doesn't come from people who don't know better. It comes from people deliberately trying to mislead and deceive the public. It is coming from people who are busy promoting freeways while doing nothing about rapid transit.

The reason we can't and won't have both freeways and rapid transit in the Lower Mainland isn't only because we can't afford both. The cost would be staggering. Even more important is the fact that freeways and rapid transit serve opposing purposes and interests that can't be reconciled.

Isn't the fact that Vancouver City Council is building freeways while just paying lip service (and hardly even that) to rapid transit proof enough that it has made a choice? It isn't building any "balanced transportation system" — it is building freeways!

What Is Rapid Transit?

Perhaps at this point it would be worthwhile to go into the whole question of rapid transit more deeply.

What do we mean by rapid transit?

As the term is usually used, it means any form of public transportation operated over its own exclusive track or roadway and separated from other traffic.

Examples of rapid transit are the subways of Toronto, Montreal, London, Paris and Moscow; the elevated trains of Berlin and New York; the one-mile monorail in Seattle; and an exclusive bus roadway in Washington, D.C.

Rapid transit systems are often supplemented by other forms of rapid transportation including commuter trains, express buses, ferries and hovercraft.

In the Lower Mainland we could use all of the above or any combinations of them, to suit our special needs. What we're after is a good travel system that will get people where they want to go, when they want to go and at low cost.

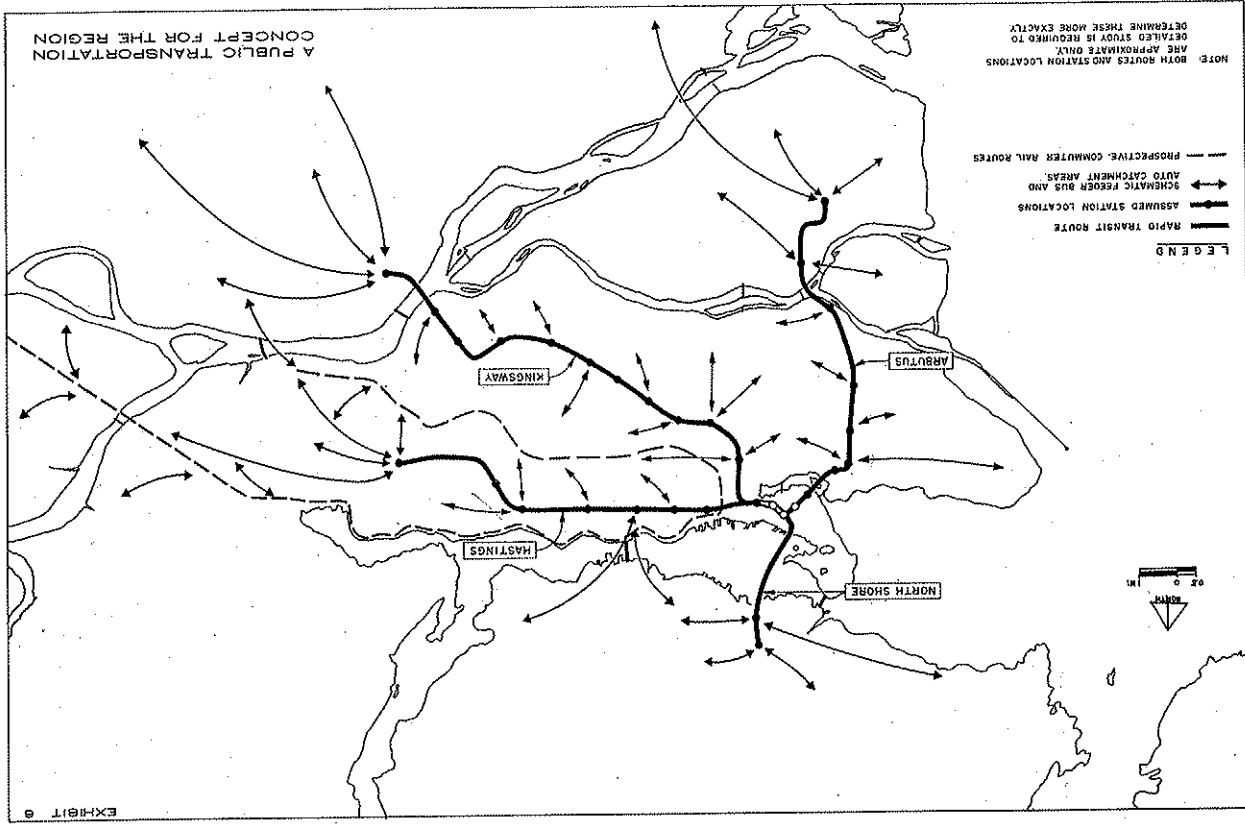
Rapid transit is designed primarily to move people, rather than cars, swiftly, efficiently and economically, to and from work, to and from the Downtown area of Vancouver, from one point to another within a city or municipality, and from one city or municipality to another.

Let me add that advocating rapid transit does not imply that we don't need or shouldn't use cars any more or that traffic roads don't need improvement. All that rapid transit is trying to do is to eliminate unnecessary car trips. People will continue to use cars for shopping, visiting, family trips and the like, and adequate roads and parking facilities must be available. But wherever it is not essential to go by car, rapid transit should offer a cheaper, faster and more comfortable service. In fact it must be made so advantageous that people will use it whenever they can.

Benefits of Rapid Transit

The advantages and benefits of a rapid transit system would include:

- **Savings in money to the individual.** It would cost less to take rapid transit than to drive a car (lower insurance costs, less wear and tear on the car). It may make a car unnecessary for many people who today own one through necessity rather than choice.
- **Savings in money to government.** A rapid transit system would be much less costly to build and maintain than freeways. We wouldn't need massive expenditures on parking lots and street improvements that freeways would force upon us. Less money would be spent on street maintenance and traffic control.
- **Savings in time.** Rapid transit would cut travel time at least in half.
- **Reduction in air and noise pollution.**
- **Fewer car accidents.**
- **Lessening of the wear and tear on nerves and of fatigue which result from driving cars in morning and evening traffic rushes.**
- **Reduced traffic congestion.**
- **Planned community development.** It would enable each city and municipality to plan and direct its development in the way it wants. The tendency is for apartment and shopping areas to grow up around transit stations which become the core of new communities.
- **Creation of thousands of permanent new jobs in the operation and maintenance of the rapid transit system and its various ancillary services (a greatly improved bus system, commuter trains, water transport.)**



Rapid Transit Study

The Greater Vancouver Area Rapid Transit Study of September 1970 was prepared for the Joint Transportation Committee of the Greater Vancouver Regional District

(GVRD) and BC Hydro and Power Authority. (The Regional District, by way, includes West Vancouver, North Vancouver City, North Vancouver District, Vancouver, Richmond, Delta, Burnaby, New Westminster, White Rock, Surrey, Lions Bay, Port Moody, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Fraser Mills, plus three electoral areas, Ioco-Buntzen Bay, University Endowment Lands and Bowen Island.)

It proposed a rapid transit network consisting of four main corridors to be completed by 1990.

(1) Arbutus Corridor — Granville and Pender in Vancouver to Centennial Park in Richmond — 10.2 miles.

(2) Kingsway Corridor — Grandville and Pender to Surrey — 13.5 miles.

(3) Hastings Corridor — Granville and Pender to North Road — 10.9 miles. This would go on toward and connect up with other forms of fast transit serving Port Moody, Coquitlam and Port Coquitlam. It would also serve the PNE, and North Vancouver (via Second Narrows Bridge).

(4) North Shore — Granville and Pender across new Burrard crossing to Upper Levels Highway.

—Link to east via Lonsdale and 21st (North Vancouver)

—Link to west via 15th Street (West Vancouver)

It estimates rapid transit passenger volume per peak hour inbound as follows:

Arbutus	Present 4600	2,000 AD 21,200
Kingsway	9,900	18,400
Hastings	5700	12,900
North Shore	4500	9,800

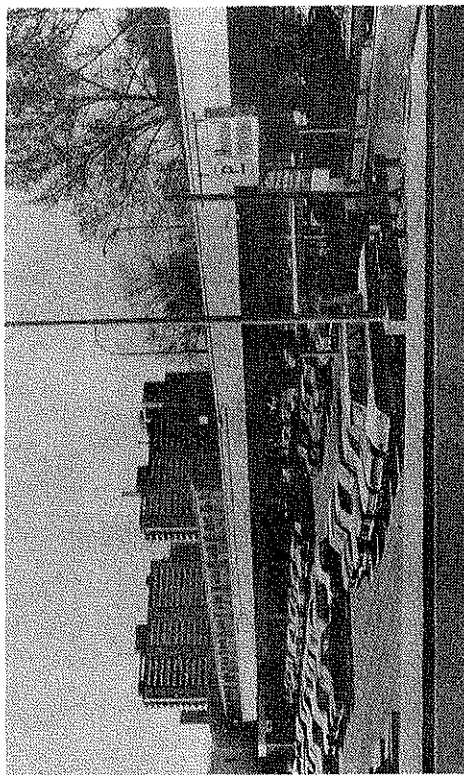
At peak periods, trains would run every two or three minutes, and at six minute intervals during off-peak periods.

The study states that the Kingsway Corridor has enough traffic today to warrant its construction immediately, and estimates that it would take 7 - 10 years to get it into operation.

The Kingsway Corridor would "leave the downtown area by means of an elevated structure parallel to the new Georgia Viaduct and turn south near Main to cross over the CNR yards. It would be underground below Prince Edward, Kingsway and 22nd Avenue to Nanaimo. At this point, the line would occupy the B.C. Hydro right-of-way between Nanaimo and Willingdon, using open cut construction. . . . Stations on this line could be located near Main, Broadway, Knight, Nanaimo, Renfrew, Central Park and Willingdon."

It proposes that the rapid transit network be complemented by feeder bus routes and parking lots for those who

wish to park their cars for the day ("park and ride") and for those who pick up or drop off passengers ("kiss and ride.")



The study also points out that in Montreal and Toronto, 70 percent of the peak of travel oriented to the central business district is by public transit. This shows the potential for our area.

How Do We Get Rapid Transit?

This involves several important questions such as
(a) Who should be responsible for establishing a rapid transit system in the Lower Mainland?

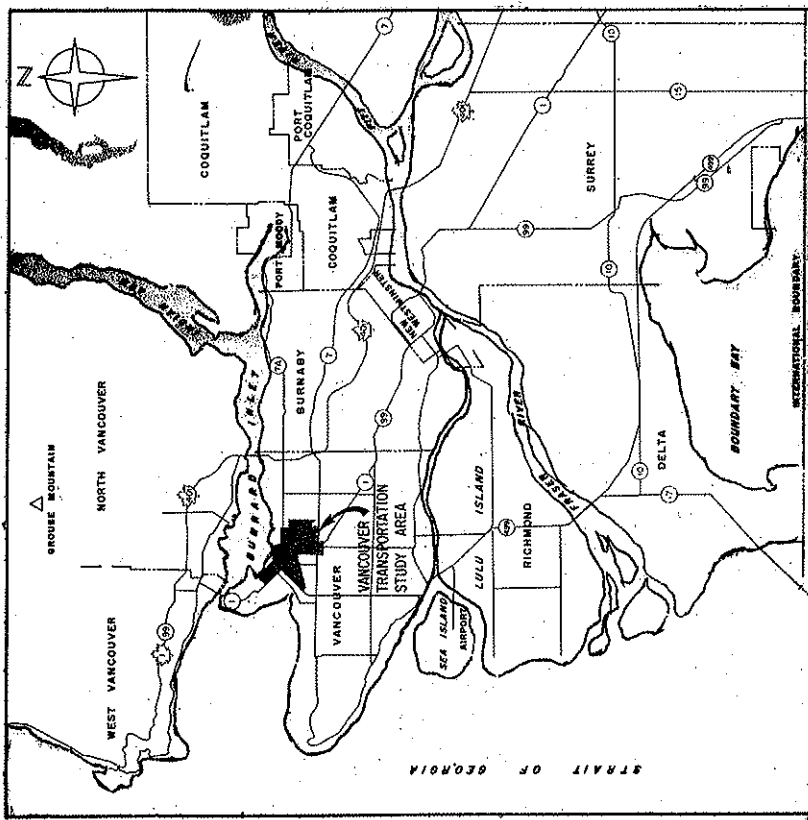
(b) What practical steps should be taken immediately to implement rapid transit?

(c) Who will pay for rapid transit?

(d) What political action needs to be taken?

A Regional Transit Authority

It will be obvious to all that rapid transit cannot be brought about by each municipality if it is left to do or not do its own thing. It is essentially a regional matter and must be tackled on a regional basis.



We already have a regional structure in the Greater Vancouver Regional District. Its directing board consists of members appointed by the various municipalities included in the district — 15 cities and municipalities plus 3 unorganized districts.

The GVRD should set up a Transit Authority for the whole region with the responsibility and authority, under the direction of the GVRD, to establish a transit system for the region.

Under no circumstances should the Transit Authority become an independent or autonomous body. (We already have one sorry example of this in the PNE in Vancouver. Although all its facilities are publicly owned, its operation has been turned over to a small group of businessmen who use our publicly owned facilities for the benefit of private professional sports promoters who get the use of our facilities for next to nothing.) The Transit Authority must be appointed by and be directly responsible to the GVRD for all its action. Only in this way can public control be maintained. Don't forget that if and when we get a rapid transit system, the special interests who oppose

rapid transit and support freeways would be only too happy to see rapid transit run into trouble.

Action Now

What practical step could be taken now to implement rapid transit?

There are several that could and should be taken without delay.

1. Start on the Kingsway Rapid Transit Corridor now, as proposed in the Greater Vancouver Area Rapid Transit Study of September 1968.
2. Completely overhaul the B.C. Hydro bus system, so that it will be able to provide greatly improved service until such a time as rapid transit comes into operation. We must end the self defeating policy being followed by B.C. Hydro today of higher fares, poorer service, fewer riders, higher fares, still poorer service, still fewer riders, etc. A streamlining of bus service should include:
 - the addition of hundreds of new buses.
 - making bus service more frequent.
 - cutting the fare in half immediately, with the object of reducing it to 10 cents a trip anywhere within any municipality, 20 cents if the trip extends into two municipalities, etc. This means a trip from Surrey to Vancouver would only cost 30 cents from White Rock 50 cents and so on.
 - establishing a system of fast express buses to move people quickly. Where necessary set up special lanes on streets, highways, bridges, reserved for buses and emergency vehicles (police, fire, ambulance, tow trucks).
 - setting up an adequate bus service not only within cities like West Vancouver, North Vancouver, Vancouver, and New Westminster, but also within the other municipalities like Surrey and White Rock where the service today is deplorable.
3. Immediately look into the possibilities of speedy, low fare commuter trains from Port Coquitlam and White Rock to Vancouver.
4. See about using water transportation (ferries, hovercraft, hydrofoil, etc.) from Steveston, Richmond, West Vancouver and Port Moody to Vancouver.
5. Look into the practical possibility of establishing a dial-a-bus system where simply by dialing a number you can have a mini-bus at your door to take you to the nearest bus or rapid transit station.

The Dollars and Sense of Freeways and Rapid Transit

Freeway Costs

The Vancouver Transportation Study placed the cost of the freeway system at \$125 million. However the chances are that it would cost at least four times that amount if the following is borne in mind:

- The figure of \$125 million was at 1968 price levels. Inflation since 1968 would boost this figure considerably.
- The \$125 million figure did not include right of way costs for the Waterfront Highway and the Brockton Interchange, both of which would go through Project 200. You can be sure the CPR will charge us plenty for that.
- The \$125 million figure only includes freeway costs within the boundaries of Vancouver. But freeways can't and won't stop there. To extend them to meet with other highways (Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Port Coquitlam, the Fraser Valley, Seattle Highway) will cost plenty.
- The 1968 estimate for the East-West freeway was \$18.4 million. But the 1971 estimate (for a new route) is \$60 million — two and a half times as much! That's just how fast estimates can change — and they never go down!
- The cost of a third crossing of Burrard Inlet together with the approaches, now estimated at \$141 million, must also be included in freeway costs.

Rapid Transit Costs

The Rapid Transit Study estimates the cost of the four rapid transit corridors (to be completed by 1990) as follows:

- Fixed facilities and right of way \$269 million
 - Yards, shops, rolling stock \$ 31 million
- This is at 1970 price levels.

Bearing all this in mind, it's clear that freeways could cost at least twice as much as rapid transit.

A further important factor is that, as shown by U.S. experience, repairs and physical maintenance of freeways run at eight percent annually. In other words, the total cost of construction is duplicated every 12 years.

The cost of operating rapid transit on the other hand, according to the Rapid Transit Study, would be only 11 cents per passenger trip by 1990.

Who Pays The Shot?

The first point that should be made is that rapid transit services (and an upgraded bus service, too) should not have to pay their own way through fares. Rapid transit should be

regarded as a service, as essential to a community as sewers and water, and the costs should come out of general and special revenues.

The bulk of the cost to build and subsidize a rapid transit system should not be placed on the property owners and tenants of the municipalities. These costs should be met by grants from senior governments. The fact is that the difficult financial situation our cities and municipalities find themselves in is not of their own making. It is the direct result of a distribution of taxing authority under a British North America Act adopted over a century ago and now completely out of date, and the contributing failure of senior governments to adjust their contributions to municipalities to the changed needs of the times.

Urban centers are growing at an accelerated rate. Today only seven percent of our entire population is engaged in farming. It is estimated that by the end of this century, nine-tenths of our population will live in large urban centres. The Economic Council of Canada predicts that by 1980 one third of all Canadians will be concentrated in three large metropolitan areas — Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. Several of our cities already have larger populations than several of our provinces.

Hand in hand with this urban growth has come the demand for all manner of essential services—police and fire protection, streets, sidewalks, welfare costs, education, parks. These costs have grown enormously. Yet our municipalities must rely mainly on property taxes to raise the necessary funds. All the other significant means of raising revenue (income and corporation taxes, resources tax, liquor tax, gasoline tax) have been reserved by senior governments. Municipalities must go hat in hand to senior government for grants to meet their rising expenses.

This situation needs correction and it can only be done by senior governments. Obviously some constitutional changes are needed. In the case of rapid transit though, no constitutional change is required — only the agreement of Victoria and Ottawa that they will pay the bulk of construction and operating costs.

The provincial government has already committed itself to pay some of the cost. On October 27, 1970, provincial municipal affairs minister Dan Campbell, stated that "the provincial government is of the opinion that the financial input to the transportation picture in the Greater Vancouver area . . . should be on the basis of a 37½ percent outright grant from the provincial government on a progress-payment basis to the transportation authority; 37½ percent outright grant, again on a progress payment, cash payment basis by the federal government and 25 percent input from the Regional District, again on a cash progress-payment basis."

This proposal leaves considerable uncertainty since it does not commit the provincial government directly to rapid transit, but only to "transportation" which could include anything and everything. Furthermore, it is conditional on grants from Ottawa and a heavy 25 percent load on the region. However it does acknowledge the need for aid by senior governments and does offer a basis for negotiations.

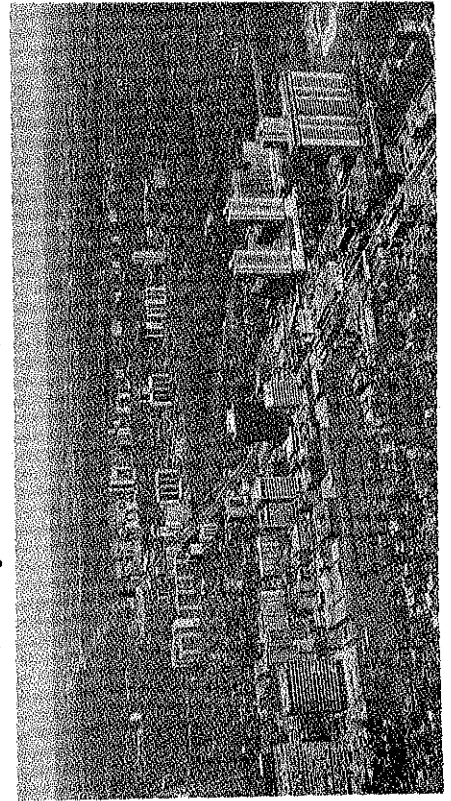
In my view we should press for 100 percent of capital costs to be paid by senior governments, plus a share of the operating costs.

The Rapid Transit Study proposes a new retail sales tax, increases in property taxes and increases in gasoline taxes as ways and means to raise whatever money the GVRD must pay for rapid transit. I don't think much of any of them because they all place the biggest burden on the people least able to pay, working people and low income groups that comprise 80 percent of the population. As an alternative, I would propose land assembly and assessment of big properties at their true market value.

Land Assembly

A profitable means of raising funds for rapid transit is through land assembly.

When a rapid transit route — the Kingsway Corridor, for example — is definitely agreed upon, the Transit Authority should acquire substantial sections of land along the route, especially in the vicinity of the transit stations. This land is bound to increase greatly in value due to the new attractiveness added to it by the rapid transit corridor and the rezoning upwards that would be necessary. When the transit corridor is completed the Transit Authority could develop this land or sell it to private developers. Millions of dollars in new revenue could be raised in this way.



The principle is a sound one. Since the new land values are created by public action, the benefits should accrue to the public and not all go to private real estate speculators and developers as has always been the case in the past. This method has been used in Britain for some time in connection with public housing projects.

Assess Big Properties at True Value

Rapid transit will not only benefit people. It will be of great benefit to business interests, from stores and offices to factories and plants. If any part of the construction and operation of a rapid transit system is to be met by regional taxes, then business must also pay its fair share.

Provincial assessment regulations require that all properties be assessed at their true market value for tax purposes. Homes are assessed in this way. But it has been standard practice by assessment authorities to assess big commercial and industrial properties at far below their true market value. It is contrary to the law but it is being practised on a wide scale — in every city and municipality. To satisfy yourself on this, go to your assessment office and get the assessment figures on some big property in your area — factory or plant, shopping centre, office building or bank. You will find that the assessed value is only a fraction of its market value and that its assessment has hardly gone up at all in the last five or ten years.

What happened with the Four Seasons property in Vancouver is typical. The property was assessed at \$3.4 million in October, 1970. In May, 1971, when the issue of buying it was placed before Vancouver voters in a money bylaw, Council itself placed the value of the property at \$7.3 million!

If all big properties in the Lower Mainland were assessed at their true value, municipalities would have more than enough revenue to subsidize rapid transit and an improved bus system.

Political Action Required

Rapid Transit versus Freeways is very much a political issue. It involves different political groups and economic classes with diverse and opposing interests. Decisions on it must be made by municipal councils and senior governments, all of which are political bodies.

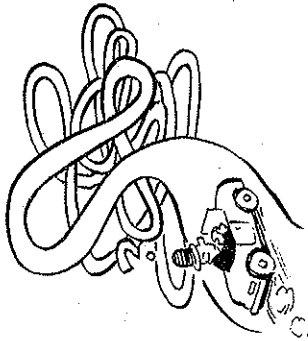
I've always made rapid transit a key issue in any civic election campaign in which I've been involved.

In a pamphlet, **A Program For Vancouver**, which I published in 1968, I placed the issue as follows:

Freeways Or Rapid Transit?

Freeways Expensive

City Council has bungled the whole issue of freeways and it's probably just as well that no action has yet been taken. Evidence is mounting that it would be a mistake to spend anywhere from \$350 million to \$1 billion on expensive freeways that would funnel traffic into the centre of the city and aggravate our traffic and parking problems.



We do need improved traffic arteries, but freeways are something else again. American cities have had some sad experiences with them.

Keep Cars Out

I'm convinced that the solution to our growing traffic congestion doesn't lie in freeways designed to bring more cars into the already overcrowded centre of the city and in providing more expensive parking lots, but in making it possible for people to come in without their cars.

Low Fare Rapid Transit

We desperately need a low fare rapid transit system that will move people quickly and cheaply to and from work and shopping, and allow them to leave their cars in strategically placed low cost parking lots in outlying areas.

All types of transit, old and new, could be considered for such a rapid transit system including:

Hydrofoil

- Hydrofoil boats to take passengers speedily across Burrard Inlet.

Ferry

- Re-establishing a ferry system across the Inlet from the foot of Lonsdale in North Vancouver.

Commuter

- Fast commuter trains along the CNR, Great Northern and old B.C. Electric tracks.

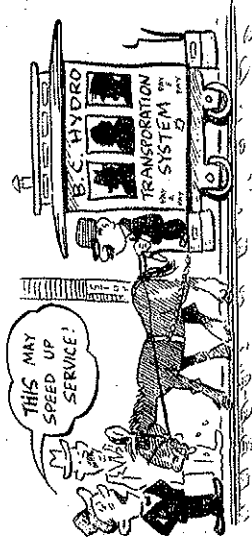
Tunnel

- A tunnel under Burrard Inlet.

Buses

- Fast express buses from Richmond, Delta and the Lower Fraser Valley.

City Council should, I believe, immediately order a study of a low fare rapid transit system, together with improved traffic arteries.



If the provincial government agrees to establishment of a municipally owned Public Utilities Board for the Lower Mainland, then this Board could also take over the transit system, which has been running at a deficit. It should be modernized, rates cut, service improved and integrated into a rapid transit system as already outlined.

In the 1970 civic election campaign the Committee of Progressive Electors, on whose slate I was a candidate, campaigned actively for "immediate action on a low fare rapid transit system" and "no freeways through our Downtown area."

A survey made by the Greater Vancouver Regional District indicates that the majority of municipal councils favor the idea the GVRD going ahead with studies of a Transit System for the regional district. This is a step forward, but still a long way from endorsement of a rapid transit system and action to build it. And in the meantime Vancouver City Council is going ahead with freeway building that could scuttle any regional rapid transit plan. The need for a public campaign for rapid transit is surely self-evident.

Rapid transit will only become a reality when concerned citizens are able to exert more persuasive pressure on municipal councils than is today being exerted by the freeway lobbies. We haven't the financial resources that they have, but we have the numbers and we have the votes. If enough of us speak up, councils will have to listen and act accordingly.

We can take heart from the fact that in Toronto, public opposition to the Spadina Expressway became so strong and widespread that the provincial government felt compelled to step in and cancel the project — even after it had spent \$74 million on this monstrosity!

It seems to me that the following action is required:

- (1) Pressure needs to be exerted on Vancouver City Council to persuade it to publicly declare that it will drop its freeway policy, opt for rapid transit, and back this up by dropping all plans to extend Georgia Viaduct as a freeway.
- (2) Pressure on all municipal councils to endorse rapid

transit and the establishment of a Greater Vancouver Area Rapid Transit Authority.

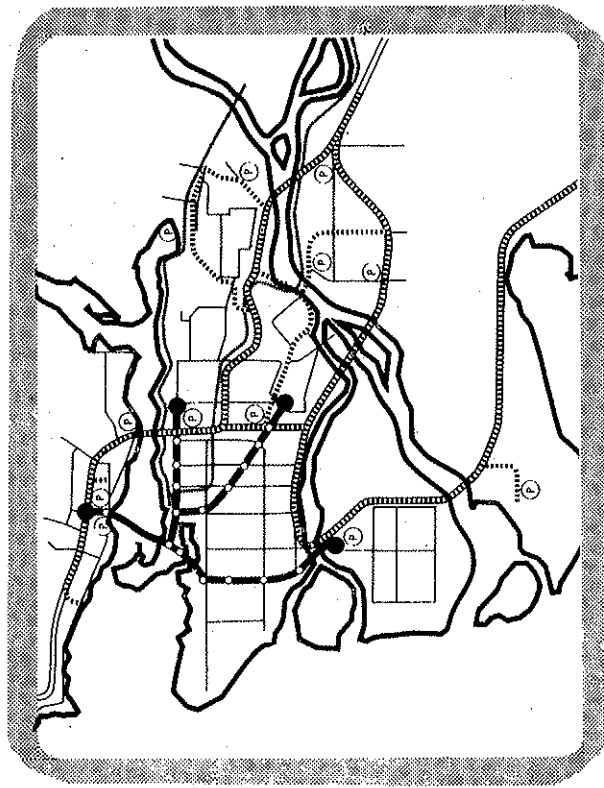
(3) Pressure on Ottawa to drop its plans for a third crossing as part of a freeway, and ask both Ottawa and Victoria to assign funds scheduled for this freeway crossing to rapid transit instead. A third crossing should be built only as part of a rapid transit system and does not rate priority at this time.

(4) Pressure on senior governments to pay the cost of a rapid transit system.

(5) In upcoming municipal elections vote only for those candidates who publicly and unequivocally come out against freeways and for rapid transit.

(6) Citizens groups in each municipality should combine their forces so as to be most effective. In Vancouver this is already being done by the Citizens Committee for Public Transit. Organize meetings, use the mass media to get your ideas across, distribute leaflets, circulate petitions, in short use any and all means to win public support and exert pressure on municipal councils and senior governments.

I believe the people of the Greater Vancouver area desire better transit, I believe we can defeat the freeway lobbies, and I believe we can have rapid transit, IF we act with determination now while there is still time.



A SUGGESTED PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

- RAPID TRANSIT SERVICES ALONG
- HEAVY TRAFFIC ROUTES
- EXPRESS BUSES ON FAST ROADS
- LINK SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES
- FREEWAYS RUN THROUGH
- LESS DENSE AREAS
- WITH FAST PUBLIC TRANSIT
- PREPARED BY THE GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT

① COMMUTER PARKING LOTS LET DRIVERS
② TRANSFER ONTO PUBLIC TRANSIT
③ COMMUTER BAIL CONNECTS DOWNTOWN
④ WITH THE OUTER METRO AND VALLEY AREAS
⑤ LOCAL BUSES LINK NEIGHBOURHOODS
⑥ WITH FAST PUBLIC TRANSIT