

TransLink to fix up fleet in newly bought \$14M site

KELLY SINOSKIVANCOUVER SUN

TransLink has spent \$13.9 million to buy back a former BC Transit building in Burnaby in order to refurbish its expanding SkyTrain fleet.

TransLink spokeswoman Colleen Brennan said the transportation authority bought the building — across from its existing SkyTrain maintenance yard on Southridge Drive — in December last year from Dayhu Investments.

TransLink had been leasing the site, for \$63,000 a month, since 2012 in preparation of upgrading its 114 Mark 1 SkyTrain cars using federal gas tax money, Brennan said. It decided to buy the facility because the existing maintenance yard owned

by the BC Rapid Transit Co. — a subsidiary of TransLink that is responsible for SkyTrain — is over capacity and more room is needed, particularly with the Evergreen Line slated to start running next year. The funding came from TransLink's capital budget, Brennan said. "We have nowhere else to go," she said, adding it is cheaper to refurbish the Mark 1 cars than to buy a new fleet, which she estimates would cost \$262 million. "We're going to get 10 more years out of those cars. We did not have space in the existing building to do that." TransLink has already spent \$1 million on the facility, on painting as well as rail lines to get the trains back and forth between the two maintenance yards, Brennan added.

ksinoski@vancouversun.com