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EDITORIAL: Spinning wheels

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We're finally getting a look at Plan B in the wake of the failure of the TransLink funding plebiscite. The B, it seems, stands for boondoggle.

The mayors of Surrey and Vancouver are threatening they'll go their own way and seek to build rapid transit lines without the regional transportation authority. Other mayors in the region are now so disgruntled, there's talk of disbanding the mayors' council — the only smidgen of influence elected officials (and by extension, the rest of us) have with TransLink.

And who can blame them? They did the impossible and put together a (mostly) unanimous vision for needed transit improvements only to have the whole thing kneecapped by being put to a doomed-from-the-start plebiscite.

The most frequent grievance aired during the expensive, waste-of-time vote was that taxpayers aren't satisfied with TransLink's broken governance model. But let's not forget, the governance model is working exactly as it was intended to when the Liberals cooked it up in 2007.

It takes decision-making powers away from our local elected leaders and shifts accountability and blame off of the province, which appoints TransLink's board members, controls its funding levers and, when a transportation minister feels like it, imposes things anyway like non-working fare gates.

Thwarting accountability is a feature, not a bug, and the only change we've seen at the agency since the plebiscite is a revolving door for TransLink's executives.

Meanwhile, the rest of us brave the increasingly worse traffic and crowded buses. We're right back where we started: spinning our wheels.

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