

LETTER OF THE DAY

# Why a transportation referendum is needed

Taxpayers must have their say once consultations produce a focused vision

To improve transportation in Metro Vancouver, big decisions lie ahead — decisions that the people who live, pay taxes and commute in the region need to be a part of.

Transportation improvements are supported through taxes and fees like property tax, gas tax, transit fares, and tolls for new crossings. And while there are many taxes, there is only one taxpayer.

To support expanded transit and road networks for the region, many local government leaders have advocated for additional sources of funding to be created, on top of existing taxes and fees.

**The provincial government does not disagree with this idea.** But our position is clear. If the people of Metro Vancouver are being asked to pay new taxes or fees, then taxpayers must have a say.

This is why the provincial government is committed to a public, region-wide referendum. It's a commitment we made in the last election and that citizens supported.

**But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Asking people to vote on a new transportation vision comes after governments and citizens work together to clearly determine and articulate what that vision actually is.**

If you're following the news, you'll



RICHARD LAM/PNG FILES

The success of transportation projects, such as the Burquitlam Station on the Evergreen Line in Coquitlam, depends on a vision that is affordable to taxpayers.

have heard about important transportation projects that individual local governments are behind. The job ahead is to bring this into a common vision.

Success depends on a vision that is affordable for taxpayers, fair for all communities, and secures the movement of people and goods for

generations to come.

I will continue to work with the mayors to facilitate a process to bring focus to the regional transportation vision, so the people can decide what's best.

**TODD STONE**

*Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure*