

# north shore news

## City of North Vancouver asks TransLink for new depot

### Council wants transit authority to keep buses on North Shore

[Brent Richter](#) / North Shore News

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The Third Street bus depot. Photo file, North Shore News

The City of North Vancouver is again pushing back at TransLink's plan to close the Third Street bus depot and relocate it off the North Shore. Council passed a motion from Coun. Don Bell Monday night, asking for a new North Shore depot to be included in TransLink's long-term capital plan.

"I know Third Street is not an ideal operation. I know the residents directly adjoining it would like to see it gone. But my fear is, symbolically or psychologically, once that facility leaves the North Shore, we're going to have a tough fight to get a facility back on the North Shore."

The main concern from Bell and others on council, is what would happen if a traffic accident or natural disaster blocked access to the bridge during the early morning when the buses and their drivers would be making their way north.

"If the two bridges go down, coincidentally or because of an earthquake or something, we're hooped," said Coun. Rod Clark.

Council passed a second motion calling on TransLink to provide a contingency plan for how service levels can be maintained in such an event. TransLink staff has said that North Van residents could share in the buses West Vancouver stores overnight at a depot on Lloyd Avenue in the District of North Vancouver.

[Council passed a series of similar motions in 2012 after learning of TransLink's plan. \(http://www.nsnews.com/news/city-lobbies-for-bus-depot-to-stay-1.356527\)](http://www.nsnews.com/news/city-lobbies-for-bus-depot-to-stay-1.356527) Since then, TransLink has started construction of a new depot big enough to house 2,000 buses just off Westminster Highway on the Burnaby/New Westminster border. That facility is expected to be complete in 2015.

Beyond worries of the risk of losing access to buses, city council members questioned the wisdom of making the 180 transit drivers who live on the North Shore commute to Richmond each morning to collect their buses, deadhead back and then be forced to return to get their vehicles at the end of their shifts.

City and district staff have examined a number of potential alternate sites, including on Port Metro Vancouver property, Squamish Nation land and at Capilano University's parking lot, but none of the options were deemed large enough or accessible enough to justify entering into negotiations for a new depot with one possible exception.

The report did state the Lloyd Avenue depot, where the District of West Vancouver keeps its Blue Bus fleet, could be expanded to house the 200

buses required to service the North Shore, plus employee parking, if the parking is in a multi-level garage.

"I would like to see a more vigorous look at the issue of going after that West Vancouver site and sharing it with West Vancouver," Bell said.

Bell noted the irony of the District of West Vancouver keeping its Blue Bus depot within the District of North Vancouver while the buses that serve North Vancouver will be moved off the North Shore.

Rather than accepting the conundrum as the fault of the municipalities, Coun. Craig Keating noted that it was time for North Vancouver's two Liberal MLAs, Naomi Yamamoto and Jane Thornthwaite, to come explain what they are doing to stand up for their constituents - "to see how our needs are not being met," he said.

"Both North Vancouvers and West Vancouver need to have this facility on the North Shore.

"It's not our responsibility. The province owns 100 per cent of TransLink, controls 100 per cent of TransLink and so they're the ones that need to come up with an answer to the question."

Mayor Darrell Mussatto agreed.

"The unelected, unaccountable, appointed (TransLink) board - that's who made the decision. I've always been opposed to it. It's wrong. We should be keeping the buses here on the North Shore and I'm hoping we can find a spot for it."

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