

north shore news

City of North Vancouver continues fight for bus depot

Council motion reaffirms concerns over relocation plan

[Brent Richter](#) / North Shore News

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The Third Street depot is slated to close in the fall of 2016. File photo North Shore News

The City of North Vancouver is continuing to fight the decision to close the Third Street bus depot and move it to Burnaby.

The city and Unifor local 111, the union bus drivers belong to, have been lobbying TransLink to find a new North Shore location so bus drivers won't have to commute to Burnaby to collect and drop off buses each day and to ensure enough buses remain on the North Shore to serve the public in the event of a catastrophe that closes both of the main bridges to the North Shore.

Transportation Minister Todd Stone wrote to Unifor local 111 leadership last month to say he acknowledged the problem, but that it wasn't an issue for the province to solve.

"I understand TransLink has reviewed options to avoid relocating buses to the Burnaby Transit

Centre, but has not been successful in finding a new bus depot location on the North Shore to accommodate projected growth in service for the area,” he said. “As you are aware, TransLink is a regional transportation authority overseen by an independent board and decisions regarding the operation of the North Vancouver Transit Centre are outside the purview of the provincial government.”

But that wasn't satisfactory to members of city council.

“I would say the province doesn't seem to be shy in making transit or transportation decisions sometimes independent of TransLink,” said Coun. Don Bell, noting the plan to replace the Massey Tunnel with a bridge.

A motion passed by council June 15 reaffirms the city's concerns with the relocation plan and asks TransLink to resume active discussions with municipal staff. The motion also was intended to remind Stone of the council's lack of ability to influence TransLink's board of directors.

“We don't get a lot of input, if any at all,” Coun. Linda Buchanan said.

The city spent years petitioning the province to build an overpass for Westview Avenue, always to be told there was no money for it, Coun. Rod Clark added, until the province reversed course.

“Don't give up. That's my advice,” Clark said.

Mayor Darrell Mussatto stood by the comments made by his fellow council members and expressed both frustration and optimism.

“Quite frankly I'm very surprised how our own minister doesn't understand how TransLink and their unelected, unaccountable board works. We need to do all we can to help educate and keep the buses here on the North Shore. Hopefully this is one step in that direction,” he said.

According to TransLink, buses that serve the North Shore will originate from the Burnaby Transit Centre about eight minutes from the Ironworkers Memorial Second Narrows Crossing starting in the fall of 2016 and there should be no impact on bus service in North Vancouver as a result of the move.