

north shore news

LETTER: Route 246 an epic transit misadventure

North Shore News

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Dear Editor:

I want to relate the experience my wife and I had taking bus route 246 on Monday, June 29 to downtown Vancouver instead of taking our car. Since we are both seniors, the combined “cost” would be \$11 for a return trip.

What we failed to consider was that almost all TransLink buses are not air conditioned. Weather-wise it turned out to be a near record hot day.

Exacerbating the situation was the fact that a considerable amount of heat was being generated in the ducts that run along the bus floor/wall interface. They were too hot to even touch. Pleas by passengers to “turn off the heat” fell on deaf ears — with a curt response “the heat is not on.” We had no choice but to sweat in silence.

We got off the bus at Georgia and Granville, but not without incident. The exit doors are apparently not designed to stay open, even when standing right in the exit. The result: one of the doors struck my wife in the arm. Not nice.

We noted that the return bus (246) was not one of the ones listed just across the street (fronting Hudson’s Bay). It was available two blocks upstream. We looked for a closer one downstream, to no avail. We discovered later that hanging flower baskets blocked the view of those telltale signs.

Remarkably the same “heat is not on” issue surfaced on our return bus (a different bus since I had noted the former was #9772, while the return was labelled #9731).

Also, on boarding the return bus, the driver was unable to issue transfers/receipts, being told to come back later. My wife felt apprehensive at having no receipt for our payment. I had no such apprehension; we had paid, and we had a witness to that effect.

Conclusion: We will take a bus only as a last resort. TransLink needs to improve their basic service levels if it ever wishes to see customers like ourselves in the future.

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