

Transit funding debated

Re: Transit plans hit political gridlock, July 3

Now that the transit plebiscite has met its fate, we have an opportunity for a better solution to our transportation woes. Though I am a regular transit user I voted No. Why? Because we already have a vast transportation system that is used at about 25 per cent capacity. That is the present road system with its private automobiles. Spend five minutes looking at commuters on any highway in the area. Mostly you will see one person in each car. If we can figure out how to put one more commuter in each car, we can cut the commuter traffic in half and save billions in fuel, capital, environmental and maintenance costs.

I suggest a modest toll on all major bridges and forgive the toll for cars with two or more people aboard. Spend the revenue on transit systems. In this inter-connected age it shouldn't be hard for commuters to discover a commuting pal near to where they live and work. Why not use what we already have before spending more billions?

RALPH STANTON
Vancouver

Metro mayors need to exert greater pressure on the federal and B.C. governments to vigorously enforce existing tax laws and go after the billions in revenue they fail to collect each year due to massive income and sales tax evasion.

The amount owing far exceeds the \$300 million the sales tax hike was to generate.

The nanny-state does not seem to work well.
Why not consider an alternative solution to fines.
Just make drivers responsible for the consequences of their actions. - cjk

Hit distracted drivers hard

\$167 for using cellphone while driving is not a deterrent

Re: Speed up crackdown on distracted driving, Editorial, June 20

I am pleased and encouraged to read Justice Minister Suzanne Anton's comments and learn the B.C. government is considering stronger measures with regards to penalties imposed on distracted drivers.

Deaths as a result of distracted driving now exceed those from drunk driving. The penalty presently imposed on a person caught driving while using a cellphone is a paltry \$167. Come on now! Do we honestly believe \$167 is any

serious deterrent? Obviously not, we see them every day.

There should be a fine and minimum 90-day licence suspension (plus impounding of vehicle) for the first offence and minimum one-year suspension for the second.

I plead for the government to hit 'em now, hard and fast where it really hurts, before scores more innocent people are killed or maimed.

GRAEME ROBERTS
Brentwood Bay

As reported by John Geddes in Maclean's in July 2014, research conducted by the Walker Consulting Group for the Canada Revenue Agency disclosed that the greatest concern among tax professionals is the CRA's failure to adequately fund enforcement to tackle tax avoidance and evasion to preserve the integrity of the system here in Vancouver.

Lower Mainlanders need to shun the underground economy and diligently report businesses and individuals who offer to charge no taxes on goods and services conditional on payments in cash.

Transportation infrastructure projects should be paid for with tax revenue from senior levels of government. No political gamesmanship in off-

loading responsibilities to local and regional governments is necessary.

SAMUEL D. HYMAN
Vancouver

As the provincial government initiated this plebiscite, I'm waiting to see what direction they want to go next. So far silence. Where are the leaders in this government when they are needed?

KEVIN DAVIES
Vancouver

In communities south of the Fraser, support for the Yes side was the lowest. I was playing bridge in Surrey on the day the

results were publicized, and the game was interrupted for an announcement of the outcome. The entire room erupted in cheers. I believe many people resent paying a usurious toll on the Port Mann that others in Metro do not pay, and there is a prevailing view that people living in that area already pay more than their share. Perhaps if there were attempts to introduce fairness into tolling, more people would support additional taxes.

DIANE GRIFFITHS
Langley

Re: The real Vancouver emerges from the ruins of the plebiscite, Column, July 4

Since moving to Vancouver 36 years ago, The Sun has been

my sole source of local news. It was from the paper's reporting that I formed my opinion about TransLink, which resulted in my No vote. Pete McMartin stated "most people in the public haven't a clue how TransLink is governed or how well it performs." Over the past couple of years The Sun has been highly critical of TransLink's management and operations; I hate to think I was purposely misled.

I suspect The Sun played a major role in the negative results of the plebiscite. Perhaps there's a modicum of hypocrisy in McMartin's assertions.

DOUG DE SAVOYE
West Vancouver

I voted No in the transit plebiscite because we shouldn't be spending such an exorbitant sum on a subway for Broadway. I prefer a simpler alternative which might mean removing parking from the street and running light transit down the middle in dedicated lanes (either rail or fast bus or whatever would work).

The redevelopment of Cambie Street to build high-density housing is going to put a tremendous strain on the Canada Line. The condos there are being marketed for their proximity to transit; the developers and realtors are cashing in, but they are not being asked to share their profits and contribute to transit. Residents who buy into those projects will be very disappointed when there is no room in the train. I live near Lansdowne station and unless you go one station south to the start of the line during rush hour, there is only standing room available.

MIRIAM COHEN
Richmond

LETTERS: ✉

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