

LETTER: Retire political elephant TransLink

North Shore News

August 19, 2015 12:00 AM

Dear Editor:

Re: editorial [Fare Pay \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-fare-pay-1.2019064\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-fare-pay-1.2019064) (Aug. 2 Viewpoint).

You have correctly identified the elephant in TransLink's glass (opaque?) shop when you wrote there are "a host of municipal and provincial politicians with divergent interests." Also TransLink's board has become a repository of political appointments. No wonder the province continues to keep control of it.

As for the mayors, they are also political animals and most want to be seen as team players waiting for an invite to run provincially/federally or are waiting for a plum public appointment rather than call a spade a spade.

Another huge problem with TransLink is a financial one. It lacks a secure source of funding free from political meddling. We are in this sorry mess because of this.

Public transportation is a big economic driver for Metro and the province. In order to reap the benefits, we must retire this political elephant.

Choosing a new TransLink CEO before fixing the political interference problem is foolhardy and will only perpetuate what we have been getting since the formation of TransLink. A new CEO, like a genie, will only be able to grant us one wish, that being to run TransLink economically and efficiently for us.

The CEO cannot grant a different wish to each and every politician.

The question is what can the powers to be do?

I have a suggestion that will fix the problem for good. Set up a task force of three, one representing each of the province, the mayors, and the people of Metro.

Let them come up with three secure sources of funding that Metro voters can choose at the next provincial election. Let them come up with their guiding vision to satisfy future transportation needs in 10, 25 and 50 years, and communicate this to Metro residents.

This or something similar to this will be more cost efficient than the present and will eliminate the waste due to political appointments and pork-barrel politics.

Only then can we hope to attain the financial, environmental, and societal benefits that a well-planned and operated transportation authority will give. I urge residents to lobby their mayor and MLA for a plan like the above.

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What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

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