

**Livable Region Coalition Challenges Gateway with alternatives
that are Safer, Faster, and Cheaper**

For Immediate Release

February 1, 2006, Vancouver- Today the Livable Region Coalition released a report that offers alternatives to directly challenge the Province's plan to twin the Port Mann Bridge and expand Highway 1.

The report, *Transportation for a Sustainable Region*, lays out a suite of transit investments that would cost less than a third of the highway expansion scheme. Combined with traffic management measures, these transit investments would make freeway expansion unnecessary while avoiding increased air pollution in the region. These solutions would also have traffic flowing within two years, while the province's scheme will further delay traffic through 8-10 years of construction.

Unlike the Province's Gateway Plan, the alternatives identified by the Livable Region Coalition are congruent with the commitment to environmental sustainability implicit in the GVRD's Livable Region Strategic Plan. Some of the measures identified are:

- Transit priority measures- includes bus lanes, High Priority Vehicle (HPV) lanes and traffic signal priority. Includes a Surrey-Coquitlam link
- Accelerated purchase of skytrain cars- 44 new Skytrain cars should be purchased as soon as possible, up from TransLink's plan to purchase 34
- Increased frequent service coverage- A 20% increase in TransLink's bus fleet, improved to a 10 minute or better frequency bus service on routes serving town centres.

“Contrary to what Gordon Campbell would have you believe, there are other options. The Gateway Plan will lock the Lower Mainland into increased air pollution causing health related impacts such as asthma and.... double the traffic-related air pollution and that will have health impacts—and financial impacts—for years to come,” said Dave Fields, spokesperson for the LRC. “Using transportation alternatives we can move people in a way that is safer, implement them faster and cheaper.”

The capital costs of the measures proposed in the report would be in the order of \$413 million compared to the \$1.5 billion cost of expanding a freeway and twinning the Port Mann Bridge.

The full text of the report, which was prepared for the LRC by Eric Doherty, MA candidate at the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning, can be found at www.livableregion.ca or www.spec.bc.ca.

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