

Rapid transit in Surrey gets \$3.1B boost

SkyTrain will expand to Fleetwood, Expo Line capacity will be doubled

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Next stop, Fleetwood.

The province and TransLink announced Thursday they will share the cost of a \$3.1 billion rapid transit expansion for Surrey to be completed sometime between now and 2020. The announcement was made at a press conference on the SkyTrain platform at Surrey's Gateway Station.

"This will be a minimum six kilometre extension in Surrey along 104th Avenue to Guildford, down 152nd Street to Fraser Highway and out to 168th Street in Fleetwood," Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon said. Falcon added \$2 billion will be spent to double capacity on the existing Expo Line into Surrey, while the rest - \$1.1 billion - will be used for the extension. The first phase of the project will be a \$10 million study to select the best route and technology options, with each of the partners putting up half of the cost. Falcon expects the study will take 18 to 20 months to complete.

TransLink's Ken Hardie said the transit authority has the cash for the preliminary study despite recent announcements of significant revenue shortfalls. Hardie also said the federal government will be asked to help cover the cost of upgrading Surrey's rapid transit.

"Our share of these things is usually about one-third, one-third to one-quarter," Hardie said. Surrey Mayor Dianne Watts applauded the announcement.

"This is great news. It's recognition that South of Fraser is significantly behind the eight ball in terms of transit."

Watts said the preliminary study will determine whether SkyTrain or surface light rail would be most suitable for the extension, noting she is a fan of the latter choice. Thursday's announcement is nothing but pre-election posturing, according to NDP MLA Bruce Ralston.

"I'm reminded of a news conference the premier held in 2005 announcing a new Surrey hospital. Well, here it's almost five years later and there's still no new hospital. I think this is the same kind of thing."



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Provincial transport minister Kevin Falcon announces Thursday a \$3.1-billion plan to double capacity on SkyTrain's Expo Line and extend commuter train service through Guildford into Fleetwood by 2020. Surrey MLA Dave Hayer and Surrey Mayor Dianne Watts look on.