



MVX Collective Society

PO Box 70516 Oak Street
Vancouver, BC V6M 0A3

25 November 2023

To: The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and Translink.

We are Mountain Valley Express, a non-profit society committed to bringing a world-class regional rail network to the South Coast of British Columbia. Though our region and province have made significant strides in improving transit in recent decades, one key piece of the transit puzzle is still missing: **frequent, regional rail service**.

Regions of a similar scale and level of ambition are already served with extensive regional rail networks. For example, Brisbane, Australia, a metropolitan area with a population similar to ours has a 689-km long regional network that connects its urban area with regional attractions and neighbouring cities. Without world-class regional rail, our region risks falling behind other global cities as well as failing to meet important environmental and equity goals.

The arguments for regional rail can be summarized as follows:

- **Economic:** Regional rail would help reduce road congestion and provide fast and frequent transit between the Metro Vancouver, Fraser Valley, and Sea-to-Sky regions. It would help over 5 million annual tourists easily access Whistler and Squamish as well as provide access for future high-speed rail to the United States.
- **Environmental:** Currently, driving is the dominant mode of transportation in the Sea-to-Sky and Fraser Valley regions as well as the periphery of Metro Vancouver. Regional rail would provide a compelling, clean, and efficient transportation option for people who live in these areas. Even with electric vehicles, rail transportation is far more efficient than typical private vehicle travel.
- **Social:** A world-class regional network will increase the number of job opportunities accessible to all residents. Regional rail corridors could serve many First Nation communities, spurring opportunities for economic development and reconciliation. Furthermore, it would reduce household expenses for those overburdened by the cost of car ownership and increase access for those who cannot afford a vehicle.
- **Region Shaping:** Regional rail would play a pivotal role in directing development, especially housing investment, around station areas, guiding regional growth and accelerating construction.



MVX Collective Society

PO Box 70516 Oak Street
Vancouver, BC V6M 0A3

We recognize that our region has other transit priorities. We are not demanding that regional rail be put to the front of the line. Instead, we are requesting a minimum set of resources and attention be given to regional rail so that key planning issues are resolved years before any shovels are put into the ground.

Transportation and land use are inextricably linked. While recent land use reforms in the form of upzoning have been made to address the housing crisis, without a matching transportation policy shift, we will risk similarly pressing problems in maintaining economic productivity and quality of life on the South Coast.

We request that the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Rob Fleming and the TransLink Board:

1. Study regional rail and integration with future rail rapid transit on a variety of productive corridors.
2. Establishes a directory of properties that should be preserved/monitored to ensure they are designed to accommodate future regional rail/rapid transit stations and corridors.

Sincerely,

Mountain Valley Express Board of Directors