

# LOWER THE FARE NOW!

*For Community Health and Social Justice*

## We stand for **social justice**

All members of our community have the right to mobility. Higher bus fares restrict people from fully participating in the economic, social and political life of the region. As transit fares increase transit dependent people are forced to choose between fewer bus trips or having less money to spend on other necessities such as food and rent. Increased fares exacerbate existing inequalities because they most impact women, people of colour, immigrants, refugees, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and seniors who are disproportionately transit-dependent.

Transit is a necessary public service in our region. We reject high fares as a form of privatization and an attack on the principle of universal access to necessary public services.

## We stand for **public health**

High bus fares reduces access to social services, health care, cultural events, family & friends, schools, places of worship, food banks and jobs for transit dependent people. Many buses are inaccessible to people with disabilities and women with children in strollers. As social isolation increases due to inadequate bus service and high fares the mental and physical health of transit-dependent people deteriorates and the health of our community suffers.

Increasing asthma and cancer rates, linked to air pollution, adversely affect the health of transit-dependent communities. TransLink's failure to prioritize clean-air buses for the region contributes to a growing public health crisis caused by poor air quality.

## We stand for a **healthy environment**

As the bus becomes more expensive, people increasingly depend on old, polluting cars. The use of cars and diesel buses in our region pumps carbon dioxide into the air and accelerates global climate change. Rising temperatures due to climate change most impacts indigenous communities, arctic communities, coastal communities, small island nations around the world, and the urban poor who are majority women and people of colour.

Therefore we join the Bus Riders Union in calling on **TransLink** to:

**Lower the fare** to pre-January 1, 2005 rates immediately and to develop a long-term plan for lower fares in the interests of social justice, public health and the environment.

## **Prioritize:**

- **More Buses:** Buy all the buses promised in the TransLink Three Year Plan / Ten Year Outlook. Expand the bus fleet to meet and exceed targets set out in the Livable Region Strategic Plan.
- **Expand Accessibility:** Commit to replacing or retrofitting all non-accessible buses.
- **Clean Air:** Replace or retrofit diesel buses with clean air technology.

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Name and position

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Date