



April 19, 2021

Brad Sperling, Chair
Peace River Regional Hospital District
PO Box 810
1981 Alaska Avenue
Dawson Creek BC V1G 4H8

Reference: 301050

Dear Chair Sperling:

Re: Regional Hospital Boards and Capital Costs

Thank you for your letter of February 9, 2021, regarding hospital capital costs and TransLink. I am also responding on behalf of my colleague the Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Minister Responsible for Translink.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to respond to your concerns concerning funding hospital capital costs for the Greater Vancouver Regional District, and TransLink's governance.

Hospital capital costs

In 1999, the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act shifted many regional transportation responsibilities from the provincial government to the Greater Vancouver Regional District. Several financing changes accompanied this shift.

BC Transit, which receives annual operating funding from the provincial government, would no longer operate transit in the regional district. Instead, the regional district would fund, plan, and operate transit in the region.

At the same time, Metro Vancouver's regional hospital capital taxes were eliminated. This meant the provincial government agreed to forgo the revenue it would have collected from the region's hospital capital taxes. However, the provincial government did not take over responsibility for paying the regional district's share of hospital capital costs.

Following the dissolution of the Greater Vancouver Regional Hospital District in 1999, the regional health authorities in Metro Vancouver have been required to generate their own funding for any capital projects they wish to undertake—without the help of property tax revenues. In contrast, taxpayers in all other districts outside of Metro Vancouver, including the Peace River Regional District, pay hospital capital taxes within their property taxes.

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TransLink's governance

TransLink is independently governed by a Mayors' Council and a Board of Directors, and its governance has not changed since our government was elected last year. TransLink generates its own operating revenue through sources such as transit fares and regional transit taxes, including property tax, a parking rights tax, and a regional motor fuel tax.

Under the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act, the provincial government is responsible for TransLink's governing legislation, which establishes TransLink's purpose, authority, and governance structure. The Act also sets out the consultation and transportation planning processes that TransLink must follow, as well as available funding sources and their limits. Any legislative amendments that may be required to implement changes, such as adjustments to planning process deadlines or introduction of new revenue sources, must be approved by the Legislative Assembly. In addition, the Province may appoint up to two Directors to TransLink's Board of Directors. You can find more information about TransLink's governance structure by visiting its website.

Minister Heyman oversees the provincial government's responsibilities with regard to TransLink. [His mandate letter](#) includes commitments for the Province to work with TransLink to make progress on several priority items, including:

- Work with TransLink to help families get around more affordably by making transit free for children up to and including age 12.
- Work with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to integrate TransLink and BC Transit services.
- Work with the TransLink Mayors' Council through its 10-year planning process to continue work to extend the Millennium Line to Arbutus, with an eventual terminus at UBC, and ensure prompt design and construction of the Surrey-Langley Skytrain.
- Reduce congestion and make transit an option for more people by working with TransLink to improve and expand the network for people living in the Fraser Valley and Sea-to-Sky regions, including by expanding West Coast Express service.

The letter is not meant to suggest that the provincial government will now fund or direct TransLink's operations. TransLink remains an independent authority.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jodi Dong, Executive Director, TransLink Branch. She can be reached at Jodi.Dong@gov.bc.ca and would be pleased to assist you.

I hope you find this information helpful. Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Rob Fleming
Minister

Copy to: Honourable George Heyman
 Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
 MLA, Vancouver-Fairview

Honourable Josie Osborne
Minister of Municipal Affairs
MLA, Mid Island-Pacific Rim

Honourable Selina Robinson
Minister of Finance
MLA, Coquitlam-Maillardville

Honourable Bowinn Ma
Minister of State for Infrastructure
MLA, North Vancouver-Lonsdale

Jodi Dong, Executive Director
TransLink Branch



PEACE RIVER REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT

February 9, 2021

Honourable Rob Fleming
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Via Email: Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Fleming:

RE: Regional Hospital Boards – Responsibility for Capital Costs

At its December 11, 2020 meeting, the Peace River Regional Hospital District Board (PRRHD) discussed changes to the Translink funding model related to the funding of hospital capital costs in Metro Vancouver.

In October 2012, the responsibility for funding 40% of hospital capital costs was transferred from Metro Vancouver to the Province, which allowed Metro Vancouver to levy property taxes to fund Translink instead.

As BC Government mandate letters place responsibility for TransLink with the Province, will the funding of 40% of hospital capital costs be transferred back to Metro Vancouver? Suppose Metro Vancouver will not be resuming responsibility for funding 40% of hospital capital costs. In that case, the PRRHD Board respectfully requests that hospital districts throughout BC receive similar assistance from the Province to create tax room for initiatives unique to each area. To that end, the PRRHD Board resolved:

“That the Regional Hospital District Board authorize that a letter be forwarded to the Ministers of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (MoECCS), Finance, Municipal Affairs, Transportation and Infrastructure, and State for Infrastructure, to remind the Province of its commitment made in October 2012 to relieve Metro Vancouver of the responsibility for 40% of hospital capital costs to allow Metro Vancouver to instead levy property taxes to pay for Translink; and further, to enquire with the Province regarding the mandate letters for the BC Government that place responsibility for Translink in provincial jurisdiction (MoECCS), and whether this will result in Metro Vancouver resuming responsibility for 40% of hospital capital costs, and if not, to request that the Peace River Regional Hospital District, and other hospital districts in the Province receive similar assistance from the Province to create tax room for specific initiatives unique to the area.”

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PLEASE REPLY TO:

☒ Box 810, 1981 Alaska Ave, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4H8 Tel: (250) 784-3200 or (800) 670-7773 Fax: (250) 784-3201 Email: prrd.dc@prrd.bc.ca
☐ 9505 100 St, Fort St. John, BC V1J 4N4 Tel: (250) 785-8084 Fax: (250) 785-1125 Email: prrd.fsj@prrd.bc.ca

Thank you for your consideration of the PRRHD Board's request.

Sincerely,

Bradley Sperling

Brad Sperling
Chair

- c: Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Email: ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Honourable Josie Osborne, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Email: MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Finance, Email: FIN.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Honourable Bowinn Ma, Minister of State for Infrastructure, Email: Minister.SI@gov.bc.ca
Mr. Mike Bernier, South Peace MLA, Email: Mike.Bernier@leg.bc.ca
Mr. Dan Davies, North Peace MLA, Email: Dan.Davies@leg.bc.ca