
MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW WEST COAST EXPRESS CARS ROLL INTO TOWN

VANCOUVER – Commuters in British Columbia will benefit from seven new passenger cars, thanks to an investment by the Government of Canada, the Province of British Columbia and TransLink.

The first two of these new cars were unveiled today by the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, the Honourable Shirley Bond, the provincial Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Langley City Mayor Peter Fassbender, Chair of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation, and Doug Kelsey, the Chief Executive Officer of the British Columbia Rapid Transit Company, Ltd. and Executive Vice President of TransLink. Steve Hall, Vancouver General Manager of Bombardier Transportation, also joined the event.

The \$28.1-million project includes the new cars and yard upgrades at the Waterfront and Mission stations to accommodate the new cars. Some safety improvements will also be made, including better crossing guards at Maple Meadows Station. This joint investment will add space for 2,000 more riders daily and improve service for customers.

"The Government of Canada is pleased to expand commuter rail service for Lower Mainland transit users by partnering with the Province of British Columbia and TransLink," said Minister Strahl. "These improvements, part of Canada's Economic Action Plan, show our government's commitment to safe, secure, and efficient travel and to building the infrastructure Canada needs for a strong future."

Built by Bombardier at its Thunder Bay, Ontario plant, the two cars are undergoing testing and will be in service by the beginning of September. The remaining five cars will be delivered by the end of October and are expected to be in service by the end of the year. Initially, the new cars will replace existing cars that will be refurbished and upgraded.

"Together with the federal government and TransLink, we're improving service on West Coast Express by encouraging more people to take the train and leave their cars at home," said Minister Bond. "This represents a strong level of cooperation between transit partners in British Columbia and it supports the Provincial Transit Plan goals to double transit ridership and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

Since beginning service in 1995, daily ridership on the West Coast Express has doubled to a daily average of 10,500 customers from about 5,000. This is equivalent to taking 4,300 cars off the road during weekday peak periods and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 21,502 tonnes.

"By working together, we are delivering transportation solutions that benefit commuters, local communities and the region," said Mayor Fassbender. "This project is an example of how partnerships between senior levels of government and the region benefit everyone. Together, we have delivered major transportation improvements, including the Canada Line and Golden Ears Bridge, helping to keep our communities healthy and our region and economy viable."

Today's event also kicked off the celebration of West Coast Express' 15th anniversary on November 1. From local events to weekly prizes, the next two months will recognize the customers and communities that are served by West Coast Express with a grand celebration planned for November.

"The new cars and station upgrades help meet growing demand for service. We are pleased to provide the thousands of customers who use West Coast Express every day a more comfortable and enjoyable experience, while adding capacity for the future," said Mr. Kelsey. "Thanks to senior government investment, we are delivering on our mandate to move people around the region through sustainable solutions." Mr. Kelsey added that TransLink's funding for this project was committed to in its 2009 capital plan.

Federal investment is provided through the Building Canada Fund to support economic growth in British Columbia and across Canada. Canada's Economic Action Plan provides for almost \$12 billion in new infrastructure stimulus investment over two years and accelerates the \$33-billion Building Canada Plan, addresses the needs in communities across Canada and contributes to long-term economic growth through investments in public infrastructure. Through this fund, as well as the Gas Tax Fund, the Public Transit Trust and the Public Transit Infrastructure Program, federal investments in new fuel-efficient buses, customized and accessible vehicles, SkyTrain cars and a third SeaBus are making a difference for transit in Metro Vancouver.

The objectives of the \$14-billion Provincial Transit Plan are to double transit ridership across British Columbia and reduce greenhouse gas emissions cumulatively by 4.7 million tonnes by 2020. Since 2008, the Province has committed more than \$700 million to transit in Metro Vancouver, including investments in key projects such as the Canada Line, new fuel-efficient and clean technology buses, and new SkyTrain cars and station upgrades.

The Government of Canada, the Province of British Columbia and TransLink are working together on a number of transportation improvements in Metro Vancouver, including the Evergreen Line rapid transit system, a top transit priority that will connect the northeast sector and downtown Vancouver.

About West Coast Express

West Coast Express is a commuter service that connects Vancouver, Port Moody, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Pitt Meadows, Maple Ridge and Mission. Trains depart every 30 minutes during morning and afternoon peak periods. During non-peak times and weekends, customers use TrainBus service. Since opening on November 1, 2005, West Coast Express has served more than 28 million riders.

BACKGROUND

KEY FACTS ABOUT WEST COAST EXPRESS 2010 UPGRADES

- The \$28.1 million upgrade project is jointly funded by the Government of Canada (through the Major Infrastructure Component of the Building Canada Fund), the Province of British Columbia and TransLink.
- The project includes seven new, bi-level passenger cars built by Bombardier Transportation, yard upgrades at the Waterfront and Mission stations, and some safety improvements, including better crossing guards at Maple Meadows Station.
- The yard upgrades include additional storage tracks and maintenance equipment for the new cars.
- Two of the seven cars have been delivered and are undergoing testing; these cars will be in service in early September. The remaining five cars will be delivered by the end of October, and are expected to be in service by the end of the year. Initially, the cars will replace existing cars that will be refurbished and upgraded.
- The new cars expand the West Coast Express fleet from 37 passenger cars to 44 cars. Each car can accommodate 147-seated passengers with additional standing room. The new cars add room for 2,000 riders a day – a 20% increase in capacity.
- Six coach cars and one cab car will be delivered. The cab car contains driving controls so that the car can be operated from the opposite end – avoiding having to turn the trains around at each end of the line.
- Each train has a locomotive and cab car; each train also has a “cappuccino car,” serving coffee and other beverages and snacks for a more enjoyable passenger experience.
- The new cars were built in Canada at Bombardier Transportation facilities in Thunder Bay, Ontario.
- This is the third West Coast Express fleet expansion. Nine passenger cars were added in 2000-2001, and a sixth locomotive, to be used as a spare, was added in 2006.
- The new cars are designed to serve customers better. Revisions to the bicycle tie-downs made room for more seating and modifications to the end doors make it even easier to pass between cars.

Other important facts

- West Coast Express serves more than 2.3 million customers per year. Since opening on November 1, 1995, more than 28 million riders (2009) have taken the service.
- Ridership has doubled from about 5,000 customers a day to a daily average of 10,500 today, resulting in 4,300 fewer cars on the road during weekday peak periods, effectively reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 21,502 tonnes.
- Cost recovery from the service is greater than 85% – one of the highest for commuter rail services in North America.