

AGENDA INFORMATION☐ Regular Meeting

Date: _____

☐ Other:

Date: _____

Dept.
Manager_____
GM/
Director_____
CAO

The District of North Vancouver

REPORT TO COUNCIL

April 1, 2026

AUTHOR: Lisa Muri, Councillor

SUBJECT: Passenger Rail Services Within the Sea to Sky Corridor

RECOMMENDATION:

WHEREAS the District recognizes the importance of exploring a Sea to Sky Rail network capable of meeting the long-term mobility, environmental, and economic needs of regional communities and stakeholders;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the District of North Vancouver Council send a letter to the Minister of Transportation and Transit expressing Council's support for the re-establishment of passenger rail services within the Sea to Sky corridor.

REASON FOR REPORT:

Recent developments involving Canadian National Railway (CN) and its intention to decommission part of its railway line from north of the railyards in Squamish through to 100 Mile House have created a time-sensitive opportunity to reconsider passenger rail services within the Sea to Sky region. This report recommends that Council formally support exploring a Sea to Sky Rail network and communicate that support to the Province.

SUMMARY:

This report recommends that Council formally express support to the Province for the re-establishment of passenger rail service along the Sea to Sky corridor. Growing population pressures, climate commitments, and increasing congestion along Highway 99 underscore the need to explore alternative transportation options. An area of shared regional interest, this step positions the District to advocate effectively for long-term, sustainable mobility solutions in coordination with neighbouring municipalities such as the District of West Vancouver, Squamish, and Whistler.

BACKGROUND:

The Sea to Sky corridor, anchored by Highway 99, connects communities from Metro Vancouver through Squamish to Whistler and Pemberton. The corridor has seen significant growth in both population and tourism over recent decades, increasing pressure on transportation infrastructure, including in the District of North Vancouver where the challenges of congestion are frequently cited by residents.

Historically, the corridor has been served by a rail line originally operated by BC Rail, which remains in place today but is primarily used for limited freight and tourism operations.

A key recent development is the planned termination of CN Rail's lease on portions of the corridor, which would return control of the railway to the Province of British Columbia. This creates a unique opportunity to revisit the feasibility of passenger rail service for the first time in decades.

Previous regional planning efforts, including the Sea to Sky Transit Corridor Study, have identified the importance of improving interregional connectivity and explored options for enhanced transit services.

Neighbouring municipalities, including the District of West Vancouver, Squamish, and Whistler, have advocated for increased regional transit in the corridor. Similar advocacy efforts have been made at the provincial and federal level, including by the MLA for West Vancouver—Sea to Sky and the MP for West Vancouver – Sunshine Coast – Sea To Sky Country.

EXISTING POLICY:

The District of North Vancouver has consistently supported:

- Regional collaboration on transportation planning
- Climate action and greenhouse gas reduction targets
- Sustainable and multimodal transportation options

At the provincial level, transportation and climate policies emphasize reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and investing in low-carbon infrastructure.

ANALYSIS:

Timing is critical. The potential transition of rail corridor control to the Province in 2026 creates a limited window for local governments to signal interest and influence provincial decision-making regarding future use of the corridor.

Early advocacy from municipalities within and adjacent to the corridor will help ensure passenger rail is considered in forthcoming feasibility, governance, and funding decisions.

Conclusion:

The re-establishment of passenger rail service in the Sea to Sky corridor represents a significant opportunity to address long-term transportation challenges while advancing regional climate and economic objectives. Expressing Council's support at this stage ensures the District of North Vancouver is positioned to participate meaningfully in forthcoming provincial discussions to advance the interests of residents of the District.

Options:

1. THAT Council confirm interest in exploring a Sea to Sky rail network capable of meeting the long-term mobility, environmental, and economic needs of regional communities and stakeholders;

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April 2, 2026

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AND THAT the District of North Vancouver Council send a letter to the Minister of Transportation and Transit expressing Council's support for the re-establishment of passenger rail services within the Sea to Sky corridor.

2. THAT the motion is not supported.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Muri
Councillor

REVIEWED WITH:					
☐ Business and Economic	_____	☐ Finance	_____	External Agencies:	
☐ Bylaw Services	_____	☐ Fire Services	_____	☐ Library Board	_____
☐ Clerk's Office	_____	☐ GIS	_____	☐ Museum and Archives	_____
☐ Climate and Biodiversity	_____	☐ Human Resources	_____	☐ NSEM	_____
☐ Communications	_____	☐ Integrated Planning	_____	☐ NS Health	_____
☐ Community Planning	_____	☐ ITS	_____	☐ NVRC	_____
☐ Development Engineering	_____	☐ Parks	_____	☐ RCMP	_____
☐ Development Planning	_____	☐ Real Estate	_____	☐ Other:	_____
☐ Engineering Operations	_____	☐ Review and Compliance	_____		
☐ Environment	_____	☐ Solicitor	_____		
☐ Facilities	_____	☐ Utilities	_____		

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