

**CITY OF BLAINE
REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION
MEETING DATE:**

SUBJECT: AMTRAC Request from White Rock

SUBMITTING DEPT: City Manager

PREPARED BY: Gary Tomsic

AGENDA LOCATION: Comments/Communications ☐ Consent ☐ Committee Reports ☐
Unfinished Business ☒ New Business ☐ Public Hearing ☐ Standing Committees ☐

ATTACHMENTS: Letter from White Rock

ANALYSIS/SUMMARY: The City of White Rock has asked that the City of Blaine renew its commitment to support their efforts to secure a passenger train stop in White Rock. The City Manager reported this at the last meeting and the council requested that be put on this agenda.

RECOMMENDATION: ☐ Waive 2nd Reading: (Include conditions of approval if applicable) Staff recommends that City Council

The City Manager sees no harm in supporting the White Rock request.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

REVIEWED BY:

City Manager _____ Finance Dir. _____ City Clerk _____

COUNCIL ACTION:

☐ Approved ☐ Denied ☐ Tabled/Deferred ☐ Assigned to: _____

COUNCIL ACTION: _____

Mayor's Office (604) 541-2131
City Administrator's Office (604) 541-2133
Corporate Services (604) 541-2127
Fax (604) 541-9348

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK

15322 BUENA VISTA AVENUE, WHITE ROCK, B.C. V4B 1Y6



October 11, 2007

Mayor Richard Myers
City of Blaine
Blaine City Hall
344 – H Street
Blaine, WA 98230

Dear Mayor Myers,

Re: Amtrak Passenger Rail Service for White Rock and Semiahmoo Region

I am writing to you on behalf of the City of White Rock in my capacity as City Manager.

In 2000, the City of White Rock undertook a study with the firm Trillium Business Strategies, Inc. to examine the feasibility and subsequent negotiations with the objective of securing passenger rail service for the Semiahmoo Region with a stop in White Rock.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on July 24, 2001, a copy of which is attached. An Amtrak Task Force was established to work on the implementation of the MOU with Councillor Doug McLean from White Rock as the Chair and representatives from the City of Blaine, Chambers of Commerce and other stakeholders. Unfortunately, the events of September, 2001 stopped all work on this initiative.

The City of White Rock has reaffirmed its commitment to the conditions of the signed MOU and appointed Councillor McLean to further discussions with the stakeholders on the implementation of passenger rail service to and from White Rock on Amtrak trains operating between Vancouver and Seattle.

The purpose of this letter is to request that your City reaffirm your commitment to this MOU. Once we have confirmation of this commitment, Councillor McLean has asked that a meeting be scheduled to renew the discussions implementing this rail passenger initiative.

Please send all correspondence on this issue to my attention and I thank you in advance for your consideration of this matter.

Yours truly,

Peggy Clark
City Manager

cc. Councillor McLean

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Amtrak Passenger Rail Service for White Rock and Semiahmoo Region

This Memorandum of Understanding is between the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) and the City of White Rock (White Rock).

Whereas:

- (a) Amtrak provides passenger rail service between U.S. cities, and between some U.S. cities and Canadian cities
- (b) Amtrak, in partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WashDOT), provides once daily round trip passenger rail service between Seattle and Vancouver, with stops in Edmonds, Everett, Mt. Vernon and Bellingham.
- (c) Amtrak and WashDOT have an interest in increasing the number of round trips per day, and in pursuing opportunities to better serve the Greater Vancouver market
- (d) White Rock, working in conjunction with the City of Blaine, Washington, wishes to secure passenger rail service for the Semiahmoo Region in order to:
 - expand alternative modes of cross-border travel
 - provide new economic opportunities within the Semiahmoo Region
 - enhance livability of communities within the Region

Amtrak and White Rock agree to pursue their common interests as follows.

Implementation of Daily Passenger Rail Service to and from White Rock

Amtrak agrees to provide daily passenger rail service northbound to White Rock and southbound from White Rock to U.S. points once the following conditions ("the Conditions") are satisfied at no cost to Amtrak:

- 1) White Rock provides the minimum essential station infrastructure (including a station structure, passenger platform, waiting areas, washrooms, ticket kiosks, customs facilities, drop-off and pick-up zones)
- 2) White Rock is able to offer long-term parking to Amtrak passengers at a convenient location and at rates comparable to other stations along the Vancouver-Portland corridor, with shuttle service to the station
- 3) Satisfactory adjustments are made to train operations to offset running time impacts of a stop in White Rock
- 4) All necessary approvals are obtained from Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company
- 5) All necessary approvals are obtained from Transport Canada
- 6) All arrangements are approved by WashDOT
- 7) A satisfactory agreement for Canada customs and immigration services is concluded with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency
- 8) Satisfactory agreements for U.S. customs and immigration services are concluded with the U.S. Customs Service and U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service

All Amtrak trains operating between Vancouver and Seattle will provide the service.

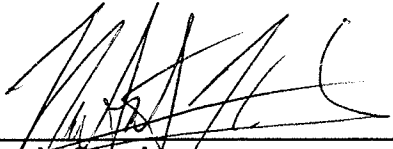
White Rock and Amtrak agree to work cooperatively to satisfy the Conditions. In the event that efforts to satisfy the Conditions are unsuccessful, White Rock and Amtrak will work together to identify an alternative station location on Semiahmoo Bay to serve the region.

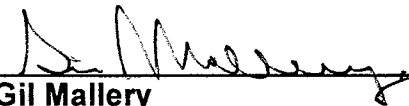
White Rock undertakes to continue to pursue community and economic benefits for communities surrounding Boundary Bay through joint transportation and economic development initiatives. These initiatives could include, for example, the introduction of shuttle ferry operations serving Blaine, Semiahmoo Inn and White Rock, and the development of cross-border cycling facilities to encourage growth in the tourism sectors of the local economies.

Expansion of Amtrak Passenger Rail Service to and from Vancouver

White Rock recognizes the social, economic, and environmental benefits of passenger rail service.

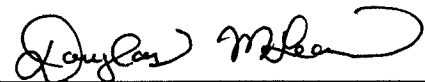
White Rock supports the expansion of passenger rail service along the Cascadia corridor and the Mayor will actively promote the introduction of additional daily train service between Seattle and downtown Vancouver.

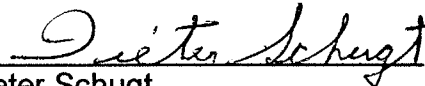



Hardy Staub
Mayor
City of White Rock

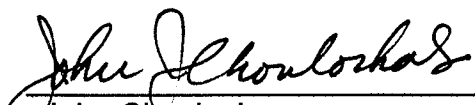
Gil Mallery
President, Amtrak West
National Railroad Passenger Corp.


Signed July 24th, 2001 in the presence of:

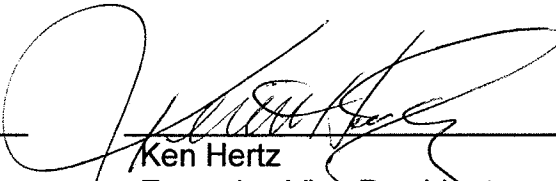


Doug McLean
Councillor, City of White Rock
Chair, Amtrak Task Force

Dieter Schugt
Mayor
City of Blaine

Pam Glass
President, White Rock/South Surrey
Chamber of Commerce

John Choulochas
Director
Blaine Chamber of Commerce

Rick Clough
Chair, White Rock Economic
Development Committee

Ken Hertz
Executive Vice President
Trillium Corporation