

Light Rail to Vancouver vs. CTRAN Express Buses: A Comparison of Key Attributes

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Metric	TriMet Yellow MAX Line to North Portland	CTran Express Buses Serving Downtown Portland
Capital cost of expanding light rail to Vancouver	\$932 million	\$0
2011 annual operating cost	\$10.2 million	\$5.04 million
Operating cost/hour	\$270	\$110
Annual hours of service	40,492	45,996
Farebox recovery ratio for operations cost	47%	67%
Cost/new vehicle	\$4,200,000	\$458,333
Peak-hour frequency	Every 15 minutes	Every 10.3-15.5 minutes
Peak-hour travel speed	15 MPH	31-45 MPH
Travel time, Vancouver to Portland	36-38 minutes	16 -18 minutes
% of passenger seating capacity actually used at the peak period	34%	38%

Light rail operations to Vancouver: A Case of Hope Trumping Experience

According to the most recent finance plan for this project, *“Light rail in the new guideway and in the existing Yellow line alignment would be planned to operate with **7.5 minute headways** during the “peak of the peak” and with 15-minute headways at all other times. This compares to 12-minute headways in “peak of the peak” and 15-minute headways at all other times for the existing Yellow line.”*¹

In fact, the Yellow Line runs at **15 minutes headways** all day. According to the FTA Full Funding Grant Agreement for the Yellow Line, service is supposed to be operating at 10-minute headways at the peak, improving to 7.5 minute headways by 2020. Given that total TriMet service has dropped by 14% over the past eight years, there is virtually no chance an expanded Yellow Line to Vancouver would operate as promised on opening day.

¹ C-TRAN, *High Capacity Transit System and Finance Plan*, July 20, 2012, p. 4.

**TriMet's Bureaucratic Miracle:
More Money Results in Less Service**

TriMet Financial Resources, 2004-2013 (000s)

	FY 04/05	FY 08/09	FY 10/11	FY 11/12 (est)	FY 12/13 (budget)	% Change 04/05-12/13
Passenger fares	\$ 59,487	\$ 90,016	\$ 96,889	\$ 104,032	\$117,166	+97%
Payroll tax revenue	\$171,227	\$209,089	\$224,858	\$232,832	244,457	+43%
Total operating resources	\$308,766	397,240	\$399,641	\$476,364	\$465,056	+51%
Total Resources	\$493,722	\$888,346	\$920,044	\$971,613	\$1,111,384	+125%

Note: Pursuant to legislation adopted in 2003, the TriMet payroll tax rate was increased on January 1, 2005, will rise by .0001% annually until it reaches a rate of .007218% on January 1, 2014.

Annual Fixed Route Service Trends, 2004-2012

	FY 04	FY 06	FY 08	FY 10	FY 12	% Change
Veh. revenue hours	1,698,492	1,653,180	1,712,724	1,682,180	1,561,242	-8.1%
Vehicle revenue miles	27,548,927	26,830,124	26,448,873	25,781,480	23,625,960	-14.2
Average veh. speed - bus	15.8	15.8	14.9	14.7	14.6	-7.6%
Average veh. speed - L. Rail	20.1	19.4	19.3	19.4	18.4	-11.5%

Source: TriMet annual service and ridership report; TriMet budget documents and audited financial statements, various years.