



CITY OF QUESNEL

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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PHONE 250-992-2111
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October 17, 2012



Passenger Transportation Board
PO Box 9850 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia, V8W 9T5

Dear members of the Passenger Transportation Board,

Re: Intercity Bus Application Notice Greyhound Canada Application No. 305-12

At a City Council meeting held on October 15, 2012 Council resolved to submit this letter with regard to suggested reduction of bus service between Vancouver and Prince George.

We are a community whose residents will be severely affected by the reduction of service. We appreciate the affordable safe transportation that is provided to our northern Communities by Greyhound Canada. We do not support this reduction of service which will not only affect our City residents but the entire corridor from Prince George to Vancouver. Air service for many residents is not an affordable option.

We appreciate the affordable and safe transportation option that Greyhound provides; clearly, a reduction in service would reduce accessibility to those options. Not all of us can afford to operate a motor vehicle or use other, more expensive means of transportation. For some, the bus is the only viable option for inter-city travel.

I note that in the application there is some concern around "unregulated competition from Province of BC agencies." I would encourage your Board to work with those agencies and Greyhound Canada to identify those issues, so that a more sustainable solution may be found that works in the best interests of all involved.

Although we are not a community directly situated along the Highway 16 corridor, commonly referred to as the Highway of Tears, we are disturbed by the potential for an increase in hitch-hiking activity, especially among more at-risk demographics, such as young women.

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Office of Mayor
& Council
250.991.7477

Mayor
Mary Sjostrom

Councillors
John Brisco
Mike Cave
Ed Colemean
Scott Elliott
Laurey-Anne
Roodenburg
Sushil Thapar

Executive Asst.
Lynn Mamic

October 25, 2012



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Council can fully appreciate the financial concerns being described by Greyhound Canada; we hope, however, that a different solution may be found to address those concerns.

Greyhound is to be commended for the quality service it provides, and we look forward to seeing that service continue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary Sjoström".

Mayor Mary Sjoström

cc: Hon. Shirley Bond
Hon. Pat Bell
MLA Bob Simpson
MLA Donna Barnett
→ NCLGA Members
Greyhound Canada

Office of Mayor
& Council
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October 25, 2012



October 23rd, 2012

Via e-mail to ptboard@gov.bc.ca

Mr. Don Zurowski, Chair
Passenger Transportation Board
PO Box 9850 Stn. Prov. Gov't
Victoria, BC V8W 9T5

Re: Application 305-12 Greyhound Canada Service Reductions

Dear Mr. Zurowski,

On behalf of the Executive of the North Central Local Government Association I am writing to express our views on the Greyhound Canada Application 305 - 12 to reduce minimum route frequencies in BC.

As an Association, the NCLGA Region covers 68% of the landmass of the Province. Our territory begins at 70 Mile House and stretches north the Yukon border above the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, our western region takes in Haida Gwaii and continues east to the Alberta border. Our membership is made up of 41 municipalities, villages and Regional Districts. The size, geographic location, and population of this territory, harsh weather conditions, and a resource-based economy create challenges which are often very different from those of other areas of British Columbia, particularly during the winter months.

A reliable and safe method of transportation is crucial in our rural areas, and many residents rely on Greyhound buses to transport them safely to school, work, medical appointments, or to the larger centers for shopping and to visit family.

Routes E1 and E2 (b) – Prince George to Vancouver:

Greyhound is proposing to eliminate 14 trips on this route. We question the need for such a large reduction in service and would suggest that perhaps they could compromise and continue to run Schedule 5015 and Schedule 5040 at a minimum of twice per week, rather than eliminating these entirely.

Route G – Dawson Creek to Alberta Border & Highway 2:

At a time when the economy is booming in the entire Peace Region, we have difficulty with justifying any reduction in service on this route. In particular we are concerned about the

elimination of schedule 5229, the 4:20pm – 5:30pm trip from Dawson Creek to Fort St. John, and schedule 5064, which is the return trip departing Fort St. John at 6:30pm and arriving in Dawson Creek at 7:40pm. This timing is excellent for those using the service to commute to and from work, providing a valuable option for passengers who are uncomfortable or unable to drive on this exceptionally busy stretch of highway.

Route I – Dawson Creek to Fort Nelson:

Greyhound is proposing to eliminate over half of the schedule on this route, reducing their schedule from its current level of 30 trips per week to only 14. Once again, we question the need for such a drastic to change to their level of service. The economy in the Fort Nelson area is booming, and all indications are that this will continue. Surely even the amount of freight shipped via Greyhound to and from Fort Nelson would justify a higher level of service than 14 trips per week!

Route J – Prince George to Dawson Creek:

Greyhound proposes to eliminate 10 runs on this route. We note that one of the schedules that they plan to eliminate is schedule 5060, which is the only daytime trip from Prince George to Dawson Creek. This would leave riders with only one option, which is to leave Prince George at 11:45pm, arriving in Dawson Creek at 5:00am. We are concerned that many people, particularly seniors would not be comfortable with this option, and it certainly does not encourage tourists to use the service, as the entire trip would be made during darkness.

The route from Dawson Creek is also important for those using the services to ship freight. During the summer months Greyhound's services are frequently used for shipping farm parts from the major suppliers in Dawson Creek to farmers throughout the region.

Route K – Prince George to Fort St. James

The proposed changes to this route are very concerning. Fort St. James is at the end of the line, and simply has no other options when it comes to public transportation. Greyhound is suggesting eliminating the current Monday – Friday service and leaving only 1 trip per direction per week, with the Fort St. James to Prince George trip operating on Fridays, and the Prince George to Fort St. James return trip on Sundays. This service is currently used by many residents and particularly during the winter months this reduced level of service would cause a hardship for many, particularly those who are vulnerable such as seniors or youth who are reluctant or unable to drive.

Route L1 – Prince George to Prince Rupert:

We are concerned about any reduction in service along this route. Options for passenger transport are already limited in this part of our region, and in fact there have been many discussions in recent months about trying to increase the level of service in along this stretch of highway. As I am sure you are aware, more than 30 women have disappeared or have been found murdered along the 724 km length of Highway 16 between Prince George and Prince Rupert, otherwise known as the Highway of Tears. The very safety of our residents, particularly of young northern women will be compromised if service is reduced from current levels.

The Northwest Region is anticipated to see a huge increase in development over the next few years, and this would seem to be a very poor time for Greyhound to be reducing levels of service.

Unregulated BC Government Competition:

We strongly encourage the Transportation to work with these groups, to determine where challenges exist, and to find a satisfactory resolution without risking patient care in the north.

We are deeply concerned there was specific mention of the Northern Health Connections bus service competing with and impacting Greyhound. NCLGA would like to go on record as being a firm supporter of the Northern Connections bus service. There can be no comparison between the two types of bus service, and it appears that Greyhound did not do their homework on this prior to submitting their application. Northern Health Buses are in fact licensed and regulated with all appropriate safety approvals. Greyhound also states that “no policing is undertaken to ensure that only passengers with a physician referral are able to travel on NH Connections bus services”. This is simply not true, and all patients are asked to provide verification of medical appointments prior to travelling on the Northern Health Connections buses. The Northern Health Connections buses provide a very valuable service to the residents of Northern BC, and it is very disturbing to us that Greyhound is attempting to make a case for reducing their service levels based on inaccurate assumptions.

In closing we would like to say that the transport of passengers and freight is crucial in our region. We believe the proposed changes would have a negative impact on our economy as well as the health and social wellbeing of our residents. As the only public transportation system currently available in Northern BC, the proposed level of reductions is unacceptable.

We urge the Passenger Transportation Board to reject this application and to encourage all concerned parties to work together to ensure the best possible outcome for our residents.

Yours truly,



Mayor Mitch Campsall
NCLGA President

cc Grant Odsen
Regional Manager, Passenger Operations
Greyhound Canada
725 Notre Dame Drive
Kamloops BC, V2C 5N8

NCLGA Members
Union of BC Municipalities
Area Associations
Northern MLA's
Northern Health
Interior Health