



NEWS RELEASE

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Decisions on scope of Evergreen Line not fully informed, says Auditor General

VICTORIA — When the Province decided to build the Evergreen Line SkyTrain extension to Coquitlam, it did so with incomplete information, Auditor General John Doyle said.

“While my audit ultimately concluded that the SkyTrain extension was the best option, it did this using information not present in the Treasury Board submissions,” said Doyle. The documents presented to the Treasury Board in 2010 fell short of meeting guidelines set out in the Capital Asset Management Framework, which agencies should follow when informing government investment decisions.”

Doyle’s latest report, *Audit of the Evergreen Line Rapid Transit Project*, revealed that the 2008 and 2010 business cases, which the Ministry of Transportation developed with Translink and Partnerships British Columbia before having them reviewed by the Ministry of Finance, omitted information needed to understand the costs, benefits and risks when comparing the SkyTrain, light rail and bus rapid transit options. They also did not explain that the SkyTrain ridership forecasts were based on assumptions that placed them at the upper end of the estimated range, nor did they describe the risks from changes in complementary and competing transit services.

“Omitting this information meant government did not have the opportunity to understand these risks and endorse actions for protecting and enhancing the benefits of the Evergreen Line over its useful life,” he said. “Applying the same approach for future capital projects puts government at risk of making decisions that would have been modified had government understood the full costs, benefits and risks.”

A framework for measuring performance was also not included and none of the agencies could show documentary evidence that they had reviewed the material submitted to Treasury Board, he said.

The audit also looked at whether government made an informed decision about the procurement of the Evergreen Line. It concluded that the choice to go with a short-term P3 arrangement was made with sufficient information.

“The P3 option fits with government’s policy to deliver large projects under P3 arrangements unless a public option is clearly superior, and a short-term P3 ensures a single operator across the SkyTrain system.” said Doyle.

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2012/13 Report 15 – *Audit of the Evergreen Line Rapid Transit Project*

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