

## Transit Meets the “Rail Mall”: two local media articles

The following two local media articles, the first from the free daily The Metro in its 28 January 2010 issue and the second from the Vancouver Sun over 4 years earlier on 27 October 2005, discuss a new proposed pathway for transit funding and ridership promotion: transit stations co-located with retail malls and residential tower development.

Does such a vision support our region’s liveability and sustainability goals and commitments? Is this area beginning to look too much like Hong Kong, the 39<sup>th</sup> most liveable city on the planet, according to The Economist? (In 2010, Vancouver was still listed as Number One.) Can you build community and sustainable local commerce within a mall? Are glass and concrete towers ecological design forms? Are they “ecoDense,” let alone support an energy descent strategy? Is this necessarily a poor prospect for our future? Is there an adaptive reuse for this new mall space and its adjoining towers?

Source: <http://www.metronews.ca/vancouver/local/article/435695--new-westminster-to-host-first-rail-mall>

### New Westminster to host first rail mall

STIG NIELSEN

METRO VANCOUVER

January 28, 2010 5:28 a.m.

Canada’s first rail mall is set to open at New Westminster SkyTrain station in 2011, developers said yesterday.

The 200,000-square-foot shopping mall overlooking the Fraser River is being built around the station, with the SkyTrain tracks going right through it. It’ll include various retailers including Shoppers Drug Mart, Royal Bank, Safeway and a 10-screen cinema.

TransLink spokesperson Ken Hardie said the development plays right into the transit authority’s ambition of mixing community centres and transit hubs.

“This development is the way of the future, where elevated traffic is fully



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integrated with shopping and a large residential complex,” he said.

Mike Degelder, the developer of the mall and three residential towers already built by the site, projected 500 families will move into the complex.

New Westminster Mayor Wayne Wright described it as “the future of living in an urban environment.”

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Source: <http://www.canada.com/vancouver/vancouversun/news/business/story.html?id=c34dded4-b594-40fb-a817-eeff12fd9ed1>

### SkyTrain shopping mall set for New Westminster

The New Westminster SkyTrain station will become fully integrated with a \$60-million, 170,000 square-foot retail project to be developed over the next three years, city and SkyTrain officials announced Wednesday.

BY THE VANCOUVER SUN  
OCTOBER 27, 2005

The New Westminster SkyTrain station will become fully integrated with a \$60-million, 170,000 square-foot retail project to be developed over the next three years, city and SkyTrain officials announced Wednesday.

The development is believed to be the first in North America to fully integrate an elevated transit system with a major shopping and housing complex. The station platform is expected to be widened to accommodate SkyTrain riders who will get off and walk to shops before resuming their travel.

The retail project will be part of a \$250-million development -- Azure at Plaza 88 -- that will see four residential towers with a total of 800 condominiums built on a 2.1-hectare site at 8th Street and Columbia, across from the New Westminster Quay.

"This is the type of project that will bring New Westminster to where it should be and truly revitalize the downtown," New Westminster Mayor Wayne Wright said in an interview.

The retail development will be anchored by a 37,500-square-foot grocery store, a 17,500-square-foot drugstore and an 11,600-square-foot liquor store. Project developer Michael Degelder said they are in the final stages of negotiations with Save-On-Foods to occupy the grocery space.

SkyTrain chief executive officer Doug Kelsey said SkyTrain won't get any revenue from the New Westminster retail development because it's a private project but noted the transit system is pursuing retail projects at other stations on land it owns so it can gain additional



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revenues. He said the Lougheed Town Centre station is a likely candidate for future retail development.

"Developments like this move a station from being just a train station into a true community station, with services that make sense for riders on their travels," Kelsey said.

He said criminal activity that takes place around SkyTrain stations such as New Westminster station can be driven away by developments such as Plaza 88 that encourage people to congregate in public places.

"Where there are people, there is typically less crime," Kelsey said. "You end up moving the people that don't belong there and they go elsewhere. We have seen that in other rejuvenations."

He noted the retail project will use features such as open spaces and extra lighting to deter criminal activity.

"This particular station has been very long on my hit list of places that need to be rejuvenated," Kelsey said. "We want to do anything we can to reduce the incidence of crime. Our vision is for SkyTrain to be a place where you go to be safe."

The SkyTrain passenger-level shopping area will feature 120,000 square feet of retail space while another 50,000 square feet of space will be built on the lower level under the SkyTrain guideway.

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### A TRANSPORTATION REFORMATION

New Westminster is planning to transform part of its downtown through a "transit village" concept. Here are a few details of the project, due to roll out over the next three years:

- A \$250-million, four-tower housing development with 800 condominiums to be built on 5.3 acres.
- New Westminster's SkyTrain station will become the heart of a \$60-million retail project, to include:
  - 170,000-square-foot retail centre, with
  - 37,500-square-foot grocery store.
  - 17,500-square-foot drug store.
  - 11,600-square-foot liquor store.

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