



POETRY IN TRANSIT TO END ITS RUN IN VANCOUVER AFTER 30 YEARS

Inspired by Poetry in Motion in New York City and similar projects in Montréal and London, Poetry in Transit launched in 1996 to connect BC riders with poetry by BC poets.

Celebrating its 30th year in 2026-27, this community engagement project, made possible through a longstanding partnership with TransLink and BC Transit, is an opportunity for the general public to discover and enjoy homegrown art on their daily commutes. Authors and commuters alike have found this program to be enriching and inspiring.

Earlier this year, Books BC was informed that TransLink will be unable to secure continued funding in support of the program after 2027.

“Since it is made possible largely in part due to our partnership with TransLink, it is likely that 2026-27 will be the final year of Poetry in Transit in Vancouver,” says Asna Shaikh, Program Manager at Books BC, the Association of Book Publishers of BC. “Poetry in Transit has significant cultural value to the city and the province. It puts Vancouver on the global map with other major metropolitan cities that have similar poetry programs. Without it, we will lose the opportunity to bring local poetry to tens of thousands of bus riders annually, the BC public will no longer be able to enjoy homegrown art for free as they go about their daily lives, and the city will lose yet another art and public engagement initiative.”

Local poets have come together to form The Committee to Save Poetry in Transit. You can see their independent petition [here](#).

“In 2025 I hosted the Poetry in Transit reading at Word Vancouver where my heroes and debut authors mingled and talked with passersby. The program is responsible for building so much community and contact, even off the bus,” says Elee Kraljii Gardiner, Vancouver’s Poet Laureate and a member of the Committee. “The public enjoyment and necessity of Poetry in Transit is clear. Art is not a luxury.”

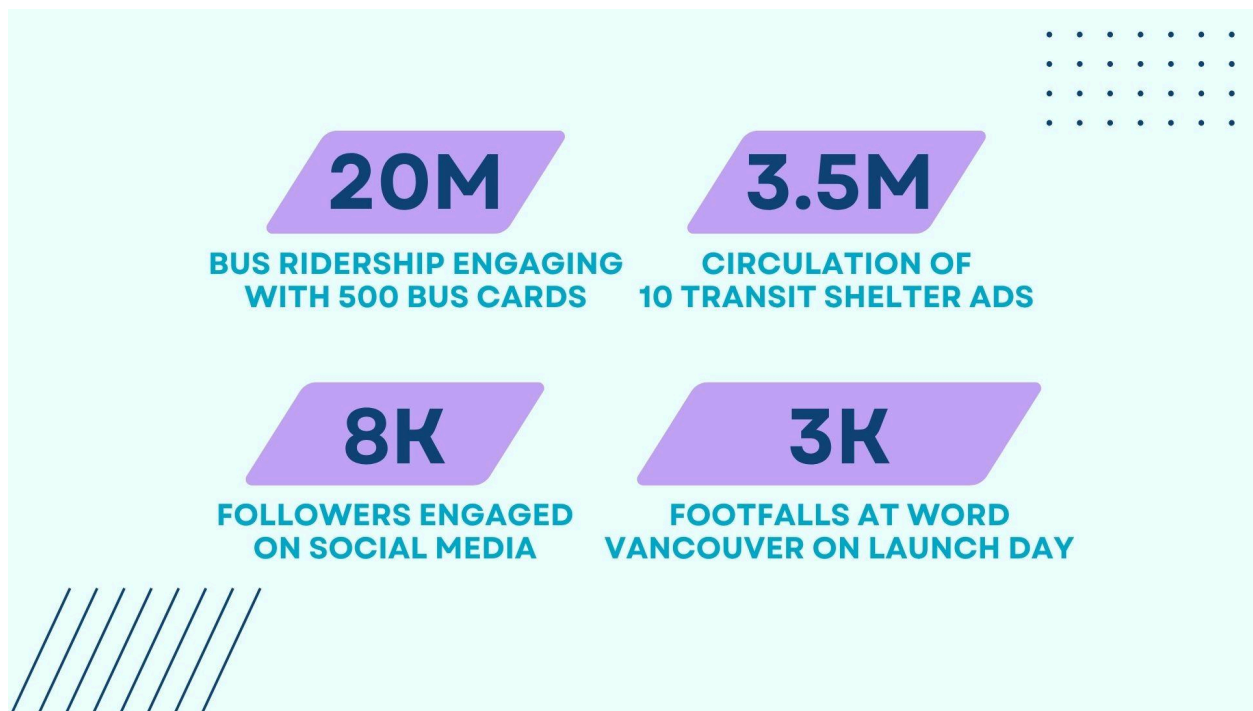
“In buses cluttered with ads and safety instructions, Poetry in Transit is the one positive motivation I have to look up,” says poet Rob Taylor. “Every ad I’ve ever read on transit has been next to a Poetry in Transit poem.”

The public can also share their thoughts directly with Books BC [here](#). Tell us what Poetry in Transit means to you.

More About Poetry in Transit

Poet Sandy Shreve helped Vancouver become one of the first cities in Canada to establish a poetry program on public transit in 1996 after campaigning and convincing the then-CEO of BC Transit to create annual funding for it. After managing it for three years, she passed over the administration to the Association of Book Publishers of BC (Books BC).

Every year, Books BC invites submissions of BC-authored poems from Canadian publishers. A jury of two poets and a TransLink representative selects 10 BC poets to be featured in the campaign. These jury-selected poems, in the form of interior bus cards, are displayed on TransLink buses in Vancouver for one year and on BC Transit buses throughout the province indefinitely from the following year. In addition, Books BC also runs a campaign of 10 transit shelter ads in Vancouver during the launch month of September every year.



For three decades, Books BC has been committed to promoting BC poetry through this beloved art engagement program.

- Artist Recognition: BC Poets are honoured to participate and consider it a career highlight.
- Public Engagement: It's a public program for everyone that doesn't cost money to attend. The general public is able to develop an appreciation of poetry and the local arts and culture community, leading to long-term support for such programs.
- Book awareness: Poets and publishers get to promote their books to readers all across BC for several years.
- Poem Impressions: The poets get to share their poems with readers across British Columbia for years to come.

About Books BC

Founded in 1974, the Association of Book Publishers of British Columbia (Books BC) supports the aspirations and activities of its membership through cultural, economic, and political initiatives and engages book-related communities in British Columbia, Canada, and beyond. Through marketing and public-engagement campaigns such as Read Local BC, BC Books for Schools, the weekly BC Bestseller List, and Poetry in Transit, Books BC promotes BC-published titles to booksellers, educators, librarians, media, festivals, and the reading public.

The activities of Books BC and its member publishers take place across the province of British Columbia, approximately 95 percent of which is unceded Indigenous land. Books BC's head office is located in Vancouver, on the traditional, ancestral and unceded land of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

This project is made possible due to the support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Book Fund, Canada Council for the Arts, Creative BC, and the City of Vancouver.

Media contact:

Asna Shaikh, Program Manager at Books BC

E: asna@books.bc.ca

T: 604-684-0228