



February 12, 2019

Mayors of the South Island  
c/o City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayors of the South Island,

**Re: Rail and Bus Rapid Transit on the South Island**

Thank you for your letter of February 6, 2019, outlining your shared priorities for rail and bus rapid transit on the South Island.

I understand the frustration people experience when they get stuck in gridlock in the Capital Region when traveling for work and appointments. I've been there myself many times.

The E&N Corridor is sitting there unused. Passenger service was discontinued under the former government's watch, and they failed to get service reinstated. Moving forward with a solution will require cooperation and respectful dialogue between communities along the route, First Nations, the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) and the provincial government.

As you note, partnership with First Nations is key to this work and must be in line with government's commitment to UNDRIP. It's crucial that the ICF, as the owner of the line, engages in consultation with Indigenous governments as we work together to move forward.

Before decisions are made around investing significant public dollars along the E&N corridor, an up-to-date and in-depth track and bridge assessment is necessary for the full length of the corridor, including the segment between Langford and Victoria. We need to determine the cost of imperative safety work, including a seismic risk assessment and rock fall review, to ensure any passenger rail service meets current day safety standards. The assessment will encompass a high-level identification of infrastructure requirements and cost of upgrades needed to allow for the operation of commuter rail from Langford to Victoria. The assessment will also determine the speed at which any rail service may be able to operate on the existing rail alignment, which is vital to understanding the effectiveness of a rail service to move people and encourage modal shift for commuters. This information is vital for all decisions makers in order to let us have

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meaningful and informed discussions on any next steps related to this corridor. This technical work is moving forward imminently, and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure anticipates the assessment will take six months.

Regarding bus rapid transit lanes to the Westshore, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is currently designing southbound lanes from the Burnside bridges to Tolmie Avenue, and we are in discussions regarding cost sharing with our federal partners. As well, BC Transit is collaborating with Colwood and View Royal on potential improvements to highway infrastructure in the Western Communities. Our South Island Multi Modal Transportation Plan will incorporate these planned improvements and continue to look at infrastructure improvements that will ensure public transit remains a solution to congestion.

The McKenzie Interchange project is expected to reduce delays up to 20 minutes in peak periods, and these travel time savings will be enjoyed by commuters and transit alike. Continuation of the shoulder bus lanes north of the McKenzie interchange will require analysis of the flow of traffic following the completion of the project to understand the benefits of continuing the transit lanes. We need to ensure that any investments will achieve the congestion reduction that we are all working towards.

Thank you again for your commitment to working together to get people moving again in the South Island.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John J. Horgan".

John Horgan  
Premier

cc: Honourable Claire Trevena  
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure