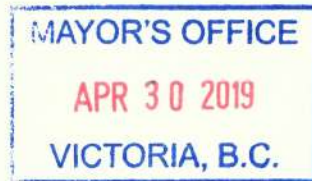




APR 24 2019



Reference: 284721

Her Worship
Mayor Lisa Helps
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC V8W 1P6

Dear ~~Mayor~~ ^{Lisa} Helps,

Re: Transformational Regional Transit Improvements

Premier John Horgan asked me to respond to your letter of March 20, 2019, regarding the City's resolution on transformational improvements for regional transit.

Working with communities to build public transit and infrastructure is a priority for the provincial government, and I appreciate the City of Victoria's commitment to finding innovative solutions that promote transit ridership and support environmental sustainability. I have shared your suggestions with staff in the ministry's Transit Branch for their information.

In the meantime, I am pleased to let you know that progress is being made on a number of the items in your letter. For example, BC Transit is scheduled to launch their NextRide program in Victoria later this year, providing passengers with real-time information on buses. In addition, the construction of southbound bus lanes from the Burnside bridges to Tolmie Avenue along Highway 1 was recently announced as part of a federal funding partnership through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. This announcement also included the planned introduction of tap payment technology in Victoria.

Moreover, in accordance with my mandate letter to BC Transit, the Corporation has been directed to ensure it is well positioned to meet or exceed the Province's legislated targets for greenhouse gas emissions (2030, 2040 and 2050), and to provide a formal status update by August 31, 2019.

Our new comprehensive southern Vancouver Island transportation strategy will take a coordinated look at ways to relieve traffic congestion on the South Island. We will explore all modes of transportation, including public transit, to find ways to improve traffic flow and move people more efficiently in this rapidly growing area of the province.

.../2

The provincial government is a proud funding partner of BC Transit and the Victoria Regional Transit Commission and, since 2014, has invested approximately \$59 million towards capital projects on southern Vancouver Island. We have also invested more than \$40 million in provincial operating funding for the South Island in 2018/19, encompassing the Victoria and Cowichan Valley regional transit systems and the Cowichan Valley Commuter service.

As you know, transit in the Victoria area falls under the purview of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC), so I am glad to see that you have also shared your resolutions with the VRTC. I look forward to continuing to work with the VRTC to find ways to improve public transit for South Island residents, and I encourage the City to continue to share its suggestions and support for transit improvements with the VRTC directly.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claire Trevena", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Claire Trevena
Minister

Copy to: Premier John Horgan