



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of December 7, 2017

Date: November 23, 2017

From: Councillor Jeremy Loveday and Councillor Ben Isitt

Subject: Advocacy to Shift Investment to Low-Emission Transportation

Recommendation:

In December 2016, the Prime Minister of Canada, the former Premier of British Columbia, and most of Canada's other provincial Premiers signed the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. This Framework proposes a policy shift that could substantially reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution from the transportation sector.

In the Capital Regional District, 56% of inventoried climate pollution in 2010 was from transportation, making transportation by far the largest opportunity for improvement in reducing carbon emissions. Between 1990 and 2014 climate pollution from road transportation increased by 43% in British Columbia, demonstrating the need for action.

The Pan-Canadian Framework commits the federal and provincial governments to "shift from higher to lower-emitting types of transportation, including through investing in infrastructure." Examples of this shift include shifting from private motor-vehicles to transit and cycling as well as shifting freight from trucks to rail. This shift in investment is complementary to many City of Victoria and regional policies and priorities, including the Victoria Transit Future Plan, which states that "Major investments in expanding the road network to accommodate the private automobile do not align with local, regional and provincial planning aspirations."

The cliché "you can't build your way out of congestion" is well supported by studies and experience. Roadway expansion in urban areas worsens both pollution and congestion. In a 2007 study, Clark Williams-Derry of the SightLine Institute found that "adding one mile of new highway lane will increase CO2 emissions by more than 100,000 tons over 50 years."

The shift in investment envisioned in the Pan-Canadian Framework could provide sufficient capital investment to implement identified improvements to the Victoria Regional Transit System. These investments include transit priority lanes on provincial highways, a new operating and maintenance facility, and many new low-emissions buses. This shift could also fund faster expansion of the City's pedestrian and cycling networks.

It is likely the federal and provincial governments will more fully implement this important policy shift with the active encouragement of local governments and regional districts. It is therefore recommended that the City write to the Governments of Canada and British Columbia urging the prompt and complete implementation of the commitments under the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change.

Recommendation

That Council requests the Mayor write, on behalf of Council, to the Prime Minister of Canada and Premier of British Columbia, copying the federal and provincial ministers responsible for climate action, infrastructure and transportation, requesting that they fully implement their commitment in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change in transportation sector, to shift investments “from higher to lower-emitting types of transportation” within the Capital Regional District.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Loveday



Councillor Isitt