

Manuel Achadinha
CEO, BC Transit
520 Gorge Road East
Victoria, BC V8T 2P3

December 4, 2017

Dear Manuel:

Subject: City Support of Transit Futures Plan

I am writing to communicate and detail the City of Victoria's broad support for the Transit Futures Plan and other critically important initiatives that aim to improve transit performance in the city and in the region.

This letter is to state our commitments, our support and our intent to help deliver transit improvements, and to work closely with BC Transit (BCT) to intensify planning and action to unlock the barriers that are currently preventing optimum regional transit performance. We are highly motivated to help transit become the top mobility choice for residents in the region. We want to work with you to create a transit system that delivers a quality of service and choice that out-performs the conventional automobile, while supporting improved health and community well-being.

We understand that there is strong support across the region to implement the Transit Futures Plan. For Victoria's part we would like to formalize this initial list of considerations and recommendations below and our desire to assist in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between BCT and the City. My staff are currently developing a draft for your consideration and input. We look forward to presenting this draft MOU to your team for review, comments and adoption. The following actions, considerations and initiatives will help improve **transit performance, sustainability and planning** in Victoria:

1. **Transit Bus Performance:** Transformational improvements to bus performance are required across the region to incent a mode-shift away from the single occupancy vehicle. This transition is only achievable if we work together to reduce traffic delays, stopping frequency, and stopping duration. These improvements require investment from BCT, as follows:

- a. Dedicated Bus Lanes: Completion of the Douglas Bus lanes, and enforcement of bus-only use.
 - b. Automated Payment Systems: Digital payment systems to ensure seamless loading, using a common payment system shared across all regional travel modes.
 - c. All Door Loading: Transition to all-door loading to reduce loading times.
 - d. Transit Signal Priority (TSP): Outfitting of TSP technology on all buses and frequent/rapid transit corridors, which would take advantage of currently installed services along Douglas Street, and expanded to other priority locations.
 - e. Digital Scheduling Tool: Advancement of an easily accessible, integrated and accurate real-time scheduling tool is required to improve ridership and convenience.
 - f. Transit Speeds: Careful control of speeds in the downtown and across Victoria is required to balance transit speed with community safety. Ongoing collaboration between the City and BCT to optimise speed and safety across the community should continue.
 - g. Road Space: Careful control of the available road space is required to balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit, accessibility and motorist requirements. Several constraints require careful and collaborative network designs by the road authority and transit planners, but also require bus designs and technologies that safely reduce overall bus width (eg. reduced mirror protrusion).
 - h. Network Design: Ongoing collaboration and design work must take place to address bus network design, functionality, convenience and efficiency, including independent analysis of the role of the E&N corridor in future regional transit.
 - i. Rapid Transit: Development and implementation of a business case and implementation plan – that builds on the basis laid in the Transit Futures Plan – is required to deliver BRT or LRT along Douglas Street to connect to the West Shore, Sidney and other priority locations.
2. **Transit Bus Sustainability**: Motor vehicle sustainability issues must be addressed through collaborative and purposeful action to significantly improve the safety and well-being of the community. Due to the number and frequency of buses, and the intent to increase transit mode-shift in the coming years, issues of public safety, affordability, human health, and environmental damage, must be addressed through the procurement of clean, quiet, effective and affordable transit. Interestingly, modern electrical bus technology poses attractive benefits to meet many, if not all, of these requirements, and should play a significant role in shaping the sustainable bus fleet of the future. Transit should develop a business case and implementation plan to electrify its fleet at the earliest opportunity. City staff continues to develop its own plans to transition to an electric and renewably powered fleet, before 2040. BCT should take the necessary action to address sustainability issues in the following areas:
- a. Safety: Adoption of sensors / systems to greatly reduce risk of collision with vulnerable road users.

- b. Affordability/Equity: Increased efforts to ensure bus transit remains accessible to the widest public base to ensure long-term equity and ridership, with the lowest life-cycle operating, capital and social costs.
 - c. Noise: Investment in noise reduction systems and technologies to cut the frequent and high levels of bus noise and disruption.
 - d. Air Quality: Investment in air emissions control technologies to eliminate harmful exhaust constituents that pose risk to human health.
 - e. Greenhouse Gases: Investment in CO₂ emissions reduction technology to drastically reduce greenhouse gases.
3. **Transit Planning, Information and Education**: Additional analysis, planning and actions are required to deliver a major shift in regional and City transit performance. This will require input from independent transit expertise, and engagement with community, stakeholders and authorities to align and prioritize our common but differentiated actions to improve regional transit performance.

Only by working in-step and collaboratively can we hope to achieve transformational transit improvements that will help commuters spend more time with their families, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce congestion, and ensure that road safety, noise, and air pollution are minimized to improve public health and community vitality. The City is committed to working closely with BCT to expedite improvements. Deepening the already strong and meaningful partnership between City staff and Transit staff will help achieve a future where transit is the top mobility choice for residents of the city and of the region.

We look forward to the development and implementation of plans to formalize these required and shared actions and in particular to a signed MOU between the City and BCT that allows us to move forward collaboratively and in lock step. We would like to invite you to come and make a presentation to a Committee of the Whole meeting in Quarter 1 of 2018 on the topics outlined in this letter to inform Council of your plans for implementation and a sense of how the City can partner with you to help you achieve your goals.

Kindest regards,

Lisa Helps
Victoria Mayor

cc. Honourable Claire Trevena, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Capital Region Municipal Mayors