

Esquimalt Official Community Plan Referral Response

April 30, 2018

RE: Request for Comments on Township of Esquimalt Official Community Plan

Thank you very much for the opportunity to review the March 2018 draft of the Township of Esquimalt Official Community Plan.

BC Transit supports the overall direction of the Township of Esquimalt draft Official Community Plan to create a livable and complete community by introducing a greater mix of land uses and focusing residential and commercial growth along corridors and areas served by regional and frequent transit. Land use and transportation are strongly intertwined; establishing more opportunities for compact and walkable community centres which are accessed and well connected to one another by an integrated transportation network, and which are connected to regional destinations by transit, represents an excellent integration of land use and transportation.

BC Transit is encouraged to see that key elements of the Victoria Region Transit Future Plan have been integrated into the Township of Esquimalt's Official Community Plan. The Township should consider further highlighting the future transit network, including explicitly stating the key frequent transit and rapid transit corridors, the Township's support for transit priority, support for joint planning of future rapid transit corridors, the establishment of a new transit hub in the Town Centre and supporting new local neighborhood transit services. In addition, the Township of Esquimalt should consider adding a map showing the frequent and regional transit corridors within the municipal boundaries.

Coordinated planning of the Official Community Plan and Transit Future Plan will lead a more successful implementation of both plans and to better outcomes for the residents of Esquimalt. BC Transit looks forward to continue working with the Township to further planning and implementation.

In addition to the above general comments, I have noted the following minor comments for your consideration:

4.0 - 5.0 – General Land-Use

- It would be advantageous to include mention of 'Transit Oriented Development'. With a large number of people travelling along Esquimalt road using transit, there is an opportunity to capture greater economic activity.

4.3.1 – Policy regarding density bonuses

- Consider adding bonus density amenities which can be put to public-space improvements surrounding and supporting transit stations. This can also be added to section 5.1.1 in reference to bonus density amenities.

5.2 – Revitalization

- Consider adding a statement regarding the integration of high-quality and high-amenity transit stops
- Mention of the installation and integration of awnings on new developments to provide shelter to transit users.

5.3 – Esquimalt Town Centre

- This location has been identified as a future transit hub. A statement explicitly mentioning this location and the need for transit supportive infrastructure and development should be considered.
- Mention of the installation and integration of awnings on new developments to provide shelter to transit users.

5.4.1 – Neighbourhood Commercial Mixed-Use

- Consider adding bonus density amenities which can be put to public-space improvements surrounding and supporting transit stations.

5.5.1 – Head Street and Esquimalt Road

- Consider improving pedestrian crossing on Esquimalt Road between Head and Lampson to ensure safe crossing for transit users accessing the bus stop on the south side heading downtown.

7.4.1 – Schools

- In regards to the sixth policy regarding school travel, consider encouraging transit use for the trip to school

9.1.1 – Walking

- Regarding the second policy on the list, consider mentioning that sidewalk improvements should be prioritized around the frequent and rapid transit network.

9.2.1 – Public Cycling Infrastructure

- Consider prioritizing cycling improvements to improve access to major transit stops and hubs. Improvements should not impact transit travel times or movements.

9.3.1 - Public Transit

- Consider adding a mode share target for transit and/or sustainable transportation. The Victoria Transit Future Plan set a regional mode share target for transit of 12% by 2030, which includes more rural areas with lower transit ridership. The District of Saanich, a comparable community with similar ridership, set a target transit mode share of 20%.
- Another target that should be considered is to have a percentage of the population within 400m of a frequent or regional transit route.
- This section should explicitly mention the frequent and regional transit network corridors that run through Esquimalt: Esquimalt Road and Craigflower Road. Though Esquimalt Road is currently part of the frequent transit network, it has been identified for future rapid bus in the Victoria Regional Transit Future Plan. Consideration should be given to include transit priority measures (including Transit Signal Priority and Queue Jump Lanes) along these corridors as a way to

ensure the transition from frequent transit to rapid transit can occur and transit is prioritized through the corridor.

- Consider adding a statement regarding establishing a transit hub in Esquimalt's Town Centre.
- Consideration should be given to using a portion of the Township's annual road capital program and major redevelopment proposals to enhance universal accessibility at transit stops and pedestrian connections to them.
- A portion of the road capital program could also be allocated to enhancing amenities at transit stops outside of the BC Transit shelter program, i.e. replacing old shelters, wider sidewalks at transit stops, pedestrian lighting, street furniture (benches), customer information including real time (BC Transit). Stops along the regional and frequent transit corridor should be prioritized.
- This section could also mention staff participation in BC Transit's Local Area Transit Plan process for the Esquimalt area in 2019-2020.

9.5.1 – Roadway Upgrades

- Reference should be made to capital investments associated with frequent and rapid transit (transit priority, right-of-way improvements and high levels of transit stop amenities)

11.3.1 – Reduction of GHG Emissions

- Consideration should be given to developing a mode share target for sustainable transportation modes. The Victoria Transit Future Plan set a regional mode share target for transit of 12% by 2030, which includes more rural areas with lower transit ridership. The District of Saanich, a comparable community with similar ridership, set a target transit mode share of 20%.

11.3.3 – Low Carbon Transportation

- Consider adding a statement in regards to prioritizing transit along frequent and regional transit corridors as a way to support meeting mode share targets.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Township of Esquimalt's Official Community Plan. If you have any questions or would like further comments on this proposal, please contact:

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