

**REPORT TO THE PLANNING & PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2007**

SUBJECT**FUNDING AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTION FOR *COMMUNITIES FOR COMMUTER RAIL*****PURPOSE**

To approve the contribution of funding and transportation modeling for the commuter rail feasibility study.

BACKGROUND

Communities for Commuter Rail (C4CR) are a group representing communities within the Capital Regional District who are interested in investigating the feasibility of a commuter rail service between the City of Langford and the City of Victoria. The commuter service is anticipated to follow the general alignment of the E&N which is owned by the Island Corridor Foundation.

Preliminary investigations undertaken by an ad hoc stakeholder committee have highlighted the difficulties of implementing a commuter rail service within the existing context of low-density and widely dispersed development patterns. However, there is support from a number of communities along the E&N alignment to examine the feasibility of providing commuter rail service in anticipation of changing land use patterns and densities in the future.

The Communities for Commuter Rail are seeking funding contributions to support the development of a study to assess the feasibility of commuter rail operations on the E&N Corridor and to identify actions and strategic directions that could enhance the viability of the service (C4CR meeting minutes in Attachment 1).

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve a funding contribution of \$10,000 from Regional Planning's transportation budget to support the development of the commuter rail feasibility study.
2. Approve an in-kind contribution only of staff time for transportation modeling assistance for the feasibility study.
3. Approve a combination of funding commitments and transportation modeling assistance to the commuter rail feasibility study.
4. Not approve a contribution from the CRD budget, recognizing the funding contributions already made by the affected municipalities within the region.

ECONOMIC / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The contribution of \$10,000 is proposed to support the development of the feasibility study. This amount is comparable to some of the municipal and private sector contributions already

committed. The money would come from the transportation consulting services budget within Regional Planning.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Consideration of commuter rail services is consistent with the policy directions established with the RGS and TravelChoices to shift travel mode share away from single-occupant vehicles.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The commuter rail feasibility study will identify the conditions necessary to support commuter rail in the region, linking at least two of the major centres identified in the RGS. This information will be beneficial for informing subsequent transportation studies and initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning & Protective Services Committee recommend to the Board that a funding contribution of \$10,000 and transportation modeling assistance be provided to the Commuter rail feasibility study.

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COMMENTS: