

SGI Transportation Service Referendum

Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area



Capital Regional District | Summer 2022

The Capital Regional District (CRD) will have a referendum question on the ballot for the general election of October 15, 2022 to ask voters on Galiano, Mayne, Pender and Saturna if they are in favour of establishing an integrated transportation service for the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area (SGI). If approved, this service will provide funding and coordination to support community buses/public transportation initiatives, active transportation projects, and inter-island connections that have been, and would continue to be, led by local non-profit and other 3rd party organizations on the islands.

Why is the CRD Proposing This Service?



Island residents, organizations, and the SGI Community Economic Sustainability Commission (CESC), asked the CRD to support the community buses and other local transportation projects that advance community goals of sustainability, livability, and mobility. Over the past year, the CRD developed the SGI Transportation Integration Plan to guide the creation of a new service.

What Would an SGI Integrated Transportation Service do?

If the service is approved, the CRD would establish a Transportation Commission made up of local island representatives to provide coordination for a transportation network that is integrated across different modes and different islands of the SGI. The Commission would oversee a grant program to fund community buses and local trail groups, and support other community solutions such as ride-hailing, ride-sharing and e-bike rebates. The CRD could apply for grants from other levels of government and hold land and own infrastructure, if needed. If a new service is created, CRD would have the option to own vehicles for lease by the community bus groups, and could hold licences for active transportation in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Road Right of Way. The CRD would also be able to act as a sponsor to non-profits and other community organizations to apply for their own transportation grants from higher levels of government.



How was the Community Consulted?



The decision to ask SGI residents to vote in this referendum comes after a thorough community engagement process that received very high engagement per capita by industry standards. Led by WATT Consulting Group, a specialist transit, transportation planning and engineering firm, the public consultation process was guided by Transportation Advisory Groups, made up of community members and local transportation organizations, ensuring the proposal is rooted in local experience.

What was Heard?

Overall, the theme heard from the public and stakeholders was that there is a need to improve transportation options on the Southern Gulf Islands. This would support the SGI in addressing climate change as well as other community goals by:

- ❖ Providing sustainable alternatives to single occupancy vehicles and reducing car dependency.
- ❖ Providing low-income populations more affordable travel options.
- ❖ Better enabling all islanders, especially seniors and youth, to travel safely and independently.
- ❖ Better connecting island communities.



To contact us, e-mail TransportationSGI@crd.bc.ca or contact your local CRD Community Liaison

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How will Decisions be Made?



If a new transportation service is created, the SGI Transportation Commission would recommend service priorities and budget allocations to the CRD Board, which would be implemented by staff and partner transportation groups. The Commission will have the latitude to shift priorities and allocations to best fit community needs and opportunities.

How Would the Transportation Function be Funded?

The Transportation Integration Plan has identified potential partnerships and costed out options that meet a range of community needs, are economical, and are right-sized for the islands. Funding for the new service would come from a base level of tax revenue, income from user fees, and infrastructure grants from other levels of government.



How Much will it Cost the Tax Payer?



If the service is approved by referendum and the CRD Board, the proposed budget for 2023 would raise approximately \$475,000 from taxes. Based on the 2022 property assessments, this would cost \$69/average household (or 9.68 for every \$100,000 of assessed property value).

The maximum budget for the service would be the greater of \$675,000 or \$0.1414 per \$1,000 of assessed property value (this is known as the "maximum requisition" and is set by the bylaw). Based on the 2022 property assessments, the service would cost \$98/average household if the maximum were collected.

How will the Funding be Used?

- ❖ Grant programs to support local community bus societies towards delivering year-round service with paid drivers and to support trail groups in offsetting the costs of materials, development, and/or maintenance of active transportation trails.
- ❖ Targeted infrastructure such as bike racks, benches, bus stop signage, and dockside information.
- ❖ Dedicated staff to manage the grants program, apply for external funding, support Commission strategic planning & implementation, coordinate & manage permissions for road side trails, and to provide minute taking and administrative support for the Commission and its work program.
- ❖ Convene partnerships to explore CRD support for more efficient inter-island travel.
- ❖ Tools to support communications and marketing, trip-booking, schedules, etc.



For more information about the SGI Transportation Integration Plan, visit <http://getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/sgi-transportation>

For more information for where and how to vote, visit <http://www.crd.bc.ca/transportation-vote>



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