The Six Elements of Sustainable Transportation in the CRD

Guiding the development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Capital Regional District (CRD) requires a strong and coherent vision for transportation. Based on central themes of the Regional Sustainability Strategy (RSS) and Travel Choices, the principles and strategies below articulate and set the stage for a future where transportation is sustainable, offers choice, enables smart growth, and makes liveable communities possible. The principles and strategies will facilitate progress towards a Region that is economically strong, socially inclusive, culturally vibrant and environmentally sustainable. CRD is perhaps better positioned than any other major urban area in Canada to become truly sustainable.

The following is intended to guide the development of the policies and strategies of the RTP, and to reflect the call for a multi-modal and integrated approach to transportation across the Region.

Principle 1. Coordinate and engage approach on planning

Transportation is directly linked to various aspects of local and regional planning, and is not a localized system. It is important that the RTP not belong only to the CRD, but that it also be considered the plan of all CRD municipalities and electoral areas – it is everyone's plan. Long-term and strategic transportation planning requires a coordinated effort between the regional government, local municipalities/EAs, and other stakeholders to implement and achieve common transportation goals and objectives. Engaging stakeholders in a discussion on how to implement and augment the RTP transportation strategies will be key to its success.

STRATEGIES	Constructively engage municipalities and stakeholders in the RTP process.
	Build and maintain support for the RTP through collaborative engagement.
	Demonstrate to government partners and stakeholders the needs, opportunities, and benefits of the RTP process and subsequent implementation actions.

Principle 2. Integrate transportation and land use planning

By 2038, the CRD population is forecast to grow by approximately 115,000. Much of this growth is forecast to occur outside of the built-up area, particularly in the West Shore communities. Existing patterns of low-density development in this area are a challenge to providing efficient transit service and encouraging transportation choices beyond the private automobile. In 2006, travel to/from the West Shore accounted for 8.1% of all daily trips in the Region, and a large share of these are taken by private automobile. As a result of the constrained roadway network serving the West Shore, these growth patterns exert significant pressure on key east-west corridors, such as the TransCanada Highway and Old Island Highway, and surrounding areas. Under a business-as-usual scenario of land use and transportation patterns, these corridors will be further strained with dramatically reduced average vehicle speeds and increased travel times.

However, the forecasted moderate growth rate presents an opportunity to capitalize on the symbiotic relationship between land use and transportation planning. By directing this growth towards existing urban areas, these areas will generate sufficient trip density to warrant more efficient transit service. Higher density and mixed-use developments also reduce trip lengths and, in turn, promote walking and cycling. Integrated planning also helps introduce pedestrian, cycling, and transit design elements into these communities (e.g. direct routes/connections), which encourages more travel by these modes.

STRATEGIES	Implement sustainable transportation and land use planning processes.
	Serve compact communities with an effective and robust transportation system.
	Foster redevelopment and intensification of key centres and corridors.
	Permit higher density mixed-use developments in mobility hubs and intensification corridors to reduce trip lengths and increase non-motorized mode shares.

Principle 3. Capitalize on potential for alternatives to driving alone

While the CRD currently has high active transportation mode shares of journey-to-work trips, there remains significant potential to shift behaviour away from auto trips to more walking and cycling, particularly for short-distance trips. For example, in 2006, more than 72% of weekday trips in the CRD which were shorter than 5 km were taken by private automobile.[1] Transit and cycling each account for around 5% of these short trips, while walking is the preferred alternative, which accounts for 17%. For longer distance trips, transit and to an extent, cycling, are the preferred alternatives to driving. Currently, transit and cycling account for 10% and 3%, respectively, of weekday trips between 5 and 9 km.[2]

A greater emphasis on providing the right kind of services and infrastructure for non-captive markets is needed to encourage this shift and to make transit and active transportation more attractive and more competitive to driving. Particularly, there is a need to enhance multi-modal connections to help “extend the reach” of trips by these modes which are more effective at serving shorter distances.

A further shift to walking and cycling from the automobile for work, shopping and recreational trips can help provide community and individual health benefits by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality, and promoting an active lifestyle and personal physical activity. This shift can also help promote sustainable development by maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and reducing on-site vehicle parking needs.

STRATEGIES	Define and implement mobility hubs that are supportive of transit, pedestrian, and cycling connectivity and complete streets.
	Balance interests in urban design and liveable communities with regional mobility requirements.
	Increase the real and perceived safety of walking and cycling.

[1] Excluding auto passenger trips, the fraction of trips shorter than 5km was just over 50%.
[2] Data from 2006 Origin Destination Household Travel Survey

	Coordinate with local municipalities to ensure direct pedestrian paths are provided to and from transit stops.
	Continue to improve infrastructure, education, enforcement, and promotion of active transportation in order to realize the significant public health benefits and daily physical activity.
	Improve support for other sustainable alternatives to driving such as scooters, eBikes, and segways.

Principle 4. An enhanced role of public transit

Transit trips account for 6.4% of the total travel market, with the highest mode shares for travel to/from/within the Core area.[3] A target of 12% transit mode share has been set by the provincial government via its Transit Future plan. Thus the Region's transit system will be expected to annually carry over 55 million passengers by 2030. Public transit will play a pivotal structural role in the Region's transportation future, and will require significant investments and transit-supportive land use policies to achieve this mode share target.

Over the next 25 years, the proposed rapid and frequent transit network will make transit more efficient and provide the future transportation capacity to meet forecast mobility demands. It is important to capitalize on opportunities for higher density mixed-use development to not only help shape efficient land use patterns, but also support rapid transit investments and make transit an attractive alternative to the private automobile.

STRATEGIES	Encourage municipalities to adopt aggressive transit-supportive land use policies to concentrate growth along major transit corridors and support the Transit Future network.
	Identify and address accessibility barriers in the transportation network to ensure universal and affordable access to sustainable transportation choices.
	Make transit more accessible through more frequent and reliable service, barrier-free infrastructure, and enhanced customer amenities.
	Ensure key public transit hubs are conveniently accessible to other modes of transportation, particularly active modes.

Principle 5. Efficient transportation corridors that meet growing future demand

Population and employment growth throughout the Region will exert additional pressures to effectively and efficiently transport people and goods. However, with this growth, competing demands will largely have to make do with existing roadway capacity.

[3] Transit Future Plan, Victoria Region. May 2011

Various corridors in the Region play key roles for different modes of travel. Some are more inter-municipal while others serve more local needs. Some provide good access for commercial vehicles while others are being considered for their viability to serve rapid transit. Accommodating bicycles, pedestrians, transit, commercial vehicles, and automobiles will require carefully examining and prioritizing the trade-offs of adequately accommodating these modes and maintaining their efficiency as part of the modal strategic networks identified in the RTP.

Strategic investments in capacity improvements and travel demand management will be fundamental to accommodating future demand and maintaining the integrity of multi-modal transportation corridors. Road network planning will focus on optimizing existing capacity to minimize the need for widening and expansion, and reducing infrastructure costs while managing congestion.

STRATEGIES	Increase the efficiency of use of existing transportation infrastructure.
	Identify key economic corridors that are important for goods movement, tourism, or interprovincial travel and assess how these can be enhanced in a manner that maximizes benefits to local communities while minimizing impacts
	Support programs that encourage alternatives to driving alone and reduce trip demand.
	Implement proven and emerging technologies that have an impact on travel behaviour, encourage travelers to take more sustainable modes of transport, and increase the efficiency of the network.
	Explore the implementation of newer technologies that have an impact on travel behaviour, support sustainable transportation in the Region, and increase the efficiency of the network, such as electric vehicles, real-time transportation information and others.
	Continue to coordinate with municipalities to ensure an efficient goods movement network is established throughout the CRD which will have minimal impact on sensitive land uses.

Principle 6. Strategic investments towards an affordable and well-maintained system

The Region will continue to face increasing financial pressures to address transportation infrastructure needs that meet future demand. A Local Funding Options Task Force has been organized to investigate, evaluate and recommend feasible local sources of funding in anticipation that the Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Project (VRRTP) implementation and operation will be shared between local and senior governments. This is a first step in developing a comprehensive list and evaluation framework of potential funding options to address future transportation capital investment needs. However, a strategic and balanced approach needs to be developed in order to guide the long-term outlook of key transportation investments, adequately fund future growth and support the regional multi-modal network. Investments in the regional transportation system need to be made based on the long-term needs of regional transportation priorities and life cycle costing.

STRATEGIES	Identify strategic local funding options for all transportation priorities in the Region.
	Work with federal and provincial partners to secure infrastructure investment for major multi-modal projects that support the regional multi-modal network, economic growth and

	prosperity of the Region.
	Explore and assess the applicability of new financing tools to fund transportation infrastructure investments.
	Maximize service life of existing infrastructure through continuous monitoring and sound asset management and preventative maintenance practices.
	Establish a decision-making framework that reflects sustainability principles and clearly identifies desired outcomes and a path to achieve them. This includes accounting for the full lifecycle costs of infrastructure improvements and seeking the least cost, highest benefit solution.
	Provide support to local municipalities throughout the implementation phases of all transportation initiatives.
	Share information on successes and challenges in implementing transportation initiatives, and apply lessons learned to future initiatives.