

City of Chilliwack
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022, 3:30 pm
Held Electronically / Dogwood Room

Council Members:

Councillor Jeff Shields, Chair
Councillor Jason Lum, Vice Chair

TAC Members:

Rob Ringma, Senior Manager, Government Relations, BC Transit
Adriana McMullen, Senior Transit Planner, Fraser Valley Region, BC Transit
Bryden Nelmes, Community Member
Chelsea Cromarty, Community Member
Stephen Head, Community Member
Willow Reichelt, Vice-Chair, Board of Education, Chilliwack School District #33
Tanis Hatch, ICBC

City Staff Members:

Kara Jefford, Manager of Transportation and Drainage
Andrew Pipke, Traffic Technician
Samantha Piper, Public Safety Specialist
Tara Friesen, Manager of Environmental Services
Marc Sole, Senior Environmental Services Specialist
Trish Alsip, Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Wayne Williams, SD33, Manager of Transportation
Marlon Hall, Chamber of Commerce
Jim Ryan, Community Member
David Hill, Road Safety Engineer, ICBC (Ex-Officio)
Neal Moulton, Area Manager, Fraser Valley South, Ministry of Transportation
Corporal Mike Pfeifer, RCMP, Traffic Section

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Jeff Shields was Chair and called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm and provided territorial acknowledgement.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved /) That the Transportation Advisory Committee Agenda for Thursday, March 17,
Seconded (2022 be adopted as circulated.

Carried Unanimously

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved /) That the Minutes of the Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting held
Seconded (Thursday, January 20, 2022 be adopted as circulated.

Carried Unanimously

4. DELEGATION / PRESENTATION

Chelsea Cromarty, Community Member, joined the meeting at 3:35 pm.

Climate Action Plan

Marc Sole, Senior Environmental Services Specialist, provided a presentation with respect to Chilliwack's Climate Action Plans. In 2011/12, the City adopted the Integrated Air Quality, Energy and Greenhouse Gas Action Plans, a Community Action Plan and a Corporate Action Plan. The City has been completing a variety of projects since 2011/12; however, the Climate Actions Plans are due for an update. Extensive consultation with staff and a consultant has been undertaken to develop initiatives and targets put forth for public and stakeholder feedback.

A brief outline was provided with respect to Chilliwack's Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory from core community activities such as both light and heavy-duty vehicle emissions which reflects more than 1/3 of emissions. An overview was provided of the total GHG emissions from all activities in Chilliwack such as agriculture, non-road equipment, engines, rail and aircraft.

Vehicle ownership in Chilliwack from 2015 – 2019 (ICBC) reflects the total number of passenger vehicles in Chilliwack has increased over time; however, more hybrid and electric vehicles are also being purchased and driven in Chilliwack. The majority of passenger and commercial vehicles still remain internal combustion vehicles.

Both the Provincial and Federal Governments are attempting to target net-zero emissions by 2050, targeting vehicles and transportation to net-zero buildings. However, relying solely on provincial and federal actions would result in an approximate 44% reduction in emissions relative to 2007 levels, which is far short of hitting the target of 100% reduction by 2050. There is a large gap in which municipalities are trying to fill to reach the net-zero target. Staff provided a graph illustrating the population growth estimate versus emissions if there were no federal, provincial or municipal climate actions taken; and, the actions taken by the Federal and Provincial Government relating to vehicle emissions, zero-emission vehicles by 2040 in BC, low carbon fuel standards and building emissions.

Staff have worked with a consultant to develop proposed Chilliwack Climate Action targets and types of activities to align with 2030 and 2050 targets; transportation targets include transit mode share of 5% by 2030 and 10% by 2050. Another aspect is to help facilitate or increase zero-emission or electric vehicle adoption in the community; the City of Chilliwack is already working towards this target with electric vehicle charging stations with the aim to accelerate to 100% light-duty electric vehicles in Chilliwack by 2050. Other action targets include zero-emission buildings, restoration of ecological areas and waste diversion. Staff provided an overview of the proposed target areas, the City's role and cost considerations with respect to the Climate Action Plans.

Discussion/Questions:

Bryden Nelmes, Community Member, provided comment noting he attended the March 15, 2022 Regular Council Meeting at which time Council approved the termination of the Organic Waste Facility and Digester #4 project; Mr. Nelmes queried whether the Digester #4 project is related to this discussion and whether it will have an impact on the Climate Action Plans.

Staff noted the termination of the project will not have a significant effect as there are a number of private organic waste facilities seeking to have digesters in operation; therefore, there will be sufficient regional capacity. There is a regional requirement for all residents and businesses to separate organic waste and garbage from recycling which the City of Chilliwack's Solid Waste Management Bylaw 2019, No. 4660 aligns with.

4. DELEGATION / PRESENTATION (continued)

Willow Reichelt, Vice-Chair, Board of Education, Chilliwack School District #33, enquired as to when apartment buildings will be required to separate organic waste and garbage from recycling.

Staff noted that multi-family complex buildings (apartment buildings, condos, senior homes, etc.) fall under the jurisdiction of the Fraser Valley Regional District's (FVRD's) Bylaw No. 1495, 2018, A Bylaw Respecting the Removal and Disposal of Municipal Solid Waste, which took effect as of April 1, 2020. They also fall under the City's Waste Management Bylaw, but the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) is taking the lead on education and enforcement.

Discussion ensued regarding the impacts of the pandemic which was attributable to an educational approach rather than enforcement. The FVRD has signalled active enforcement will be ramping up as they begin to work with the waste haulers and residents with respect to this issue.

Ms. Reichelt queried which natural area restoration projects are being considered. Staff noted various restoration concepts will be considered including projects which would facilitate improved habitat for salmon-bearing streams.

Stephen Head, Community Member, enquired as to whether consideration will be given with respect to the reduction of vehicle idling; staff provided comment noting idling is a component that will be in the plan.

Rob Ringma, Senior Manager, Government Relations, BC Transit, provided comment with respect to the proposed Chilliwack Transit Facility under consideration in the next five to six years in Chilliwack, and how electrification of infrastructure will help with reducing overall GHG emissions.

Discussion ensued regarding mode share in Chilliwack; Adriana McMullen, Senior Transit Planner, Fraser Valley Region, provided comment with respect to the 2012 Transit Future Action Plan which had set a transit mode share target of 2%. The City achieved that target and the next target set in the most recent Transit Future Action Plan is 3%. The degree of transit growth in the community indicates the community responds positively to investments in the transit system. Ms. McMullen noted the proposed operations and maintenance facility will be a key factor in meeting those mode share goals. Discussion ensued with respect to percentages of mode share in other municipalities.

Chelsea Cromarty, Community Member, enquired as to whether an idling bylaw in Chilliwack has been considered. Staff noted further review of idling and new vehicle technology will be considered, ie: the impact of idling diminishes as more people switch to electric vehicles or new vehicles that automatically cut the engine when stopped; however, the challenge is with respect to enforcement. Ms. Cromarty expressed interest in finding out what other municipalities have idling bylaws, and if so, how are municipalities enforcing the bylaw; staff noted they will reach out to other municipalities and this data will be included in the review. Staff noted there will be an education component of the proposed plan, to help raise awareness with respect to idling.

Mr. Nelmes queried the requirement of electric vehicle charging stations in new builds for single-family dwellings; staff provided details with respect to electric vehicle charging station requirements as per the Zoning Bylaw No. 5000.

Public engagement will take place in the next few months and will include a project page on engagechilliwack.com, online survey, Q&A and Idea Boards, a pop-up booth at Cottonwood Mall on April 2, 2022; and online townhall-style presentation and Q&A.

4. DELEGATION / PRESENTATION (continued)

Stakeholder consultation will also be underway with stakeholder workshops including community members, non-profits, relevant industry leaders; and government-to-government with FVRD and local First Nations. The Climate Action Plan will be provided to the Committee.

Marc Sole and Tara Friesen left the meeting at 4:00 pm.

5. OLD BUSINESS / ACTION ITEMS

Active Transportation Plan – Update

Andrew Pipke, Traffic Technician, provided an update with respect to the Active Transportation Plan. Staff have worked with the consultant to undertake an equity analysis, create a prioritization map and are beginning to discuss funding and project options. The Transportation Advisory Committee will receive an in-depth presentation at the May 26, 2022 meeting and the final draft will be brought forth to Council for consideration and adoption in June 2022.

Staff provided the results of the equity analysis which was based on census data from Chilliwack and broken down into the following five categories; income, recent immigrants, senior, youth and Indigenous identity.

The draft sidewalk prioritization results were provided which were based on the following factors: road classification, proximity to transit, schools, parks, pedestrian generators, network connectivity, population density; and, whether it's within an urban growth boundary or rural development neighbourhood such as Yarrow or Greendale.

The current sidewalk funding allows for \$400K/year under the Concrete Works Program. However, sidewalks are also funded through other programs such as Development Cost Charges (DCC's) and Capital Works with installation of approximately 1-3 km of sidewalks installed per year. Grants from Federal and Provincial Governments vary every year; the City of Chilliwack, in partnership with the Tzeachten First Nation, received a provincial Active Transportation grant for a multi-use pathway along the Chilliwack River Road. Through development, approximately 3 km of sidewalk is replaced or installed per year; however, it is not necessarily in the highest priority locations as sidewalks are part of frontage improvements with respect to development.

Discussion/Questions:

Mr. Ringma queried whether the Concrete Works Program includes funding for bus stop improvements such as bus stop pads; staff indicated sidewalk funding includes bus stop improvements and separate funding is available for transit facilities such as pads, benches or bus stop shelters. Mr. Ringma noted BC Transit offers cost-sharing on BC Transit bus shelters through the Transit Shelter Program.

Mr. Nelmes enquired whether new sidewalks are required to be installed directly in front of new development, or can sidewalks be installed elsewhere in the neighbourhood. He also queried whether sidewalks are required in front of every new parcel. Staff provided clarification with respect to Development Cost Charges (DCC's) and noted developers are required to provide off-site improvements including sidewalk on their respective new development frontage, however, there may be some exceptions.

Mr. Nelmes enquired whether the final Active Transportation Plan includes prioritization with respect to location and condition of accessibility mechanisms such as sidewalk let-downs; staff noted the plan includes the locations of sidewalks; however, there is currently no let-down inventory.

5. OLD BUSINESS / ACTION ITEMS (continued)

Ms. Cromarty raised a question with respect to whether the federal grant funding received and the yearly provincial funding opportunities, would move the sidewalk prioritization plan ahead more quickly; staff noted funding received helps to accelerate projects such as sidewalks; however, it is challenging to count on funding as it is dependent upon provincial and federal government budgets and priorities at the time.

Tyson Road Active Transportation Upgrades and Federal Grant Application

The Government of Canada recently announced a \$400M Active Transportation Fund that will be available for the next five years for communities to provide Active Transportation improvements.

Pedestrian and cycling improvements are proposed on both sides of Tyson Road between Evans Road and Watson, as this is the last section of the Tyson/Evans/Eagle Landing Pkwy/Ashwell corridor that does not have sidewalk on either side of the road. The project includes providing 2.1m wide cycle lanes on both sides of Tyson Road, and 2.1m wide sidewalks on both sides as well as improved accessible bus stops.

Questions/Discussions:

Mr. Nelmes enquired as to whether consideration will be given for sidewalk corridors that can connect lower priority areas with high priority areas; staff noted network connectivity is a key factor in prioritization.

Ms. Cromarty enquired as to what type of feedback is being sought in the next round of public consultation; staff noted they are working on public engagement questions for the Engage Chilliwack platform with respect to prioritization.

The Active Transportation Plan update will be forwarded to the Committee.

6. NEW BUSINESS / DISCUSSION**BC Transit Updates**

Rob Ringma, Senior Manager, Government Relations and Adriana McMullen, Senior Transit Planner, Fraser Valley Region, BC Transit, provided the following updates:

Next Ride

Next Ride is the Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology that will allow customers to go onto their Transit App and see where their bus is in real time and conduct their transit planning in real time. The technical team is currently installing the technology in Abbotsford and will then move on to Chilliwack. The anticipated completion date for the technology installation is the first two weeks of April 2022. The official public launch of the Next Ride technology will be approximately the end of April/early May once testing has been conducted.

Chilliwack Route Renumbering

BC Transit has informed the public of the change in route numbering through a communications and marketing plan, press release, and temporary bus stop signs placed at every bus stop in Chilliwack. The new signage installation at bus stops starts this week at bus stops from Chilliwack to Hope, in preparation for March 27, 2022 when the electronic displays on the buses officially change.

6. NEW BUSINESS / DISCUSSION (continued)FVX Expansion to Lougheed

Expansion of the Fraser Valley Express route to the Lougheed Skytrain Station takes place on March 27, 2022. BC Transit provided a communication and marketing plan with respect to the expansion; preview schedules are up and available on BC Transit's website including the Route 66: Fraser Valley Express page where riders can plan ahead. BC Transit is adding trips to the FVX route on weekends and at peak times. BC Transit has been collaborating with TransLink to update BC Transit's marketing and Rider's Guide material. BC Transit and local partner staff will be in Chilliwack next week for an on-site customer awareness day.

Provincial Transit Budget 2022/23

Mr. Ringma provided an overview with respect to how priorities in the Transit Future Action Plan are prioritized and implemented. For the last two years, the pandemic has had a significant impact on ridership, loss in revenue and increased costs. There has been contribution to the economic recovery through the Provincial Government's Safe Restart program; however, BC Transit is continuing to experience increased cost pressures including inflation, fuel and contract costs. The Province has offered to provide an operating grant to maintain essential service levels in 2022/23 in the amount of \$140M.

Ridership levels on average are still below 65% of pre-pandemic levels provincially; although Chilliwack continues to buck the provincial average. There is capacity in most systems to accommodate growth in the absence of transit expansion.

BC Transit is working with local government partners across the Province at options for optimizing existing services including reallocations of service, improved on-time performance, technology improvements and the continuation of rebuilding ridership within existing budgets.

BC Transit will progress projects that will increase ridership and improve customer satisfaction including expanding the number of systems using NextRide technology and electronic fare collection. BC Transit will continue planning improvements to operations and maintenance facilities and transit exchanges to add electric vehicle charging capacity which will help continue the advancement of BC Transit's Low Carbon Fleet Program.

Questions/Discussions:

Co-Chair Lum requested clarification with respect to whether BC Transit will be able to match the increases the City of Chilliwack envisioned through the Transit Future Action Plan; Mr. Ringma noted the Province is funding BC Transit's base budget; however, has not provided any additional funds for expansions at this time. The 4300-hour and two bus expansion requested by the City of Chilliwack will be reconsidered for budget next year.

As part of BC Transit's 2022 service strategy, other improvements and optimization opportunities will be reviewed and staff will present the results of those analyses to local government partners.

Ms. Reichelt queried whether the provincial budget is a result of low ridership; Mr. Ringma noted many factors go into the provincial budget, and low ridership due to COVID may have been a consideration.

Chair Shields thanked Rob Ringma and Adriana McMullen for the updates.

Next Steps:

Staff will provide the draft Active Transportation Plan to the Committee for review and input prior to the May 26, 2022 meeting.

7. OTHER

8. INFORMATION / CORRESPONDENCE

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 26, 2022 at 3:30 pm in the Dogwood Room.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Transportation Advisory Committee meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Councillor Jeff Shields, Chair