



May 28, 2021

His Worship
Mayor Fred Haynes
The Corporation of the District of Saanich
770 Vernon Avenue
Victoria BC V8X 2W7

Reference: 300664

Dear Mayor Haynes:

Re: Support and Advocacy for Victoria Regional Transit Commission Funding

I am writing to follow up on your letter of January 21, 2021, regarding the District of Saanich's support for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) 2021 transit service expansion funding request.

Providing a safe and reliable transportation network that helps meet our government's climate action goals is a key priority for the ministry, and I appreciate that the District of Saanich shares the same goals. I know the VRTC's 10-Year Vision is vital in helping to ensure the delivery of innovative and sustainable transit solutions in Greater Victoria, and the ministry is pleased that the VRTC will be implementing transit service expansion in 2021/22. This funding will benefit communities across the Victoria Regional Transit System, particularly as B.C.'s vaccination efforts continue and transit ridership increases.

Our government is committed to ensuring that British Columbians have safe and affordable access to public transportation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and into recovery. That is why we worked with the federal government to secure \$86 million in Safe Restart funding to help BC Transit with immediate relief from pandemic related revenue losses. I know BC Transit and local governments continue to work hard to ensure operators and passengers can continue to safely use public transit throughout this pandemic, and I am glad this funding relief will help to alleviate some of the pressures associated with the difficulties of these past months.

As you may know, one of my mandates as the new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure is to deliver better transit and transportation for Southern Vancouver Island, as guided by the [South Island Transportation Strategy](#). To that end, the ministry remains committed to working with the District of Saanich and the VRTC to provide an affordable and reliable travel alternative for people in the Greater Victoria region. For instance, as part of the McKenzie Interchange Project, work continues to support the implementation of RapidBus between downtown Victoria and the West Shore.

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As well, the provincial government, in partnership with the federal government and the VRTC, is helping to fund the first 10 electric buses operated by BC Transit in Greater Victoria, with the new buses anticipated to go into service in 2022. The provincial government is also partnering with the VRTC and federal government to fund the new handyDART operations and maintenance facility in the Town of View Royal, enabling the existing facility to be converted to a third regional operations and maintenance centre.

These investments will play an important part in supporting the delivery of improved and more reliable transit in the region.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Fleming". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rob Fleming
Minister