

November 1, 2010

Dear Mayor and Councillors:

We write to urge your support for rail-based rapid transit at this time, based on the following:

1. Immediate and Long-term Land Development Opportunities:

With Council's role in guiding land use, rail-based rapid transit will open huge opportunities for Saanich citizens and the District to reap the benefits of Transit Oriented Development at the regional transit "hub" at Uptown, along the Douglas Corridor, and elsewhere:

- economic/land development/taxation increases and congestion decreases;
- quality of life: walkability, increased options for those with and without cars, safety and convenience;
- environment — GHG, energy conservation etc.

2. Strong Public Support

Written comments from the public at the BC Transit Victoria October Open House showed:

- 60 % supported a "rail based" system;
- 12 % supported "road based;"
- 8 % wish to make it "better for bikes"; and
- 0 % support was registered for a bus-system.

3. Double the Ridership

A rail system is estimated to double the new transit ridership, compared to a bus-based system, according to BC Transit's presentation to last week's Rapid Transit Citizen Liaison Committee.

4. More speed and capacity compared to bus rapid transit (*also from Transit's CLC presentation*)

Light Rail:	25 - 40 km/hr	and 1500 to 14,000	passengers/hour
Rapid Bus:	15 - 25 km/hr	and 1500 to 3,500	passengers/hour

5. Capital cost estimates (\$/km) are within the range of comparable systems, elsewhere in North America, with similar engineering complexity. Life-time costs are generally lower — based on a rail car's life-span of 35 to 40 years.

6. Therefore — Saanich Council must assume a major leadership role in ensuring that the design and location of the Central Transit Hub will benefit everyone in the CRD area.

IslandTransformations.Org is an established group targetting sustainability for Vancouver Island. Our key thrusts have been in the areas of transportation and energy. We have compiled, commissioned and presented information on an integrated rail-transit system for the region. If you have questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the group,

Irwin Henderson
President, IslandTransformations.Org

