

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE,
HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL, ON THURSDAY, 2011-JAN-27,
COMMENCING AT 3:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Allan Davidson, Chair
Jim Routledge
Michele Patterson
Trevor McLeod
Councillor Jim Kipp
Councillor Bill Holdom
Councillor Bill Bestwick

Staff: Tom Hickey
Andrew Tucker
Tom Moscrip
Bob Prokopenko
Gordon Foy
Randy Churchill
Tim Davidson
Jodi Wilson

Councillor Diana Johnstone

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

There were no late items brought forward.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the minutes be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

5. DELEGATIONS:

There were no delegations present.

6. STAFF REPORTS:

(a) Parking Management Study Update

At its 2010-Sept-23 meeting, the Transportation Advisory Committee reviewed the Parking Advisory Committee's recommendations as referred by Council. Tim Davidson, Supervisor of Bylaw Services, provided an update on the action taken related to these recommendations. A copy of the Vancouver Island University/Harewood Neighbourhood Parking Plan was also circulated.

- #1 Change all currently regulated on-street metered parking to 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday thru Saturday, unregulated on Sundays.

Staff identified the area included in the Parking Management Study (downtown) as Selby Street to the waterfront and Comox Road to Esplanade Street, including the corner at Harbour Chandler. All currently regulated on-street parking in this area has been changed to be 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Saturday.

- #2 Forward the Parking Strategy to the City's Transportation Advisory Committee for future reference and to the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to focus future transit planning specifically in the study areas of the Downtown, Vancouver Island University and the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital.

This has been completed.

- #3 Standardize all of the time restricted on-street, but unmetered, zones to maximum 2 hour parking.

All parking has been made 2 hr, excluding loading, disabled zones, taxi zones and the short term parking such as the 20 and 30 minute zones around the banks. This is approximately 98% complete.

Some 4 hr and 3 hr zones have been changed to 2 hr. There have been very few violations since the change and there haven't been any complaints.

- #4 Not provide any further expansion of resident exempt parking regulations in the downtown area until there is sufficient off-street parking inventory to accommodate the displaced vehicles.

Resident Exempt was not expanded. More resident exempt passes were issued on Selby Street between Wentworth Street and Fitzwilliam Street due to an increase in residents.

As per Council's motion to establish Resident Only parking within 500 meters of Vancouver Island University; staff are implementing this. The first area to be designated as resident only is between Wakesiah, Lambert, Fourth and Fifth. This is the area that is most affected. The cost of doing this project is between \$15,000 and \$30,000. If there is displacement, staff will chase it and deal with it as it happens.

- #5 Commence discussions with the Downtown Nanaimo Business Improvement Area (DNBIA) and the Chamber of Commerce with the intent to implement a merchant-based refund of parking in the downtown core.

The City of Nanaimo is looking at providing free parking on Saturdays in the downtown core. Working with the DNBIA towards meeting this goal. There are a lot of considerations. A final conclusion has not been met and there are still further discussions that need to take place with the DNBIA.

- #6 Commence a process with the business community (DNBIA and the Chamber of Commerce) to implement parking meter kiosks on Commercial Street, Bastion Street, and Church Street with parking rates that are greater than rates on off-street lots and in parkades.

Research is ongoing and several examples have been identified. A preliminary test area from the Globe Hotel to the Dorchester Hotel on Front Street with solar power live credit card capabilities will cost in the neighbourhood of \$30,000. This is not within the capital plan; therefore, no further action is being taken at this time. It will form part of the 2012 budget proposals.

- #7 Standardize all parking meter kiosks among the city own lots and implement technologies that make it easier and more flexible for the consumer to pay for parking such as the use of cell phones, debit cards, etc.

Standardizing all parking meter kiosks among the city owned lots is currently on hold. Not in the budget.

- #8 Improve wayfinding of available City parking using such things as:

- update the website to clearly identify graphically where public parking is located downtown;
- provide parking diagrams to the DNBIA, Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Nanaimo and businesses located in the downtown that wish to include this information on their website; and
- include parking wayfinding diagrams in the Visitor Guide.

Improving wayfinding in the downtown. Considerable changes around the Conference Centre with the illuminated sign on Terminal Avenue, two directional signs on Gordon Street have been added, one has been moved on Commercial Street and one more installed on Museum Way.

- #9/10 Change the Parking sign above the entrance to the Port of Nanaimo Centre Parkade to a backlit sign at ninety degrees to the Port of Nanaimo Centre (PNC) parkade using the internationally recognized symbol for parking (A large blue P on a white background).

All three parkades will be re-signed with the internationally accepted parkade symbol ('P'). There are funds in the budget and the work will be done in February. This addition will make the parkades more recognizable.

- #11 Increase the lighting intensity by 2X at the entrances to parkades to better signify the entrance and provide better security.

The City of Nanaimo's Energy Manager, has identified through a lighting survey that the Bastion parkade is very dim. There is a plan in place to do a retrofit in 2012. The Harbourfront parkade would benefit from the Energy Manager doing a review as it is also in need of lighting upgrades.

The City of Nanaimo would like to put a Maintenance program in place so that the bulbs are replaced before they burn out.

- #12 Consult with the DNBI regarding parking signage in the downtown core.

This has been completed. Several additional internationally recognized signs have been installed.

- #13 Implement maximum 2 hour parking, resident exempt zones, identified in red on the attached Schedule "A" of the hospital zone.

Implementing maximum 2 hr parking in the Hospital Area is on hold because the City of Nanaimo is currently working on the Vancouver Island University (VIU) area. Staff will implement parking restrictions at VIU first, do it with a lot of thought and have it successful.

After consulting with the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH) area residents, staff will implement some form of restricted parking in that area. Staff have been in touch with the Hospital and Area Neighbourhood Association (HANA) and have explained our commitment to VIU and the timeline for that project. HANA understands that their concerns will be addressed shortly after VIU is completed. Currently, HANA is working through some of their own issues and staff is scheduled to attend their February 14th meeting at which time more parking solutions will be discussed.

NRGH advised that there were funds remaining from the renal unit expansion that may fund construction of an additional 107 parking spaces. The City provided a letter to VIHA asking that the money remain in place for the additional parking at NRGH. Andrew will advise the committee of the results of this request.

Regarding the University area - the implementation of parking control around VIU is similar to that done around the RCMP station. The restricted area at Milton Street is done by permit granted to the resident. The VIU area will be on a complaint basis. Most residents know whose vehicle should or shouldn't be there. They can call in their concern and City staff will respond by either ticketing or towing.

VIU has quite a range of students and a fluctuation as to when the busy times are. The signs at VIU will read "No Parking Except Residents of this Block". This sign was created under the guidance of a consultant that worked with the Engineering Department.

Parking in the dirt lot at the corner of Hwy. 19 and Fifth Street raises concerns. A request for no-posts along the curb will force vehicles to access the lot off of College Drive. The Committee was concerned that during the winter there is a lot of black ice on the corner of College Drive coming towards the Parkway; what can the City do to keep pedestrians safe that are coming out of that lot? Staff will raise this concern with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure who own the land and have jurisdiction over the intersection.

Committee member Patterson noted that VIU lots are over capacity approximately 95% of the time. For VIU, the solution is not creating more parking, but creating some alternate modes of transportation and re-educating VIU students and staff. The Committee was concerned where the displaced parking is going to go? Nanaimo Aquatic Centre? Nanaimo Ice Centre?

City staff will address the displacement as it happens. Contact with Parks, Recreation and Culture has already been made; they will notify Bylaw if parking in recreation facility lots becomes a concern. Serauxmen Stadium parking lot is also being used. School District 68 is considering making it a pay parking lot.

Councillor Holdom noted that further research and discussion still needs to be put towards a student U-Pass. Carpooling is also one of the strategies that will be brought forward to help alleviate the parking issues at VIU.

- #14 Install parking meter kiosks in the area identified in green or "unregulated" on the attached Schedule "A" of the hospital zone.

No action has been taken but it will be discussed in the future.

- #15 Forward the Strategy to Vancouver Island University (VIU) and request that VIU consider adding to their off-street parking inventory or suggest another viable strategy to City Staff to reduce parking demand in this zone.

A strategy has been forwarded to VIU by the City of Nanaimo. The government will not pay for parking; therefore, there will be no new parking added to VIU's inventory.

- #16 Request VIU and the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) commence discussions on how the RDN's transit function can better serve the university.

Councillor Holdom said that VIU is discussing with RDN Transit how they can better service VIU. RDN has already increased their schedule to address student demand and relocated their bus loop. Committee member Patterson advised that VIU is currently having a Traffic Demand Management Study completed to see if there is anything further that can be done.

- #17 Postpone any consideration of time restricted resident exempt parking until viable options are developed through discussions with VIU to relieve parking space demands.

Council has directed that there be no parking within 500 metres of the VIU boundaries. Residents are exempt from this restriction.

It was moved and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

(b) VIU Parking Update

Chair Davidson advised that the VIU Parking issues were covered under (a) Parking Management Study Update (above).

(c) Nissan Leaf Electric Car Purchase

Tom Hickey provided a brief presentation on the Nissan Leaf.

As part of a Fraser Basin Council initiative the City of Nanaimo is purchasing three this year and one the following year. The cost is about \$35,000 / vehicle and the City of Nanaimo is hoping to have them by June, 2011. One will be committed to Bylaw Services and the other two will be in the Vehicle Pool. While the vehicle is more expensive than a comparable gas powered vehicle there is significant fuel savings and reduced maintenance costs. The City will also be decreasing its carbon footprint. The estimated lifespan of this vehicle is 10 years.

Councillor Kipp has read that the Prius hybrids have been used for 1 million kilometers in taxi fleets and believes that these electric vehicles will have service reliability. Committee Member McLeod indicated that the Lithium Ion battery is very durable.

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

It was moved and seconded that the Correspondence be received. The motion carried unanimously.

(a) Moyse Crescent

This will be addressed with a solution implemented when the NRGH parking issues are dealt with.

(b) Bicycling Assessment

Identified as a useful tool for developing or implementing cycling strategies.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorse the Bicycling Assessment as a guideline for the design and development of trails and roads.

It was moved and seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

Transportation Plan

Chair Davidson asked staff to provide an update on action taken. Staff have talked with North Vancouver about coming to discuss with the Committee their transportation planning process. A date has not been confirmed as of yet.

A Transportation Plan typically outlines:

- Where are we?
- Where do we want to go? and
- How do we get there?

The Committee needs to consider how much time and resources it wants to spend on the plan and in engaging the community in the process.

Staff would like to provide the staff and committee members that we are inviting a list of questions so they have an idea of what type of guidance and input we are looking for. If you have any questions, please forward them to Gordon Foy and he will compile them.

Chair Davidson acknowledged that of the three municipalities he researched, the end result was reached in two different ways. One particular method took approximately 2-3 years while another took only 6 months. Our goal is to complete the plan prior to the 2-3 years, but at the same time we realize that 6 months may be unrealistic.

Councillor Kipp would like to see a Transportation Plan in place, even if a basic one is all we can do right now as we can continue to build on it in the future.

Councillor Holdom would like to know the planning horizon for the Transportation Plan. Staff said this is something the committee needs to determine. Chair Davidson suggested linking the planning horizon into the Green House Gas reduction timelines.

Councillor Bestwick would like to see the Transportation Advisory Committee submit a Transportation Plan to Council in 6 to 12 months.

Staff believe that once the Committee initiates the community input process that we need to keep on a fairly tight timeline to ensure the community stays engaged.

The funding for the Transportation Plan is in City of Nanaimo budget for 2012 and 2013 and is funded by Development Cost Charges. City Council can be asked to move some of the funding forward so the planning process can be started this year.

It was moved and seconded that the Transportation Advisory Committee request staff to arrange a meeting with West Vancouver and North Vancouver jurisdictions. The motion carried unanimously.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 4:28 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

10. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting date will be set once staff have established a date that will accommodate a meeting with North and West Vancouver to discuss their recent Transportation Planning experiences.

CHAIR