

DATE OF MEETING MAY 30, 2022

AUTHORED BY LAINY STEVENSON, ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECT SPECIALIST  
DARCIE OSBORNE, A/MANAGER, PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

SUBJECT **ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION TO SPECIAL EVENTS**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report:**

To inform Council that Staff will be working with Regional District of Nanaimo Transit and third party contractors to provide free transit shuttle services and bike valet parking for at least four (4) days of Special Events in 2022.

## **BACKGROUND**

As provincial health restrictions lift, large public events in Nanaimo are resuming. Canada Day, Dragon Boat Festival, Silly Boat Races, Marine Festival, and the Vancouver Island Exhibition (VIEx) are just a few of the major events that are restarting this summer. In anticipation, and in response to feedback received through the Downtown Mobility Hub project and the ReImagine Nanaimo process, Staff are exploring opportunities to support alternative modes of travel to and from events. The objective is to ease access to summer events and reduce reliance on vehicle travel.

### **Policy Context**

The 2014 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) outlines a strategy to manage the anticipated increase in travel within the City by supporting and promoting active and sustainable transportation. The TMP goal is to double walking, biking, and transit trips by 2041. In addition, strategic policy actions include:

- Encouraging travel to community events by walking, cycling, and transit;
- Reducing general parking while increasing shared bicycle parking; and,
- Providing better pedestrian access and transit amenities in mobility hubs, now known as primary and secondary urban centres.

In addition to the TMP, the Draft City Plan encourages a behavioural change to reduce the average distance driven. This will help reduce vehicle emissions and other environmental impacts, as well as congestion and travel delay. An overall policy of the “Connected” section is to implement Transportation Demand Management programs to shift trips to non-automobile modes and reduce parking demand.

Providing alternative transportation options such as a transit shuttle service and secure bicycle parking at events encourages more sustainable forms of transportation and reduces parking

demand at event sites. This supports the objectives of both the Transportation Master Plan and the Draft City Plan.

## **DISCUSSION**

Culture and Events and Transportation teams are organizing City support for the biggest special events this summer. Plans for these events are currently developing, and given the long hiatus of the pandemic, it may be an opportune time to refresh the City's approach to travel and parking for special events.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Previous Attendance (total)</b>
Canada Day	July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Maffeo Sutton Park	10,000
Dragon Boat Festival	July 9 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup>	Maffeo Sutton Park	9,000
Silly Boat Races	July 17 <sup>th</sup>	Maffeo Sutton Park	8,000
Marine Festival	July 22 <sup>nd</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup>	Maffeo Sutton Park	20,000-25,000
VIEx	August 26 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>	Beban Park	12,000-15,000
Truth and Reconciliation Day	September 30 <sup>th</sup>	Maffeo Sutton Park	5,000 (PHO in effect)

Staff are exploring ways to make biking and transit more appealing so that the public will choose to leave their vehicles at home for the big events.

Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Transit services staff indicated that it would be possible to provide a transit shuttle service from a main transit exchange to and from major events. They have offered to provide two buses for each event day (9am-5pm) at an estimated cost of \$3,000. Woodgrove Mall and Vancouver Island University (VIU) would be the probable starting points for this service as they are already part of the existing transit system and are easily accessed by all modes of travel; however, other locations or additional pick up points may be considered. Representatives for both Woodgrove Mall and VIU provided approval in principle, pending final scheduling.

Staff contacted multiple organizations that provide bicycle valet services and received estimates of approximately \$2,000 per event. These organizations provide full service secure bicycle parking at the event, free of charge to attendees. This may also be an opportunity for training sessions for City Staff to provide a similar service at events in the future.

The estimated total for both the transit shuttle and bike valet is \$5,000 per event day. Users will not be charged. Budget for the trial is available in "Alternative Transportation Education and Marketing" budget and the "Healthamongus" budget. These funding sources are typically used for promotion, education, and marketing of a variety of healthy and sustainable community activities. If funding permits, additional shuttles and bike valets will be organized for other events.

Resources are prioritized to the busiest days of the busiest events. This includes one day of Marine Festival, VIEx and Dragon Boat Festival, plus Canada Day, for a total of four (4) days and an estimated cost of \$20,000. Public communication including maps and shuttle schedules

will be developed and advertised shortly, and will be aggressively promoted through multiple media platforms.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff plan to allocate \$20,000 from the Alternative Transportation Education and Marketing and Healthamongus budgets to facilitate at least four (4) days of event service, prioritizing events based on past attendance numbers.

Staff will formally request the transit shuttle from the RDN Board and will engage a bike valet provider in anticipation of providing these services for one day of Marine Festival, VIEx and Dragon Boat Festival, plus Canada Day.]]

## **SUMMARY POINTS**

- Planning is in full swing for summer events in downtown Nanaimo.
- City Staff are proposing to provide transit shuttle services and bicycle valet parking for at least four (4) major events; one day of Marine Festival, Vancouver Island Exhibition and Dragon Boat Festival, plus Canada Day.
- Attendees are encouraged to leave their cars at home and take the shuttle to these special events.
- More information about where to park, and the shuttle schedule, will be announced in the coming weeks.

### **Submitted by:**

Lainy Stevenson  
Active Transportation Project Specialist

Darcie Osborne  
A/Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture

### **Concurrence by:**

Jamie Rose  
Manager, Transportation

Poul Rosen  
Director, Engineering

Richard Harding  
General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture

Bill Sims  
General Manager, Engineering and Public Works