

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING JULY 17, 2023

AUTHORED BY JAMIE ROSE, MANAGER, TRANSPORTATION

SUBJECT TRANSIT STOP AMENITIES

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide further information on transit stop amenities and recommend next steps to improve conditions with transit stops.

Recommendation

That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend Council support the creation of a Business Case, as part of the Business Case review for the 2024 - 2028 Financial Planning Process, informed by Option 2 – Corridor-Based Hybrid, as outlined in Attachment A – Options Paper, of the report titled "Transit Stop Amenities", dated 2023-JUL-17.

BACKGROUND

Following the presentation of a Staff Information Report, Attachment B - *Bus Shelter and Bench Strategy Update*, at the January 24, 2022, regular Council meeting, Staff engaged a consultant to undertake a review of the City of Nanaimo's (City) approach to providing Transit Stop Amenities. The objective of this task was to provide a report on how other Municipalities manage this service and what opportunities may be available for the City, Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), and BC Transit (BCT) to adopt a more formal, financially viable, and scalable program.

DISCUSSION

Over the past year, Staff have worked with Neilson Strategies to review opportunities to re-vamp the Nanaimo Transit Stop Amenities Program with the objective of seeking a sustainable approach to meet the expectations of the community as outlined in City Plan and the Transit Redevelopment Strategy. This work included interviews with representatives from the City, RDN, BCT, District of Saanich, City of Kamloops, and City of Kelowna. Attachment A provides a summary of this work.

OPTIONS

The details of all four (4) Options are outlined in Attachment A – *Options Paper*. The options range from the current sponsor driven approach to one which sees the City acquire and control all assets. This spectrum of options has a variety of benefits, risks, and costs; all of which were

considered when identifying a preferred option. Staff recommend that Council support Option 2, a Hybrid option which would see a third party provide stop amenities on the core transit routes (as outlined in City Plan and the Transit Redevelopment Strategy) and the City, in partnership with the RDN and BCT, provide amenities on neighbourhood routes. This approach strikes a balance between increasing levels of service to support transit users, while keeping capital and operating costs manageable.

1. That the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend Council support the creation of a Business Case, as part of the Business Case review for the 2024 - 2028 Financial Planning Process, informed by Option 2 – Corridor-Based Hybrid, as outlined in Attachment A – Options Paper, of the report titled "Transit Stop Amenities", dated 2023-JUL-17.
 - The advantages of this option are that the City will gain a higher degree of control over the type, location, and quality of transit stop amenities, without the burden of the full capital and operations investment or obligation to maintain or renew assets at end of life.
 - The disadvantages of this option are that the City will not have absolute control over the amenities and will still be accountable for capital and operating expenses for a portion of the system amenities on neighbourhood routes.
 - Based on the analysis within the report, the anticipated financial implications of this approach are that the City will need to budget approximately \$260,000 in operating expenses and \$565,000 in capital expenses over the first five (5) years of this program. These costs will increase to approximately \$860,000 in operating and \$1,100,000 in capital for years 6 to 10 of the program.
2. That the Governance and Priorities Committee provide alternative direction to Staff. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- The current Transit Stop Amenity program does not meet the needs or expectations of the community.
- The contracts with the existing vendors are expiring.
- The hybrid approach strikes a balance between control, elevated level of service, and financial obligation.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Options Paper

Attachment B – Bus Shelter and Bench Strategy Update Information Report – January 24, 2022 |

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