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**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREAS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 08, 2022**

SUBJECT **Bylaw No. 4484: Service Establishment for the Southern Gulf Islands
Transportation Service**

ISSUE SUMMARY

Consideration of Bylaw 4484 to establish an integrated transportation service for the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area.

BACKGROUND

This report advances Bylaw No. 4484, "Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Service Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 2022", a bylaw to establish an integrated transportation service funded by tax requisition for the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area. In accordance with the bylaw, the scope of the service may include:

- funding and facilitating transportation studies;
- administering, facilitating, and issuing grants, sponsorships, and contributions to transportation initiatives on a one-time or ongoing basis;
- acquiring, developing, managing, and maintaining:
 - sidewalks and multi-modal paths;
 - parking spaces, areas and facilities; and
 - pedestrian safety and traffic calming facilities;
- implementing and providing transportation demand management programs;
- administering, facilitating, and issuing grants-in-aid to non-profits or societies for operations and capital costs that benefit integrated transportation in the Southern Gulf Island Electoral Area, including public transit, active transportation, and water-based transportation services;
- entering into partnerships and agreements, including funding contributions, with third party operators, government agencies, public authorities, and non-profits for the delivery of transportation within the Southern Gulf Island Electoral Area, and to connect the Southern Gulf Island Electoral Area with other regions;
- coordinating integrated transportation services across modes; and
- establishing one or more reserve funds for capital or operating purposes.

This project has been advanced in stages since 2018, as set out in the timeline below:

- May 2018: the Southern Gulf Islands Community Economic Sustainability Commission (CESC) requested that the CRD establish a new Transportation Commission for the SGI Electoral Area.
- June 2018: the CRD Board directed that staff:
 - consult with community groups, BC Transit, and BC ferries to define a service model that would best serve the transportation needs of the Southern Gulf Islands;
 - consult with the community bus service providers within the Southern Gulf Islands to determine operating requirements, costs, and service levels to support a CRD transportation service for the Southern Gulf Islands; and
 - include the establishment of an SGI transportation service in service and budget planning for 2020.

- November 2018: BC Transit updated its Southern Gulf Islands Service Discussion Document and found little had changed for public transit feasibility, the islands remained on the cusp of viability for a BC Transit service.
- 2019: CRD SGI team consulted existing public transit service providers (community bus societies) on the islands and updated the 2016 Community Bus Assessment with current data.
- 2020: Project planning included development of a project charter, project proposal and community engagement plan for corporate communications, grant applications to fund a feasibility study (which were successful), and development of an RFP to be let in 2021.
- 2021: Watt Consulting Group engaged to undertake feasibility study for an integrated transportation service: linking public transit, active transportation, and inter-island connections in the Southern Gulf Islands.
- April 2021: Planning process initiated that engaged stakeholders, community groups, and other agencies to confirm need, provide technical analysis and operational considerations for each transportation mode. The process was grounded in an in-depth community and stakeholder consultation program which included on-line interactive engagement, surveys, workshops and meetings, in-person information tables on the islands, and two different mail outs to SGI households.
- December 2021: Service model options and quantified costs developed. Preliminary business case for a range of service level options received.
- January 2022: Round 2 community engagement sought community feedback on service levels and associated costs, and the overall appetite to establish an SGI transportation service funded by a tax requisition. Consultation results indicated majority support for a tax requisition to increase transportation solutions in the islands.
- February 2022: The SGI Community Economic Sustainability Commission passed a resolution recommending the CRD Board implement “Option D, Fully Integrated Transportation Service,” with a maximum requisition of up to \$675,000.
- April 2022: SGI Active Transportation Plan completed.
- May 2022: Final report and business case received in support of an integrated transportation service for the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area.

To proceed with this initiative, a new service must be created by adoption of a service establishment bylaw. This bylaw is subject to elector approval under the *Local Government Act*, which may take the form of a referendum or an alternative approval process in the service area. Staff recommend the proposed bylaw be submitted to elector approval by way of referendum concurrently with the 2022 General Local Election. If the referendum is successful, the CRD Board must adopt Bylaw No. 4484 by December 31, 2022 pursuant to the *BC Assessment Act* in order to requisition funds for the service in 2023.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board that:

1. Bylaw No. 4484, “Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Service Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 2022”, be introduced and read a first, second, and third time;
2. That staff be directed to implement the elector approval process by way of referendum;
3. That Kristen Morley be appointed Chief Election Officer with the power to appoint one or more Deputy Chief Election Officer(s);

4. That the wording of the referendum question for the purposes of the ballot shall be as follows:

Are you in favour of the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board adopting Bylaw No. 4484, "Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Service Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 2022" authorizing the CRD to establish an integrated transportation service for the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area to raise a maximum annual requisition up to the greater of SIX HUNDRED AND SEVENTY FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$675,000) or \$0.1414 per ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000.00) of taxable land and improvements for the purpose of funding the operating costs of the service.

YES or NO?

5. That general voting be held on Saturday, October 15, 2022 in concurrence with the General Local Election, with Advance voting opportunities held on dates and voting places to be determined by the Chief Election Officer;
6. That the synopsis of Bylaw No. 4484, attached as Appendix B, be approved for advertising purposes.

Alternative 2

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board that Bylaw No. 4484, "Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Service Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 2022", be referred back to staff for more information.

IMPLICATIONS

Social Implications

The SGI does not currently have public transit options, safe cycling routes, or the ability to travel efficiently between the islands. An integrated transportation system would change the economic and social geography and enable shared services and increased connections throughout the islands. Overall, the theme heard repeatedly from the public and stakeholders was that there was a need to improve alternate transportation options on the Southern Gulf Islands, particularly due to a lack of safety for users of the hilly, winding and narrow road network.

Improved transportation alternatives would:

- better connect major origins and destinations on the islands;
- provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicles;
- reduce car dependency;
- provide seniors and low-income populations better travel options;
- better enable kids the ability to travel safely and independently; and
- be more sustainable and better stewards for the environment.

Environmental & Climate Implications

The CRD's Regional Climate Action Strategy ("RCAS") has identified on-road transportation as the region's most significant source of greenhouse gas emissions ("GHGe"), and notes that the CRD needs to focus on mitigating impacts of transportation by moving towards lower carbon emissions options such as walking, cycling, transit and electric vehicles. In 2019, the CRD declared a climate emergency and committed to reducing GHGe by 40% by 2030. An SGI Transportation service would enable the islands to advance low carbon transportation solutions.

Service Delivery Implications

If approved by referendum and the CRD Board, the new service will be established for transportation improvements in the SGI Electoral Area and will be accompanied by the establishment of an SGI Transportation Advisory Commission. The Commission would include representation from each island, as well as representation by stakeholders in each of the three transportation modes.

While proposed Bylaw No. 4484 is broadly enabling, the level of funding anticipates CRD in a coordinating role, supporting transportation improvements by third party service providers and providing general governance for modal integration. The service model proposed by Watt Consulting in the business case recommends the SGI Transportation Service undertake the following:

- Establish a Commission to oversee strategic planning for multi-modal, integrated transportation planning across the SGI EA.
- Develop and administer an internal grant program:
 - Fund third party grants for active transportation - enable non-profit trail societies to plan for and build walking and cycling routes connecting key community destinations.
 - Fund third party grants for public transportation - enable funding for local community bus societies to support continual operations, provide service across more times of the year, and be able to pay drivers and reduce reliance on volunteers (this was noted as a key need for sustainable service).
- Create coordinating tools that support multiple types of travel, including a website showing travel options and trip booking software.
- Apply for and receive grants. Provide staff support to access and receive funding for transportation projects through provincial and federal programs.
- Hold licences of occupation in the Ministry of Transportation road right of way, as needed.
- Other CRD support, as needed, to help local organizations make transportation happen, such as developing partnerships, strategic planning, and leasing or owning land and vehicles if required and a local organization is not able to do so.

In 2023, work will be required to establish the Commission, hire new staff, and coordinate strategic planning for service priorities. Through the CRD service planning process, the following timeline has been proposed for year 1 of the service:

Quarters 1 & 2:

- Advertise for Commissioners and appoint Commission.
- Develop job description(s), post and hire new staff.

Quarters 2 & 3:

- Develop strategic plan and prioritized work plan with Commission.
- Start to implement short term priorities of work plan.
- Develop Grant Program based on transportation criteria; design application process.
- Service and Budget planning for 2024.

Quarter 4:

- Progress with work plan.
- Confirm 2024 work plan priorities and final budget for 2024.

Financial Implications

The proposed service bylaw includes a maximum requisition equaling the greater of \$675,000 or \$0.1414 per \$1,000 of assessed value. For communications purposes, this can also be expressed as \$14.10 per \$100,000 of assessed property value.

If the service is established, 2023 would be a transitional year and the full suite of transportation service elements would not yet be phased in. A draft budget has been prepared for 2023 to support the service’s inaugural year in the case it is approved by the referendum and the CRD Board. Year 1 of the service would see a requisition amount at a fraction of the maximum, reflecting the best practice of starting small and sustainable within the available requisition amount, and prudently increasing in accordance with inflation and increased service needs. Ultimately, the service priorities and budget allocated will be proposed by the Commission for approval by the CRD Board and may change from year to year.

At maximum requisition levels, the service model proposed by the business case is as follows:

Maximum Requisition: \$675,000		
<i>Allocation</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Service</i>
\$169, 000	CRD Staffing & Coordination	1.0 FTE (J17 position) Analyst for professional level service such as managing licenses of occupation, roadside trail project management, supporting strategic planning, support commission work program, and administering internal/external grant programs. 0.5 FTE (J12 position) Administrative support to manage records, correspondence, commission clerk support.
\$15,000	Coordination and Marketing Tools	Funding for coordinating tools to support consolidated SGI transportation communications and marketing, trip-booking, online information, promoting car shares programs, etc.
\$16,000	Supporting Infrastructure & Maintenance	Targeted infrastructure improvements and maintenance to better connect modes, such as bike racks, benches, and bus stop signage, dockside improvements.
\$124,000	Active Transportation	Grant program to help offset costs of materials, development, and/or maintenance of active transportation trails. Roadside trails/Licence of Occupation would likely be co-funded through third party grants.
\$294,000	Public Transportation	Grant program of up to support local community bus societies towards delivering year-round service.
\$57,000	Water Transportation	Convenes partnerships, provides financial contributions to non-profit societies, and provides general support for seasonal and potentially year-round water taxi services.

Alignment with Board & Corporate Priorities

- 2018-22 Board Priority: Community Wellbeing (Transportation & Housing)
- 2019-22 Corporate Business Plan – 2e - EA transportation services

CONCLUSION

Bylaw No. 4484 is proposed to establish an integrated transportation service for the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area. If approved by referendum and the CRD Board, the new service will be established beginning in 2023 for transportation improvements in the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area and will have a Commission established to advise on the service.

RECOMMENDATION

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board that:

1. Bylaw No. 4484, “Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Service Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 2022”, be introduced and read a first, second, and third time;
2. That staff be directed to implement the elector approval process by way of referendum;
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YES or NO?

5. That general voting be held on Saturday, October 15, 2022 in concurrence with the General Local Election, with Advance voting opportunities held on dates and voting places to be determined by the Chief Election Officer;
6. That the synopsis of Bylaw No. 4484, attached as Appendix B, be approved for advertising purposes.

Submitted by:	Justine Starke, MCIP, RRP, Manager, Southern Gulf Islands Service Delivery
Concurrence	Stephen Henderson, Senior Manager, Real Estate and SGI Service Delivery
Concurrence:	Kristen Morley, J.D., General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: Bylaw No. 4484, “Southern Gulf Islands Transportation Service Establishing Bylaw No. 1, 2022.”

Appendix B: Synopsis of Bylaw No. 4484