

## 4.5 Public Transportation

### INTRODUCTION

As of the 2016 review of this Plan, VIA Rail's passenger train service has not run through the Plan Area for several years and its future is uncertain. The E&N rail corridor remains a valuable community asset that if not used for rail, should be used for as a non-vehicular (active) transportation and recreation corridor.

In 2014, Regional District of Nanaimo Transit Services began operating a bus to and from Deep Bay and connecting to Nanaimo via Qualicum Beach in the morning and afternoon on Tuesdays. The service is planned for expansion to 5 days per week in September, 2017. It is a long standing desire for this community to have public transit connection north into the Comox Valley Regional District, where many residents travel to regularly for work, shopping and appointments as it is often more convenient than travelling to Nanaimo. Transit service in the Comox Valley Regional District currently goes as far south as Fanny Bay, less than 10 km from where transit service ends in Deep Bay. Focussing growth and development in Village Centres will make continued expansion of the frequency of service more viable.

### OBJECTIVES

1. *Support* existing transit service in Area 'H' and *encourage* expansion.
2. *Support* the development of commuter transportation opportunities for residents of Area 'H' in addition to the current transit service.
3. *Protect* the E&N railway line as a continuous linear transportation corridor by designating the lands as a transportation corridor for rail travel and for non-vehicular mobility options.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

1. The E&N Railway corridor lands shall be designated Transportation Corridor with a minimum parcel size of 2 ha.
2. The Regional District shall support the development of public transportation nodes in Village Centres such as bus shelters in strategic locations linked with active transportation facilities.
3. Should rail transportation services cease to exist, this Plan supports the establishment of walking and cycling trails on the E&N railway corridor.
4. The Regional District shall encourage the development of alternative transportation opportunities such as mini-bus commuter services, carpooling, and park and ride connections to Regional District Transit routes in consultation with Regional District Transit Services.
5. The Regional District supports accessibility in public transportation; an accessible transportation system works to support the independence, comfort, self esteem, and security of everyone, including people with disabilities.

### ADVOCACY POLICIES

6. BC Transit and the Comox Valley Regional District are encouraged to work with the Regional District of Nanaimo to develop a public transit connection between the Deep Bay area and transit in the Comox Valley Regional District.