

## The Role of the proposed Commute Trip Reduction [CTR] program within CleanBC

### Executive summary

- A program to reduce the unnecessary, unwanted and unfair travel related to commuting and congestion has been anticipated in CleanBC's *2020 Climate Change Accountability Report*.<sup>1</sup>
- A program design is currently being evaluated by analysts in the Climate Action Secretariat.
- Transportation accounts for over 50% of all carbon emissions in B.C.'s urban areas.
- The lead proponent<sup>2</sup> of the 4-stage CTR program calculates that its implementation will reduce B.C.'s carbon emissions by 5% within 5 years.
- The CTR program responds to the Climate Solutions Council's recommendation to "highlight co-benefits and prioritize actions/system changes that address multiple priorities (health, affordability, economic opportunity, etc.)." Development work is "shovel-ready" so that, given priority, stage 1 of the program could be rolled out as early as this summer of 2021.
- The program will work synergistically with other components of CleanBC and the Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy to increase their effectiveness (for example, better commuting solutions are essential for Active Travel initiatives by the Province and municipalities, and with Smart Growth planning) and/or to temper potential problems (e.g., addressing post-pandemic transit hesitancy, and the induced demand effect from highway/bridge/tunnel widening).
- The program will contribute toward B.C.'s economic, equity, affordability, pollution, congestion and healthcare goals.

### Background

- Research by the proponents has identified large private and public sector organizations as major players in the transportation sector. For example, the Surrey School District controls the scheduling and locations for daily home-school-home commutes by 11,000 staff and 74,000 students, and the provisioning of 128 schools. School districts oversee fleets of buses and delivery vehicles, and manage hundreds of hectares of parking spaces. Similarly, Fraser Health determines the commutes of over 40,000 staff, the healthcare-related travel situation for 1.8 million citizens, and the provisioning of 12 hospitals and dozens of other facilities. Other large B.C. transportation players include Telus, Jim Pattison Group, BC Hydro, ICBC, Best Buy, Amazon, municipalities, universities, TransLink, West Fraser Timber, etc.
- Research using StatsCan commuting flow data reveals high levels of inefficiency in the scheduling and allocation of employees to workplaces. There are opportunities to improve people's commuting situation by using any of over a dozen simple, inexpensive tactics. There is also potential to significantly improve the travel situation of large organizations' clientele (patients, students, customers, etc.) and shipping and delivery.

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<sup>1</sup> *CleanBC 2020 Climate Change Accountability Report*, p. 45, Appendix 1: CleanBC Initiatives by Sector, Cleaner Transportation, "Get to work on getting rid of gridlock: Help people get around with a long-term strategy to increase active transportation and look at better commuting solutions."

<sup>2</sup> A consortium led by Trelawny Consulting Group Ltd./[closercommutes.org](http://closercommutes.org), with Victoria Transportation Planning Institute, JTB Consulting and [BeTheChangeEarthAlliance.org](http://BeTheChangeEarthAlliance.org).

- Consultation has been conducted to gather perspectives and recommendations from over 200 key informants in business, non-profits, crown corporations, health authorities, school districts, unions, universities and municipalities, in Canada and beyond, and within the B.C. Government (including Ministers, executives and planners across multiple ministries). Extensive analysis on program delivery models in other jurisdictions and development of apps have been done. Pilot tests have been conducted with banks, municipalities, credit unions and school districts in B.C.
- The program design proposes four stages, each stage requiring large organizations to assess the carbon emissions burden from specific transportation-related activities and make best efforts to reduce that burden:
  - In stage one, public sector organizations – PSOs – will address their inefficiencies and the opportunities to orchestrate employee commutes that are shorter in time and distance, have fewer emissions, are less expensive, more active and more equitable.
  - In stage two, large private sector organizations will be brought into the program, improving their employees’ commutes as above.
  - In stage three, all large organizations will work to improve efficiency and healthy choice in the travel of their clientele (such as students to and from schools, and patients to and from hospitals).
  - In stage four, all large organizations will work to reduce GHGs and other unwanted effects associated with their shipping and delivery.
- A report<sup>3</sup> by the Environmental Law Centre at University of Victoria’s Law Faculty recommends using regulations under the *Climate Change Accountability Act* to authorize the first stage. [The *Act* already requires PSOs to report on multiple sources of GHG emissions, including business travel, and make best efforts to minimize those emissions.] For the following three stages, likely an amendment or new legislation will be needed to extend the reporting and ‘best efforts’ requirement beyond the public sector.
- The ELC report opines that the large organizations’ actions supported by this program would not run afoul with the mobility clause of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* nor with provincial privacy laws.
- The draft program budget calls for an investment of \$3 million per year to operate the program. Subject to being given priority for funding by the Government, roll-out of the first stage (to PSOs to improve employee commuting) could begin as early as this summer 2021.
- Actions by the organizations are expected to have little cost and be implemented simply and quickly. Support to the organizations will be provided online: apps to simply and quickly identify the fastest high-impact actions, explainer videos, instructions, cost-benefit analyses, resources, etc. There will be over a dozen commute-improving tactics supported, covering a variety of situations, plus ways to address clientele travel and shipping/delivery. There will be a net benefit to each organization due to improved productivity, lower human resources expenses (notably for recruiting, retention,

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<sup>3</sup> “Commuter Trip Reduction Initiatives: Implementing Efficiencies in Transportation for a Greener Future” – A report by University of Victoria’s Environmental Law Centre Clinic. Available at: <http://trelawnyconsulting.com/CTR/ELC-Commuter-Trip-Reduction-Transportation-for-a-Greener-Future.pdf>

absenteeism, accidents, mental and physical health, morale), and lower facilities costs (office space, parking, etc.).

- The program is expected to help with affordability and equity: transportation is a major budget expense and drain on time for low- and medium-income families, students, and those working multiple jobs in the largely non-male 5Cs of caring, clerical, catering, cashiering and cleaning.
- The program will improve health and well-being by: reducing pollution/smog; reducing the well-documented mental & physical effects of long commutes<sup>4</sup>; providing more time & money for family & recreation; etc.
- The program will boost the economy through improved productivity, increased profitability and sustainability for the organizations, and reduced traffic congestion – the latter some economists contend is a billion dollar per year damper on B.C.’s economy.

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## Appendix 1: CLEANBC INITIATIVES BY SECTOR<sup>12</sup>

INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION	GHG MT IN 2030
<i>Cleaner transportation</i>		
<b>Bring down the price of clean vehicles</b>	<b>Within 20 years, every new car will be a zero-emission vehicle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandate 100% of new cars to be zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) by 2040; 30% ZEV by 2030 and 10% ZEV by 2025</li> </ul>	0.6
	<b>Help people to afford cleaner cars and save money on gas bills with EV incentives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide rebates for light-duty vehicles</li> <li>• Expand incentives for clean buses and heavy-duty vehicles</li> </ul>	0.4
	<b>Make it easier to charge an electric car or fuel a hydrogen car</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the charging network with home, work and public fast-charging stations and additional hydrogen fueling stations</li> <li>• Enable private investment in charging and hydrogen fueling infrastructure to get more stations faster</li> </ul>	
<b>Speed up the switch to cleaner fuels</b>	<b>Phase in more renewable fuels for the gas we use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make our fuel cleaner by increasing the carbon intensity requirement of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to a 20% reduction in average carbon intensity by 2030</li> <li>• Increase the supply of cleaner fuels by ramping up new production in B.C. of 650 million litres of renewable gasoline and diesel by 2030</li> </ul>	4.2
	<b>Make vehicles run cleaner by increasing tailpipe emissions standards for vehicles sold after 2025</b>	0.9
<b>Get to work on getting rid of gridlock</b>	<b>Help people get around with a long-term strategy to increase active transportation and look at better commuting solutions.</b>	
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>6.0</b>

<sup>4</sup> See “The Effects of Long Commutes: an annotated bibliography” by CloserCommutes Systems Inc. [http://trelawnyconsulting.com/CTR/Effects\\_of\\_Long\\_Commutes\\_PDF\\_21\\_Feb\\_2019.pdf](http://trelawnyconsulting.com/CTR/Effects_of_Long_Commutes_PDF_21_Feb_2019.pdf)

## Examples of the CTR program working synergistically with other programs

- **Active Travel** initiatives by the Province and municipalities – if commutes are long, people can't/won't walk or cycle despite having bike lanes
- **Smart Growth** – 15-minute-neighbourhoods rely on close home-work commutes
- **Transit ridership** – employers' actions can help counter post-pandemic transit hesitancy
- **Major highway infrastructure** projects – improving commute options can help counter the 'induced demand' effect from highway/bridge/tunnel widening
- **Programs to address inequality and affordability** – helping B.C. recover from the disproportionate **job losses post-pandemic** by women and BIPOC, especially those working in the 5 Cs; transportation costs can be reduced for low- and middle-income people; commute times reduced for those working multiple jobs; etc.
- Creating **affordable housing near transit** – employers can make transit viable for more people by better efficiency in allocating work location and scheduling, and other tactics
- **Improving health and well-being** – reducing pollution; reducing mental & physical effects of long commutes; more time & money for family & recreation, etc.

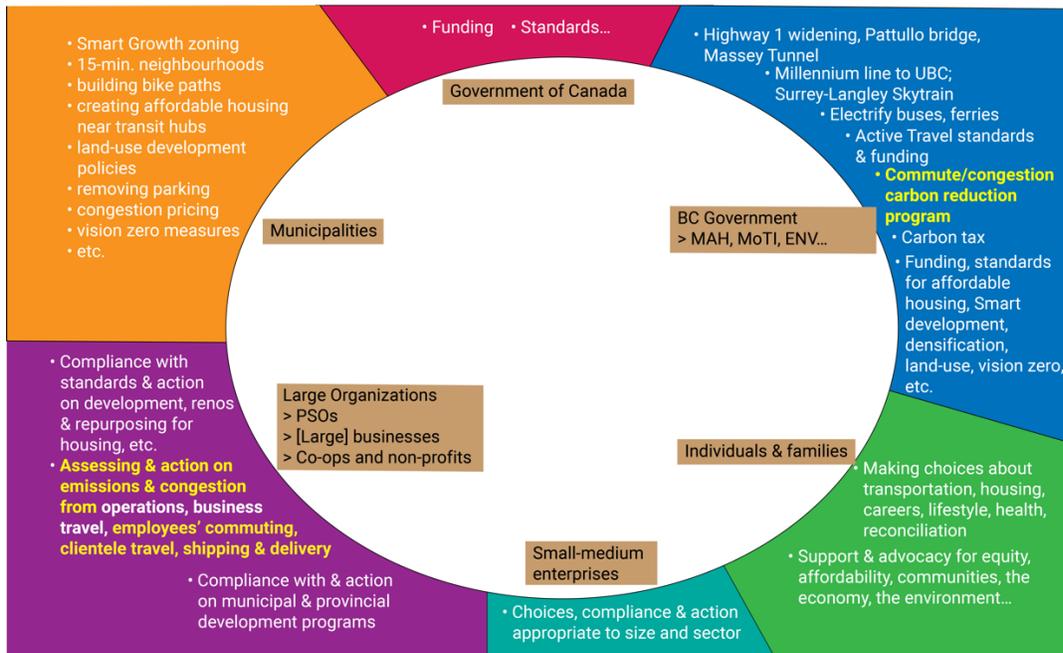
Widen Hwy 1 thru Fraser Valley	Massey Tunnel Replacement	Pattulo Bridge Replacement	Extend Millennium Line to UBC
Surrey-Langley SkyTrain	Electric buses for TransLink & BC Transit	Active Travel Standards	Carbon Tax
Smart Growth Zoning	15-minute Neighbourhoods	Vision Zero Safety	Congestion Pricing
Affordable Housing Near Transit	Bike Lanes	Land-Use Development Policies	Less Vehicle Parking
Commute Reduction Program	BC Ferries Improvements	EV Vehicle & Charger Station Subsidies	Research Low Carbon Transportation

### BC Integrated Transportation & Development Strategy

- In the support program there will be XLSM apps to help an organization identify which tactics to focus on, given that organization's and its employees' circumstances:
  - closer commutes *aka proximate commuting* (awareness of home/work proximity at time of hiring and internal job openings, and for peer-with-peer worksite swaps)
  - supporting biking, walking and other active commuting modes (infrastructure, incentives, procedures, etc.)
  - connecting employees with carpool, vanpool & carshare services, possibly with incentives
  - promoting transit use with discounted passes & supportive work scheduling, etc.
  - guaranteed ride home for family urgencies
  - providing vehicles and/or taxi cabs for errands
  - providing a shuttle to transit hubs
  - EV and e-bike charging stations
  - telework from home
  - working from remote/satellite offices and collaborative shared workspaces
  - shift re-scheduling/ flexibility; longer & fewer "compressed" workdays
  - disincentives for SOV use (e.g., charging extra for parking, and/or 'cash-out')
  - selecting/moving locations of offices/branches
  - supporting/coordinating with other existing and planned transportation programs.

## The Players' Roles within B.C.'s Integrated Transportation & Development Strategy

highlighting how the B.C. Government will provide *authority* and *methodology/tools* for all large organizations to take action on commuting, congestion and carbon emissions



*Players' roles in the draft Integrated Transportation and Development Strategy*

### Observations

- During the ongoing pandemic, the B.C. Government has given *authority/requirement* in the form of public health orders and *instructions/support* to all players. Municipalities, large organizations, SMEs and individuals have been mobilized to quickly and efficiently take action for the benefit of all.
- Our society is facing multiple crises that warrant a similarly assertive approach: equity, affordability, reconciliation, rebuilding the economy, pollution, congestion, climate change, mental health & addictions....
- It is suggested that the European ECOfit “sustainable management” program’s design (upon which the proposed CTR program was modeled in part) could be used to deliver on the Climate Solutions Council’s recommendation for a program to “help B.C.’s small and medium-sized enterprises adopt technologies to measure and reduce their GHGs, increasing resilience to maintain and grow jobs as well as support homegrown B.C. technology SMEs with market validation and business growth.” ECOfit has been very effective in that regard, including helping Heidelberg be awarded the UN’s *Global Green City* and *European Sustainable City* (twice).

Questions from CSC members are welcome.  
Respectfully submitted,  
Bruce Batchelor