



To: Mayor and Council

Date: June 1, 2016

From: Rob Buchan
CAO

File:

Re: **New Library Discussions**

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council choose one of the following options:

Option 1

- 1) Advise VIRL of Council's support for a new satellite branch library to be located on the Panorama site and for Sidney's aspirations for a new or expanded library branch located in the Town of Sidney, and that Council supports both projects proceeding within 24 months;
- 2) Authorize the Mayor to send a letter on behalf of Council and Sidney to VIRL expressing the Council's mutual support for both library service projects, and invite Sidney Mayor Price to co-sign the letter;
- 3) Initiate the electoral approval process to enable VIRL to borrow the funds they need for the project.
- 4) Direct staff to initiate land transfer process at Panorama by way of long term lease when that transfer is required by VIRL.

Or

Option 2

Direct staff to undertake a community survey to measure the amount of support for a satellite branch prior to making a decision on a new satellite library branch

Or

Option 3

Take no further action at this time with respect to a new library service.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS:

This matter relates to Council's strategic priorities:

No. 4 Maintain a Strong Sense of Community

No. 5 Ensure Strong Leadership, Fiscal Responsibility and Transparent Government

The provision of good library services is considered to be an important part of the strong community and the manner in which such service is provided is impacted by Council's leadership, fiscal responsibility and transparency.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

Council began a discussion about the possibility of a new, additional library service in the fall of 2014 by way of an introductory story in the municipal news-letter. The following are relevant background notes:

Overview

- a) The District of North Saanich jointly owns the library located in the Town of Sidney with Sidney, and the service is provided by the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL).
- b) The VIRL Board is composed of an Executive Committee, a municipal member from each participating municipality and regional district, and serves to guide and support the operations of all public library services in VIRL's service area.

Current Funding Arrangement

- a) The cost of the library service, including operations and facility improvements/new facilities, is shared amongst all of its members, rather than being funded directly by the local community in which the library is located.
- b) The current funding formula applies to all members of the VIRL. Members are levied annually according to the following formula:
 - a. 50% based on their share of the total population of the VIRL service area; and
 - b. 50% based on converted assessment.
- c) This funding model includes an annual increase of 2.25% for Furniture & Equipment and Facilities, which is part of the 10 year Facilities Master Plan.
- d) The current funding model and VIRL budget can accommodate new facilities without any increase to the annual requisition to cover capital improvements; however, increases in services would impact operational budgets and would result in an increase in requisition which is shared equally by all participants in the VIRL system.

2015 Budget and Funding Information

- a) In 2015 there was an increase in the budget of \$20,500, or 2.96% for the cost of the library service and a 0.24% increase for property taxes.
- b) For 2015 the cost to North Saanich for Library Services was \$712,900.

Current Facilities Agreement with Sidney

- a) Sidney and North Saanich have contributed equally to the cost of constructing a library facility on land owned by the Town of Sidney.
- b) Our facility agreement sets out how the cost of maintaining the library buildings and improvements is shared between the two municipalities.
- c) The VIRL rents the facilities from Sidney and North Saanich, and North Saanich receives 50% of these revenues.
- d) The current agreement is effective for 2012-2017. Please note that this is a rolling 5 year term agreement that can be terminated with two years notice.
- e) In 2015, North Saanich's budgeted share of the revenue was \$20,000.

Consultations:

1. In the fall of 2014 Council raised the question of a new library in the fall newsletter. This only elicited a few public responses. At this time, the Council directed staff to investigate sites for a potential new branch serving North Saanich located in North Saanich. The Panorama Recreation Centre site was selected for further investigation.
2. On May 28th, 2015, VIRL and North Saanich met with the immediate neighbourhood and with the PRC to discuss the possibility of a new library branch located on the PRC property.
3. North Saanich has had a number of discussions with the Town of Sidney regarding the possibility of a new library service in North Saanich. It has always been emphasized that this would be in addition to the current or even new library site in the Town of Sidney.
4. On January 25th, 2016, VIRL and North Saanich jointly hosted a community consultation in the municipal hall. While there were no feedback forms taken, our observation of the comments were:
 - a. There was general support for maintaining a library service in Sidney (this has always been contemplated by North Saanich and VIRL).
 - b. There was general support for enhancing library services and that this could include a smaller satellite branch in North Saanich
 - c. There was some discussion about whether any new service would best be delivered by VIRL or by changing service provider to the Greater Victoria Regional Library system.
5. North Saanich has met with the Town of Sidney to discuss the provision of Library Services. We were advised that the Town of Sidney supports North Saanich's interest in having a local branch developed in North Saanich (see attached letter from the Town of Sidney), and that the Town wishes North Saanich's support for an expanded library service in Sidney.

DISCUSSION:

At this time Council may wish to determine if it wishes to proceed with pursuing a library branch in North Saanich in addition to the existing or a future new branch in the Town of Sidney or if further discussions and consultations are required. A further but costly option for determining community support is to undertake a statistically reliable survey.

With respect to the discussion about possibly changing our library service provider to the GVRL, staff note that the capital cost of any building would fall entirely to North Saanich for a facility built in North Saanich. This would be in addition to operation costs. As a consequence this would be a more costly option at this time.

OPTIONS:

Council can:

- 1) Direct staff to advise the VIRL that Council supports a new satellite branch library to be located on the Panorama site and for Sidney's aspirations for a new or expanded library branch located in the Town of Sidney, and that Council supports both projects proceeding within 24 months, and initiative next steps; or,
- 2) Direct staff to undertake a community survey to measure the amount of support for a satellite branch prior to making a decision on a new satellite library branch located in North Saanich and co-serving North Saanich and Sidney; or,
- 3) Direct staff to undertake no further investigations or discussions on library service at this time.

If Council elects to proceed with Option 1, we would request VIRL to hold public meetings for resident input into building, siting and landscape design aspects.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Any increase in library service in North Saanich, Sidney or elsewhere in the VIRL service area will have an increase in annual financial requisitions to cover increased operational costs, but not for any capital costs.

A community survey using a survey firm could cost in the order of \$20,000.00.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

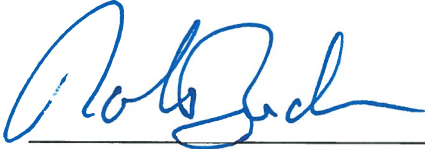
We would need to engage legal services to assist in developing the requisite agreements. There are no known legal impediments to being able to enter into these agreements.

Should Council decide to proceed with this initiative, there will need to be an electoral approval process through the CRD for VIRL to borrow the funds for the project and the District will need to undertake a leasehold subdivision of land at the panorama site and place a public notice of the disposition.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:

Staff is requesting Council's direction regarding the new library service initiative.


Respectfully submitted,



Rob Buchan
Chief Administrative Officer

Concurrence:

Theresa Flynn, Director Financial
Services



Eymond Toupin, Director Infrastructure
Services



Anne Berry, Director, Planning and
Community Services



Curt Kingsley, Director Corporate Services



TOWN OF SIDNEY

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August 10, 2015

Board of Trustees
Vancouver Island Regional Library
Box 3333
Nanaimo, BC Canada V9R 5N3

Dear Chair Bruce Jolliffe:

Subject: Town of Sidney Library Facilities

I am writing on behalf of Council of the Town of Sidney to confirm the Town's interest in working cooperatively with Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) to establish a new library facility in Sidney, either within the downtown area, or at the current site (replacing the existing facility) on Resthaven Drive.

It is important to note that future confirmation of the preferred location for a new building would be subject to the Town undergoing further consultation and engagement with the community, likely in October / November of this year. We would be pleased to work with you in developing this community consultation, but feel strongly that we have the responsibility to undertake our own process with our community.

Council recognizes the need for a significantly larger library facility to properly serve its citizens, and as such, accepts the perspective of the District of North Saanich to also pursue appropriate library facilities within their own community to meet the needs of their constituents. Council is open to the possibility that both of our communities can be accommodated. Accordingly, although Council recognizes the process and constraints associated with VIRL's funding model, they are hopeful that a commitment from VIRL regarding new library facilities can be realized within a two to three year timeframe.

Please know that the Town appreciates and values the commitment that VIRL makes to providing exceptional service and facilities to its many members. In sending this letter, it is Council's desire to provide a clear and definitive indication to VIRL of the Town's commitment to work cooperatively to achieve these same objectives for Sidney.

Finally, it is important, as we collectively move forward, to garner a better understanding of the timing of VIRL's budget and facility planning processes, as well as a step-by-step timeline for how to get a proposal before the board in a way that best fits their requirements. With this understanding, we can plan our own processes that will provide VIRL what it needs to properly consider our community's needs and wants. It would be Council's preference to achieve a level of approval that would provide us with a degree of flexibility to explore creative options for the potential relocation of our library to our downtown core, should that ultimately be the preference of our citizenship.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Price". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor Steve Price

- c. Council
Rosemary Bonanno, Executive Director



Memo

To: Rob Buchan, CAO, North Saanich
Cc: Joel Adams, Director of Finance, VIRL
Jamie Anderson, Director of Library Services & Planning, VIRL
From: Rosemary Bonanno, Executive Director
Date: April 20, 2016
Re: **North Saanich Service Location**

Let me take this opportunity to recap where we are in the process. Working collaboratively will ensure quality library services for the citizens of North Saanich and the citizens of Sidney. The District of North Saanich has offered Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) free land to build a library facility at the Panorama recreation site. A wonderful location for a library. VIRL assisted the District in conducting an "informal community conversation" in the spring of 2015. We garnered further information during the VIRL strategic planning meeting in June 2015. And in January 2016 we participated with Council and conducted a joint community consultation session focused solely on a library facility for North Saanich. Upon conclusion of the successful session you confirmed by email on February 4, 2016 you had nothing to report at that time. But would advise when appropriate.

From our perspective this is what we know and where we are in the process:

- Library in Sidney is a well-used community asset. A questionnaire conducted by Sidney Council returned results indicating that the current location was the preferred location for a library in Sidney at this time;
- With or without a standalone branch in North Saanich the existing branch in Sidney is in desperate need of maintenance and VIRL wants to proceed with the Sidney maintenance project and work with Sidney on developing a service strategy that meets their needs and expectations;
- VIRL has the financial capacity to develop and launch both projects; and
- If everything falls into place the North Saanich building project could commence within the next 24 months.

Memo

The District still needs to put in place the *alternative approval process* enabling VIRL to be a borrowing service area. The question is put to the community for a 6 week period. They determine if the project will go forward. We appreciate the letter of support sent by Sidney Council. VIRL will work with Sidney to ensure we meet community needs and expectation of their community. In fact VIRL would like to return Sidney Branch to its past glory. A preliminary examination by our Facilities Division has determined that the footprint of the Sidney branch can support expansion and additional parking without destroying the Rose Garden. But discussion for another day. VIRL wants to ensure that both communities receive quality library services.

Once again Rob, thank you for continued spirit of collaboration. We look forward to working with you in the future. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosemary Bonanno". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rosemary Bonanno BA MLS
Executive Director