

Opinions wanted on Victoria transit funding

By [Laura Lavin - Victoria News](#)

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The public has until Feb. 5 to fill out a survey at lrtlocalfunding.ca and have a chance to be selected for a focus group to help find funding options for the [Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Project](#).

A special task force has been established to investigate potential funding options for the project.

The task force will investigate alternative funding and transit incentive options that could be used to fund the local share of the capital and operating costs of a light rapid transit project that is proposed to connect Victoria to the western communities.

"We can't stand still on the transit issue," said Saanich councillor and Capital Regional District director Judy Brownoff.

"We will be at gridlock in both directions if we stop planning now. We have to try to look at opportunities for LRT and we have to have some way to pay our share."

Anticipating the cost of LRT will be shared between all levels of government, the B.C. Transit and CRD boards formed the joint task force to find funding for the local share of the projected cost of \$950 million.

"There are a whole bunch of opportunities around local funding. People have to think outside the box it's not just about property taxes," said Brownoff.

The Victoria Regional Transit System currently relies on a variety of funding sources including fares, property and fuel taxes, provincial funding and advertising. Other sources could include increases to current funding or a portion of the provincial carbon tax, additional vehicle registration fees, road tolls, special tax or fee on parking spaces and other options.

"People are saying we should target kilometres travelled, make it directly related to how much you use your car ... also employers at Mayfair Mall, for instance, have a number of people working (there) and employers could pay a fee – less than one per cent - so the employers pay the tax. They do that and they don't have to provide parking. There's a whole bunch of very interesting options," she said.

CRD staff will contact the selected focus group participants between Feb. 5 and 9.

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