



## **CAR STOPS ON HORNBY**

### **HICEEC Discussion Paper**

#### **The Concept**

At its August 2008 meeting the HICEEC Board proposed a system of car stops around Hornby at which travelers could secure rides to other locations on the Island. A similar system has been introduced on the Pender Islands.

#### **Examples**

Such systems have been introduced or considered elsewhere. They are referred to as “casual carpooling”, “dynamic ride-sharing”, “instant carpooling” or “slugging”.

##### **- USA**

In the USA “casual carpooling” has proven successful in San Francisco, Washington DC and Houston. In these cases it has been closely connected with commuting and the availability of special lanes for high occupancy vehicles (thus providing an incentive for drivers to take on riders).

##### **- Canada**

In Canada, proposals have been proposed for Qualicum Beach and UBC with the only system actually in use being one recently introduced on Pender Island. The Town of Qualicum Beach “Good Samaritan Ride Program” proposal arose after cancellation of the BC Transit bus service due to low ridership. The UBC proposal, not yet implemented, included people requiring a ride displaying standardized hand-held signs showing their destination.

##### **- Pender Islands**

The Pender Islands system involves 16 car stops around the Islands with standard road-side signs. The project has been well-advertised and uptake so far is encouraging.

#### **Market for the service**

The following could be considered as potential users:

##### **a) Commuters**

Most established programs are largely based on commuters, which is not particularly relevant on Hornby. One challenge for people depending on chance rides for getting to work would be the uncertainty of arriving on time.

##### **b) Residents not owning a car**

Many of these people already hitch-hike. An informal survey indicated that generally they experience few problems getting rides except in the winter when the population is significantly depleted by residents taking extended winter vacations. None of these people thought that established car stops are needed.

c) Seniors who do not drive

The Qualicum program was developed largely to address the needs of seniors, about 20% of whom do not drive. Safety was a concern, thus the Qualicum proposal included the need for participants to register. The need to walk from homes to car stops might be an issue for some seniors as well as the time it might take to secure a ride. Shelters at car stops may increase uptake.

4) Car-owners who may wish to reduce car use

Car stops, which do not involve actively soliciting a ride, may be used by people who would be reluctant to hitch-hike. The Pender program has shown some success in this regard. The Penders have about twice the population of Hornby and a more extensive road network.

5) Summer visitors

The large number of summer visitors could make use of a car-share program. However, the visitor exit survey indicates that most summer visitors are in groups of three or more people.

The value of car-stop program would depend upon how many seniors and car-owners would choose to use this method of travel rather than drive.

### **Legal and regulatory issues**

- Hitch-hiking

There is a statutory provision against hitch-hiking in BC. According to Section 318 of the *Motor Vehicle Act*, a person who is on a roadway to solicit a ride commits an offence. Members of the local RCMP detachment state that this law is in place to address safety considerations and note that they have reason to be concerned about safety issues with respect to hitch-hiking on Hornby. The Environmental Law Centre Clinic (ELC) at the University of Victoria suggests that the use of car stops located off the roadway would likely not be considered in contravention of this statutory provision but suggests that steps should be taken to address the safety issues that generated it..

- Insurance

In any carpool arrangement the issue of insurance coverage of participants should be addressed. Drivers should ensure that they have Third Party Liability coverage. It is also advisable that there be no payment made for rides as this could breach rate class provisions.

- Liability

The most likely exposure with respect to the liability of a car stop program is with respect to liability of injuries. This can be addressed by proper siting of car stops and ensuring that drivers are made aware of the need to carry potential insurance. An appropriate waiver can also reduce exposure to liability.

- Siting

Car stops should be sited in compliance with highway regulations and requirements. Thus the locations should be determined in consultation with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure staff. Car stops would need to be located off the travel portion of highway. Pull-offs for mail boxes are an example of possible locations.

## Safety issues

Safety issues can be addressed through a registration system involving ID cards as proposed for Qualicum beach. On the Penders, this was not considered necessary because, with a relatively small population, people were not so concerned about getting into a car with strangers. A particular concern for Hornby (as expressed by the RCMP) is the summer season when there are a large number of strangers on the island. Less formal ways of addressing safety may be through actively promoting safety guidelines or holding social events for those interested in the program so that participants can get to know each other and understand the rules of the program.

## Possible locations

Suggested "pick-up" areas	Possible car stop location	Preliminary site assessment
<b>Co-op West</b> To Hall, Galleon, Shingle Spit	Central Road North Side West of Co-op crossroads	Very challenging : no space for pull-out due to ditch
<b>Hall West</b> To Shingle Spit	Central Road North Side West of Hall parking lot	Possible space for pull-out: bike path & hall traffic to be considered
<b>Shingle Spit</b> To Hall, Galleon, Co-op	Shingle Spit Road East Side Opposite pub	Inadequate space for pull-out - ditch
<b>Hall East</b> To Co-op	Central Road South Side East of Sollans Junction	Possible space for pull-out next to sign
<b>Galleon</b> To Hall	Sollans Road West Side South of Gunpowder	Inadequate space for pull-out ditch
<b>Co-op South</b> To Sandpiper, Fords Cove	Central Road West Side South of Co-op Crossroads	Very challenging: no space for pull-out due to bike lane
<b>Sandpiper South</b> To Fords Cove	Central Road West Side Opposite Sandpiper	Space by mail boxes
<b>Fords Cove</b> To Sandpiper, Co-op	Central Road East Side Opposite dock parking	Limited space congestion
<b>Sandpiper North</b> To Co-op	Central Road East Side North of Sandpiper	Limited space
<b>Co-op North</b> To Whaling Station	St Johns Point East side North of Co-op parking lot	
<b>Whaling Station</b> To Co-op	St Johns Point North Side West of Anderson Drive	Possible space next to mail boxes

## Promotion

To encourage uptake, the program would need to be promoted through such means as articles, flyers, advertisements, posters, social events and presentations. This should include information on liability, safety, etiquette, etc.

## Financial issues

On Pender, each post with signs and fixtures cost about \$140. About 11 car stops would be required on Hornby resulting in a cost of about \$1,500. There would be additional costs for installation and site improvement where required. An amount would also need to be budgeted for promotion. The total initial cost of the Pender program was \$3,500. Funding was provided by the Capital Region District and the Lions Club.

## **Conclusions**

It seems that there would be little, if any, additional benefit in having car stops for residents people who already hitch-rely on rides.

It is uncertain whether other residents would use such a system because of low traffic volumes in winter, high occupancy of vehicles in summer, winter weather and distance from homes to car stop locations.

There would be challenges in creating pull-outs in several key locations.

There are no present funds available for such a project. About \$3,000 would be needed for a minimal program; considerably more if stops are to have shelters.

“Ride offered” signs could readily be made available for use on ferries.

Ride sharing could be supported by promoting the web site and by encouraging planning car pools to meetings (committees, boards, HIRRA, etc) and events, (Literary Lunches, etc)

## **Recommendations**

That HICEEC:

1. Not proceed with full implementation of car stops at this point.
2. Make available “ride offered” signs for use on the ferries
3. Encourage car-sharing arrangements with respect to meetings and regular events.
4. Investigate possible locations for car stops with the Ministry of Transportation
5. Explore the concept further with the community.
6. Monitor implementation of car stop services elsewhere

*Tony Law - 26 September 2008*