



# Transit Future Plan

CHILLIWACK AREA | May 2012

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



TRANSIT *future*

## Acknowledgements

This plan was made possible by participation from provincial and local government, key stakeholders and the public. BC Transit would like to thank staff from:

Fraser Valley Regional District

City of Chilliwack

District of Hope

District of Kent

Village of Harrison Hot Springs

Finally, thank you to the over 600 members of the public, riders and non-riders alike, who contributed to the plan's development by attending open houses, taking surveys, or submitting written or verbal comment.



# Executive Summary

High-quality transit service is a foundational component of managing growth and fostering sustainability within communities. Greater provision of transit service increases the range of transportation options available to the travelling public. The transit market potential within the Chilliwack Area, which includes Chilliwack, Agassiz, Harrison, Hope and the Fraser Valley Regional District areas adjacent to Chilliwack, is increasingly important to address climate change, to accommodate population and employment growth, to manage traffic and to support an aging demographic.

This plan has been created for the Chilliwack Area, which is located in the eastern portion of the Fraser Valley, focusing on Chilliwack, Kent, Harrison Hot Springs and Hope. These communities are connected by three major highways: Highway 1, which runs south of the Fraser River, Highway 7, which runs along the north side of the Fraser and Highway 9 which links Harrison in the north to Highway 1 in the south. The transit services provided in this area of the Region include local services in Chilliwack and a regional service connecting Harrison, Agassiz (Kent community centre) and Chilliwack. Today, there are no transit services to Hope.

The population for the Chilliwack Area is forecast to increase from 89,500 (according to the 2006 Census) to 159,000 by 2031. The number of registered vehicles will continue to increase with population; increasing the annual number of kilometres travelled and the level of air pollutants and greenhouse gases emitted. To help build a sustainable future in the Chilliwack Area, this plan has been designed to increase transit's mode share from one to two per cent by 2036, which means an increase from 491,000 annual rides today, to 1.9 million annual rides in 2036.

The Transit Future Plan envisions the Chilliwack Area's transit network 25 years from now and describes the services, infrastructure and investments that will be required to get there.

## Goals

The Transit Future Plan is designed to achieve five goals:

### 1. Transit is efficient and cost effective

Transit is designed to optimize the use of resources and provide better value to the residents and businesses, resulting in improved value of transit investments and increased productivity.

### 2. Transit service is designed to complement and support the diverse land use patterns and community types

The Chilliwack Area contains communities that range in size from a few hundred to over 75,000. Serving this diverse array of communities, from urban centres to rural communities requires tailored transit service that is appropriately sized.

### 3. Transit service is reliable, safe, convenient, and integrated with other transportation modes

The Chilliwack Area Transit Future Plan places a strong emphasis on the customer. This goal focuses on the best practices that make transit attractive and convenient to customers. Transit is fast and direct, safe, convenient, accessible, modern and attractive. Transit is integrated with the transportation network, especially pedestrian and cycling networks.

### 4. Improve the image and marketing of transit through excellent customer service and communication

Transit relies on its operators, marketing, customer information, and fare products for its public image. To improve the image of transit, operators are excellent customer service agents. Customer information is widely available and accessible and fare products are diverse and easily attainable.

### 5. Service contributes to environmental sustainability

Transit contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gases, promotes healthy living, and encourages and supports more walkable and compact land use patterns.

The Transit Future plan target for transit mode share is two per cent, or approximately double the current mode share for transit. This target translates to approximately 1.9 million riders.



# The Transit Future Network

The Transit Future network is comprised of three layers of transit service that together create a comprehensive transit network that meets the needs of Chilliwack and the surrounding area over the next 25 years.

## Frequent Transit Network (FTN)

Frequent Transit service provides medium to high density land use corridors with a convenient, reliable, and frequent transit service all day long (15 minutes or better, 15 hours a day, 7 days a week). The FTN will carry the largest share of the transit system's ridership. This justifies capital investments such as transit priority, right-of-way improvements, a high level of transit stop amenities, and corridor branding.

## Local Transit Network (LTN)

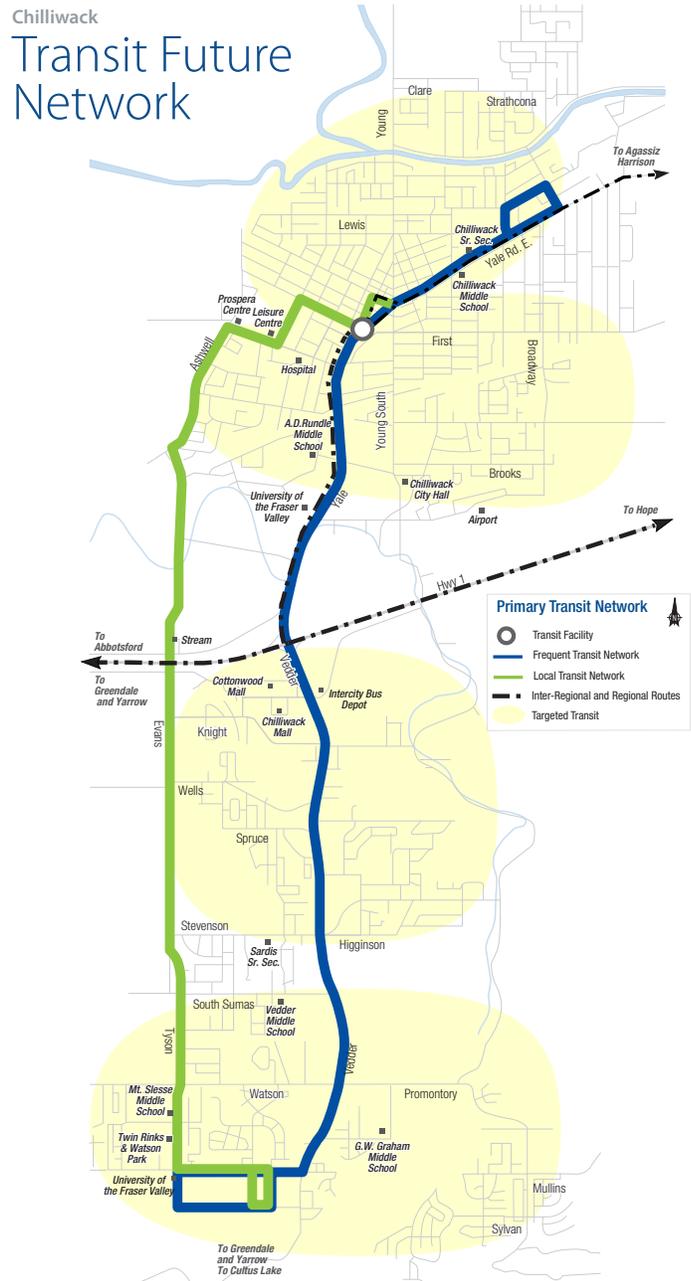
The LTN is designed to connect neighbourhoods to local destinations and to the FTN. Frequency and vehicle type are selected based on demand.

## Targeted Services

Targeted transit services are a collection of transit services that include handyDART, regional, express, and para-transit services.

In 2036, service in the Chilliwack Area will include FTN and LTN routes within the City of Chilliwack. Regional services will also connect communities in the Chilliwack Area and Chilliwack and Abbotsford. Inter-regional service will Metro Vancouver and Abbotsford and Mission. Custom transit service is also an integral part of future service provision recognizing the average age of the population is projected to increase over the next 25 years.

Establishing the Transit Future network requires prioritizing transit investments and developing an implementation strategy to transform today's network into the future network. The implementation strategy for the Chilliwack Area has three horizons: near-term, short-term, and medium to long-term.



## Near-term improvements

The near-term service improvements are planned for implementation in summer of 2012 and are focused in the Chilliwack urban area. The near-term improvements are based on a new route structure that removes most existing routes and replaces them with new, more direct and frequent routes.

### Implementation of the Yale-Vedder Line

- Establish a network spine with 20 minute frequency along Yale-Vedder, which will directly connect downtown, Sardis, and South Chilliwack

### Realignment of Local Routes

- Provide direct connections from neighbourhoods to the spine with three new routes that operate at 30 or 60 minute frequencies

## Short-term improvements

### ► *Chilliwack local service*

#### Improved Sunday Service

- Extend Sunday service hours to 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Routes 1 – 4
- Increase the frequency of Route 1- Vedder to 30 minutes on Sundays

#### Holiday Service

- Introduce transit service with the same service hours and frequencies as Sunday service on public holidays

#### Improved Local Service Frequency

- Increase Route 1 frequency to 15 minutes during weekdays and Saturdays
- Increase Route 2 frequency to 30 minutes on weekdays and Saturdays
- Increase Route 4 service to 30 minutes during peak periods on weekdays

#### Custom transit improvements to span of service

- Extend custom transit service hours to 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Saturdays, and 9:30 to 6 p.m. on Sundays
- Add an additional custom transit vehicle to provide more service during peak periods

#### Review of Downtown Chilliwack's Transit Exchange

- Consider the location, capacity, and amenities for a transit exchange that will serve Chilliwack over the next 25 years

### ► *Regional Service*

#### Establish the Abbotsford-Chilliwack Express (ACE)

- Provide Highway Express service on Highway 1 between Abbotsford and Chilliwack

#### Increased Service between Chilliwack – Agassiz - Harrison

- Provide hourly service between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Provide Sunday service year round
- Expand evening service as demand warrants

### Feasibility study for service to Hope

- Complete a feasibility study to determine the most appropriate type, level of service, timing and costs to connect Hope with the rest of the Fraser Valley.

## Medium to Long-term Priorities

### ► *Chilliwack local service*

#### Extend the Evans Line

- Realign the Evans route to provide direct service from South Sumas to downtown via Stream
- Provide 20 minute frequency on this route

#### Restructure Local Service

- Provide access to key destinations and connect directly to both north-south routes (Vedder and Evans)
- Frequency is 30 minutes or better

#### Expanding Custom Service

- Extend custom transit service hours to match conventional transit service hours
- Add additional custom transit vehicles to allow spontaneous travel during peak periods

#### Enhancing Service to Cultus Lake

- Consider year round service
- Consider adding trips in peak periods
- Consider extending the service day

#### Enhancing Service to Yarrow and Greendale

- Schedule more trips during the weekdays
- Schedule additional trips on weekends if there is an increase in demand

#### Increasing Transit Service Levels

- As demand warrants, increase service levels on the Vedder and Evans Routes until they reach the service hours and frequency identified for the FTN
- As demand warrants, increase service levels on local routes until they reach the service spans and frequencies identified for the LTN

### ► *Regional Service*

#### Increase service on the Abbotsford-Chilliwack Express (ACE)

- As ridership warrants, increase service on Highway 1 between Abbotsford and Chilliwack to 15 minute frequency during peak times and 30 minute frequency during off peak periods

#### Increased Service between Chilliwack – Agassiz - Harrison

- Provide evening service every night of the week

#### Introduce transit service to Hope

- Based on the results of the feasibility study conducted, implement a regional service connecting Hope to Chilliwack.

## Moving Forward

### Funding the Plan

To meet the mode share and ridership targets identified for the Chilliwack Area will require significant capital and operating investments in the transit system over the next 25 years. Conventional transit annual service hours are expected to increase from 21,400 hours to 86,000 hours. The plan also calls for capital investments, which include:

- Expanding the transit fleet from 9 - 36 vehicles
- New transit exchange in the City of Chilliwack
- Improvements to customer amenities at transit stops

This level of investment in transit will require stable revenue sources, increased predictability of funding, and implementing new partnerships and revenue opportunities.

### Implementing the Plan

The Implementation Strategy directs short-term to long-term investment in the Chilliwack Area and informs the three-year service planning process. This process aims to provide a closer link to local government budgeting processes in order to ensure that funding availability is better aligned with local needs and provincial funding. This is accomplished by providing three-year base budgets, and proposed service expansion cost estimates by year.

### Keys to Success

BC Transit has begun to take steps to guide the Transit Future Plan from a vision to a reality. These efforts will only be successful if done in partnership with all local governments in the Fraser Valley, the Regional District, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and the community. A continuous and open dialogue is required to ensure strong links between land use and transit planning, provincial and regional transportation planning and transit, and transportation policy and funding availability.







520 Gorge Road East, Victoria, BC V8W 2P3  
[www.bctransit.com](http://www.bctransit.com)