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**SUBJECT: 2019/20 SERVICE PRIORITIES**

**PURPOSE**

This report, summarizing transit service expansion priorities for 2019/20, is presented to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **APPROVAL**. Confirmation of service priorities will enable staff to complete detailed service planning and associated budget development.

**BACKGROUND**

As part of the annual service planning process, BC Transit works with its local government partners throughout the province to identify service priorities to inform expansion plans for the following fiscal years. This process allows BC Transit to accurately project provincial funding requirements in its provincial budget request.

At the June 19, 2018 meeting, the Commission approved an additional 20,000 hours of conventional transit service along with eight additional buses for 2019/20. This expansion aligns with the level of investment identified in the Transit Future Plan to support meeting the mode shift and ridership goals.

Through transit planning initiatives (e.g. the Transit Future Plan and Local Area Transit Plans) and feedback collected from local partners and the public, over 150,000 hours of transit service improvements have been identified. These proposed service improvements have been evaluated and ranked using a range of criteria including population served, potential ridership and impact on service reliability. Appendix A includes a summary of all of the proposed enhancements for the Victoria Regional Transit System.

To take full advantage of the 20,000 hours of expansion approved for next year, three key initiatives are recommended. These include increasing frequency and span on crosstown routes, extending late night service by one hour on Fridays and Saturdays and improving summer transit service on ferry-oriented routes.

Confirmation of service priorities will permit detailed schedule planning and operational budget development to be brought to the Commission in February 2019 for approval.

**DISCUSSION**

Crosstown service provides critical connections to areas outside of Downtown Victoria. The Transit Future Plan identified crosstown corridors as part of the Frequent Transit Network and recommended as service standard of 15-minute frequency from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. seven days a week. A number of crosstown routes do not meet this standard and are experiencing challenges in regards to on-time performance and peak capacity. Improvements are required to keep pace with increasing demand. Additional service hours will improve transit service levels and address capacity issues.

Late night service has been identified as a priority through Local Area Transit Planning activities as well as several advocacy and service associations. Although extending the existing service on Fridays and Saturdays does not require additional buses, it does require

additional resources to provide transit supervision and yard operations until the last bus returns to the yard at approximately 3:45 a.m.. Consequently, the marginal cost of this service extension is approximately two and a half times costlier than existing service. The 2,200 hours is equivalent to 6,300 hours of regular expansion hours.

The third recommended priority is additional service to ferry-oriented routes. There has been a significant increase in demand on routes servicing the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal. As a result, ferry-oriented transit routes are experiencing bus crowding and pass ups. Additional summer service on ferry oriented routes will help meet the recent increase in demand.

## Summary

Service Improvement	Description	Estimated Annual Hours
Service improvements on Frequent Transit Network crosstown routes	Schedule maintenance, on-time performance, peak capacity, service span improvements  Routes considered for improvements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 Royal Oak via Gorge / UVic via Hillside</li> <li>• 16 UVic / Uptown</li> <li>• 26 UVic / Dockyard</li> <li>• 39 Westhills / Interurban / Royal Oak / UVic</li> </ul>	13,000
Late night service	Extend late night service by 1 hour on Fridays, Saturdays and select holidays with three additional trips, the last scheduled trips leaving downtown Victoria between 2:30 AM to 3:00 AM.  Routes considered for improvements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 UVic/Downtown</li> <li>• 6 Royal Oak/Downtown</li> <li>• 14 UVic/Vic General</li> <li>• 15 Esquimalt/UVic</li> <li>• 27/28 Gordon Head/Majestic/Downtown</li> <li>• 50 Langford/ Downtown</li> </ul>	6,300
Improved summer weekend ferry service	Additional ferry trips on weekends to meet demand and address pass ups.  Routes considered for improvements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70 Swartz Bay / Downtown</li> <li>• 72 Swartz Bay / Downtown</li> </ul>	700

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Commission **APPROVE** the three transit service enhancement priorities for 2019/20, reflecting an additional annualized 20,000 hours of conventional service.

Respectfully,

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Attachment A: Service Expansion Priorities for the Victoria Regional Transit System