

Victoria Regional Transit System

2013/14 Service Review



FINAL DRAFT – February 18, 2014

Victoria Regional
Transit Commission



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1.0 Introduction

The Transit Future Plan, as endorsed by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission in May 2011, the CRD and twelve of the area's thirteen municipalities identifies steps to direct the future of transit in the region over the next 25 years. The Transit Future Plan was based on local government land use and transportation plans including the Regional Growth Strategy, Travel Choices and Official Community Plans. The Transit Future Plan identifies a transit network with a hierarchy of services including Rapid Transit, Frequent Transit, Local Transit and Targeted Transit services.

The Victoria Regional Transit Service Review is one of the components of the Transit Future Implementation Plan. Developed collaboratively with transit passengers, front line staff, key stakeholders and local government staff from June 2012 to December 2013, this Service Review recommends performance standards and transit service changes that align with the Transit Future Plan network. The main goals of these changes are to improve service to customers and the effectiveness of the transit system, particularly in order to outline ways that existing system resources may be reallocated or optimized to best serve existing and future ridership and land use patterns.

The Service Review also outlines future service expansions and infrastructure investment that will guide the development of future three-year Service and Financial Strategies.

As approved by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission in June 2012, the objectives of the Service Review were to:

- Support the implementation of the Transit Future Plan and the associated ridership targets
- Develop transit service performance standards as a framework for reviewing the performance of the existing transit system
- Identify opportunities to improve service efficiencies within the transit system
- Identify cost neutral service changes that align with the Transit Future Plan
- Review existing transit terminal facilities and identify triggers for capital improvement and expansion
- Identify areas that are currently not served or are underserved by fixed-route transit
- Identify future transit service expansions to inform three-year Service and Financial Strategies
- Identify ways to maximize transit system legibility and ridership through improved customer information, corridor branding and improved route naming and number conventions

This document presents the final results of the Service Review process. It includes an outline of the service review activities and public consultation undertaken, evaluations of existing system performance and areas not served by transit, transit service design standards that will guide future decision making and proposed service and infrastructure priorities for the next five to seven years.

Immediate “quick wins” service improvements for the system identified from the first phase of the project were implemented in September 2013.



2.0 Background

2.1 Victoria Region Transit Future Plan

By 2038, the Victoria region's estimated population is expected to grow to 453,000 with an expected 40 per cent increase in daily trips. Meeting the demands of the forecasted population and traffic growth in the Victoria region requires a shift in focus from moving vehicles to moving people.

The May 2011 Transit Future Plan envisions the Victoria region's transit network 25 years from now and describes what services, infrastructure and investments are needed to get there. The plan was designed to create a stronger link between land use and transit planning, support the key initiatives of BC Transit's Strategic Plan and support the Provincial Transit Plan.

The Transit Future Plan included a review of the existing transit services, regional and local land use plans, travel data, demographic projections and travel demand forecasts. Consultation efforts included detailed discussions with municipal partners, a stakeholder's workshop, the Transit Future bus tour, Rapid Transit open houses, a project web site and an online planning game. In total, BC Transit engaged with more than 5,000 people in the region.

The background research and community engagement resulted in the creation of a unified vision for transit and the development of a transit network designed to meet the needs of the Victoria region.

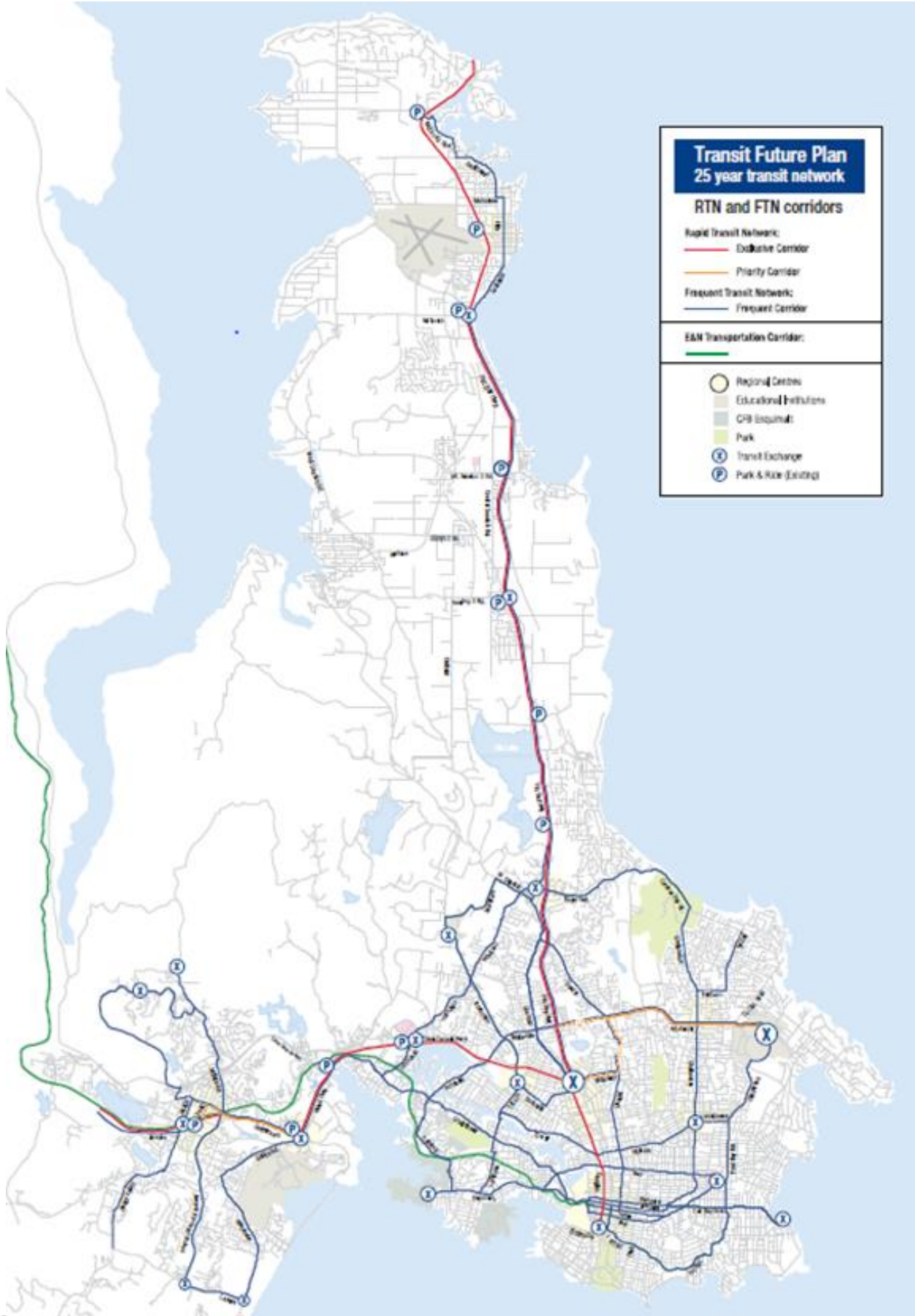
Victoria Regional Transit Future Plan (May 2011): Vision and Goals

Vision Statement

"To be a leader of integrated transportation solutions connecting people and communities to a more sustainable future"

Goals

1. Transit is an attractive alternative to the private vehicle
 - Fast and direct
 - Convenient and reliable
 - Easy to use
 - Comfortable
 - Accessible to everyone
2. The transit system reduces our impact on the environment
 - Support a sustainable urban form
 - Support a sustainable transportation network
 - Investigate new vehicle technologies
3. The transit system is efficient
 - Maximize ridership for the amount of resources used
 - Match transit services levels to demand
 - Match transit vehicles to demand



The Transit Future Network

One of the most important features of the Transit Future Plan is that it created a network for the future system comprised of four layers of transit service. This network vision and its layers are shown in the map at on the preceding page. Together the different layers of service create a comprehensive transit network to best meet the existing and future needs of the region. The service layers are designed to efficiently move people around the region facilitated by the implementation of transit priority measures.

Rapid Transit Network (RTN)

RTN services are designed to move high volumes of passengers between key nodes and along key transportation corridors with high to medium density mixed land use. Service is very frequent (at least every 15 minutes between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.) seven days a week and stops less often than traditional transit services. Investments in RTN infrastructure, technology, vehicles, and service levels greatly increase system performance. To improve travel time and reliability, RTN services utilize an exclusive (Exclusive Corridor) or semi-exclusive (Priority Corridor) right-of-way to eliminate or significantly reduce the impact of general traffic on transit vehicles. RTN services use high capacity transit vehicle technologies such as light rail vehicles and high capacity buses. Other investments required along the corridor are premium transit stations, off-board ticketing and typically corridor branding.



Frequent Transit Network (FTN)

The FTN provides medium to high density mixed land use corridors with a convenient, reliable, and frequent (at least every 15 minutes between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.) transit service seven days per week. The goal of the FTN is to allow customers to spontaneously travel without having to consult a transit schedule. The FTN will carry a large share of the transit system's total ridership and for this reason 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 RTN and FTN. LTN services allow customers to plan a trip to work, school, local shopping centres or personal trips by transit. Frequency and vehicle type are selected based on demand. In some cases, smaller transit vehicles can be utilized to better match customer demand and operating conditions to local roads.



Targeted Services

Targeted Services are a collection of transit services that do not fit into the other definitions and are more focused on the specific needs of customers. These services include:

- Interregional services that provide connections between cities
- handyDART services that provide door-to-door services for customers unable to use the conventional service
- Express service that provides a direct limited-stop route between destinations
- Rural para-transit that provides flexible transit routing in rural areas



2.2 Service Review Approach and Process

The Service Review project included a number of phases and deliverables:

- 1. Develop Performance Guidelines (Completed September 2012)** - This process developed transit service performance guidelines based on the Transit Future Plan service hierarchy to measure, monitor, and prioritize transit resource allocation. Further refined through a workshop held with the Victoria Regional Transit Commission in August 2012, the final set of guidelines was approved by the Commission in September 2012.

The guidelines will be used to guide the recommendations on transit investment and service allocation both for this service review as well as an on-going tool for monitoring transit system performance. The final guidelines are presented in Section 3.0, with the most recent results for 2013 presented in Appendix E.

- 2. Review and Analyze the Existing Transit System (Completed December 2012)** – This phase evaluated all existing transit routes against the approved performance guidelines to measure effectiveness of the service at the route level. Analysis also included reviewing ridership data at the stop level to highlight segments of bus routes where high and low ridership activity occurs. The service review also identified areas of the region that are not served or are underserved by existing transit services.

This segment of the project also reviewed the existing and anticipated future conditions at transit terminals to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate the existing and anticipated future number of buses. It also identified areas where improvements may be required to address operational issues, to improve passenger amenities, and to improve accessibility for transit users with disabilities. A summary of existing system analysis conclusions is presented in Section 4.0.

- 3. Develop Options (Completed February 2013, June 2013)** – Based on the results of the existing system performance analysis, this phase of the project developed options for service improvement. Service improvements were broken into two pieces: “Quick Wins” to be implemented in September 2013, and longer term options for implementation in September 2014 and beyond. Service options are detailed by timeframe and type in Section 5.0.

3.1 Quick Wins (Implemented September 2013) - Cost neutral service improvements were identified in and recommended for implementation prior to the completion of the service review. In addition, improvements identified as part of a concurrently held transit priority study were recommended to the Commission for roll out in 2014.

3.2 Future Transit Service Concepts (For implementation September 2014 onwards) A number of transit service concepts were developed in line with transit service performance guidelines and Service Review objectives. To support the development of the service concepts the following were also included:

- **Customer information, marketing and branding** – Undertaken as a complementing project, this component has been developing customer

information, marketing and branding requirements for the system based on the Transit Future Network service layers. Implementation of the branding project will be brought forward with options for budget approval in spring 2014. This project will provide concepts for things such as corridor branding, a new network map and a route naming and numbering.

- **Infrastructure** - Increased hours and vehicle requirements will trigger the need for improved and expanded infrastructure. The review identified the infrastructure that will be needed to support the evolution of the system, such as expanded exchange capacity, new exchange points, enhanced stops and stations and transit priority measures.
- **Service Design Standards** – To complement the Performance Guidelines (which measure how well existing services perform), the service review also developed Service Design Standards to guide future decision making. These standards set everything from the level of frequency to be provided by certain types of routes to creating spacing guidelines between stops to recommending the specific residential density thresholds that must be met for new services to be implemented.

4. Public Consultation (Completed November 2013) – A comprehensive public consultation on the proposed service review options and recommendations was conducted in Fall 2013. As described further in Appendices A-C, this consultation included open houses, workshops, surveys and an online component. Passengers, the public and frontline staff were asked to provide feedback on the proposed Service Standards and Performance Guidelines, service and infrastructure options, and preliminary service branding and mapping concepts. There were also asked to prioritize service and infrastructure options over the next 5-7 years.

5. Document Development (Completed February 2014) – Based on feedback received through the consultation phase, the service review components were refined. Preliminary results were presented to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission in December 2013. All final comments received from the Commission—as well as from presentations to front line staff undertaken in December 2013—were then combined into this final document.

2.3 Public Consultation Summary

In the fall of 2013, BC Transit conducted public consultation for the Transit Service Review to gather feedback on the proposed Service Design Standards and service change concepts. The information received was used to ensure that the Transit Service Review recommendations reflect the needs and priorities of the community.

The fall 2013 public engagement initiatives included:

- Nine public Transit Future Bus events were held across the region as well as two internal events for front line staff;
- Project information was available on the Transit Future Website along with an online survey for the public to provide input; and
- Three stakeholder workshops: one in each of the WestShore, Core Area and Saanich Peninsula.

TRANSIT FUTURE BUS TOUR

The Transit Future Bus is a mobile ‘open house’ used to engage community members to help determine service improvement priorities. On the bus, participants were able to provide feedback through discussion with BC Transit staff to help prioritize service change concepts. The Transit Future Bus was brought to nine events throughout the region and in total over 700 hundred people visited the bus at the following locations:

Consultation Numbers	
Transit Future Bus Visitors	706
Regional Workshop Participants	50
Completed Online Surveys	500



Table 1: Transit Future Bus Engagement Dates and Locations

Location	Date	Time
Downtown Victoria (Fort @ Douglas)	October 1, 2013	12:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Royal Oak Transit Exchange	October 2, 2013	7:00 am - 9:00 pm
Camosun – Interurban Campus	October 2, 2013	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Camosun – Lansdowne Campus	October 3, 2013	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
University of Victoria	October 3, 2013	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Downtown Victoria (Fort @ Douglas)	October 4, 2013	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Sidney (5 th @ Beacon)	October 4, 2013	1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Sooke (Farmer’s Market)	October 5, 2013	10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Langford (Goldstream)	October 5, 2013	2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

BC Transit hosted a series of regional stakeholder workshops in the WestShore, Core Area and Saanich Peninsula. An invitation to attend the regional workshops was sent to local municipalities, institutions, neighbourhood groups and other key stakeholders (including interested transit customers).

The purpose of the workshops was to engage people in a structured environment to provide input on the proposed service changes, customer information improvements and the Service Design Standards that will guide the development of the Victoria Regional Transit System over the next few years. The workshop was run in a café style format with four tables where specific topics were covered. Round table discussions included the following topic areas:



Round Table Discussions

- Service Design Standards and Performance Guidelines;
- Rapid Transit Network service and infrastructure improvement priorities;
- Frequent and Local Transit Network improvement priorities; and
- Service branding and customer ease of use.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESULTS SUMMARY

Table 2 highlights the key themes heard during the public engagement for the Transit Service Review. A detailed tabulation of feedback from the Transit Future Bus open houses, Public Survey Report and Regional Workshops is attached as Appendices.

Table 2: Transit Future Bus Feedback

Key Theme	Suggestions
Rapid Transit	<p>Strong support for the development of Rapid Transit Lines with service to the WestShore, Peninsula, UVic via McKenzie and related initiatives to better facilitate the movement of people throughout the region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term increases to service frequency and span of service • Implementation of an express/limited stop route to the WestShore (Route 50 with less stops) • Short term implementation of transit priority measures on Douglas, McKenzie and Island Hwy and support for the medium term implementation of transit priority on Hwy 1 and Hwy 17 • Rerouting Peninsula buses to use the Douglas bus lanes to Uptown

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Park & Ride capacity in the WestShore • The establishment of rapid transit stations on Douglas, McKenzie, Hwy 17, Island Hwy and Goldstream • Development service brands for rapid transit, improvements to the signage and maps
Frequent Transit	<p>Strong support for the development of a Frequent Transit Network and the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term priorities included a minimum of 15 minute frequency on routes 4, 14, 26, 27/ 28 and 30/31 on all service days from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm on weekdays • Meeting the minimum 15 minute frequency service standard on weekends for the following routes 4, 14, 26, 27/ 28 and 30/31 • Improvements to service at peak times to reduce passenger pass ups • A Hillside-Gorge crosstown route • An expanded UVic Transit Exchange • Transit Priority on Yates, Pandora, Johnson, Fort, Quadra and Esquimalt • Additional bus shelters at bus stops with high numbers of passenger boardings • Improvements to customer information at bus stops
Local Transit	<p>Strong support for the following Local Transit Network initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing service levels to the Camosun Interurban Campus on the 8, 21 and 39 • Support for restructuring local transit service in the WestShore to better match demand, providing service to areas without transit service, improvements with connections between the route 50 and local routes • Improvements to service at peak times to reduce passenger pass ups
Service Design Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General support for the Service Design Standards • Some concern that the minimum level of 2 hour service on local transit services is too infrequent and concerns about losing existing service on low demand routes • Discussion on what the appropriate thresholds are for introducing service to new areas and how it is prioritized with other service improvements

3.0 Service Design Standards and Performance Guidelines

As part of the on-going management of the transit network, Service Design Standards and Performance Guidelines have been developed as tools to facilitate service planning decisions and measure how the transit system is progressing towards achieving its goals.

- **Service Design Standards** define service levels, the service area and when new service should be introduced to an area.
- **Performance Guidelines** measure service effectiveness and monitor how well the transit system is progressing to achieving the vision of the Victoria Region Transit Future Plan and determine whether change is required.

These measures are meant to ensure resources are used effectively and an acceptable level of service quality is provided to the customer, and, along with the Transit Future Plan, guide planning decisions and recommendations to the Transit Commission.

Service Design Standards and Route Performance Guidelines should be reviewed periodically (every 3-5 years depending the level of community development), since they evolve as the system develops and as the needs of the community change.

Appendix E presents the application of the performance guidelines against actual system performance for the period from September to December 2013.

3.1 Service Design Standards

What they are and what they define: Service Design Standards define levels of transit service desired to meet individual community needs. Service Standards are specific to a particular transit system and the communities it serves and should reflect community values.

Service Design Standards usually define features such as:

- Service span (the hours and days of service when it operates);
- Frequency of routes or groups of routes;
- Walking distance to bus stops;
- Level of accessibility; and,
- Thresholds for the introduction of new transit service to areas beyond the walking distance of existing transit services (subdivision density, population, etc.).

Why they matter: The key benefit of Service Design Standards are that they guide local governments and BC Transit staff in determining and managing community expectations regarding the level of transit service in their community. They also provide principles for decision making regarding system design, such as whether to provide a new service or change existing service.

Victoria Regional Transit System Service Design Standards

NETWORK DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Transit service should be focused on major activity centres and residential areas within the urban containment boundary.
- Transit routes should be kept as direct and frequent as possible to be competitive with the automobile.
- Transit trips should connect local neighborhoods with their respective regional growth centres and transit trips between regional growth centres should be made with no more than one transfer.
- Transit service should connect to other transportation systems to allow passengers to conveniently connect to other modes, including cycling and pedestrian networks, regional busing, rail passenger services and custom transit (handyDART) services.
- Transit service should be operated on the arterial and collector road network and have limited operations on the local road network. Future arterial and collectors roads should be designed to accommodate transit vehicles, transit stops and transit priority measures.
- The transit network should provide coverage to at least 85 per cent (within 400 metres walking distance of a transit route) of the region's residential and employment population within the Capital Regional District's Urban Containment Boundary.

EASE OF USE PRINCIPLES

- To make the transit system easy to understand and use for all passengers, routes should be direct and straightforward, and service frequencies and schedules should be consistent on each route and during each time period, when possible.
- Customer information should be designed to be straightforward with simple route and schedule information. Transit information should be developed to communicate the layers of service identified in the Transit Future Plan; including Rapid, Frequent, Local and Targeted Transit, with specific attention to the following:
 - Strategies for route identification such as naming and numbering conventions. A simple to understand transit network map.
 - Information and branding for the Rapid Transit Network and the Frequent Transit Network, including logo/identifier, visual identity and style guide for additional livery (vehicle colour schemes or logos), print and electronic channels.
 - Identity and numbering for the Local Transit Network and Targeted Services.
- Persons with mobility and cognitive disabilities should be provided with a range of transit options, including handyDART service, taxi programs, and fully accessible transit vehicles and bus-stop infrastructure.

INTRODUCING NEW SERVICE

The following guidelines have been identified to determine when it may be feasible to introduce new transit service into residential, industrial, commercial and recreational developments. The following conditions should be met:

- The development area considered for potential transit service is within the Capital Regional District's urban containment boundary.
- Minimum density of ten residents per hectare or ten jobs per hectare measured over a minimum developed area of ten hectares (i.e. suburban development of single family homes).
- Road and pedestrian access that provides for safe access and efficient operation of transit service.

TYPES OF TRANSIT SERVICE

Table 1, describes a hierarchy of transit services that will support implementation of the long - term transit strategy and satisfy various market segments, including existing transit rider and potential transit riders.

Table 1: Types of Transit Service

Type	Service Description	Example
Rapid Transit Network	Rapid Transit routes are designed to move large volumes of passengers between major destinations with very frequent service and a limited number of transit stops or stations.	70x Swartz Bay/Downtown
Frequent Transit Network	Frequent routes that operate at a minimum 15 minute frequency over a specific span of service. Routes generally operate on arterial roads, serve corridors with mixed land use and provide connections between urban centres	4 UVic/Hillside/Downtown
High Demand Local Transit Network	Local routes generally serve less densely populated suburban areas with a focus on connections to local centres and to rapid and frequent transit routes	21 Interurban/Downtown
Coverage Based Local Transit Network	Local routes generally serve less densely populated suburban and rural areas with a focus on connections to local centres and to rapid and frequent transit routes	32 Cordova Bay
Targeted Transit	Targeted routes are created to provide service to specific areas such as schools, universities and/or peak commuter trips	School focused trips: 29 UVic Commuter trips: 52x Colwood/Downtown
Custom Transit	Demand responsive service for people with disabilities who cannot use the regular conventional transit system some or all of the time	handyDART

SERVICE FREQUENCY AND SPAN OF SERVICE

Service frequency defines the minimum frequency at which a route operates, subject to meeting the Performance Guidelines. Investments to increase service levels will be considered to strategically develop the network or when route performance indicates the route is performing 25 per cent above the target for the routes class.

Span of service defines the operating hours for each service type, as described in *Table 2*. Extension to the span of service shall be considered when the first and last hour of service has productivity greater than the average productivity on the route.

Table 2 Transit Frequency and Span of Service

Type	Minimum Service Frequency				Latest Arrival Time of First Transit Trip in Morning	Evening Service (Last Trip Leaving Route Terminus Outbound) Should be Provided at Least Until
	Day Type	Peak	Off-Peak (midday/evening)	Hours of Operation of Minimum Service Frequency		
Rapid Transit Network	Weekday	15	15	7:00am to 10:00pm	7:00am	Midnight
	Saturday	15	15	7:00am to 10:00pm	7:00am	Midnight
	Sunday	15	15	7:00am to 10:00pm	7:00am	Midnight
	With additional frequency based on demand					
Frequent Transit Network	Weekday	15	15	7:00am to 10:00pm	7:00am	Midnight
	Saturday	15	15	7:00am to 10:00pm	7:00am	Midnight
	Sunday	15	15	7:00am to 10:00pm	7:00am	11:00pm
	With additional frequency based on demand					
High Demand Local Transit Network	Weekday	30	60	7:00am to 7:00pm	7:00am	7:00pm
	Saturday	30	60	7:00am to 7:00pm	7:00am	7:00pm
	Sunday	60	60	7:00am to 7:00pm	7:00am	7:00pm
	With additional frequency based on demand					
Coverage Based Local Transit Network	Weekday	120		7:00am to 6:00pm	7:00am	7:00pm
	Saturday	120		8:00am to 6:00pm	8:00am	6:00pm
	Sunday	120		9:00am to 6:00pm	9:00am	5:00pm
	With additional frequency based on demand					With additional service depending on demand
Targeted Transit	Will vary depending on service required and market served					
Custom Transit	Weekday	N/A		7:00am to 10:00am		10:00pm (Midnight on Fridays)
	Saturday	N/A		8:00am to 10:00pm		Midnight
	Sunday	N/A		8:00am to 10:00pm		10:00pm

VEHICLE TYPE CLASSIFICATION

Table 3 describes the vehicle type's attributes such as capacity and length, as well as the operating guidelines such as life span, and maximum annual hours of operation and kilometres.

Table 3: Vehicle Type Attributes

High Capacity	Heavy Duty
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Floor/ accessible • Minimum of 2 wheelchair positions • 13 - 20 year lifespan • 35 or more seats, 95 passengers with standees • Double deck or articulated • 40 feet or greater in length • 2,500 maximum annual operating hours • 75,000 maximum annual kms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low floor/ accessible • Minimum of 2 wheelchair positions • 13 – 15 year lifespan • 30 or more seats, 70 passengers with standees • 35 feet or greater in length • 2,500 maximum annual operating hours • 75,000 maximum annual kms
Medium Duty	Light Duty
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low floor / accessible • Minimum of 1 wheelchair position • 8 – 10 year lifespan • Fewer than 25 seats, 40 passengers with standees • Less than 35 feet in length • 2,500 maximum annual operating hours • 75,000 maximum annual kms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low floor / accessible • Capable of having more than 2 wheelchair positions • 5 year lifespan • Up to 20 seats, No standees • Less than 35 feet in length • 2,000 maximum annual operating hours • 60,000 maximum annual kms (300,000km life)

VEHICLE TYPE BY SERVICE LAYER

Vehicle type is driven by passenger loads during the peak hour of the relevant operating period. On routes where bus capacity is exceeded, consideration should be given to operating buses with additional capacity or with increased service frequency. On routes where a small bus would accommodate passenger loads at peak times, consideration should be given to operating a smaller bus (light duty bus) and maintaining existing frequency. A typical approach is to allow standing passengers during peak periods (optimally for shorter runs) but to provide sufficient capacity for seated passengers during the off-peak hours. *Table 4* describes the vehicle types associated with the Transit Future layers of service.

Table 4: Vehicle Type by Service Layer

Service	Medium to Long-term
Rapid Transit	High capacity vehicle bus or rail
Frequent Transit	Heavy duty or high capacity vehicle
Local Transit	Heavy, medium or light duty vehicle
Targeted Transit	Heavy, medium or light duty vehicle
Custom Transit	Light duty vehicle

TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Design principles for transit facilities should conform to the BC Transit infrastructure and design guidelines (www.transitbc.com/corporate/resources/pdf/res-urban-21.pdf), as well as the federal guidelines for transportation and transit infrastructure.

Transit Stops

Transit stops and facilities for waiting passengers should include a hard surface landing/waiting area and be universally accessible. They should also include on-street passenger amenities such as, benches, shelters, lighting, waste receptacles, and route/schedule information.

- Direct pedestrian and cycling connections should be provided to bus stops via sidewalks, pathways and crosswalks, with curb ramps and barrier-free access.
- Bus stops should be located on the far side of crosswalks, or at least 20 metres in advance of a crosswalk.
- Buses may stop in the traffic lane (with a bus bulge where on-street parking is provided) and bay if the posted speed limit is greater than 50km/hr at curbside out of the traffic lane, or in a dedicated bus pullout.
- Adequate sight distances should be achieved for motorists approaching the bus stop as well as transit passengers crossing the road from the bus stop.

Passenger amenities at transit stops can enhance the quality of service for customers and can also have a significant impact on attracting new users. *Table 5* describes what transit stop amenities should be associated with each type of service.

Table 5: Transit Service Type and Associated Stop Amenities

Service	Amenities
Rapid Transit & Transit Exchanges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premium transit shelters • An elevated boarding platform • Off-board fare payment • Real time schedule information • Bike storage • Customer wayfinding information • Universally accessible • May include Park & Ride facilities
Frequent Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit shelters • Bike storage • Quality customer information (such as transit schedule and map information) • Universally accessible • May include Park & Ride facilities
Local Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit Shelter • Universally accessible • Bench
Targeted Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit Shelter • Universally accessible • Bench
Custom Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not required

STOP INTERVALS

Transit stops should be spaced along a corridor based on the type of transit service. Transit stops that are spaced too close together lead to slower transit trips and higher transit stop maintenance costs while transit stops that are too far apart limit passenger access to the system. Therefore consideration should be given to balancing passenger needs and service efficiency, as well as the market and nature of the destination served. Outside the urbanized area, bus stops should be limited to major destinations, connection points, points of interest, and residential concentrations. Select types of service will have different spacing intervals. See *Table 6* for the appropriate standard for each service type

Table 6: Service Type and Appropriate Stop Intervals

Service	Stop Interval
Rapid Transit	Limited stops at key locations. Stops are typically spaced 800m to 2km apart
Frequent Transit	Frequent stops along a corridor, 300m - 500m apart
Local Transit	Frequent stops along a corridor, 250m - 300m apart
Targeted Transit	Varies depending on service
Custom Transit	Not applicable

TRANSIT PRIORITY MEASURES

Transit priority is a term used to refer to a variety of physical and operational improvements designed to give transit vehicles and their passengers priority over general vehicle traffic. Transit priority measures can be:

- Regulatory, such as “Yield to the Bus” regulations and signage;
- Operational, such as retiming traffic signals to respect the large number of passengers on transit vehicles compared to private vehicles; and
- Physical, such as exclusive transit ways, intersection queue-jumpers, bus bulges, and transit signal priority measures.

Table 7: Transit Priority Measures



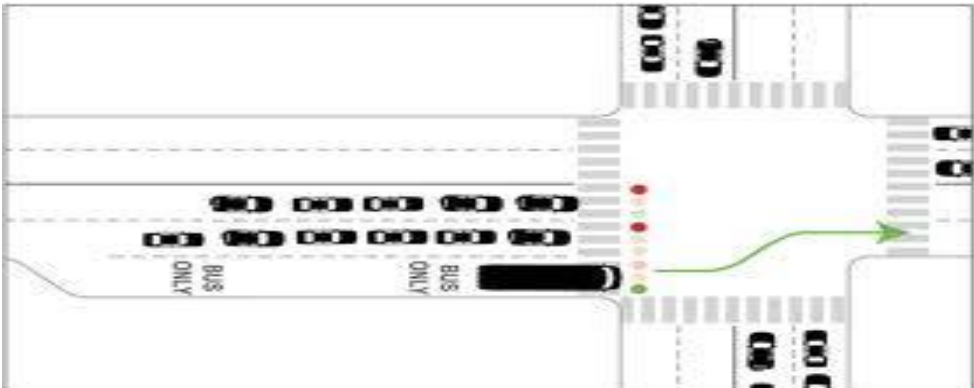
Signal Priority Measures	Lane Priority Measures
 <p>Transit is given signal priority along the corridor at the majority of intersections</p>	 <p>Bus only lanes for part or all of the route corridor, or bus queue-jumper lanes at key areas of congestion</p>
<p>Queue-jumper lanes at key areas of congestion</p>	
	

Table 8: Transit Service Type and Transit Priority Measures

Service	Priority	Existing	Long-term
Rapid Transit	Signal	Limited	Transit is given signal priority along the full corridor at intersections
	Lane	Limited	Transit only lanes in areas of congestion or when the number of buses exceeds 25 buses per hour along a corridor Bus queue-jumper lanes at key areas of congestion
Frequent Transit	Signal	None	Transit signals are optimized to benefit transit Transit is given signal priority in areas of congestion or when the number of buses exceeds 25 buses per hour along a corridor
	Lane	None	Queue-jumper lanes at key areas of congestion
Local Transit	Signal	None	Transit signals are optimized to benefit transit Transit is given signal priority at key delay points
	Lane	None	Not required
Targeted Transit	Signal	None	Not required
	Lane	None	Not required
Custom Transit	None	None	Not required

TRANSIT EXCHANGES AND PARK & RIDES

Transit exchanges are typically located within the activity centres of the community, such as the downtown, village centres, and shopping malls, in order to reinforce the relationship with land use patterns. If properly planned and designed, transit exchanges can become effective multi-modal exchanges and pedestrian-oriented sites. Transit exchanges should provide weather protection; seating, transit route and schedule information, lighting, bicycle parking and other amenities as shown in the passenger amenities for stops (see Table 5).

Park & Rides should be located in suburban and semi-rural areas to provide residents who live in areas with no transit service or poor transit service an access point to higher quality transit services. Below are the basic functional requirements for transit exchanges and Park & Ride facilities:

Site location requirements

- Sites with no significant safety concerns, which provide for direct and safe pedestrian access, and which minimize the interaction between buses and general traffic on adjacent roads;
- Sites that can be accessed safely and efficiently, avoiding traffic congestion and bus queuing;
- Sites that provide high visibility to pedestrians, motorists and others, minimizing personal safety concerns for transit passengers using the terminals in evenings and at other off-peak times; and,
- The sites must be located to minimize additional routing and costs.

Physical design requirements

- All platforms should accommodate standard 12 metre buses, including double-decker buses in the future;
- All Rapid Transit stops and select exchange platforms should be designed for articulated buses.
- Buses must be able to arrive and depart from platforms independently.
- Passenger facilities should include:
 - Passenger amenities, including weather protection, seating, illumination, and bicycle storage;
 - Accessibility to all areas of the terminal for persons with disabilities; and,
 - Wayfinding signage and information.
- Transit terminals should also incorporate operator facilities such as washrooms.
- Park & Ride sites should include parking for automobiles, bicycles and bus stops for transit access.

3.2 Performance Guidelines

What they are and what they define: Performance Guidelines define numerical thresholds and targets for a particular system and its routes and services.

Why they matter: Working in tandem with Service Design Standards, Performance Guidelines are tools that evaluate existing services, identify trends in performance and, based on this evidence, determine how service and supporting features (fares, marketing, facilities, etc.) should be adjusted to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the system to optimize resources.

For a service to be efficient and productive, a balance should be achieved between oversupply and overcrowding. A number of measures can establish this equilibrium such as:

- Implement transit priority
- Change service span
- Alter frequency
- Change bus stop spacing
- Reduce/increase coverage
- Bus route changes
- Targeted marketing/Corridor branding
- Vehicle type allocation



When performance falls below the set guidelines, recommendations to the Commission will focus on the utilization of the above tools to maximize efficiency.

Appendix E presents the application of the performance guidelines against actual system performance for the period from September to December 2013.

Performance Measures

Performance measures have been chosen that evaluate the effectiveness of service planning investments on a system and route level.

System level: The measure used for the system guidelines is:

Average boardings per revenue hour - Measures the total volume of ridership as compared to the supply of transit service.

Cost per passenger trip – Measures the average cost to provide service per passenger trip.

Cost recovery – A measure of the financial performance of the transit system usually expressed in terms of total operating revenue/total operating expenses.

Passengers trips per capita – Measures the ratio between transit trips and the population of the service area.

Route level: The measures used for the route level guidelines are:

Average boardings per revenue hour - Measures the total volume of ridership as compared to the supply of transit service.

Average boardings per trip - Measures the total number of people that board a vehicle on a specific trip.

Route level performance guidelines have been classified into four categories (rapid transit, frequent transit, local transit and targeted transit) to acknowledge different performance expectations based on a route’s objective.

Performance Targets

Table 9 and 10 outline the performance targets set for the system and route level. As well as monitoring existing performance against these guidelines, historical trends will also be monitored to determine if the system or routes are becoming more or less efficient over time. Significant variance (+/ – 25 per cent) from the target will place a route on an action list for further investigation and will require more detailed analysis. Routes that fall below the 25 per cent variance will be candidates for corrective adjustments and routes that fall above the 25 per cent variance will be candidates for service improvements. BC Transit will report on an annual basis how the system and routes are performing and this will help guide planning decisions.

SYSTEM LEVEL

The purpose of monitoring system wide performance is to identify trends in system performance and compare the performance of the transit system with other peer transit systems. These measures are designed to monitor the pulse of the Victoria Regional Transit System as a whole and guide service planning decisions. This can be particularly useful when identifying system wide impacts of major investments in the transit network such as, development of the rapid and frequent transit networks.

Table 9: System Level Performance Guidelines

System	Measure
Boardings per revenue hour	50
Cost per passenger trip	4.5
Cost recovery	30%
Passengers trips per capita	65

ROUTE LEVEL

Analysis on a route-by-route basis gives a detailed indication of how individual components of the transit system are performing. A route-by-route analysis allows observations of the impact of service changes and investments made in the past and identifies future opportunities for strategic investment or re-investment.

Table 10: Route Level Performance Guidelines

	Boardings per Trip	Boardings per Revenue Hour
Rapid Transit	40	55
Frequent Transit	40	55
Local Transit (High Demand)	25	40
Local Transit (Coverage)	10	20
Targeted Transit	40	60
Community Coverage*	-	5

**There are no existing routes categorized as community coverage routes but through route performance monitoring over time some existing routes may not meet the targets for local transit and may be reclassified as Community Coverage Routes. It is recognized that some community routes may provide a distinct social benefit to a localized community and consideration will be given to the demographics and underlying reason for the routes existence prior to any recommendations for service adjustments (If ridership falls below 5 boardings per revenue hours there is no greenhouse gas benefit from providing the route).*

4.0 Existing Service Analysis: Key Conclusions

The Service Review evaluated all existing transit routes against the approved performance guidelines to measure effectiveness of the service at the route level. Analysis also included reviewing ridership data at the stop level to highlight segments of bus routes where high and low ridership activity occurs. The service review also identified areas of the region that are not served or are underserved by existing transit services, future infrastructure requirements and changes that could be made to improve the operation and accessibility of the system.

This section summarizes the key findings from this analysis. These overall conclusions—as well as detailed findings at the route level—in turn shaped the service and infrastructure options presented in Section 5.0.

4.1 Overall Service and Infrastructure Conclusions

When examining the overall existing performance of the Victoria Regional Transit System, the service review concluded the following:

Service

- Service is well utilized at peak times
- Several routes have passenger pass-ups at peak times and a few routes experience pass-ups throughout the day
- Some major routes do not meet the performance standard especially in the evenings
- Congestion is impacting the effectiveness of the system
- Some neighborhoods are not served by transit (See section 4.2)
- There is some opportunity to reallocate minor route resources (community bus) in the WestShore and Peninsula to serve areas without transit service

Infrastructure

- Park & Ride capacity is needed in the WestShore
- Transit customers are parking at Commonwealth Recreation Centre
- Some terminals are at bus capacity and need to be expanded at peak times, in particular:
 - UVic Exchange
 - Legislature Terminal

4.2 Route and Ridership Conclusions

On weekday morning and afternoon peak travel times 222 buses are in service. This is 100 per cent of the available fleet, meaning that all transit assets are fully utilized. Conversely, it also means that system reliability can be a challenge if there are issues that arise with vehicle maintenance schedules.

During the peak hours there are 9,000 to 10,000 boardings per hour in the transit system, meaning that buses are relatively full at peak travel times. When looking at the performance of specific routes and segments of routes by their identified route classes, the following conclusions emerge:

- Most of the routes in the rapid and frequent route classes meet or exceed performance targets during peak travel times and midday
- Most of the routes in the major route class meet performance targets during the evening
- The following routes perform below the local route performance targets throughout the day
 - 1 Richardson
 - 2 Oak Bay
 - 10 Bay Street
 - 24 Cedar Hill
- The following routes fell below the local route performance targets in the evening
 - 3 Gonzales
 - 21 Interurban
 - 25 Maplewood
 - 75 Saanichton
- Several routes experience passenger pass-ups at peak times
 - The majority of passenger pass-ups occur on the following routes:
 - 4 UVic
 - 7 UVic
 - 14 UVic
 - 26 UVic
 - 27/28 Gordon Head /Majestic
 - 39 UVic/Royal Roads
 - 50 WestShore
 - A few of the major routes to UVic “pass-up” throughout the day
- If transit priority treatments such as bus only or bus-on-shoulder lanes are implemented on Hwy 1 and Douglas St there will likely be significant increases in ridership to/from the WestShore, potentially a 15 per cent to 25 per cent increase.

4.3 Transit Service Coverage

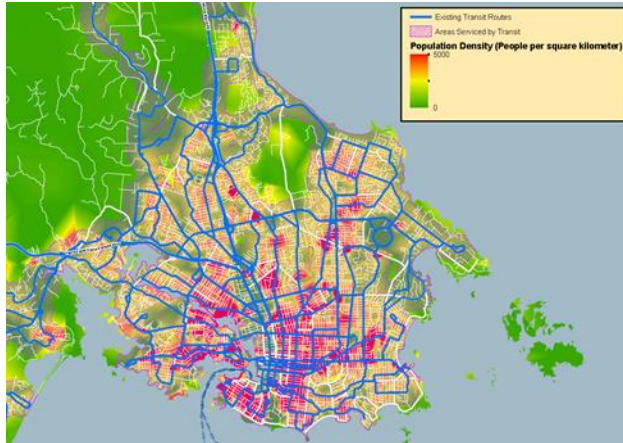
The service review also examined area population within the context of the existing transit service to determine those areas that were underserved by transit. The following maps present the population densities and existing transit system coverage in the core area (roughly the area encompassing the municipalities of Victoria, Oak Bay, Saanich, Esquimalt and View Royal), the WestShore, Sooke area, and the Saanich Peninsula. In each case, a 400 metre “buffer” (indicating the typical walk limit for transit of a 5-10 minute walk) was applied against each route to determine its level of coverage.

Based on the analysis of existing coverage, the following key conclusions are drawn:

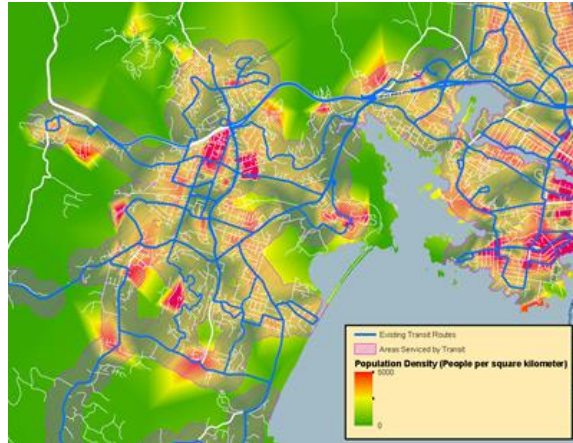
- The majority of urban and suburban neighborhoods in the core area are within walking distance of transit (400m)
- Some areas of Cordova Bay Ridge are beyond walking distance to transit
- WestShore areas beyond walking distance to transit include:
 - Bear Mountain
 - Westhills
 - Kettle Creek
- Within the Sooke area, some parts of Sun River are beyond walking distance to transit

- On the Saanich Peninsula, the main residential area outside the existing walk limits to transit is Deak Park.

Greater Victoria



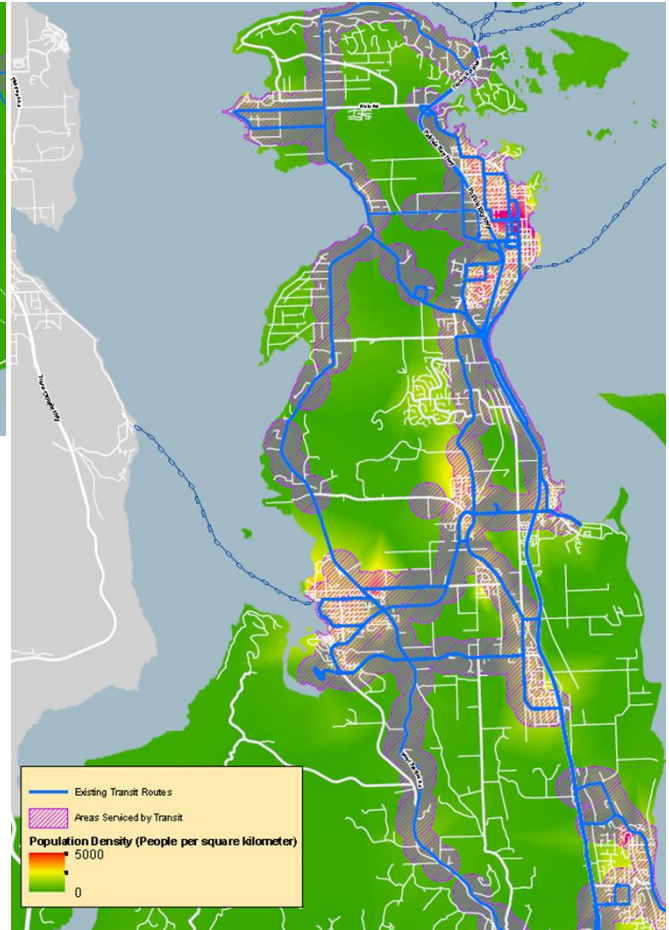
WestShore



Sooke



Saanich Peninsula



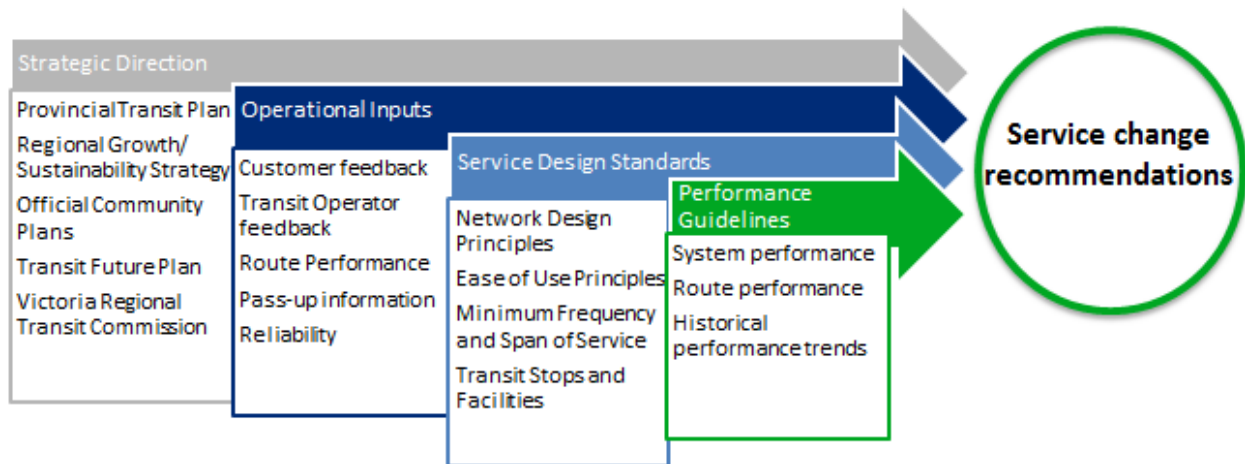
5.0 Recommended Service Improvement Options

Based on service design guidelines, analysis of the existing system and public consultation feedback received in Fall 2013, the service review has developed a number of service and infrastructure improvement options. These options and their suggested placement in priority timeframes are presented in the following pages. A number of “quick wins” were implemented in the fall of 2013 including:

- Service increases to bus routes with high demand
- Conversion of low performing conventional routes to community bus
- Conversion of high performing community bus routes to conventional bus
- Additional service from the WestShore to Dockyard
- Direct service to Royal Roads
- Improved routing efficiency at UVic
- Improved service coverage to the Shoal Assisted Living Home in Sidney

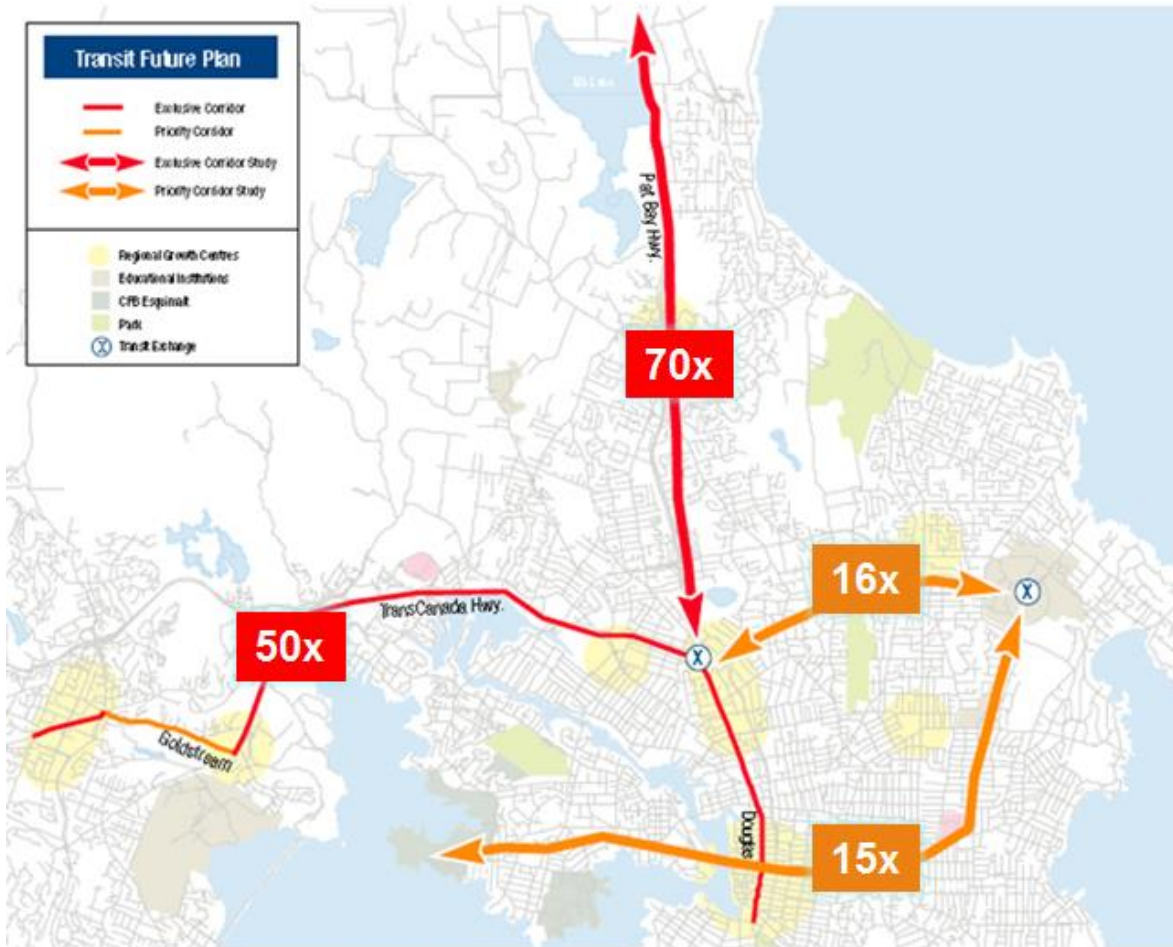
The service improvement options were developed through an integrated planning approach as described in Figure 1 below and were prioritized with input received from the public. This approach will be used annually to ensure the continued efficiency and effectiveness of the transit system.

Figure 1: Integrated Planning Approach



The Transit Future Plan identifies a future transit network with a hierarchy of transit services. The Service Review recommends transit service changes that align with the development of a Rapid and Frequent Transit Network (Maps 1 and 2).

Map 1: Rapid Transit Network



Map 2: Frequent Transit Network



Based on this integrated planning approach and recent public feedback, the draft service review recommendations are summarized in the tables below. The recommendations are categorized by service type; Rapid Transit, Frequent Transit and Local Transit, including some system wide initiatives in a separate table. Each service layer table displays service, infrastructure, and customer information recommendations. Some recommendations will require further planning and consultation in the year they are scheduled for implementation.

The recommendations in tables 11-14 are further categorised by the year they are proposed to occur from 2014 to 2016, as well as some medium term initiatives. Recommendations that are identified as medium term are slated to occur in the next 4-7 years and the implementation date will be further refined in the future as progress is made on the shorter term recommendations. More detailed information on recommendations for the upcoming 2014/15 year is available in Appendix D. The detailed 2014 recommendations will be used to guide the development of the 2014/15 Annual Service Plan.

Tables 11 – 12: Summary of Rapid Transit and Frequent Transit Network Proposed Priorities by Year

Rapid Transit Network (RTN)

	2014	2015	2016	Medium-Term
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop key RTN corridors 16x, 50x, 70x and introduce/expand service on weekdays Consider extending the future 15x Rapid Line to Esquimalt Introduce limited stop service on the 50x between Langford and Downtown <p><i>*See Appendix 3 for more detailed information on proposed 2014 service changes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve service levels on RTN, particularly during evenings on routes 16x Shift Peninsula Rapid Line service to Douglas north of Hillside with implementation of Phase 2 bus lanes 15x Crosstown Rapid Line alignment study to confirm routing between UVic & Downtown Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop RTN corridors 15x and introduce/expand service on weekdays Improve service levels on entire RTN on weekends Uptown Service Plan - Conduct- A service plan will need to be developed to align with development of an exchange at Uptown to integrate local & frequent buses with Rapid lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve service levels and expand service hours to meet the RTN Service Standards
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Phase 1 of Douglas Street Bus Lanes Identify Rapid Transit Stations locations for service between Langford Exchange and Downtown Identify future curb space for bus recovery in the Legislative Precinct to support service increases Develop Rapid Transit Stations along RTN corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Douglas Street Bus Lanes Phase 2 15x Crosstown Rapid Line alignment study to identify opportunities for transit priority & rapid transit stations Implement Transit Priority Measures on Island Highway Corridor Increase Park & Ride capacity on the Westshore Develop Rapid Transit Stations along RTN corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Transit Priority Measure on McKenzie Implement Transit Priority Measures on Highway 1 and Highway 17 Establish Uptown Exchange Develop Rapid Transit Stations along RTN corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop Rapid Transit Stations along RTN corridors Increase Park & Ride capacity on the Peninsula
Customer Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and name Rapid Transit routes Improve online communication Improve route/network maps and Rider's Guide communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to update on-street signage (key destinations, Douglas St) and wayfinding and schedule information to identify RTN and FTN services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve on-street signage and wayfinding and schedule information to identify RTN and FTN services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce on-street real-time information at the RTN Transit Stations

Frequent Transit Network (FTN)

	2014	2015	2016	Medium-Term
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve service levels on weekdays to meet FTN Service Standards on routes 4, 6, 11, 14, 27/28, 30/31 <p><i>*See Appendix 3 for more detailed information on proposed 2014 service changes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve service levels on weekdays to meet FTN Service Standards on routes 4, 6, 11, 14, 27/28, 30/31 Introduce Gorge-Hillside Crosstown Route Restructure Route 6 service Expand late night service on Fridays and Saturdays on select routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve service levels on weekends to meet FTN Service Standards on routes 4, 6, 11, 14, 27/28, 30/31 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the FTN to include Fairfield, Millstream & Royal Oak Continue to improve service levels to meet FTN Service Standards
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of the UVic Transit Exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See System Wide Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See System Wide Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit Priority Measures on Shelbourne, Quadra, the downtown couplets Goldstream and Craigflower
Customer Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce FTN brand and associated map changes Improve online communication Improve route/network maps and Rider's Guide communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to update on-street signage (key destinations, Douglas St) and wayfinding and schedule information to identify RTN and FTN services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to improve on-street signage and wayfinding and schedule information to identify RTN and FTN services 	

Tables 13-14: Summary of Local Transit Network and System-Wide Proposed Priorities by Year

Local Transit Network - High demand & Coverage Based (LTN)

	2014	2015	2016	Medium-Term
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase frequency of service to Camosun Interurban routes, 8, 21 & 39 • Westshore Service Plan, Phase 1 - Conduct & Implement - Undertake the re-alignment of current resources and the introduction of service to new areas including Bear Mountain and Westhills • Adjust services levels to better meet the LTN Service Standards, re-allocate resources to match service to demand and improve consistency between services • Review opportunities to convert low-performing off-peak service to community bus including routes 24 & 25 <i>*See Appendix 3 for more detailed information on proposed 2014 service changes</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westshore Service Plan, Phase 2 - Implement Phase 2 recommendations to serve new Westshore Secondary Schools, increase service levels, consistency of 61 routing, and service to Dockyard • Tillicum-Burnside Service Plan - Conduct & Implement - Restructure routes to improve service to Burnside & Camosun Interurban • James Bay Service Plan - Conduct & Implement - Restructure service to improve consistency, better match demand & improve connections to secondary schools • Adjust services levels to better meet the LTN Service Standards, re-allocate resources to match service to demand and improve consistency between services • Review opportunities to convert low-performing off-peak service to community bus including routes 2 & 21 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sooke Service Plan - Conduct & Implement - Review local services to improve service coverage • Jubilee Service Plan - Conduct & Implement - Restructure Oak Bay services to connect at the Jubilee Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esquimalt Service Plan Conduct & Implement - Restructure 24 & 25 to improve connections to Esquimalt's Town Centre, improve connections between the Dockyard & Westshore • Peninsula Service Plan Conduct & Implement - Review services and improve integration between local bus services and Rapid Transit Lines • Establish new crosstown routes on McKenzie-Admirals & Cedar Hill X Rd • Continue to optimize resources by matching service levels and vehicle type to demand. There are approximately 70,000 conventional service hours that can be converted to community bus service over the next 5-7 years. The timing of the conversion of conventional service hours to community service hours will take into consideration labour agreements, ridership, fleet and operating facility constraints
Infrastructure		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See System Wide Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand terminal capacity at the Jubilee Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review location of Sooke Transit Terminal to ensure alignment with Town Centre development
Customer Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve online communication • Improve route/network maps and Rider's Guide communication 			

System Wide

	2014	2015	2016	Medium-Term
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve service reliability and address overcrowding on busy routes <i>*See Appendix 3 for more detailed information on proposed 2014 service changes</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve service reliability and address overcrowding on busy routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve service reliability and address overcrowding on busy routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve service levels and expand service hours to meet demand
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local municipalities to improve bus stop accessibility and amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local municipalities to improve bus stop accessibility and amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local municipalities to improve bus stop accessibility and amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open third conventional operating facility in service • Work with local municipalities to improve bus stop accessibility and amenities
Customer Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve online communication • Improve route/network maps and Rider's Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to update on-street signage (key destinations, Douglas St) and wayfinding and schedule information to identify RTN and FTN services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve on-street signage and wayfinding and schedule information to identify RTN and FTN services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce on-street real-time information at the RTN Transit Stations

6.0 Ongoing Monitoring, Consultation and Implementation

The Victoria Regional Transit System determines its upcoming resources and expansions through the approval of an Annual Service Plan and a Three Year Service Plan by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission each year. The options in this Service Review are proposed to guide the evolution of the transit system and the development of those subsequent documents over the next 5-7 years.

However, it must be emphasized that municipal funding capacity and provincial funding availability will determine the pace of future transit system growth. Similarly, emerging needs, issues and opportunities will also shape the prioritization and implementation of the various service and infrastructure options.

Using the integrated planning approach presented in section 5.0, it is proposed that the following activities take place on an annual basis to ensure that existing resources are used prudently and that any additional resources are directed to the system in a way that they will achieve maximum gain. These activities are in line with those proposed in the Transit Future Plan.

Activities to Support Annual Service Plan Development:

- An annual ridership performance review of the transit system and route
- Monitoring and reviewing transit operations data, passenger and operator comments
- The Three Service and Financial Strategy
- Local area service planning initiatives

7.0 Funding Transit Improvements

Growth in transit service is a priority of the region's economic development and transportation strategies. Recent public consultation conducted by BC Transit on initiatives to improve transit in the region has confirmed a strong interest from the public in moving forward with investments to improve transit service.

Presently, the Victoria Region pays for the share of transit not covered by provincial funding through four streams: passenger fares, property taxes, local fuel tax and advertising and other revenues. However, without significant new streams of funding, future transit service increases will be limited due to the need for capital investments to support expanded service. Up to \$125 Million in additional capital expenditure is necessary over the next 5 years to upgrade transit exchanges, fleet, and operating centers.

Property tax funding cannot reasonably accommodate the increases necessary for capital and service growth. The *BC Transit Act* allows for the Commission to seek funding from property tax, passenger and ancillary revenue, and a motor fuel tax. The Victoria Regional Transit System presently receives 3.5 cents per litre tax on fuel sold in the service area. This tax generates approximately \$11.7M annually to help cover the local share of transit expenses. A 1 cent increase in fuel tax, generates approximately \$3.3 million annually. Gas tax increases can only be enacted with the cooperation of the Province due to the need to pass amendments to the *Motor Fuel Tax Act*.

To help fund investments in transit the Transit Commission has requested that the Government of BC amend the Motor Fuel Tax Act to increase the dedicated fuel tax applied in the region under the *BC Transit Act* by 2 cents per litre to support transit system development in the Capital Region.

While no tax is welcomed, public surveys have consistently shown increases to fuel tax to be preferred to increases to property tax. The CRD conducted a Regional Transit Local Funding Options Study that included a high level of consultation, with a fuel tax increase being identified as the preferred public option to support Regional Transit improvements. The study included an online survey and workshops. In addition, other surveys and public engagement through the

Rapid Transit project and the creation of the Transit Future Plan reiterated similar public support.

8.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that this Service Review report—including its Service Standards, Performance Guidelines and Service and Infrastructure Options—be approved by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission to guide future transit system development and the evolution of service towards the vision described in the Transit Future Plan.

It is recommended that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission:

- **Approve this report.**

BC Transit
February 2014

9.0 Appendices

- A Service Review Workshop Summary
- B Transit Future Open House Results
- C Online Survey Results
- D Proposed Service Changes for 2014
- E Service Performance Report
- F Public Awareness and Attitude Survey Monthly Report