

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

Chair and Members

June 17, 2025

#13

SUBJECT: Planning Update

PURPOSE

To provide the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (“the Commission”) with an update on transit service planning in the Victoria Region for **INFORMATION**.

DISCUSSION

1. UPCOMING TRANSIT SERVICE CHANGES

Fall 2025 Service Change

Effective September 2, 2025, the Fall service change includes the following:

- Seasonal service levels across multiple school-serving routes will be reinstated, including Routes 2, 4/9, 6, 8, 12, 14, 17, 22, 25, 26, 27, 35, 51, 52, 57, 58, 60, 61, 72, and 76.
- Discontinuation of summer seasonal service to support tourism demand, including Routes 70 and 75.
- Review of running times on West Shore local routes including Routes 46, 47, 48, 49, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, and 65 with minor trip time adjustments to improve service reliability.

Holiday 2025 Service Change

Effective December 8, 2025, the holiday service change includes the following:

- Service will be seasonally reduced to better align with the lower ridership demand from post-secondary education institutions.

Service reductions in December allow us to provide additional service in seasons with higher ridership demand.

Winter 2026 Service Change

This section outlines the proposed changes associated with the January 5, 2026 service change. These changes include regular seasonal service changes and previously approved strategic priorities that do not require further Commission approval.

- Seasonal service levels across multiple post-secondary school-serving routes will be reinstated.

- Introduction of the Route 40 Dockyard/UVic via Admirals/McKenzie, as per the Burnside/Tillicum and Esquimalt/View Royal Local Area Transit Plans and the approved 2025/26 Annual Service Plan.

2. TRANSIT SERVICE PLANNING INITIATIVES

Victoria Regional Transit Plan

The Request for Proposals (RFP) process is now complete, and Watt Consulting was identified as the lead proponent to support BC Transit in developing the Victoria Regional Transit Plan. The plan is still targeting a 12-month process with an anticipated late Spring 2026 completion date.

Beyond replacing the outdated 2011 Transit Future Plan, the Victoria Regional Transit Plan will be a key input into the development of an Integrated Regional Plan, which is required to secure funding for the Metro-Region Agreement funding stream of the new Canada Public Transit Fund. Figure 1 below represents the relationship between the upcoming Victoria Regional Transit Plan, the Integrated Regional Plan, and other existing and planned regional and local government planning initiatives.

Key next steps in the project include collecting and reviewing relevant data, reviewing key local and regional policies, finalizing the engagement strategy, and coordinating upcoming key stakeholder engagement workshops.

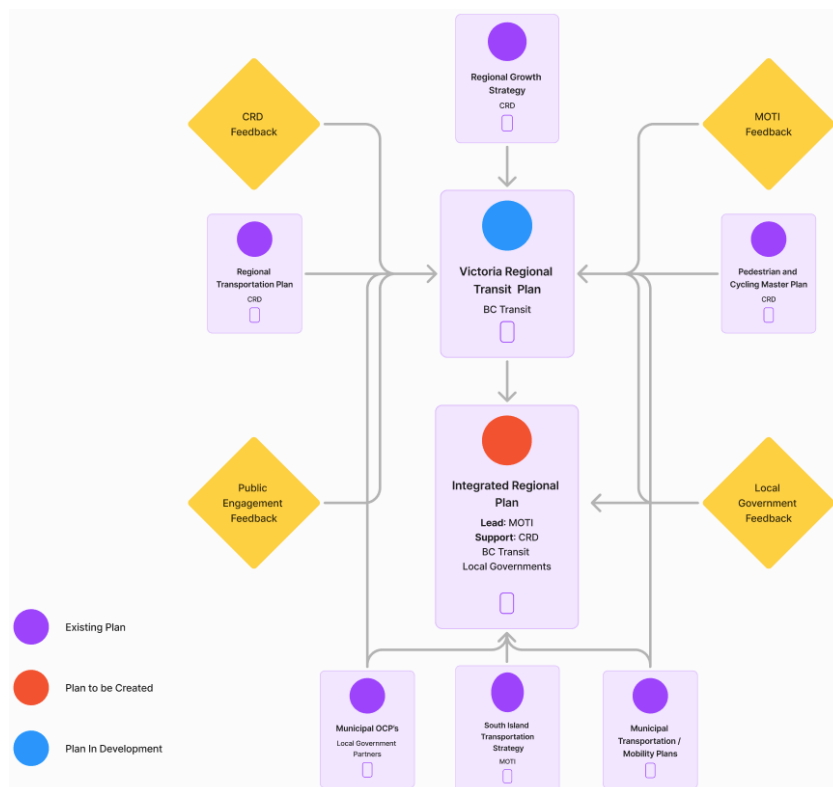


Figure 1: Victoria Regional Transit Plan Relationship Map

Local Area and Corridor Transit Plans (LATP)

Tillicum/McKenzie Corridor Transit Plan

The Tillicum/McKenzie Corridor Transit Plan is on hold, pending further engagement with the District of Saanich on the McKenzie corridor.

2025/26 Service Change Engagement

This engagement process has now completed and is supporting many of the proposed service changes for the January 2026 service period.

Proposed changes include:

- Adjustments to Peninsula local transit service to improve service reliability
- Route 39 and 51 changes to align with the West Shore Local Area Transit Plan, improve AM peak travel times and reliability, and support the opening of the new Westshore Post Secondary Campus.
- Adjustments to Sooke service, with cost-neutral proposals for regional service in 2025/26 and to local Sooke service expansion (tentatively planned for 2027).

Overall, the proposed changes had a very high level of public support. A summary of the engagement results can be found in Appendix 13a and the proposed changes for January 2026 are detailed in this report.

Sooke Transit Service Reallocation Review

Based on previous Commission direction, several service reallocation options have been developed to improve transit service within the Sooke area. These proposals were included in the 2025/26 Service Change Engagement process. Based on a high level of public support (Appendix 13a), proposed changes to Routes 65 are being recommended for the January 2026 service change.

Other Planning Work

Referrals – Referral-related work undertaken or proposed since the last Commission meeting includes:

- **Bus Stop Improvements** – BC Transit continues to work closely with Local Government Partners within the Victoria Region to coordinate improvements to stop configurations and layout to improve accessibility and customer experience.
- **Development Referral Process** – BC Transit receives and responds to development referrals from Local Governments considering rezoning and large-scale development proposals. BC Transit provides comment on opportunities for transit supportive development, improvements to transit supportive infrastructure such as bus stops and sidewalks and provides comments on the feasibility of future transit service to the proposed development.

Planning staff have received approximately 33 development referrals between February and May 2025 and provided feedback to eight Local Governments.

Service Monitoring

- **Ridership Performance Report** – Planning regularly monitors service performance against the service standards and performance guidelines identified in the 2013/14 Service Review document. Regular performance monitoring allows for a better alignment between service levels and ongoing changes in demand and travel patterns.

The attached Ridership Performance Report (Appendix 13a) provides information on ridership performance over the Winter 2025 service period from January 6 to April 13, 2025, and provides information on historical ridership and service reliability trends up to April 13, 2025.

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Date
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*Appendix: 13a Appendix - Ridership Performance Report; 2025-2026 Service Changes
Engagement Summary*