

CORDOVA BAY ASSOCIATION

FOR COMMUNITY AFFAIRS



PO Box 53584 Victoria RPO Broadmead, BC V8X 5K2

August 14, 2025

Ryan Windsor, Chair
Victoria Regional Transit Commission

Re: Request for improved transit service in Cordova Bay

We are requesting improved transit service for the currently underserved Cordova Bay area of Saanich. To help achieve this, we are also pitching an innovative On Demand transit service pilot project for our area.

Community Context

Cordova Bay, located in the northeast corner of Saanich, is home to 8,100 residents and comprises 7% of Saanich's population. It is unique in Saanich for its combination of urban and rural areas. It is popular with residents throughout the Greater Victoria area and tourists who visit its beaches, parks, shops, and recreation opportunities at the golf courses and Lochside Regional Trail. Cordova Bay currently receives limited public transit service, despite having a large population base as well as proximity to a major transit hub and key destinations for employment, education, healthcare, shopping, and recreational activities. The limited service is particularly hard on young people in our community struggling to get to work, school or participate in recreational activities elsewhere in the region.

The area is currently serviced by two transit routes: #32 Cordova Bay/Royal Oak Exchange, which principally serves the Cordova Bay village and residential areas along Cordova Bay Road, and #35 Ridge, which provides limited service to the west side of the area near Claremont High School. Cordova Bay is within a 15 to 20 minute drive to downtown Victoria, Uptown shopping centre, UVic, Camosun College, the airport and Swartz Bay BC Ferry terminal. It is also only 5 to 7 minutes away from the main Royal Oak Transit Exchange.

The Cordova Bay Association for Community Affairs (CBACA) was formed in 1976, as per our constitution, to “inform, engage, connect with and advocate on behalf of the residents, property owners and local businesses of Cordova Bay to maintain a strong, vibrant, active, sustainable and positive community” (CBACA Constitution, 2025). Our request and proposal reflect our advocacy and commitment to a more liveable Cordova Bay.

Our Request

Cordova Bay needs a transit service with frequency intervals mirroring those of nearby comparable communities, and coverage to serve a wider area of our community.

Our community seeks transit service with 15 to 30 minute frequency intervals, seven days a week like Cadboro Bay, Broadmead, Gordon Head (Majestic area) and Saanichton. Appendix A provides an overview of the current transit service levels for Cordova Bay and comparisons to these other communities.

We are also seeking additional transit coverage to serve a wider area of Cordova Bay. The Ridge area makes up approximately 50% of the land area of Cordova Bay but has no transit service, apart from a limited service around the immediate Claremont High School area.

Our Proposal

We propose that Cordova Bay serve as a pilot area in the capital region for an innovative On Demand type transit service that would allow customers to book a bus ride from within a defined area. We understand that this type of service is currently being piloted in a neighbourhood area of Kelowna and offers an opportunity to provide an increased and more flexible transit service to a currently underserved area such as Cordova Bay.

We recognize the challenges of providing a demand-driven, cost effective and equitable transit service throughout the capital region. Given the wide variability of transit needs in the region, implementing a flexible and efficient On Demand type of transit service would present a valuable opportunity to cost-effectively increase ridership, provide greater frequency and include areas of Cordova Bay that are more difficult to access, such as the Ridge.

Strategic Alignment

District of Saanich

Saanich’s updated Official Community Plan (OCP) identifies the village area of Cordova Bay as one of the designated growth areas in the District of Saanich, and a prime area for increased transit service.

The OCP also outlines goals to increase housing diversity and affordability in Saanich. Several housing options to achieve these goals, such as non-market housing and small multi-unit housing rely on a good transit service for their residents to access work, school, health services and recreational activities.

During the development of the 2022 Cordova Bay Local Area Plan, residents identified transit service as one of their top concerns.

CRD Regional Growth Strategy

Realizing the vision of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) can be helped by working through a series of the plan's objectives that include:

- Significant reduction of community-based greenhouse gases.
- Increased transportation choices.
- Creation of safe and complete communities (including convenient public transit).

Providing reliable and convenient transit service to Cordova Bay directly supports these objectives.

Victoria Regional Transit Commission Local Area Transit Plan

VRTC's most recent Local Area Transit Plan for Broadmead and Cordova Bay proposed route improvements for the current Route #35 Ridge and a new Route #34 to serve the broader Ridge area, as well as increasing the frequency and the span of service throughout Cordova Bay. The proposed service level improvements were very positively received, particularly for the Ridge area, by participants in the consultation phase of the transit planning process.

BC Transit

Our request and proposal align with BC Transit's 2024 Strategic Plan which outlines a transit system that offers varied services for a diverse province that could include a flexible, demand-response service such as On Demand.

In addition, our request aligns with BC Transit's "Thriving Communities" objective for expanding affordable, reliable, frequent and efficient transit.

In Summary

We ask that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission, as part of its upcoming service-planning process, designate Cordova Bay for a pilot project On Demand transit service as part of a broader initiative to increase the frequency, daily service span and coverage in Cordova Bay, particularly in the Ridge area.

We ask that customers in Cordova Bay experience 15 to 30 minute wait times like comparable areas such as Cadboro Bay, Broadmead, Gordon Head (Majestic area) and Saanichton.

These requests align with the strategic priorities of Saanich, CRD, VRTC and BC Transit, and will enhance the liveability of and transit usage in a currently underserved area.

In addition, we are planning to submit a delegation request to present our request and proposal to the VRTC Board in a commission meeting this fall.

Thank you for your consideration. We will be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Barb Lucas
President
CBACA

Dave Chater
Chair, Transportation and Parks Committee
CBACA

cc. VRTC Commission members

Lana Popham, MLA
Councillor Zac de Vries, Chair, Transportation Advisory Committee, Saanich
Harley Machiesle, Director of Engineering, Saanich
Troy McKay, Senior Manager, Transportation and Development, Saanich

Appendix A: Information on current service levels and comparisons

Current Service Levels

The Cordova Bay area currently receives only a basic level of service (see photo below), especially in comparison to adjacent areas such as Cadboro Bay, Broadmead, Gordon Head (Majestic area) and Saanichton. Service in Cordova Bay has been unchanged for decades, despite population growth and greater needs in the community.

Two routes currently serve Cordova Bay: Routes #32 and #35 (see attached map).

Route #32 provides seven day a week service with a range of 40 minute to 70 minute intervals throughout the day or average 48 -minute intervals, with increased servicing for the morning/afternoon work/school day rushes. The last bus at night is at 10:17pm, including on weekends.

Route #35, however, is primarily focused on serving students at Claremont High School and is not set up to service the broader “ridge” sub area of Cordova Bay. Route #35 is scheduled to correspond with the high school's academic calendar, operating primarily from September through June. Service to the broader community is minimal outside of these times. The last bus leaving the area around the high school is at 5:40pm and only on weekdays.

Nearby Comparable Areas

Noted below are transit routes and schedules from comparable communities that are 5 to 15 minutes away from Cordova Bay:

- Cadboro Bay: Route #11 features 16 to 33 minute frequency intervals; the last bus is at 12:43am, seven days a week.
- Broadmead: Route #6a features an average of 45 minute intervals with a range of 36 to 58 minute frequency intervals; the last bus is at 12:15am, seven days a week. Broadmead also has a separate 6B route that serves another part of this small area.
- Gordon Head (Majestic area): Route #28 features 13 to 33 minute frequency intervals; the last bus is at 12:45am weekdays, 2:45am on Friday nights. This area also features Route 27 which covers a portion of the Majestic neighbourhood.
- Saanichton Village: Five bus routes with a range of frequency intervals from 21 to 90 minutes, The primary bus on Route #72 to and from downtown ranges from 19 minutes to 42 minutes, with an average 29 minute frequency interval. The last bus is at 12:22am, seven days a week.

Service Levels and Population of Cordova Bay and Comparable Areas

Area	Population	Served by	Frequency Intervals	Last bus
Cordova Bay	8,100	Route 35 Route 32	Sept to June only, school day Avg 48 minutes	5:40pm weekdays 10:17pm daily
Cadboro Bay	4,100	Route 11	16 to 33 minutes	12:43am daily
Broadmead	3,814	Route 6a	30 to 45 minutes	12:15am pm daily
Gordon Head (Majestic)	7,562	Route 28	13 to 33 minutes with an average 22 minute frequency interval	12:45 am weekdays 2:45am on Friday nights.
Saanichton	4,645	Route #72	19 to 42 minutes with an average 29 minute frequency interval	12:22am daily

Notes:

Population statistics sources:

- Cordova Bay – 2022 approved Local Area Plan
- Cadboro Bay – 2024 approved Local Area Plan
- Broadmead – 2021 Canada Stats (data sullied by Saanich Planning Dept.)
- Majestic area- 2021 Canada Stats (data supplied by Saanich Planning Dept.)
- Saanichton- 2021 Canada Stats (data sourced from AreaVibes.com)

BC Transit sign highlighting the limited service to Cordova Bay



Extent of Transit in Cordova Bay

- LEGEND**
- EXISTING CROSSWALKS
 - EXISTING SIDEWALKS
 - ROAD (ROW)
 - PARK
 - BEACH ACCESS
 - PLACES OF WORSHIP
 - BUS STOPS
 - COMMERCIAL LAND
 - INSTITUTIONAL LAND

Route #32

Route #35

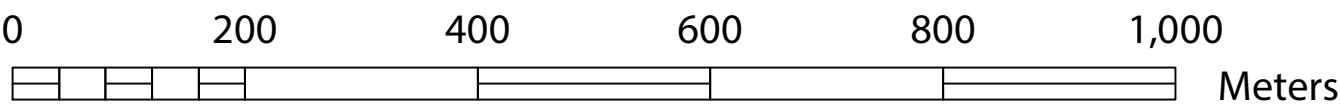
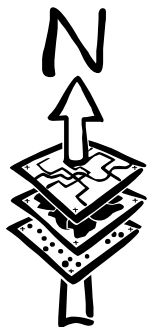


FIGURE 4 // MAP OF SAANICH



Source: Contains information licenced under the Open Government Licence – District of Saanich