

# Victoria Regional Transit Commission

Chair and Members

November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

# #16

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## 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**.

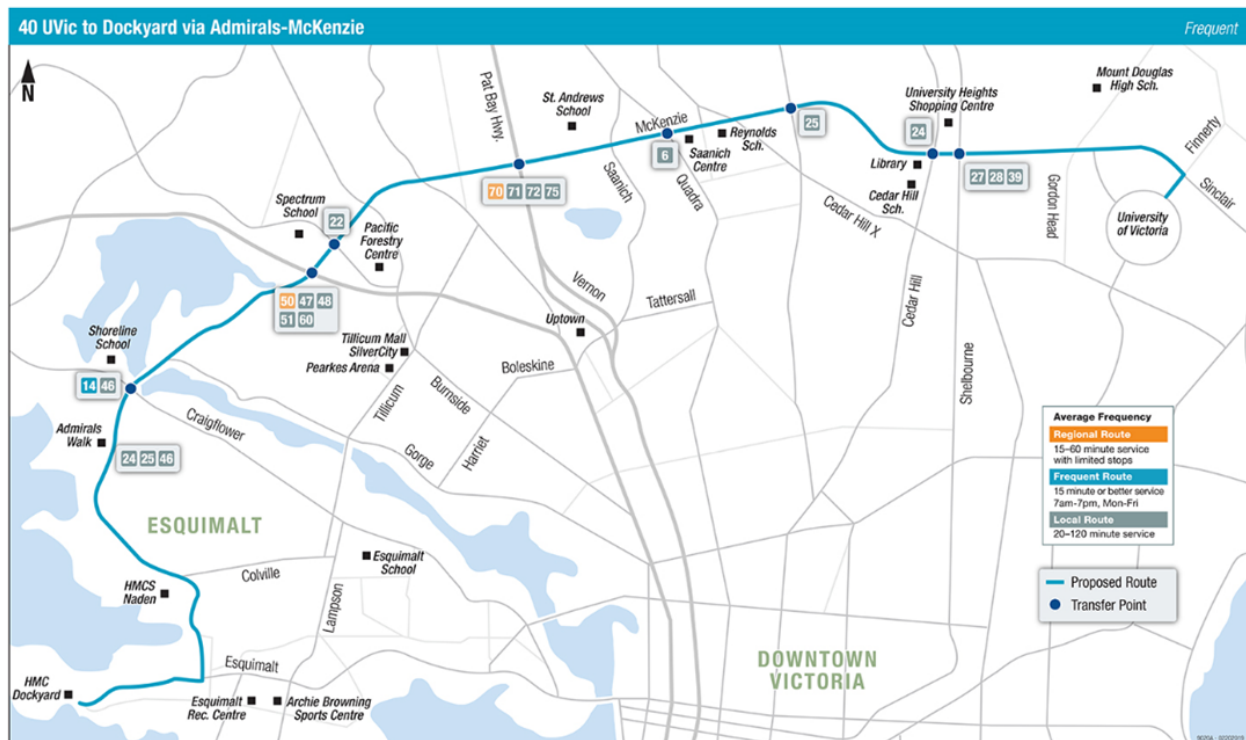
## 1. TRANSIT SERVICE CHANGES

### Winter 2026 Service Change

Effective January 5, 2026, the winter service change includes the following service changes, which were approved by the Commission in the June 17 meeting.

- Introduction of the Route 40 Dockyard/UVic via Admirals/McKenzie, as per the Esquimalt/View Royal Local Area Transit Plan.
- Seasonal service levels across multiple post-secondary school-serving routes will be reinstated.
- Changes to several Peninsula local routes to improve service reliability:
  - Route 81 adjusted to interline with the existing Route 75, addressing service reliability challenges and improving connections between the Peninsula, the Keating Business District and Victoria. This proposed change also improves weekend service on Route 81.
  - Routes 82 and 87 were merged to create a new Route 87 Tsawout/Sidney via Dean Park.
    - Addresses service reliability challenges on both existing routes and improved connections with Route 72.
    - Improves service to Tsawout First Nation from 2.5 weekday round trips to 5.5 trips.
    - Improved connections between Tsawout First Nation and other key destinations on the Peninsula, including West Sidney.
    - Slight reduction in weekday peak service on Lochside Drive between Mount Newton X-Road and McTavish Exchange, but improved service frequency on weekends.
  - Adjustment to Route 88 to improve service reliability to YYJ and improve access to West Sidney.
- Separate the existing Route 39 Westhills / UVic into two distinct routes to improve service reliability, efficiency, and to better align service with class start times at Camosun and UVic.
  - Route 38 Westhills/Interurban/ Royal Oak
  - Route 39 UVic/Royal Oak/Interurban

- Route 51 renamed to 51X to reflect express service design with limited-stop policy. Additionally, its routing will be extended to Westhills and realigned to improve speed, service reliability, and connections between Langford and UVic, including the new West Shore Campus on Goldstream and Jacklin.
  - This change includes added hourly midday and early evening service to retain an all-day, one-seat ride between the West Shore and UVic in alignment with the proposed change to Route 39.
- Adjust Route 65 to provide commuter transit service to the underserved portion of north-east Sooke in the Arranwood/Steeple Chase neighbourhood.
  - Based on significant support through engagement, this routing change would also include a reallocation of two AM and two PM peak trips from Routes 61 to Route 65.
- Minor adjustment to Route 72 in the northbound direction to improve operational speed and reliability around Uptown, aligning with the completion of the Ravine Ave dedicated transit lane.
- Minor adjustment to Route 75 in the northbound direction via Elk Lake Dr to support with layover capacity constraints at Royal Oak Exch (due to the introduction of new Route 38)



- **Figure 6:** Proposed routing for new service along Admirals and McKenzie from Dockyard to UVic.

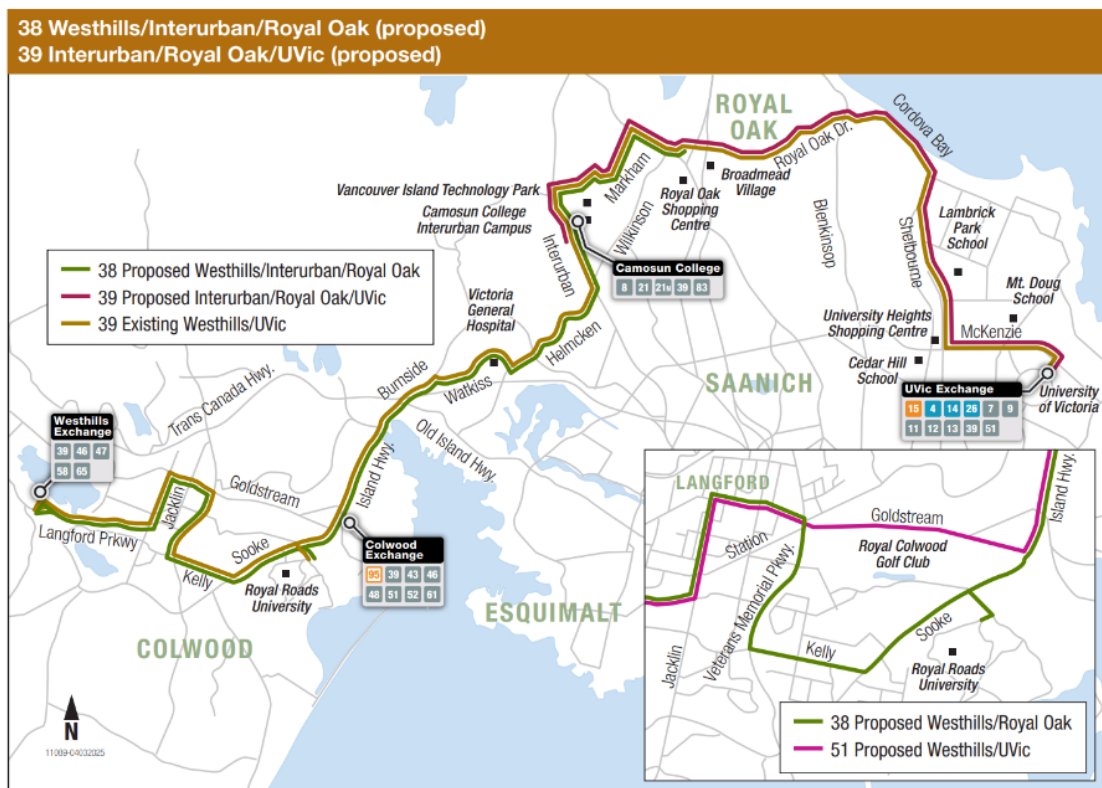
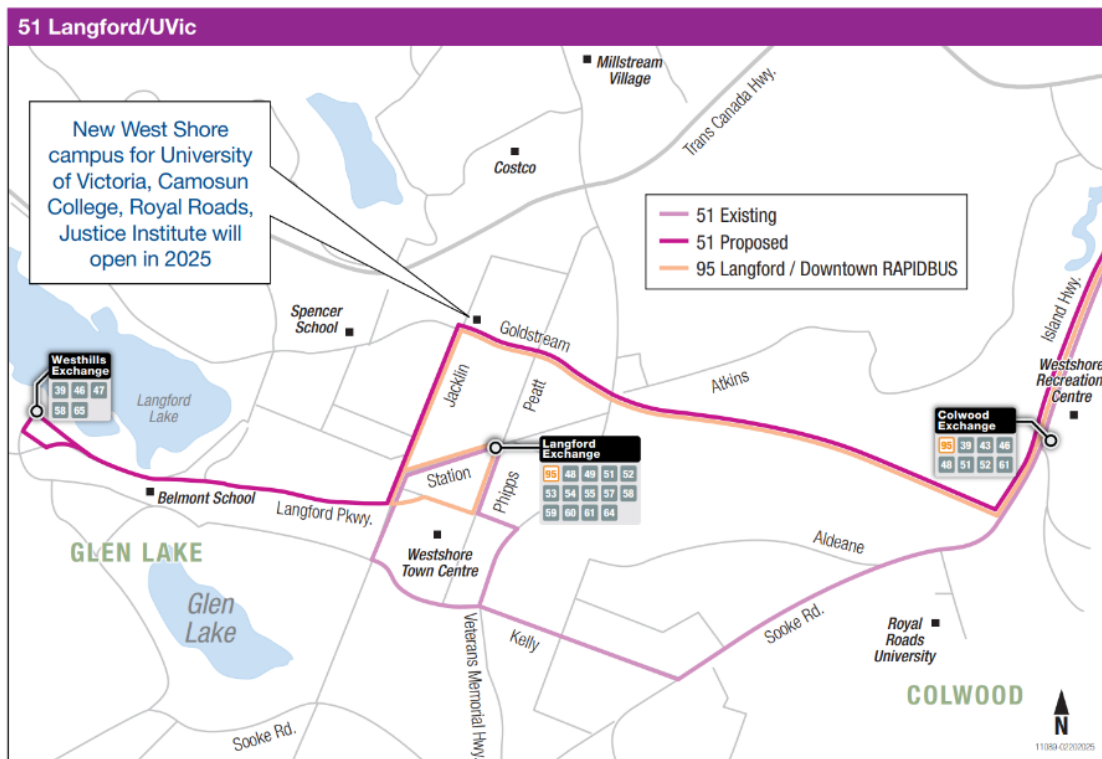
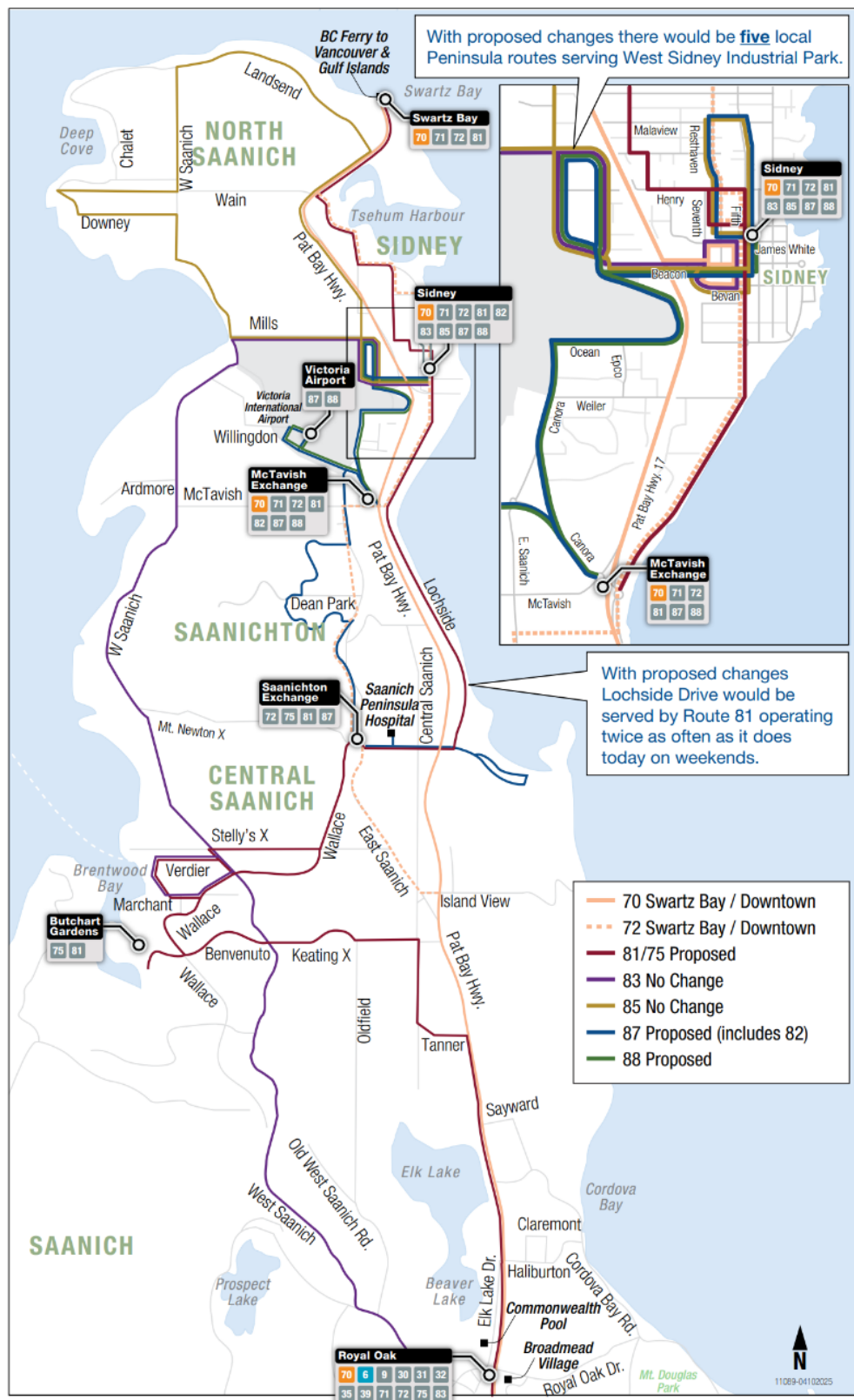
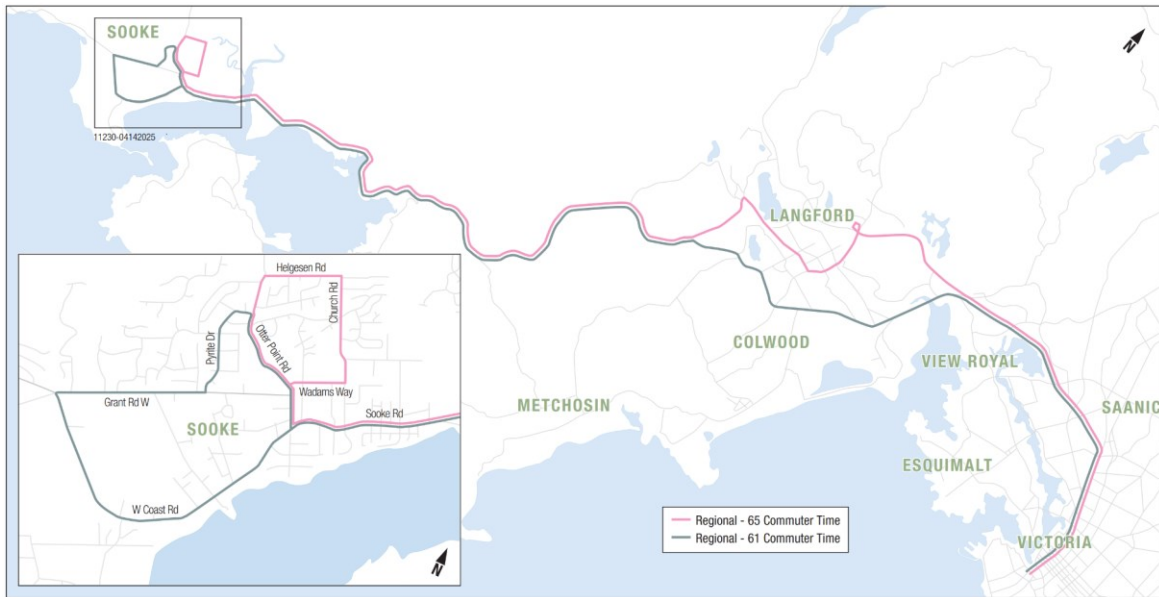


Figure 7: Proposed Routing Changes on Routes 39 and 51 to help address chronic on service reliability issues.



**Figure 8:** Proposed Routing Change in the Peninsula area to help address chronic on service reliability issues.



**Figure 9:** Proposed Routing Change on Route 65 to north-east Sooke

## Spring 2026 Service Change

Effective April 13, 2026, the spring service change includes the following service changes:

- Seasonal service reductions to post-secondary institutions to align with reduced demand, including Routes 4, 7, 12, 14, 15, 21, 26, 39, 51, and 76\*.
- Seasonal service improvements to Routes 70, 72 and 75 to support returning tourism demand for the Swartz Bay ferry terminal and Butchart Gardens.
- Additional peak-oriented service to support passenger capacity and ridership to/from the new PEXSISEN Elementary School in Westhills, Langford.
- Routing adjustment for Route 57 in the Thetis Heights neighborhood to improve service coverage.
- Service reliability improvements on Routes 1, 3, 10 and other routes in alignment with cyclical on-time performance analysis.
- Proactive scheduling for roadway construction projects and/or speed limit reductions.
- Investments in high-performing routes to address passenger comfort and pass-ups.

## 2. TRANSIT SERVICE PLANNING INITIATIVES

### Victoria Regional Transit Plan (VRTP)

Beyond replacing the outdated 2011 Transit Future Plan, the Victoria Regional Transit Plan (VRTP) 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.

Data collection and initial analysis, the review of key local, regional, and Provincial policies, and the engagement process are all now complete.

## Engagement

Engagement for the VRTP was conducted through multiple channels between October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, including an online survey, stakeholder and Local Government roundtables, in-person open houses led by BC Transit staff, and presentations to Local Government Councils. The engagement focused on getting feedback on proposed route and network design guidelines and identifying priorities and values for developing the transit system over the next 25 years.

### Online Survey

An online survey was active between October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> via BC Transit's dedicated engagement website and saw over 1,850 individuals respond. A media advisory was published with the survey and public engagement launch, with community-specific promotion and messaging provided. The engagement portal was hosted on the [engage.bctransit.com](https://engage.bctransit.com) website.

### Open Houses and Key Stakeholder Engagement

Through October, BC Transit staff also held two virtual key-stakeholder roundtable workshops with representatives from major employers, regional travel destinations, and local neighbourhood and community associations. A total of 23 key stakeholder groups attended. Nine open house events organized equitably at locations across the region, were delivered to support in-person engagement with residents, transit users, and operators, and brought approximately 350 total attendees.

### Key Findings

Common themes from participants were centered around the desire for investments in Rapid Transit and future Light Rail Transit. Frequency, reliability, and direct/simplified routing were the three most identified priorities for improving the transit system into the future. There was significant feedback provided on improving connections within the transit system, with a general preference for a more efficient, direct, and connective network to support more frequent service. There was significant support for prioritizing improved connections within the network to Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal, YYJ International Airport, and UVic as key destinations.

Additional details can be found in Appendix 16A of this report.





**Figure 10:** Open House Engagement- Langford Exchange – Victoria Regional Transit Plan



**Figure 11:** Open House Engagement- University of Victoria – Victoria Regional Transit Plan

### Next Steps

The Victoria Regional Transit Plan is still on track for a June 2026 completion date.

After Commission approval of the VRTP and the associated Network and Route Design Guidelines, there will be an opportunity to explore a transit network restructure, possibly for a 2028/29 implementation timeline. This future planning work would be guided by the Commission and supported through additional planning work and public engagement.

Based on key emerging themes, the Victoria Regional Transit Plan will recommend initiating a study to revisit the West Shore Rapid Transit alignment in partnership with the CRD, the Province and key stakeholders, ideally in alignment with upcoming E&N corridor study work the CRD plans

to undertake. Once an updated Rapid Transit alignment has been confirmed, technical studies and design work could occur to advance the development of higher-order transit within the region.

## 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. In order to align with the recent completion of the Ravine Way transit lane and the new Hwy 1 RapidBus Stations at Uptown, planning work is underway to modify some of the service concepts initially developed through this planning process and bring back to the Commission to support changes for January 2027, pending approval of the 2026/27 expansion by the Province.

## 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 14 development referrals between September and October 2025, providing feedback to 6 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.

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