

TRANSIT *future*

POWELL RIVER AND QATHET REGIONAL TRANSIT

2025

City of Powell
River

qathet Regional
District



Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect that BC Transit carries out its work on the traditional territories of indigenous nations throughout British Columbia.

The City of Powell River and qathet Regional District lie within the ancestral and traditional territory of the Tla'amin Nation.

We are grateful to live, work, and play on their traditional lands.

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01 This Plan

The role of this Transit Future Service Plan is to:

Envision the future transit Service for the City of Powell River and qathet Regional systems, including a new network for the City of Powell River transit system.

Describe the transit service investments, identify infrastructure opportunities and information needs to achieve the vision.

Create clarity for ongoing improvement and decision-making at both the City and Regional District level to deliver the desired transit service.

Inform both the planning and operational activities.



02 BC Transit Corporate Priorities

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

BC Transit is committed to building an inclusive work environment that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. Every day, we aim to ensure our communities thrive by providing the safest, highest-quality, most accessible public transit – this means listening to and meeting the transportation needs of British Columbians.

Future plans include furthering engagement with Indigenous communities and using Gender-Based Analysis+ (GBA+) to integrate multiple perspectives in transit planning, and guide decisions that provide the best experience for all riders.

Low Carbon Fleet Program

The first deployment of electric buses will happen in the Victoria Regional Transit System in 2025.

BC Hydro will help determine the readiness of the electricity infrastructure to support electric fleets across the province.

BC Transit will work with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit to refine the anticipated funding requirements, for buses and new operation and maintenance facilities.

Electronic Fare Strategy

Smart ticketing providing new ways to pay. With UMO, BC Transit is working to not only improve rider convenience but also enable mobility partnerships and create new data collection opportunities.

Systems can accommodate a mix of fare products, including cash fares. The system also operates in areas with low-cell phone coverage/service.

OnDemand

OnDemand is an initiative that uses technology to dynamically dispatch a bus or fleet of vehicles to locations dictated by customers using an app or phone-in service.

BC Transit is currently piloting this in the Kelowna Regional Transit System, with a view to add more communities in the coming years, based on the success of this initial phase.

Next Ride

Door to door journey planning. Provides bus location information to customers via transit apps, enhances operations control and route information for the operator.



Development Referral Program

Local governments or developers can send any referrals and supporting information to BC Transit to review and provide comments about how the proposal may affect current or future transit service and infrastructure, and how the application or plan could be changed to be more transit-supportive.

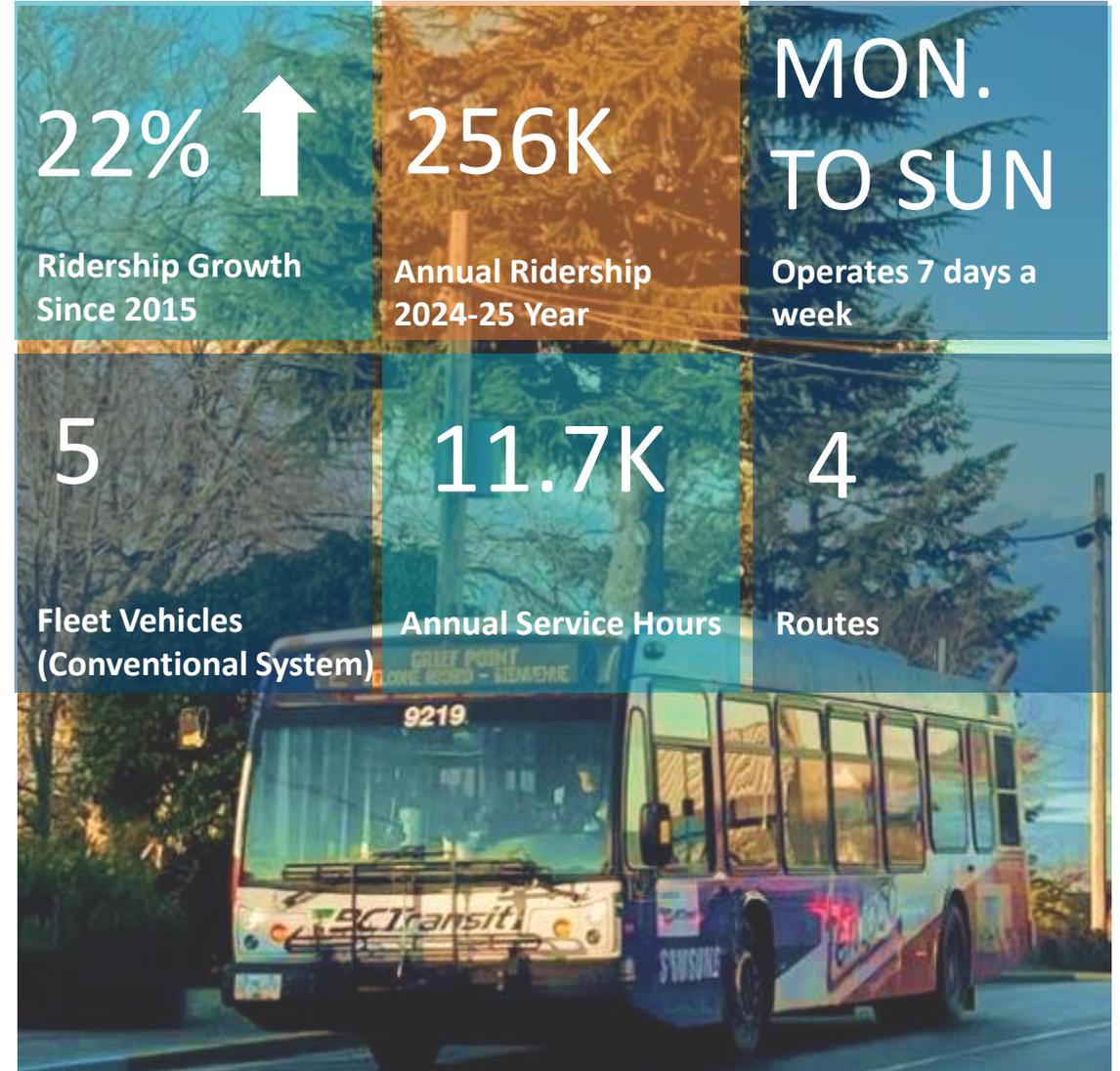
03 Transit Today - City

About the system

Inaugurated in 1979, Transit service is provided in the City of Powell River seven days per week on Routes 1, 2 and 3. Route 9 Brooks is offered only on weekdays. Service operates from 7:00 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays, Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., and Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. with two seasonal service changes to align with the start and end of the school year

Work in the System includes:

- In 2015, BC Transit Service Review
- In 2018, Route 3 was extended to the Recreation Complex on alternating trips.
- In 2022, the Route 1 trips serving Brooks school were created as their own Route – Route 9.
- In 2024, the central transit exchange was relocated to a purpose-built location (completion is pending).
- In May 2025, schedules were adjusted to improve on-time performance and address longer trip-travel times.



03 Transit Today - City

Transit Ridership is Growing

The City of Powell Transit System has seen ridership grow from 209,952 riders in 2014-15 to 256,000 riders in 2024-25. The system is delivered through BC Transit's cost sharing model and in coordination with the City of Powell River (CoPR). Final decisions on fares, routes, and service levels are made by the CoPR.

Transit service is provided in the City of Powell River seven days per week on Routes 1, 2 and 3. Route 9 Brooks is offered only on weekdays. Service operates from 7:00 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays, Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., and Sundays from 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. with two seasonal service changes to align with the start and end of the school year

53.1%*

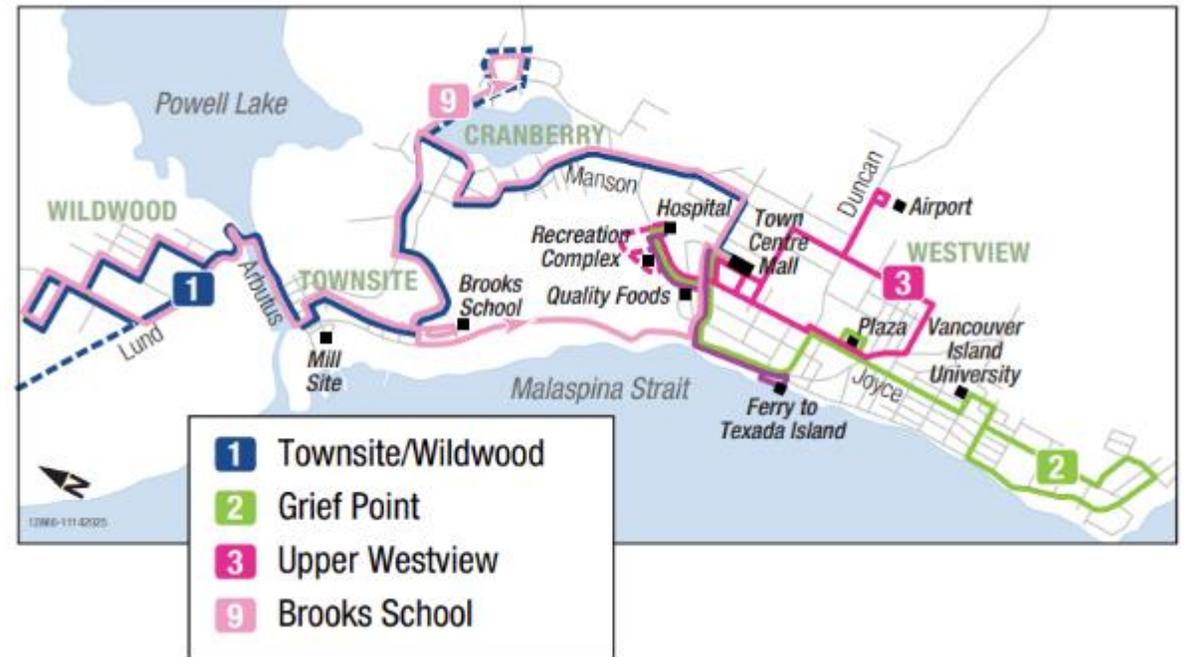
Of non-school System ridership is attributed to route 1

33.2%*

Of non-school System ridership is attributed to route 2

13.6%*

Of non-school system ridership is attributed to route 3



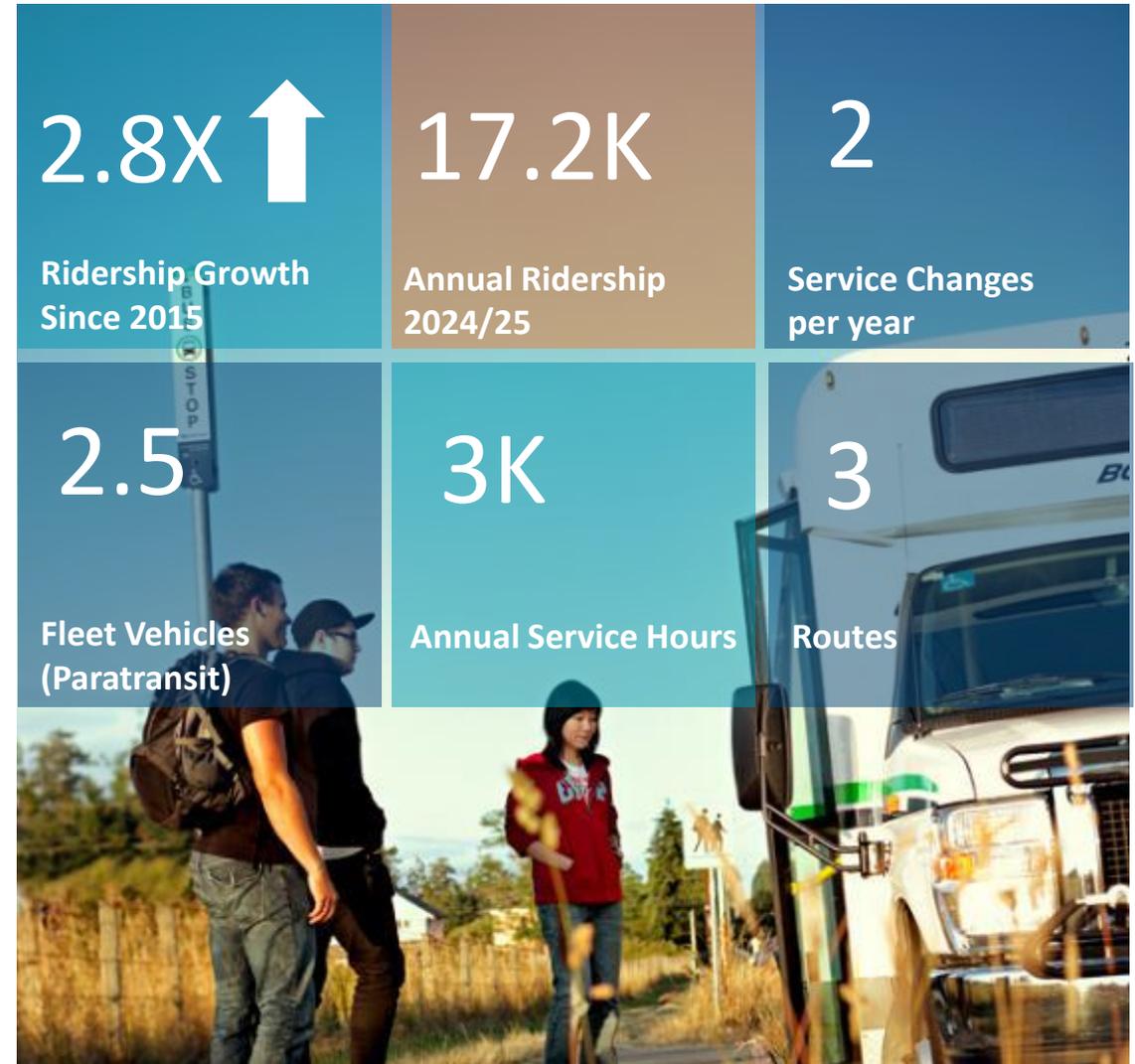
03 Transit Today - qathet

About The System

The qathet Paratransit System was inaugurated in 2009. The system is delivered through BC Transit's innovative cost sharing model and in coordination with the qathet Regional District (qRD). Final decisions on fares, routes, and service levels are made by the qRD. Operation of the service is contracted to the City of Powell River

Features of the System include:

- Route 13 Texada – the only public transit route in British Columbia (possibly Western North America) to include a ferry crossing.
- Interlined service between select Route 14 Lund trips and select Route 12 Stillwater trips enable residents from as far north as Lund to reach Saltery Bay.
- On-Request Service Residents living up to 1 km off of the bus route may call ahead to request the bus deviate from the route to serve them. The schedule may accommodate 1 deviation per direction of travel.



03 Transit Today - qathet

Transit Ridership is Growing

qathet Regional Paratransit has seen ridership grow substantially from 6,035 riders in 2014-15 to 17,200 riders in 2024-25.

Transit Service Design

qathet Regional paratransit is seasonal; from the May Victoria Day weekend to the Labour Day weekend (inclusive), Route 14 runs increased service. Round trips are shown below. On Thursdays, owing to vehicle constraints, only Route 13 operates.

Route each trip	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12 Stillwater 67 min 101 min*	-	5 trips	5 trips	5 trips	-	5 trips	5 trips
13 Texada 240 min	-	-	-	-	2 trips	-	-
14 Lund OFF-SEASON 93 min	-	2 trips	2 trips	-	-	2 trips	-
SUMMER 93 min	2 trips	2 trips	2 trips	2 trips	-	2 trips	2 trips

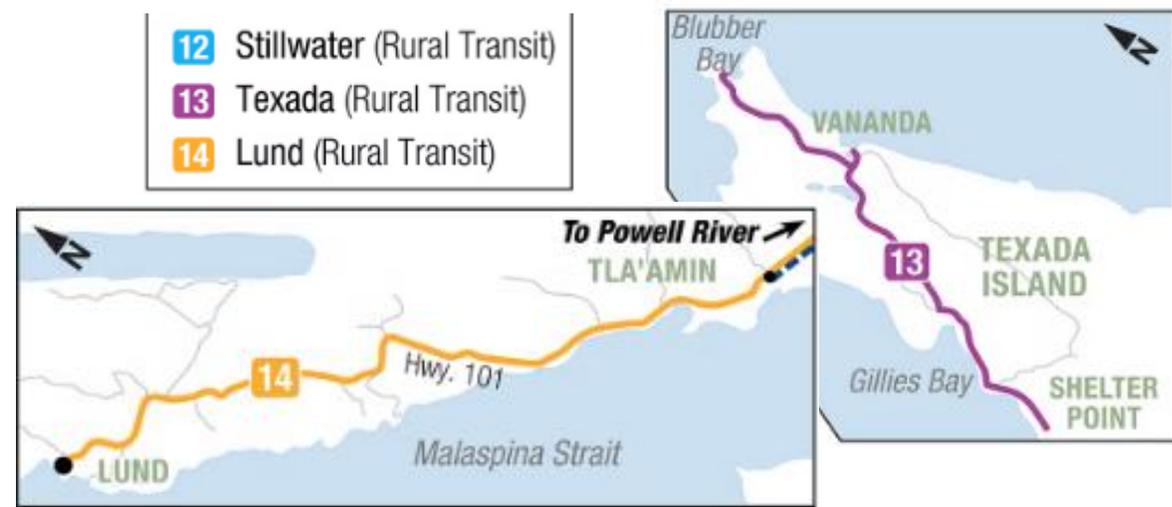
62%
Of residents live in Electoral Areas B & C, served by Route 12

18%
Of residents live in Electoral Area D, served by Route 13

20%
Of residents live in Electoral Area A, served by Route 14



- 12 Stillwater (Rural Transit)
- 13 Texada (Rural Transit)
- 14 Lund (Rural Transit)

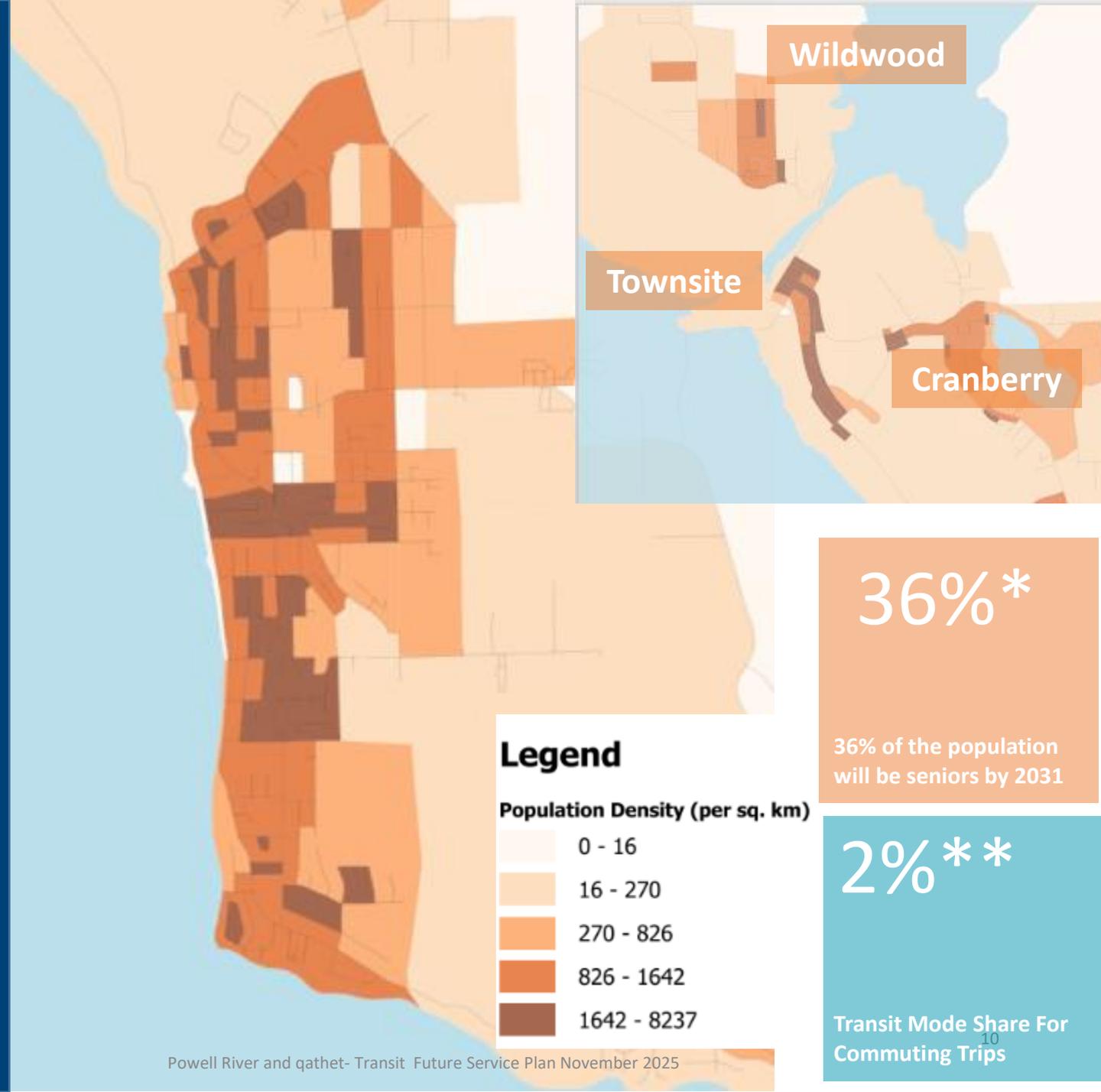
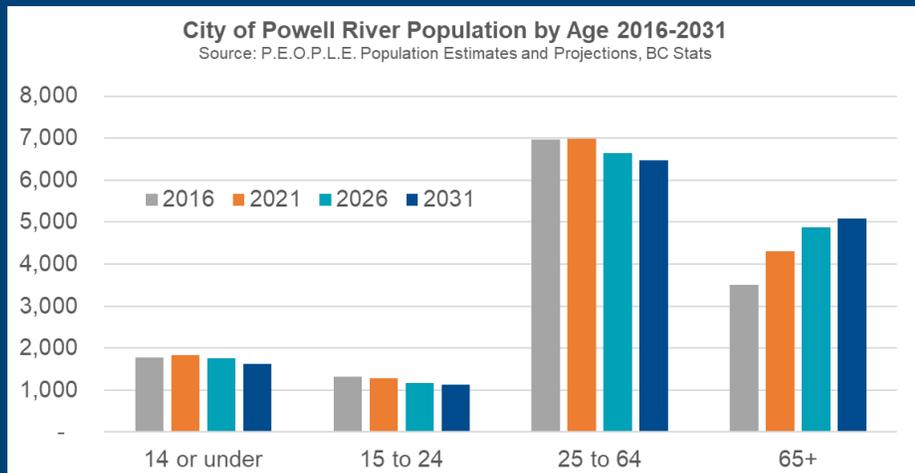


04 Transit Need - City

Who is Powell River?

The city of Powell River grew by 6% from 2016 to 2021, reaching a population of about 14,000. In this time, the proportion of seniors rose from 27% to 31%. Looking forward, 36% of the population is projected to be seniors by 2031.

The map to the right illustrates the distribution of population density as of the 2021 census.



Wildwood

Townsite

Cranberry

36%*

36% of the population will be seniors by 2031

2%**

Transit Mode Share For Commuting Trips

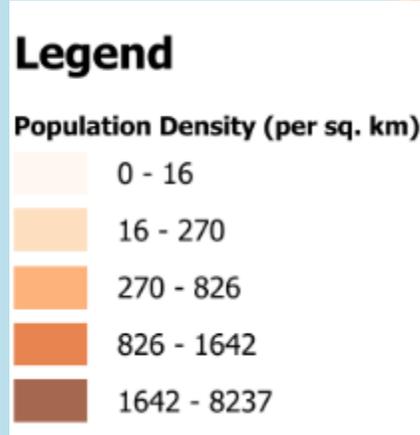
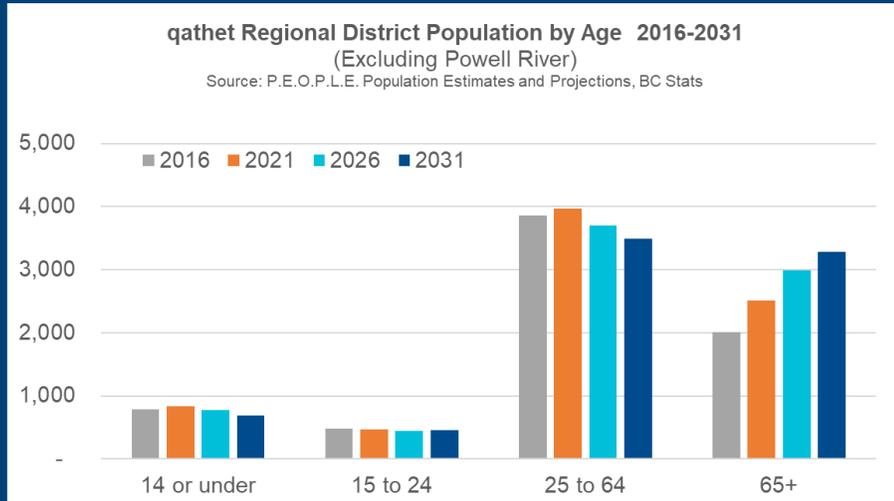
* Population Estimates and Projections, BC Stats
 **Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

04 Transit Need - qathet

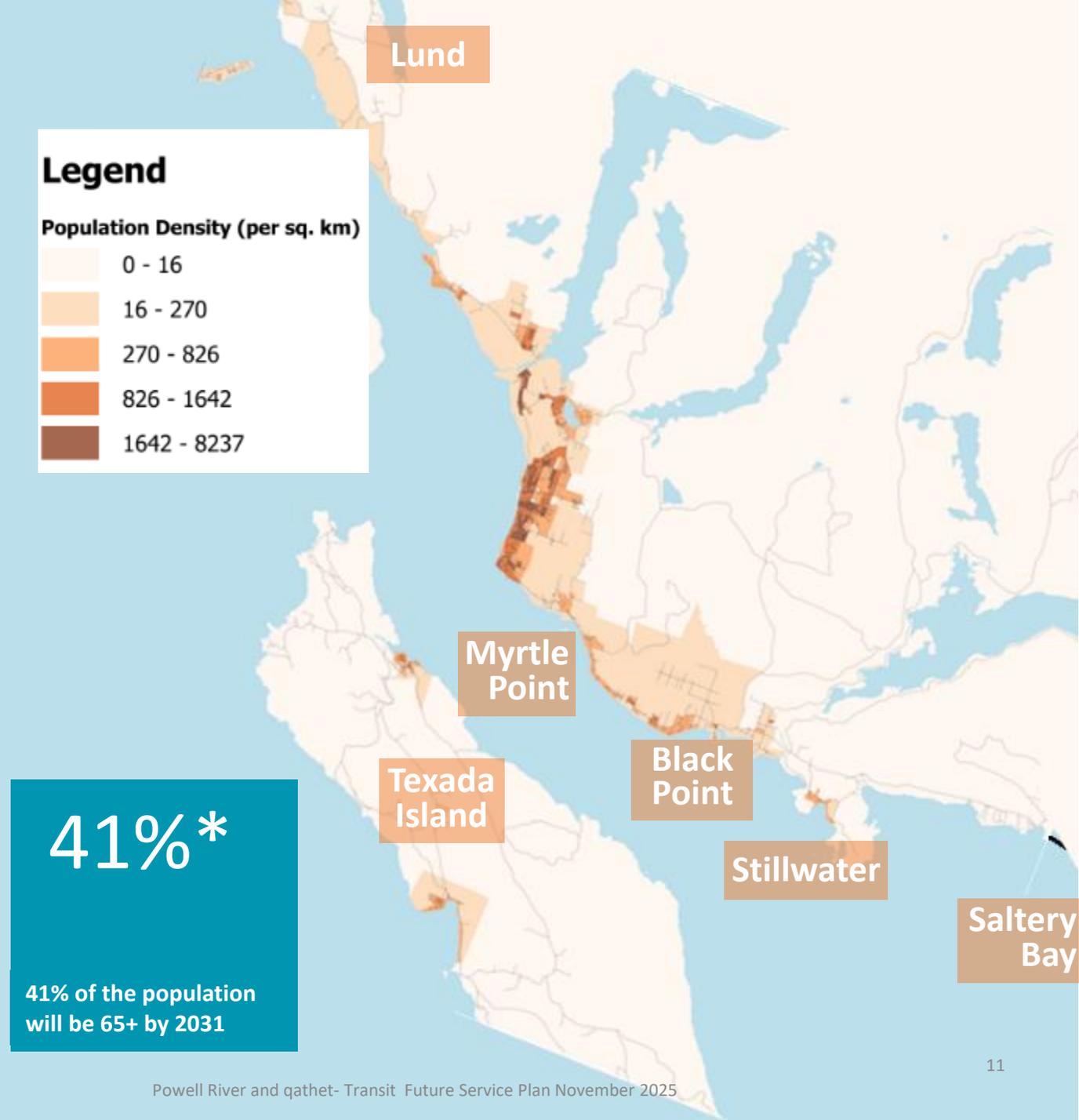
Who is qathet Regional District?

qathet Regional District grew by 4% from 2016 to 2021, reaching a population of about 14,000. In this time, the proportion of seniors rose from 28% to 32%. Looking forward, 41% of the population is projected to be seniors by 2031.

The map to the right illustrates the distribution of population density as of the 2021 census.



41%*
41% of the population will be 65+ by 2031



* Population Estimates and Projections, BC Stats

05 On-Time Performance

On time performance is critical to the operational viability and reliability of scheduled public transit. An operations review was a key early component of this Transit Future Service Plan.

Before May 2025

- BC Transit schedulers determined that scheduled runtimes for most trips on the city routes was insufficient. Congestion and road changes that make buses move more slowly were the cause of this.
- Transit riders' comments from the Phase 1 survey indicated that customers were being impacted by this.

In May 2025

- BC Transit re-allocated time within the city route schedule by dissolving some trips and distributing the resulting minutes to the remaining trips to provide sufficient run time for each trip.
- This resulted in a reduction of about 15% of trips.



November 2025 Update:

Runtimes are now corrected; however past service calculations have been based on unrealistic schedules.

Congestion and factors that slow buses down mean that maintaining the same service needs more resources. Correcting this can lead to service reductions (as occurred in May 2025) or an increase the cost of service without creating additional trips.

06 Ridership Trends - City

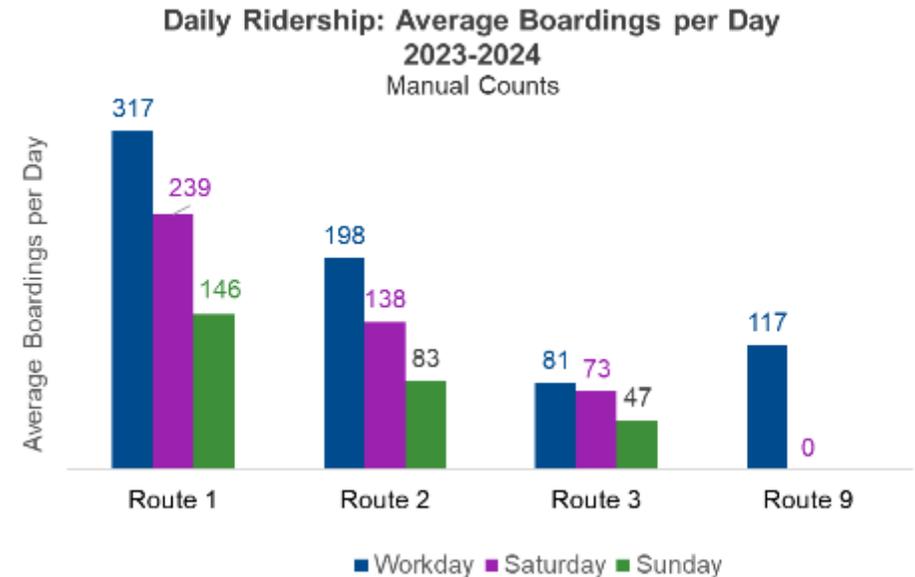
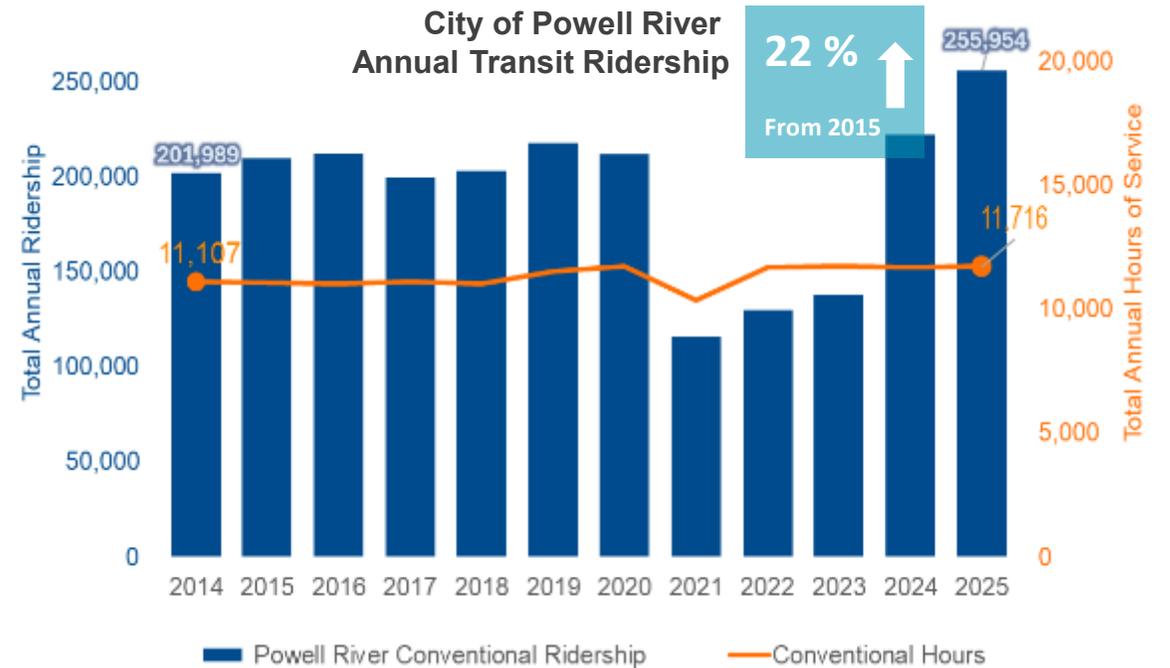
Ridership: Trends across years

- Ridership has risen by 22% since 2015
- The annual hours of service in the transit system have risen by 6% since 2015

Daily Ridership

- On non-summer weekdays there are about 760 boardings in the summer there are about 590 per weekday, a reduction of about 22%
- Route 9 carries about 160 passengers per day when schools is in session, and 14 passengers per day in the summer (one trip of four is removed in the summer)
- The average Saturday ridership is about 62% of the weekday ridership
- The average Sunday ridership is about 40% of the average weekday ridership.

* unless stated averages used refer to weekday service.

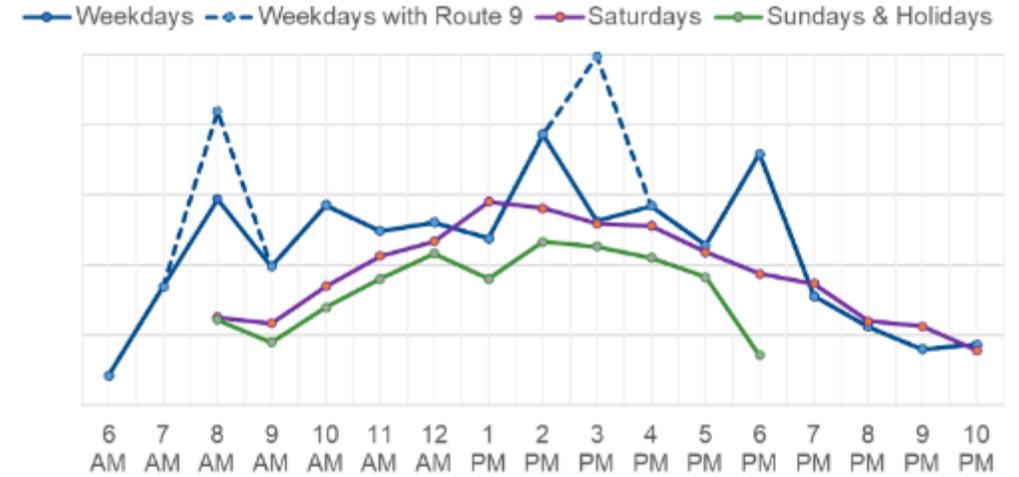


06 Ridership Trends - City

Ridership: boardings by trip start hour

- The predominant ridership profile in Powell River shows a gradual rise in riders towards the midday followed by smooth decline in the evenings.
- On weekdays on the regular routes (1, 2, and 3) there are peaks in boarding that occur in the 8 a.m., 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. hours.
- Route 9, sampled on school-days, creates strong peaks at 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Boardings by trip start hour



* unless stated averages used refer to weekday service.

06 Ridership Performance City

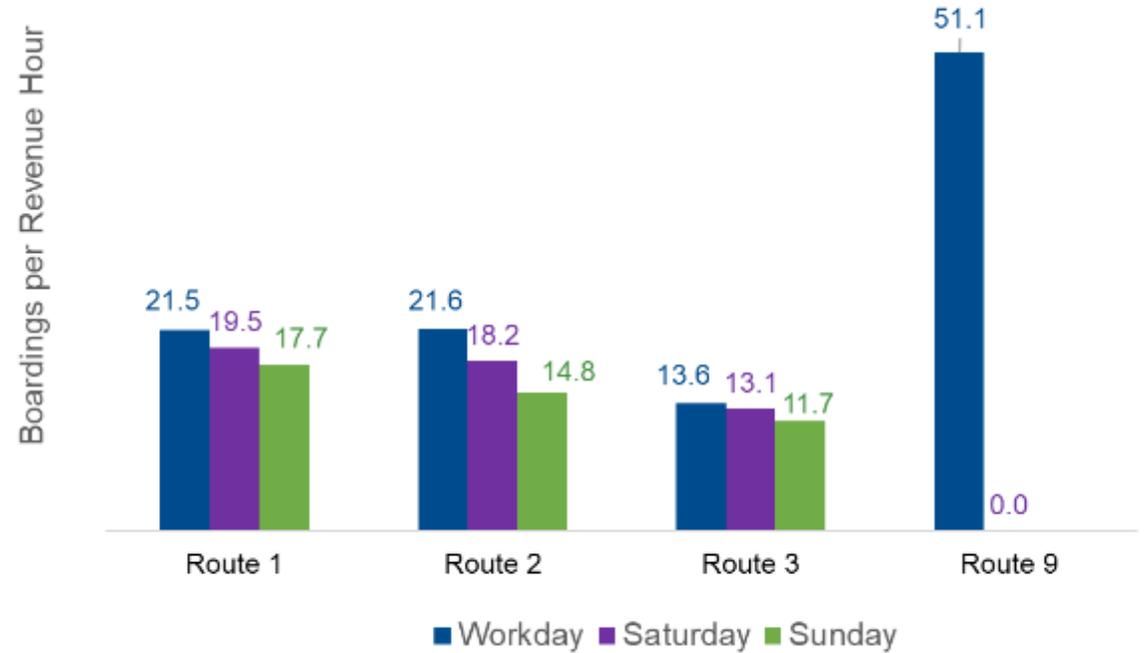
Boardings per Hour

The transit industry uses *Boardings per Hour of service offered* as a benchmark by which to compare transit systems to each other and routes to one another. This is a standardized metric that allows level comparison.

Key Takeaways – Ridership Performance

- Productivity is good for a community of this size.
- Route 9 is targeted for the high school market and service is well used during the school year but is otherwise low.
- The most productive route in the system is tied between Route 1 and Route 2 – at 21.5 boardings per hour.
- The productivity across days of the week indicates that the distribution of service hours provided on Saturdays and Sundays fits the demand.

Performance: Average Boardings per Hour
April 1 2023 - March 31 2024
Manual Counts



53.1%

Of non-school System ridership is attributed to route 1

33.2%

Of non-school System ridership is attributed to route 2

13.6%

Of non-school system ridership is attributed to route 3

06 Ridership Trends - qathet

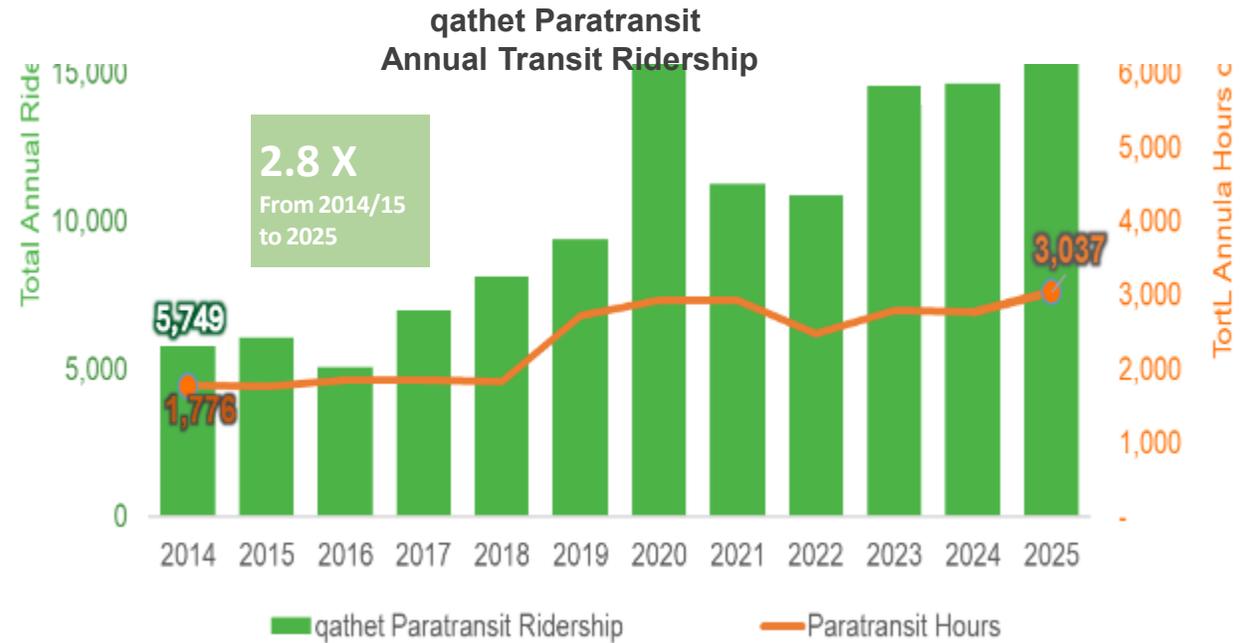
Ridership: Trends across years

- Ridership has risen nearly 3-fold since 2014/15
- The annual hours of service in the transit system have risen by 71% since 2015

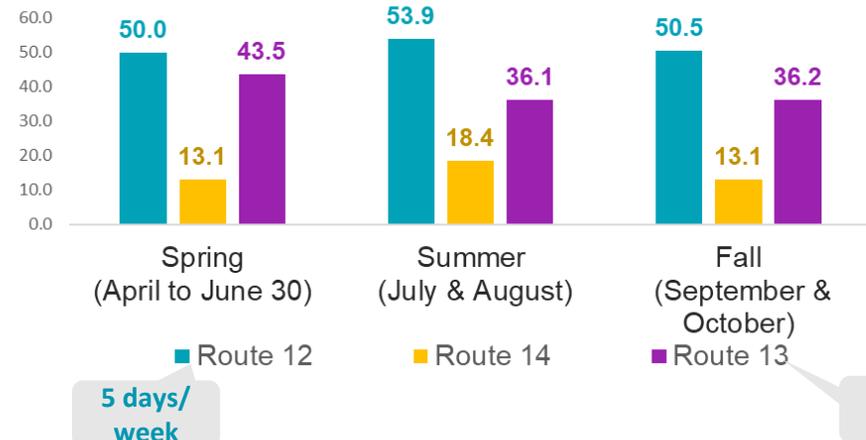
Ridership

- Route 12 carries the most passengers on each of its service days (4 weekdays and Saturdays)
- Routes 12 and 14 show an increased summer seasonal demand
- Route 13 is well used for having only 2 round trips. Ridership shown on this route is weekly since it only operates on Thursdays.

* unless stated averages used refer to weekday service.



Seasonal Performance: Average Boardings per day - weekdays only
(April 1, 2024 to October 31, 2025)



06 Ridership Performance

qathet

Boardings per Hour

The transit industry uses *Boardings per Hour of service offered* as a benchmark by which to compare transit systems to each other and routes to one another. This is a standardized metric that allows level comparison.

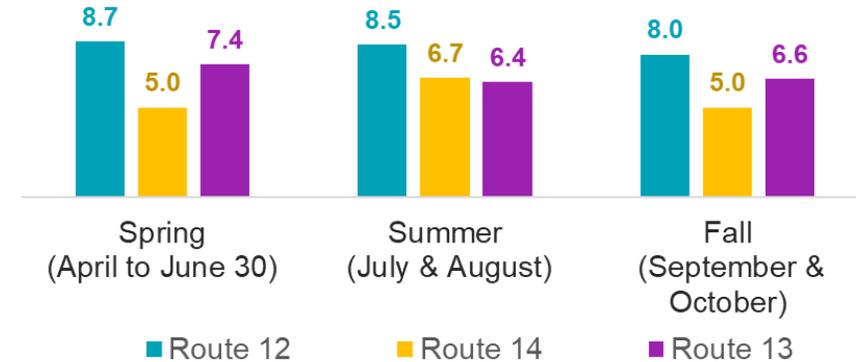
Key Takeaways – Seasonal Performance

- Route 12 performance is the most stable throughout the year.
- Demand for Route 14 is higher in the summer period, even with 2x more trips, performance is higher in the summer.
- Route 13 performs well.

Key Takeaways – Day Type Performance

- Route 12 has lower demand on Saturdays than on weekdays, even with fewer trips offered.

Seasonal Performance: Average Boardings per Hour - weekdays only
(April 1, 2024 to October 31, 2025)

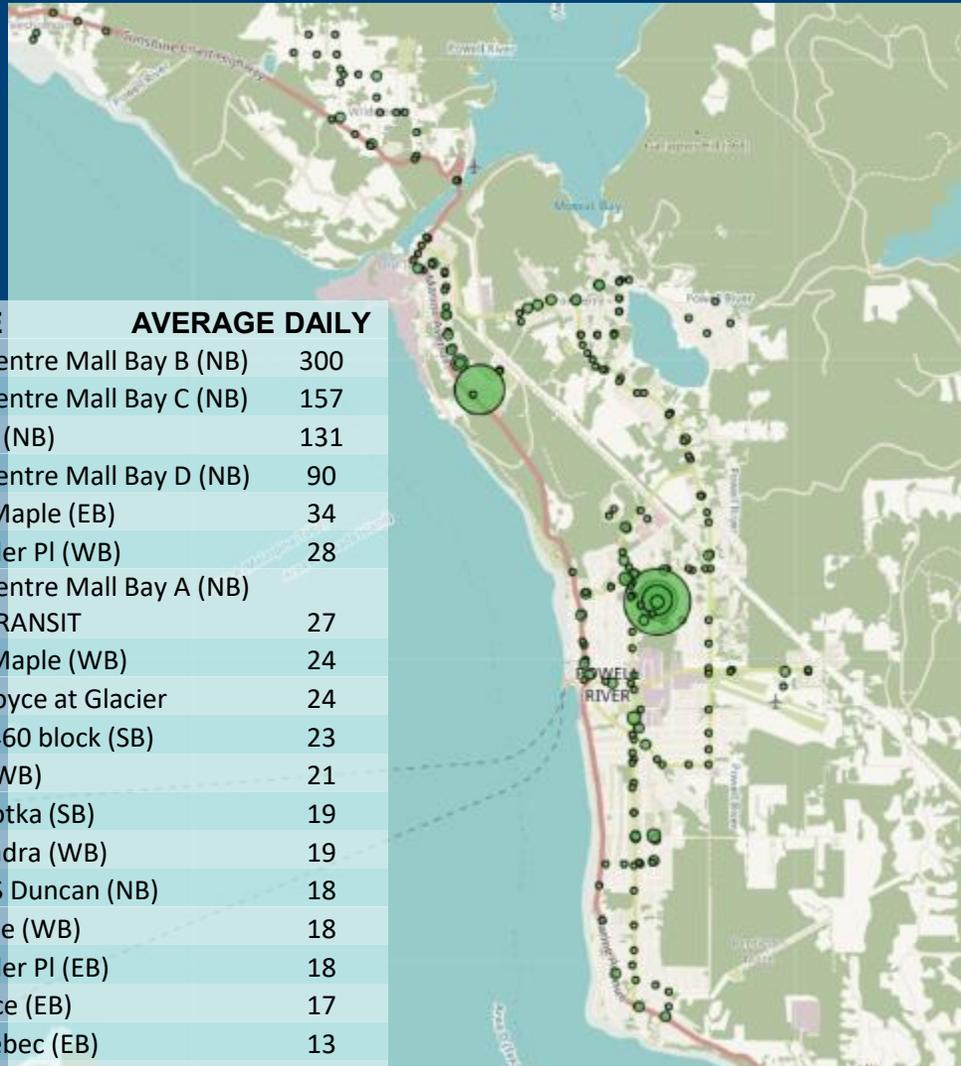


Performance: Average Boardings per Hour, by day type
(April 1, 2024 to October 31, 2025)



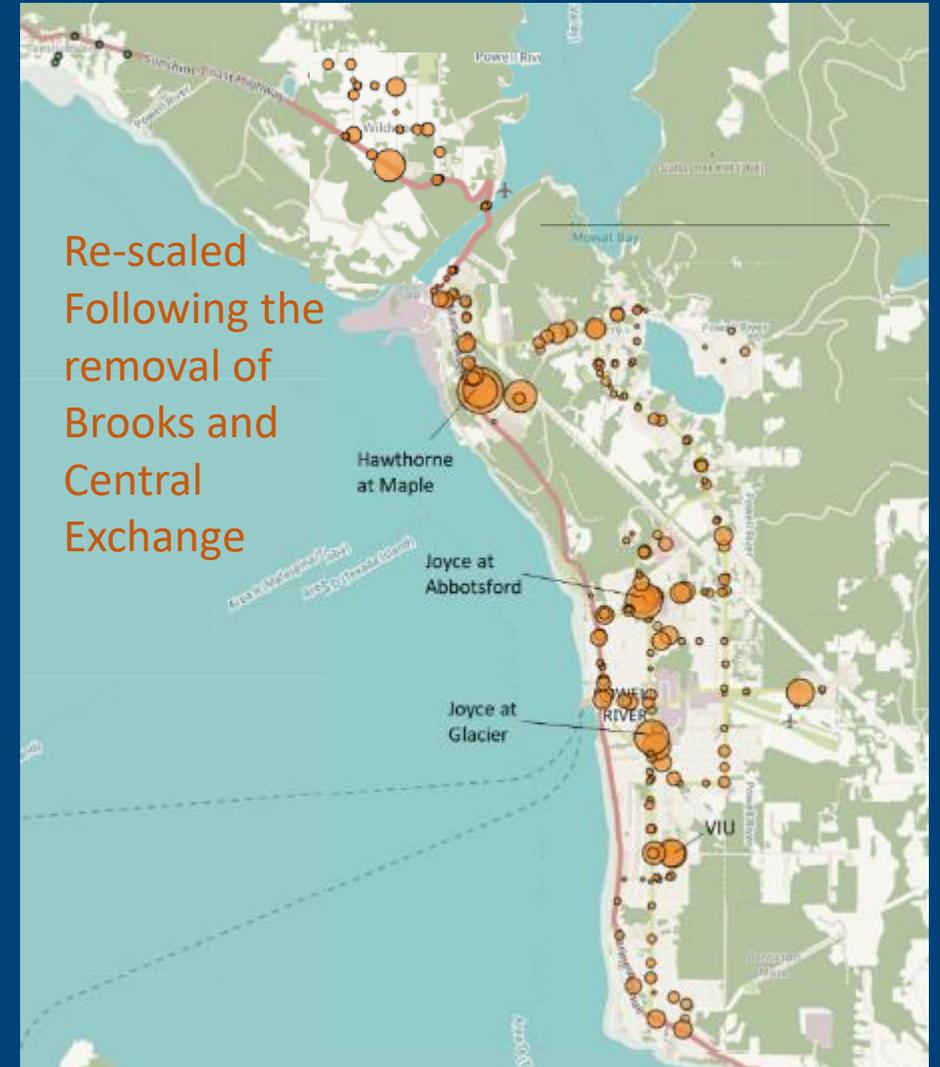
**Route 14 (Lund) operates on Saturdays and Sundays between May and Labour-Day long weekends

07 Ridership Stop Level - City of Powell River (Top 20)



STOP NAME	AVERAGE DAILY
North Town Centre Mall Bay B (NB)	300
North Town Centre Mall Bay C (NB)	157
Brooks School (NB)	131
North Town Centre Mall Bay D (NB)	90
Hawthorn at Maple (EB)	34
Alberni at Sadler Pl (WB)	28
North Town Centre Mall Bay A (NB)	27
qathet PARATRANSIT	27
Hawthorn at Maple (WB)	24
Northbound Joyce at Glacier	24
Timberlane 5460 block (SB)	23
Lund at King (WB)	21
Quadra at Nootka (SB)	19
Nootka at Quadra (WB)	19
Airport Exit NS Duncan (NB)	18
Glacier at Joyce (WB)	18
Alberni at Sadler Pl (EB)	18
Nootka at Joyce (EB)	17
Alberni at Quebec (EB)	13
Cranberry at Ortona Ave (WB)	13
Alberni at Joyce (EB)	13

* unless stated averages used refer to weekday service.



Re-scaled
Following the
removal of
Brooks and
Central
Exchange

07 Ridership Stop Level – qathet Regional District



Route 12 Stillwater

STOP NAME	AVERAGE DAILY
Hwy 101 at Lang Bay (WB)	7
Centennial at Maris (WB)	5
Hwy 101 at McLean (WB)	4
Zillinsky at Nassichuk (NB)	3
Hwy 101 at Black Point Rd (WB)	2



Route 14 Lund

STOP NAME	AVERAGE DAILY
Hwy 101 at Craig (EB)	3
Sunshine Coast Hwy at Franzen	3
Hwy 101 at Malaspina (SB)	2



Route 13 Texada

STOP NAME	AVERAGE DAILY
Gillies Bay at Sanderson (NB)	6
Shelter Point at Gillies Bay Rd (EB)	2

* unless stated averages used refer to weekday service.

08 Engagement Overview

How we Engaged

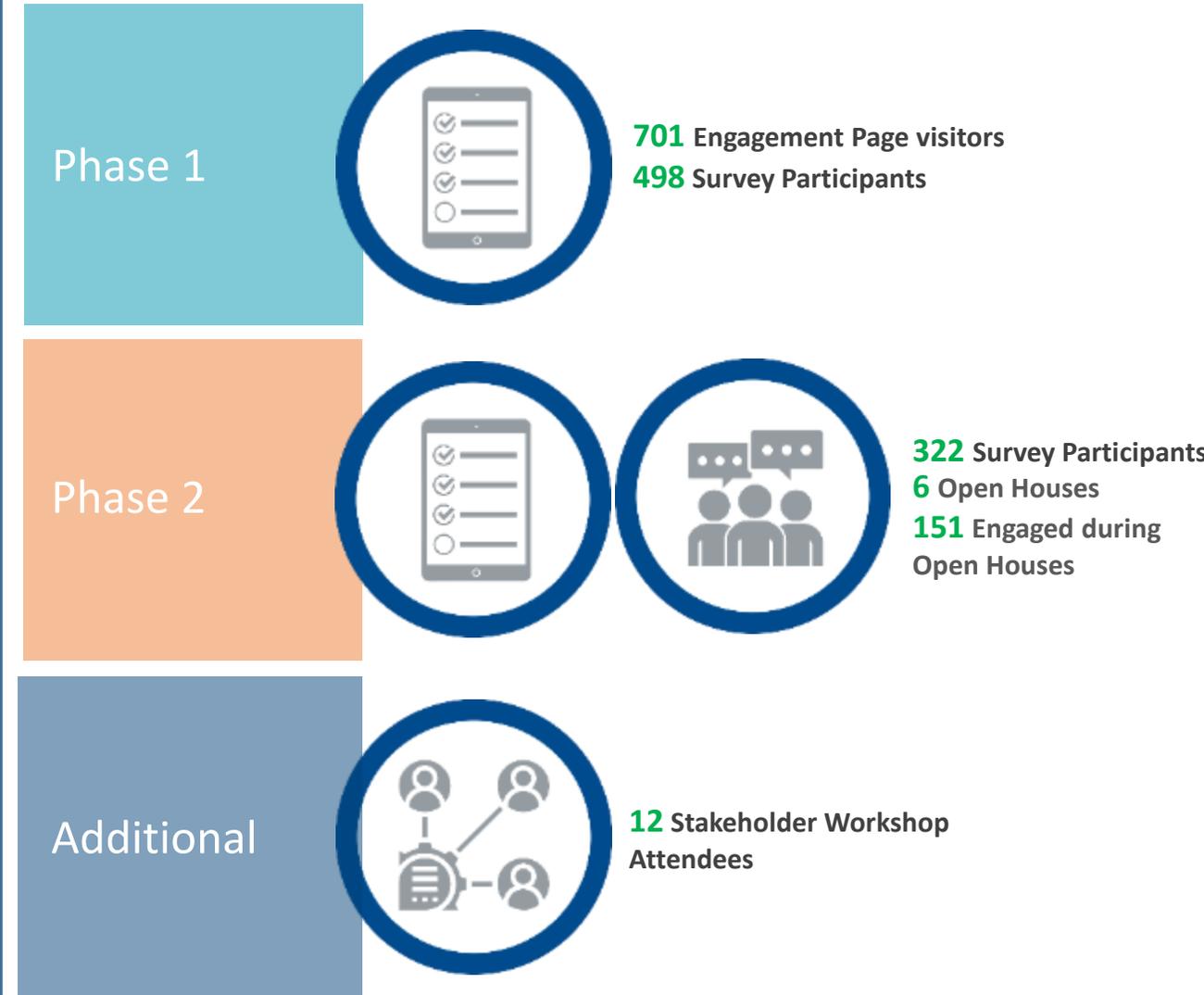
As part of BC Transit’s commitment to public engagement, two phases of consultation were held, both supported by an engagement website.

Phase 1 (December 2024) gathered information on transit use, travel patterns, and community priorities through an online and hardcopy survey.

Phase 2 (June 2025) collected feedback on service options and proposals via an online survey and six in-person events, with hardcopy surveys also available.

Community outreach included newspaper and digital ads in the Powell River Peak, radio ads, internal bus and bus stop posters, community posters, and social media

In addition to public engagement, BC Transit invited organizations representing seniors, business organizations, youth, social aid agencies, housing providers, people with disabilities, ratepayer's groups and others to participate in a facilitated workshop.



09 Engagement Phase 1:

What We Heard

Most Phase 1 survey respondents expected to have higher transit needs/use in the future.

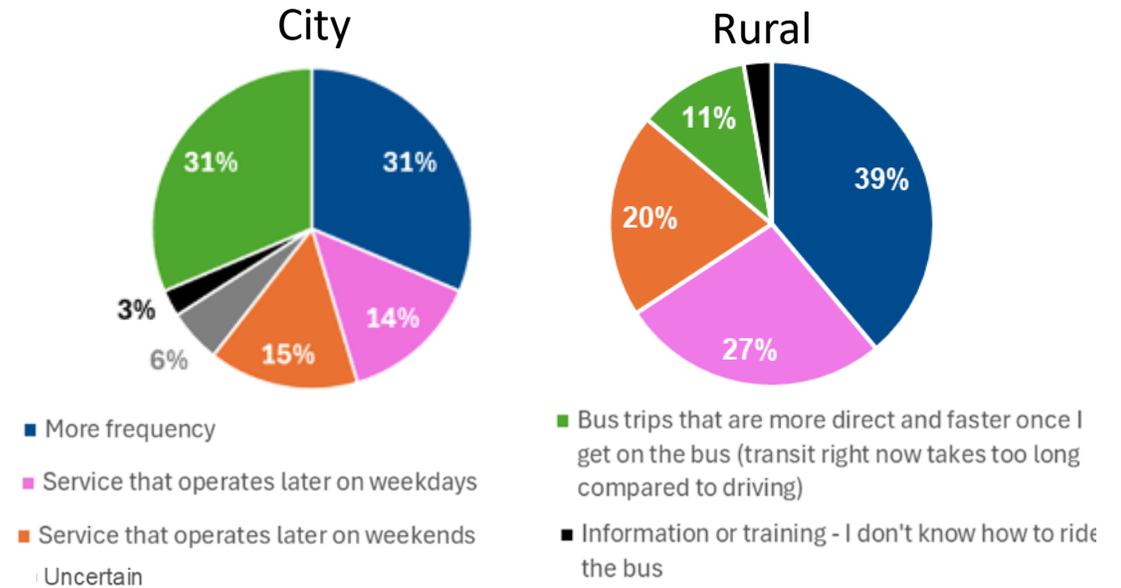
About the survey:

- 498 people participated in the survey online; 48 by paper.
- 74% of respondents were vehicle drivers or passengers; 16% used BC Transit, 4% walked, 2% used Zunga, 1% used bicycle.

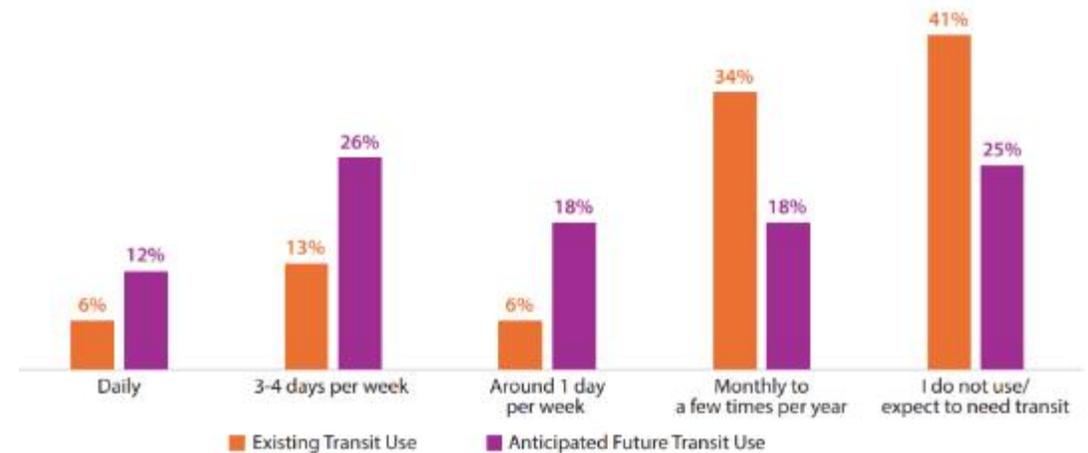
Key Findings:

- **City Resident Priorities:** increase frequency (31%) and travel-time competitiveness with driving (31%).
- **Rural Resident Priorities:** Increase frequency (39% overall: 34% Route 12, 50% Route 14)
- Top two transit-users by age: 38% (25 or younger), 17% (Age 75+)
- Lowest-transit-users by age: 54% (young seniors), 42% (adults 25 to 64)

What would encourage you to use transit more in the future?



Considering your changing needs how often to you expect to need transit in the future?



09 Engagement Phase 1:

What We Heard

Transit Rider and Community Travel Patterns:

Overall: Shopping and errands (for both most and second-most frequent trips).

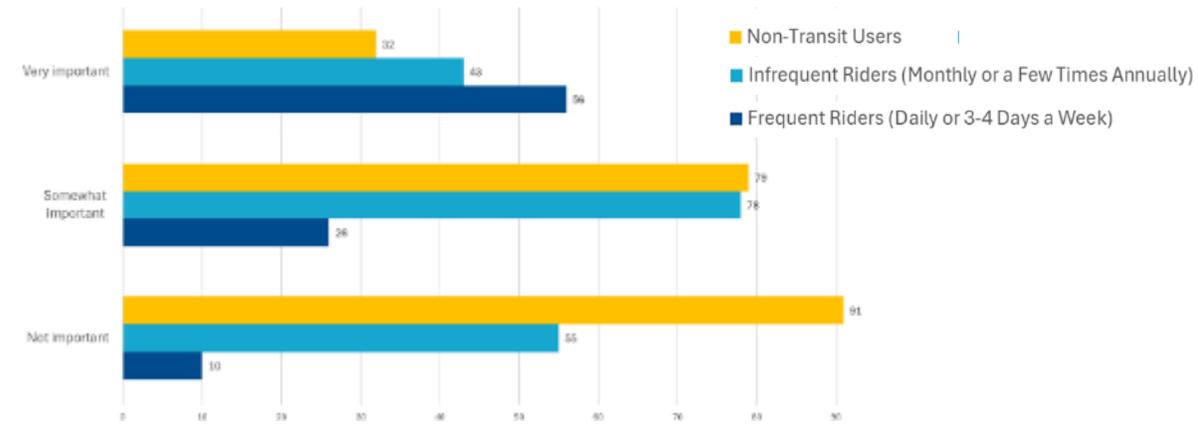
By transit use:

- Frequent riders: Work
- Infrequent riders and non-transit users: Shopping or errands

Bus Stop Infrastructure Priorities:

1. Shelter and bench
2. Transit Schedule
3. Lighting

How important was proximity to/quality of transit or other alternative transportation when you chose where to live?



What is your age group?

Phase 1 Survey

- 14 or under
- 15 to 24 years old
- 25 to 34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- 65-74 years old
- 75 years or older

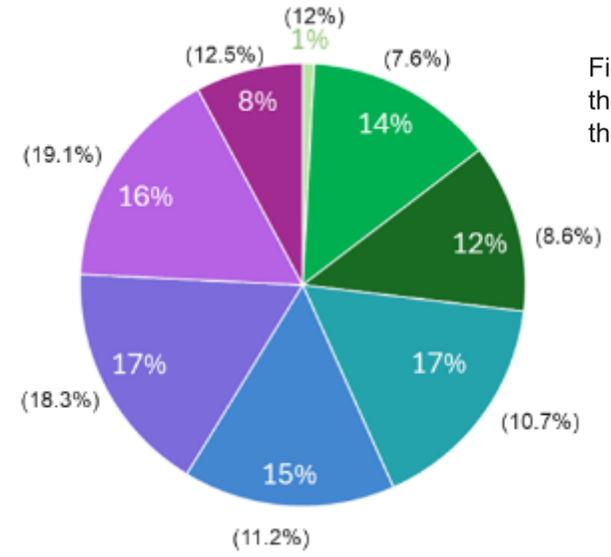


Figure in (brackets) is the actual proportion that this age group forms 2021 Census for qathet RD

10 Network Design Considerations - City

Purpose of the Network Redesign

1. **Modernize the network** so that service levels and service investments are:

- “right sized” for the areas they serve
- Can be scaled independently to address future divergence in needs between areas

2. **Improve the network to address reasons why people do not take the bus to grow transit ridership.**

Things city residents cited that would encourage more transit use:

- Faster, more direct. Transit takes too long once I get on the bus [compared to driving]
- More frequency

3. **Improve service for hospital staff (single biggest employer)**

- Make transit attractive to hospital employees (see #2)
- Consider service availability at shift change times.

4. **Make the system more legible and easier to read/use.**

- Reduce complexity of movement/route lines
- Increase predictability of trip times

5. **Consider limitations of the existing road network; identify infrastructure needs to support the above network changes and enable future network efficiencies.**



11 Engagement Phase 2:

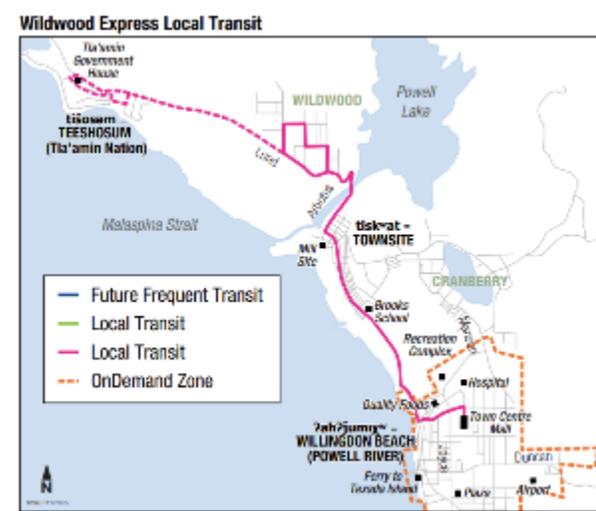
City – What we asked

Purpose

The purpose of this public engagement was to gather community input to help shape the development of a new transit network for the City of Powell River.

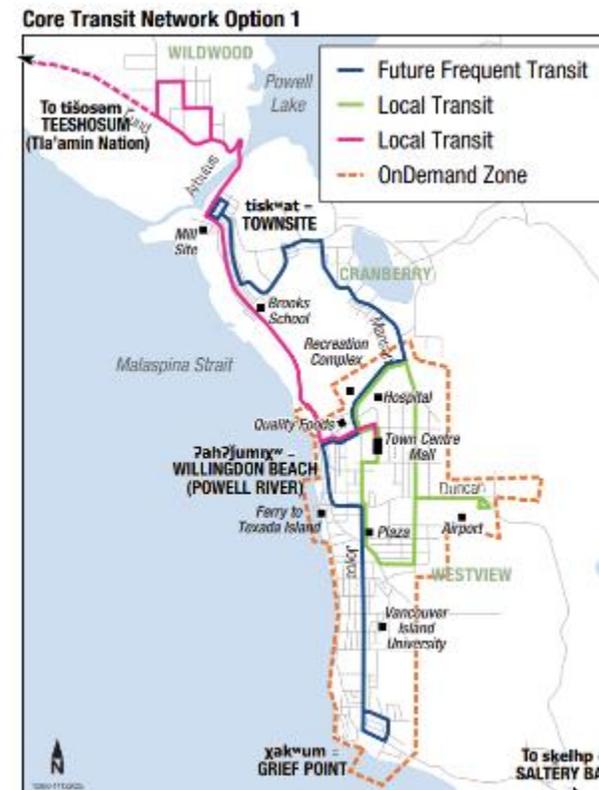
The goals were to:

- Confirm priorities identified in the Phase 1 survey.
- Determine which areas of town residents visit most often for shopping and errands.
- Share the concepts to:
 - Decouple service to less-dense parts of the city from service in the densifying parts of the city
 - Two transit network options being considered for the city's core
- Gauge community interest and support for a new BC Transit OnDemand service.
- Serve as early change management to prepare riders and stakeholders for the upcoming network restructure.



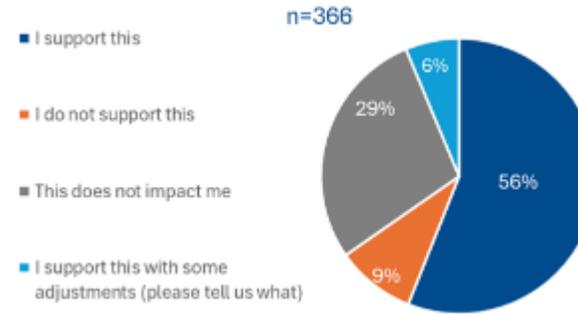
Decoupling service to less dense parts of the city (Wildwood) from densifying parts of the city and streamlining it to make it more direct (faster)

Two network options to serve the City's core area:



11 Engagement Phase 2: City – What we heard

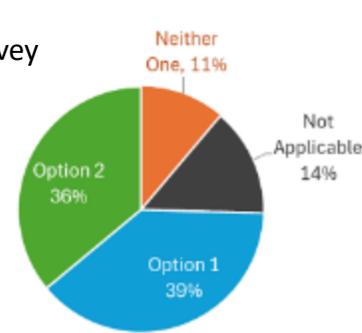
- **79%** of city residents agreed that the top two factors to encourage transit use are:
 1. Faster, more direct trips once I get to on bus
 2. More frequency
- **75%** of survey respondents reported visiting the cluster of businesses around and in Powell River Town Centre (including Freshco, Crossroads Village) most often for shopping and errands.
- **62%** of engagement participants supported (or were not impacted - 29%) by the proposal to decouple service to less dense areas (Wildwood) from the core of the city, in exchange for faster more direct travel times.
- City residents **were nearly split** when asked to indicate which of the two core network choices would serve their most frequent trips best.
- **65%** of city engagement participants supported (or were not impacted 19%) by the introduction of BC Transit OnDemand.



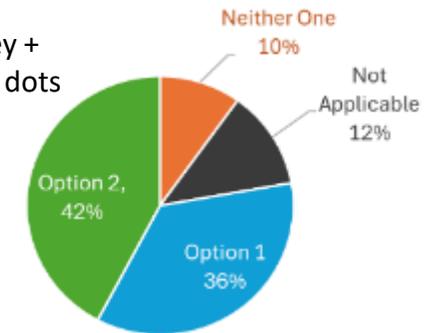
Decoupling the Wildwood service from the core of the city and streamlining it to make it more direct (faster)

Core Network Preferences, n =374

Online Survey

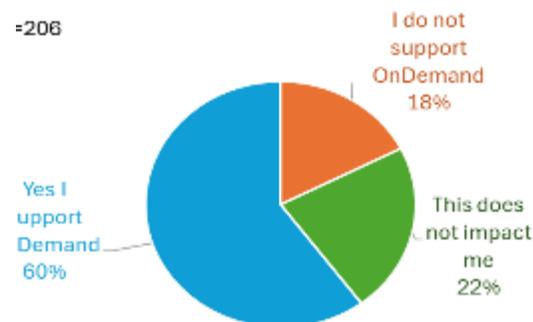


Online Survey + Open House dots

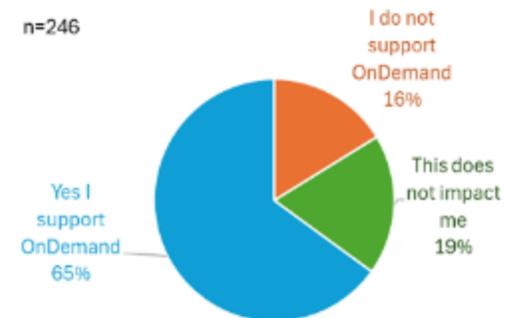


BC Transit OnDemand Service, n = 246

n=206



n=246



12 Engagement Phase 2

qathet – What we asked

Purpose

The purpose of this public engagement was to gather community input to understand community priorities for possible improvements to Routes 12, 13 and 14.

The goals were to:

- Confirm priorities identified in the Phase 1 survey.
- Determine which areas of Powell River residents visit most often for shopping and errands.
- Share service improvement ideas for Routes 12, 13 and 14 and ask community members to let us know their priorities.
- Gauge awareness of On-Request service in the qathet Regional District
- Serve as early change management to prepare riders and stakeholders for the upcoming City network restructure.



12 Engagement Phase 2

gathet – What we heard

Agreement with priorities heard in Phase 1:

- 94% of survey participants indicated that they *definitely agree* (44%) or *somewhat agree* (50%) with the priorities identified in phase 1.

Priorities:

Route 12 – strong distinctions

- Add service on Thursdays for consistent Monday to Friday service
- Introduce service on Sundays (three round trips)
- Add an additional round trip on Saturdays to reach four round trips

Route 13 – support for upcoming expansion

- Support for the second day of service scheduled to be implemented in 2026. Interest in on-island service connecting to the ferry.

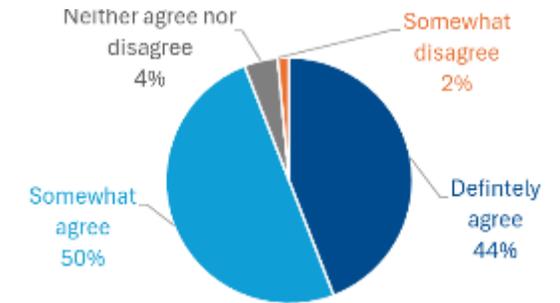
Route 14 – more modest distinctions.

- Priorities were less obvious. Filling in weekdays is highest priority; further priorities were more evenly matched.

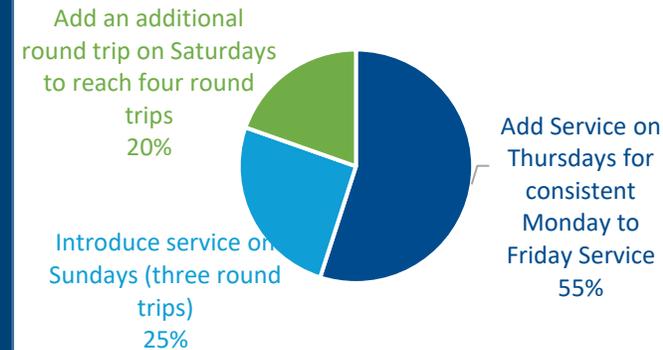
In the Phase 1 survey, rural residents said the top factors that would encourage more transit use are:

- south of town: more frequency
- north of town: more trips per day and days per week

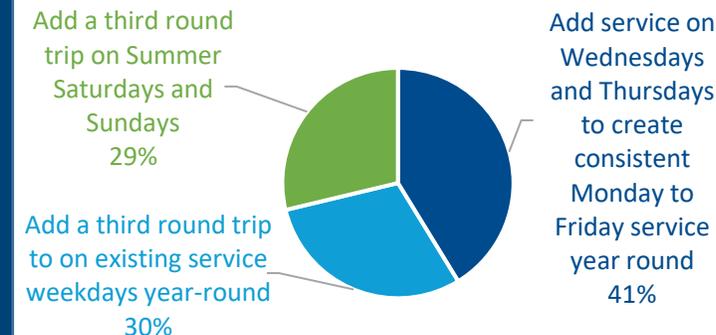
How much do you agree?



Route 12 Priorities, n= 45



Route 14 Priorities, n =



81%

Of respondents were unaware of the On-Request option available for Routes 12, 13 and 14.

13 Powell River: Your Future Network and Service Area

This new transit network modernizes Powell River's system, offering faster, more direct connections between key destinations, including qathet General Hospital. The updated design introduces layers of service designed to work with one another. These also allow route frequencies to be scaled in a more targeted way to fit demand needs.

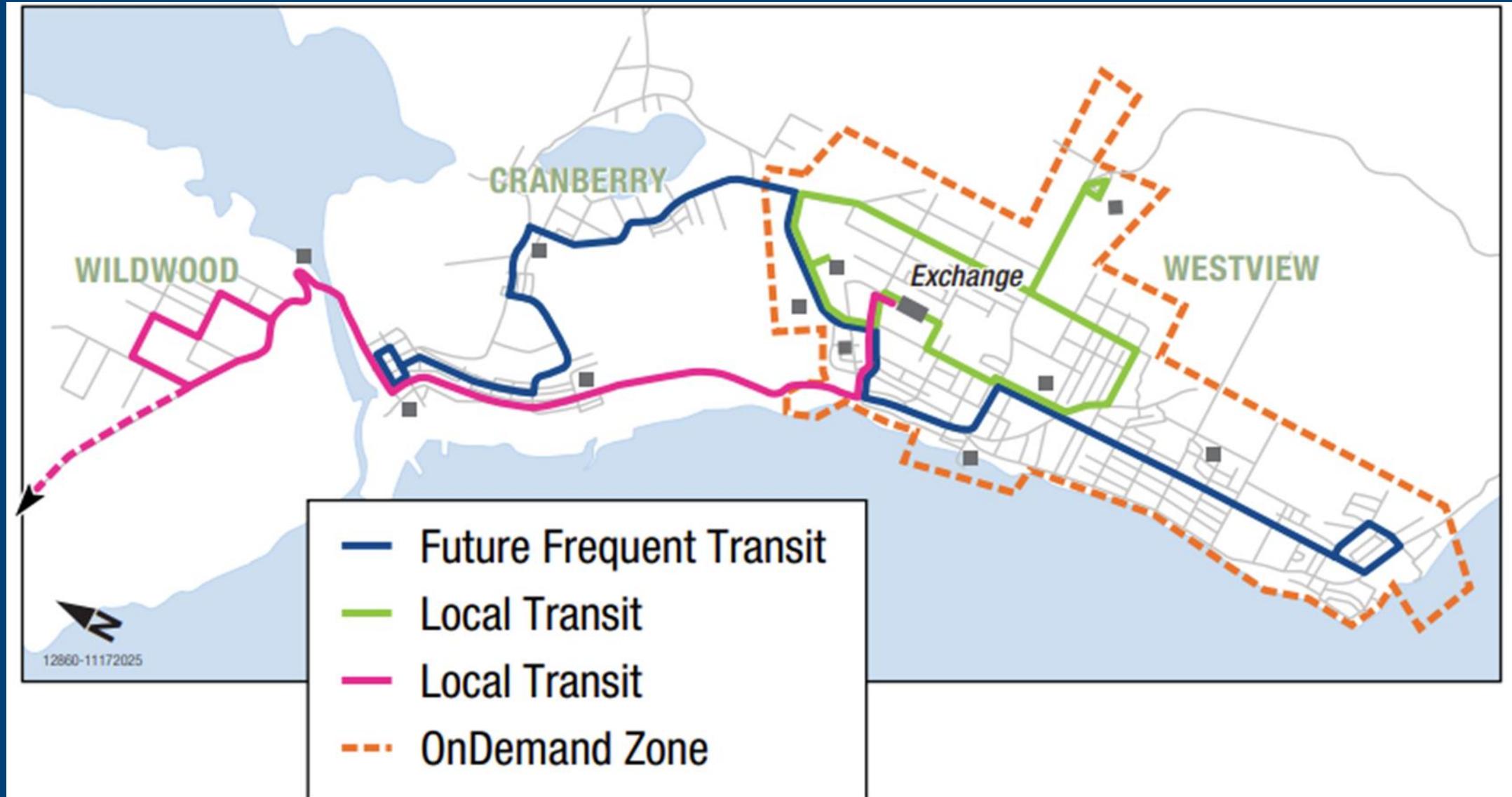
New route classifications:

Future Frequent Transit Route (FTN) serve as mainline, directly linking major destinations and providing trip times that are more competitive with driving. They typically are the highest performing routes in a system. With further investment, subject to performance, the FTN may reach 30-minute service levels.

Local Transit Routes (LTN) provide connectivity between local neighbourhoods and key centres, as well as access to Frequent Transit Routes. They often enable more coverage than Frequent routes and sometimes use smaller vehicles to provide more flexible access. In Powell River the LTN service interval is anticipated to be every 60-90 minutes.

The new **BC Transit OnDemand** (proposed) service will complement scheduled routes and maintain transit access for customers in some areas where conventional stops will be decommissioned. The service area boundary coincides with parts of the city with highest proportions of seniors.

13 Powell River: Your Future Network and Service Area



13 Powell River: Your Future Network – Service Spans

Service	Monday – Friday*	Saturday	Sunday
Before the Transit Future Service Plan (2024)	7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m./11:30 p.m.	8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.	8:40 a.m. to 6:40 p.m.
New Network:	Minimum 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.	Minimum 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.	Minimum: 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
<i>Proposed Future Target:</i>	<i>6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.</i>	<i>6:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.</i>	<i>8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.</i>
handyDART	Monday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday to Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Not Available
BC Transit OnDemand (proposed)	11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.	11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.	Not Available
<i>Service Days to align with handyDART</i>	<i>Future Target: TBD</i>	<i>Future Target: TBD</i>	<i>Future Target: Serve In alignment with handyDART.</i>

*Friday service end would match Saturday service end

14 Powell River: Service Priorities - Short & Medium Term

Priority	Description	Resources
1. Network restructure (2026)	Implement the network redesign for the City routes contained within this document.	2,700 service hours, 3 buses
1. Introduce BC Transit On Demand (Proposed)	Introduce BC Transit OnDemand within the service area shown in this plan.	2,400 service hours, 2 light duty buses
1. Implementation assessment and service adjustment	Network restructures usually reveal needs for minor refinements. A small buffer of hours is strongly advised to respond to this.	400-700 service hours
A biannual (every 2 years) investment trajectory (proposed)	Biannual investment trajectories can enable more gradual adjustments and improvements to service. As of 2025, 900 annual hours would add 10 round trips per week to the Future Frequent Transit Mainline.	900 hours, every 2 years
2. Post-Implementation Review	Following a settling-in period, undertake a full evaluation of the operations, performance and customer satisfaction with the change, refine improvement priorities and amend this plan as needed. Examine opportunities to optimize summer service on Route 9 Brooks.	Cost-neutral
3. Route 1: Restore service spans and increase early weekday morning service. (2027-28)	Extend the Route 1 weekday evening service span; add one early morning Route 1 trip to support hospital employees' commute for the 7:00 am shift start.	900 hours

14 Powell River: Service Priorities - Short & Medium Term

Priority	Description	Resources
4. Route 2: Implement Phase 2 of the Wildwood Express Route (2027-28)	This priority would be funded through a Community Transit Partnership Agreement (CTPA) with Tla'amin Nation. This would extend Route 2 trips consistently to reach Tishosum. The route may be converted to a light duty bus, enabling flexible On-Request coverage.	2,000 service hours, 1 bus
5. Conduct Westview Ferry Connections and report (2027)	Work with BC Ferries to identify opportunities to improve passenger connections for customers transferring between BC Ferries and BC Transit.	Cost-Neutral
6. Route 1: Increase service frequency (2029-30)	Establish 30-minute service level in the afternoon peak; improve evening service around hospital shift-change time.	900 service hours
7. Implement Westview adjustments	Consider expansions or service changes as recommended by the Westview Ferry Connections report	TBC
8. Weekend service improvements (2031-32)	Apply weekend service span improvements.	900 service hours

15 qathet: Your Future Network and Service Area

The existing route alignments for Routes 12 and 13 and 14, combined with the added coverage of the On-Request service provides good coverage for the communities of qathet Regional District.

This Plan does not propose changes to the network map in the regional district electoral areas for any of the qathet Paratransit routes. Future changes to the Paratransit system should focus on adjustments to and improvements to service levels.



16 qathet: Service Priorities – Short & Medium Term

Priority	Description	Resources
1. Route 13 Texada Improvements	Increase service on Route 13 Texada from 1 day per week (Thursdays) to 2 days per week (Tuesdays and Thursdays). Operate the same service level on both days.	550 hours, 2 buses
2. Route 12 Stillwater weekday improvements	Introduce service on Thursdays, matching the existing schedule of other weekdays.	420 hours
3. Examine opportunities to streamline route 14 and make alignment more predictable.	Following a settling in period from the city's network service change, conduct a review of Route 14 bus stop activity within the city boundaries to identify if the route can be made consistent in both directions.	Cost neutral
4. Route 14 Lund improvements (all year)	<p>Introduce 2 round trips on Thursdays (all year) to match existing weekday service levels. Conduct engagement to determine whether the remaining hours are best put towards either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 3rd round trip during peak season (late evening) or • Introducing 2 round trips on Wednesdays 	330 hours
5. Route 12 Stillwater weekend improvements	Introduce service on Sundays to Route 12 Stillwater at three trips per day.	280 hours
6. Route 13 Ferry connection examination	During engagement, staff received several suggestions to explore on-island transit connecting to the ferries. This is not feasible because round trip overland travel times on Texada are mismatched with sailing times. BC Transit will consult BC Ferries to determine if there is any flexibility for sailing times.	Cost neutral

17 Infrastructure Priorities

Priority	Description	Resources/Partners
Central Transit Exchange	Provide shelters and improve passenger amenities.	BC Shelter Program, City of Powell River
Route terminus improvements for the Mainline Route	<p>The new Mainline route will require transit operators to have layover and recovery in Grief Point and Townsite.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thunder Bay WB at Cariboo requires driver amenities and an improved bus pull out. The pull out would also serve as a staging location for the proposed BC Transit OnDemand. • Marine northbound at Ash requires passenger amenities improvements and an improved bus pull out. 	MoTT, BC Transit, City of Powell River
Conversion of speed humps to speed cushions on routes used or planned for transit use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed cushions are an alternative traffic calming device used in place of traffic humps, and which are designed to enable buses and emergency vehicles to pass over them. 	Tla’amin Nation, MoTT
System-wide Bus Stop Accessibility improvements	Upgrade bus stops for accessibility – pads should be sufficiently wide for ramps to deploy. Please consider using the BC Transit development referral program to help flag opportunities associated with redevelopment.	City of Powell River

17 Infrastructure Priorities

Priority	Description	Resources/Partners
Bus Stop Spacing Review	Conduct a spacing review to ensure that stop spacing reflects standards established in the BC Transit Infrastructure design guidelines.	City of Powell River / BC Transit
Bus Stop Amenities Improvements	Consider adopting an annual bus stop improvement program for stop improvements and maintenance. See section 7 for most-used stops.	BC Transit Shelter Program, City of Powell River
Rightsizing	The Wildwood route presents a key opportunity to investigate the implementation and operation of an appropriate vehicle type and size for ridership demands.	BC Transit, City of Powell River, qathet Regional District
Pedestrian improvements at qathet General Hospital	BC Transit requests that Vancouver Coastal Health consider site circulation improvements to improve pedestrian access to the main hospital entrance from public sidewalks and transit stops on Joyce.	Vancouver Coastal Health
Intersection improvements Barnet and Mall Entrance to enable transit bus use	BC Transit requests that any future intersection upgrades consider enabling access for heavy duty transit buses between Barnet and the Central Transit Exchange in both directions. This will enable more legible and cost-effective future routing options.	City of Powell River
Intersection of Joyce and Manson	BC Transit requests that any future intersection upgrades consider a bus-capable roundabout.	City of Powell River

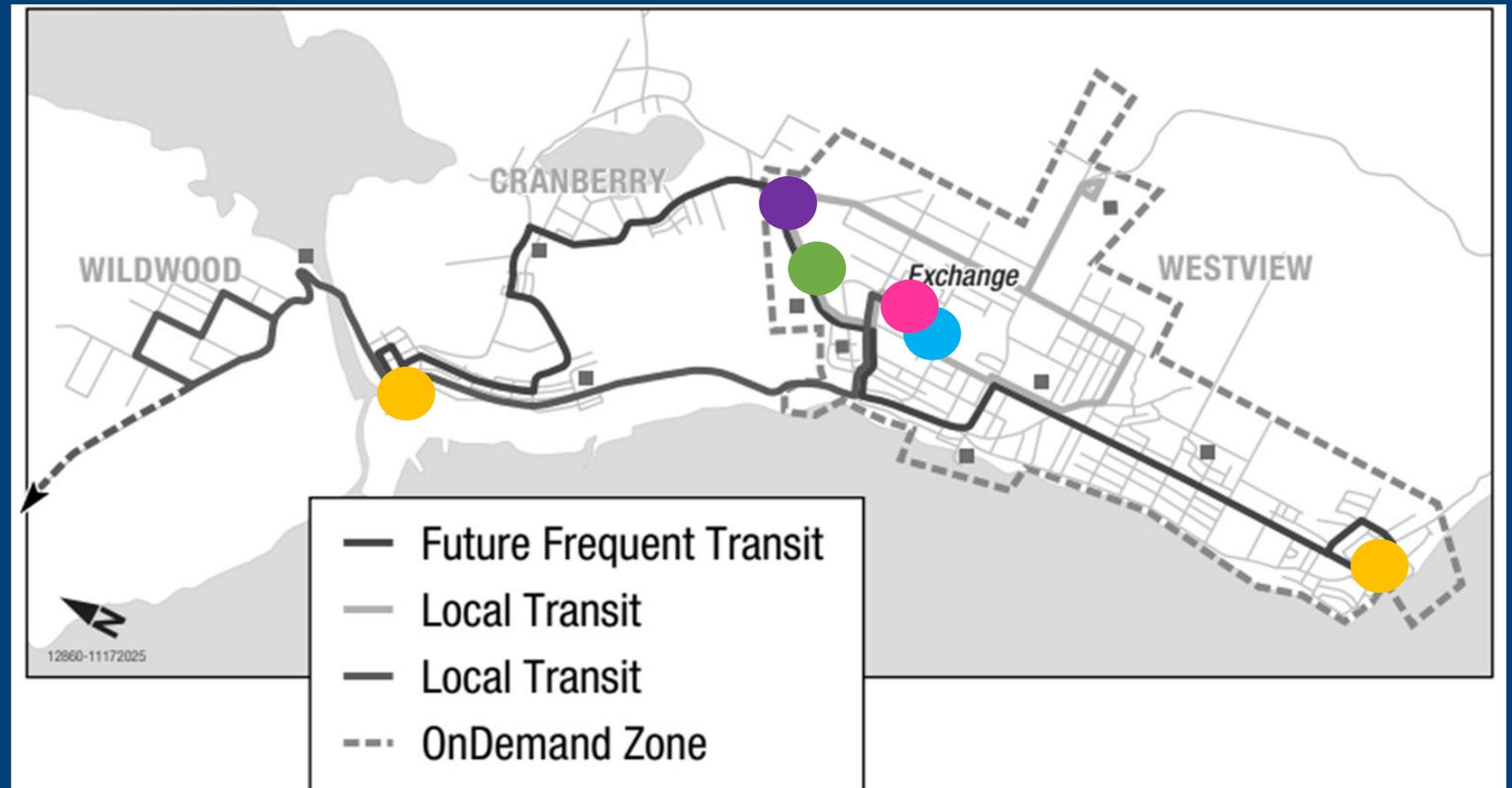
17 Infrastructure Priorities

Infrastructure

Infrastructure priorities will help to shape the City of Powell River and qathet transit systems over the next five years providing improved transit infrastructure for customer convenience and safety. New infrastructure will support the implementation of this plan and enable future improvements and service efficiencies.

Priorities from the previous table that have targeted locations are shown below on the map to the right.

-  **Central Exchange** Provide shelters and improve passenger amenities
-  **Terminus Improvements**
Thunder Bay WB at Cariboo driver amenities, pull out, OnDemand staging area.
Marine northbound at Ash passenger amenities improvements
-  **qathet General Hospital** Improve pedestrian access to/from bus stops on Joyce
-  **Joyce & Manson** If intersection improvements are planned, consider a bus-capable roundabout
-  **Barnet at Mall Entrance** If intersection improvements are planned, enable full-size bus access to and from the exchange



18 Future Fleet

Right-Sizing Buses for Flexibility

Utilizing smaller buses on local routes can enable more flexibility in service delivery. As of January 2026, the City of Powell River Transit System will have a mix of 8 heavy duty and 2 light-duty vehicles.

Through public engagement we heard interest from some community members in smaller, light-duty vehicles to better meet the demands of the local routes.

The planned the redesign of the City's bus network seeks to better fit the transit service to the needs of neighbourhoods. Following a settling in period, transit staff will consider rightsizing opportunities as needs for fleet replacement arise. Similarly, staff will continue to monitor ridership on the qathet Paratransit routes to ensure that fleet size continues to balance passenger demand with the flexible service delivery offered today.



19 Information Priorities

Priority	Description	Resources/Partners
Schedule and Map Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer full-size route and schedule posters to select strategic locations such as qathet General Hospital; Powell River Town Centre, Westview Terminal, Blubber Bay, Saltery Bay, Lund, Tla'amin Health Centre. Ensure that shelters at the central exchange, each of the new Route 1, and at other busy locations have frames suitable for route and schedule posters. Explore making the full-size route and schedule posters downloadable as a PDF. 	BC Transit, City of Powell River, qathet Regional District.
Riders Guide Design	For the first iteration of the network restructure Riders Guide, show city and regional routes on distinct maps.	BC Transit
Updated Flag signs within Tishosum	Apply the new First Nations language formatting options for new/replacement flag signs situated in Tishosum	BC Transit, Tla'amin Nation
Service Change Enhanced Awareness	Enact an enhanced awareness campaign as part of the March 2026 network restructure service change. Include support for transit operators, and also for seniors and residents whose routes are changing.	BC Transit, City of Powell River
On-Demand coverage for areas with decommissioned bus stops.	Some underutilized bus stops will be decommissioned in this service change. Customer information for OnDemand should be prioritized for posting at these stops.	BC Transit, City of Powell River

19 Information Priorities

Priority	Description	Resources/Partners
Support “Bus Buddy” and community-led transit training initiatives	Support community and volunteer organizations interested in conducting peer education for the “bus-curious”.	City of Powell River, qathet Regional District
Raise awareness of On-Request Options for Rural Areas Transit Riders	Explore creative ways to remind residents within the qathet Paratransit areas that On-Request Zone exists. Rack Card? Community Newsletter inserts? Other?	BC Transit, qathet Regional District
Collaboration with Comox Valley Regional Transit and BC Ferries	Facilitate connections between BC Ferries, City of Powell River, qathet Regional District and the Comox Valley Regional District to share information and support Transit-Ferry travel between the respective communities.	BC Transit, City of Powell River, qathet Regional District, Comox Valley Regional District
Raise awareness of Route 12, 13 and 14 seasonal schedule	Ensure that local marine operators are familiar with the seasonal service increases and designed interlines for Route 14 and 12.	BC Transit, qathet Regional District
Consult with BC Ferries to learn if there is any potential for Texada Island schedule flexibility.	See 16 Service Priorities – Rural 2026-2031 – Item #6	BC Transit, qathet Regional District, BC Ferries

20 Investment Strategy

Funding the Plan

To achieve the goals of this plan, sustained capital and operating investments in the transit system will be required over the next five years and beyond.

The plan also calls for capital investments that include:

- Accessibility upgrades to existing transit stops to enable customers reliant on mobility devices to use the scheduled bus service.
- Improvements to customer amenities at transit stops

Given that additional transit investment is anticipated over the coming decades, BC Transit, the City of Powell River, qathet Regional District and Tla'amin Nation will need to prioritize and plan for these investments and ensure there are stable and predictable funding sources available.



21 Moving Forward

Monitoring + Implementation

Performance of the transit system is monitored on an annual basis, which is typical for transit systems of this size. Performance may be monitored more closely after a significant service change to evaluate the change.

Service improvements will be integrated into the Three-Year Transit Improvement Process (TIP), which is updated on an annual basis. Infrastructure improvements will be incorporated into BC Transit's Capital Plan. Prior to implementation of service changes, BC Transit planning staff will work with staff at the City of Powell River, qathet Regional District, and Tla'amin First Nation to ensure service improvements appropriately reflect local needs. Additional targeted engagement may be conducted to refine or reconfirm concepts.



Acknowledgement

Thank you

The development of this Transit Future Service Plan provides a roadmap for the continued development of the Powell River and qathet Transit Systems.

This plan was made possible by participation from local governments, key stakeholders and the public. BC Transit would like to thank the project working group members from:

- City of Powell River
- Powell River Transit Operations
- BC Ferries
- qathet Regional District
- Tla'amin Nation

