

# Victoria Regional Transit Commission

BC Transit 520 Gorge Road East  
November 18, 2025 | 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

## DRAFT MINUTES

*The Victoria Regional Transit Commission conducts its business on the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.*

### **Present:**

Commissioner Ryan Windsor, Chair; Commissioner Marianne Alto, Vice Chair; Commissioner Marie-Terese Little; Commissioner Dean Murdock; Commissioner Colin Plant; Commissioner Maja Tait; Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna

**Regrets:** Commissioner Barbara Desjardins

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### BC Transit Staff:

Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager; Christy Harrold, Vice-President, Strategy, Planning, and Public Affairs; Greg Hill, Director, Financial Planning & Analysis; Ryan Campbell, Manager, Financial Planning and Analysis; Levi Timmermans, Director, Project Delivery, Levi Megenbir, Manager, Service Planning; Jacob Burnley, Transit Planner, James Wadsworth, Manager, Project Development; Ryan Dennis, Director, Strategy & Growth; Tessa Stewart, Manager, Business Development; Stephen Anderson, General Manager, Victoria Regional Transit; Christine Lewis, Executive Assistant and Divisional Coordinator (Recorder)

### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Ryan Windsor called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**Motion MOVED by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna and SECONDED by Commissioner Colin Plant to approve the agenda as written.**

**CARRIED**

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 9, 2025**

**Motion MOVED by Commissioner Marie-Terese Little and SECONDED by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna to approve Minutes as written.**

**CARRIED**

### **3. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Good morning, everyone. I'd like to begin by acknowledging that we're meeting on the unceded traditional territories of the Lekwungen peoples, including the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations.

It's hard to believe that 2025 is almost at a close. It's been a busy year for our transit system and I would like to take this chance to thank the staff, and in particular the transit operators and maintenance staff, for all the work they do year-round to keep our buses on the road, ensuring riders receive safe reliable transit to take them where they need to go.

As students at post-secondary institutions take a break from their studies and some head home for the holidays, we will see a seasonal service change on December 8<sup>th</sup>. This will be followed by another winter service change early in the new year, through which service levels will be significantly increased in alignment with school resuming.

New Year's Eve is the time to celebrate this past year and the beginning of 2026. To ensure everyone has a safe ride to and from where they need to go, we will be providing free transit after 6pm to riders across the region, with service until approximately 3:00am (route dependent).

We have some Good News stats to share coming out of this quarter. With the reinstatement of the Cowichan Valley Regional Transit service post labour-action, the Cowichan Valley Commuter has seen a 70% recovery in the last month. Also, here in the Victoria Regional Transit System, the Pass-Up Reduction Program initiated in September has seen a significant reduction in pass-up events. Utilizing more standing room, buses now stop at every designated stop and allow passengers to board. General Manager Stephen Anderson will be sharing more about the initial success of this program, but our customer service team has seen a 36% reduction in complaints regarding pass-ups since the program began.

We have a very full agenda, so I will now turn it over to Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager to give the staff update before we start today's meeting.

Thank you.

#### **4. STAFF REMARKS**

Good morning, Commissioners. Before getting into reports today, I wanted to take a moment to provide some additional comments from Staff, which are intended to provide information on items that aren't being covered in reports today, and hopefully they'll also set some context for the meeting, and the agenda that's been provided.

The season of giving is just around the corner, and BC Transit is once again giving back with our classic holiday initiatives. In 2024, the community generously donated 3,343 pounds of food donations, \$10,200 in toys and over \$400 in cash donations during our Stuff the Bus event, all of which was donated to the Mustard Seed Food Bank and Salvation Army to support families in the region.

If you're celebrating the start of the holiday season at the Peninsula Coop Santa Claus Parade or the IEOA Truck Parade, make sure you give a wave to the BC Transit bus. On December 13 and 14, look for the Santa Bus lit up and decorated for the holidays. Riders can enjoy a free ride and some festive holiday music while aboard.

Winter 2026 Service Change starts January 5, one of BC Transit's most extensive updates in recent years. The Planning Team will guide you through the upcoming service changes later in the agenda, but because this change is so comprehensive, we're putting extra effort into rider engagement. We'll be rolling out special marketing brochures, bus stop notices, and on-bus messaging. We'll also use social media to keep riders informed. Most importantly, we'll have staff stationed at key stops and exchanges during the first few days of the change to answer questions and help riders adjust to new schedules and routes.

Have you seen more BEBs? I have. We currently have 10 electric buses in service, and additional battery-electric buses (BEBs) are being delivered and released into service. You will start to see more this fall and winter. Feedback from operators and maintenance teams has been extremely positive—they appreciate the performance and reliability. By the end of 2027, 62 electric buses are planned for Victoria.

## 5. CORRESPONDENCE

None

## 6. DELEGATIONS

None

## 7. MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

**7a) MOTION by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna to provide online access to Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) meetings and make recordings of these meetings available online to the public.**

Staff advised that there are currently no formal requirements from the Crown Agencies and Board Resourcing Office (CABRO) for BC Transit to record or livestream VRTC meetings and that an amendment to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission Charter would be advised. Staff also advised that the usual location of the meetings (boardroom at BC Transit, 520 Gorge Road East, Victoria, BC) will be undergoing a renovation in December 2025 through early 2026 and they are looking at what options are available to provide online access to meetings in the future.

**AMENDED MOTION by Commissioner Colin Plant and SECONDED by Commissioner Dean Murdock for staff to report back on their recommendations on how to implement recording and live streaming of future Victoria Regional Transit Commission meetings.**

**CARRIED**

**7b) MOTION by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission support the creation of a public open data portal to provide accessible, regularly updated statistics on transit ridership, bus stop usage and crowding.**

Staff advised that BC Transit has invested heavily in improving access to value-added data over the past few years, but a public facing data portal would require a thoughtful, measured approach aligned with enterprise data strategy. A public-facing data portal is part of a long-term strategy but is not currently identified as an active project. As BC Transit is a provincial entity, any data portal would need to include all transit systems across the province.

**AMENDED MOTION by Commissioner Colin Plant and SECONDED by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna for staff to bring back a report at a future Commission meeting the feasibility and timeline for BC Transit to create a public data portal for the Victoria Regional Transit System.**

**CARRIED**

**8. ATAC CHARTER UPDATE – FOR APPROVAL**

*ELISE WREN*

The Commission was presented with a report that recommended a change to the Accessible Transit Advisory Committee Charter that included administrative changes and a new directive to disallow the Chair from voting on motions unless in a tie-breaking event as well as an invitation for members of the Commission to attend their meeting if available. Staff advised that the Charter is reviewed every two years and that the amendment on voting by the Chair was proposed by the current Chair of the Committee.

**AMENDMENT MOTION BY Commissioner Colin Plant and SECONDED by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna to APPROVE the proposed changes but remove the request to disallow the Chair from voting on motion unless it is a tie-breaking event.**

**DEFEATED**

**MOTION BY Commissioner Maja Tait and SECONDED by Commissioner Marie-Terese Little to APPROVE the ATAC Charter Update as presented.**

**CARRIED**

**9. CUSTOM TRANSIT SERVICE AREA – FOR APPROVAL**

*ELISE WREN*

The Commission heard that the current custom transit service area for handyDART is based on a 2011 map. The proposed changes to this service area would use a 2025 map and look at extending boundaries to include East Sooke and the Saanich Peninsula as well as new transit routes. The newly proposed map will encompass all existing handyDART client addresses and be more inclusive of the region.

**MOTION BY Commissioner Colin Plant and SECONDED by Commissioner Maja Tait to APPROVE the Custom Transit Service Area.**

**CARRIED**

**10. SAANICH TRANSIT CENTRE UPDATE – FOR APPROVAL**

*LEVI TIMMERMANS AND KATIE HAMILTON*

The Commission was presented with a report that gave an overview of BC Transit's current transit facilities in the Victoria Regional Transit System and an introduction of plans for a new fourth facility located in Saanich that will help to ensure space for the transit fleet and maintenance as the current facilities are expected to reach capacity by 2028. Properties in the Glanford area, some of which have historically been used for transit, have been acquired and consultation has begun with local stakeholders including neighbourhood associations, property owners and local First Nations. The Commission was asked to approve public engagement with

local governments prior to the Commission's final approval to proceed with the project. In early 2026, staff plan to present at the Capital Regional District Transportation Committee meeting for information, as well as offer Council presentations to any municipalities that wish to receive a delegation. After engagement, staff will seek Commission approval in June, 2026 and then continue with public engagement into 2027.

**MOTION BY Commissioner Maja Tait and SECONDED by Commissioner Dean Murdock to APPROVE engagement with local governments as set out in recommendation in the Saanich Transit Centre update.**

**CARRIED**

**11. VRTS FARE REVIEW – FOR APPROVAL**  
*TESSA STEWART*

The Commission was presented with a recommendation to increase the 30-day Concession Pass and handyDART monthly pass to \$55.00 to align with BC Transit's recommended fare pricing guidelines. If approved, the Concession Pass fare change would commence on June 30, 2026. Staff advised that the last rate change was in 2012 and there is currently a significant different in price from standard fares with the 30-day Concession Pass being almost half the price of standard 30-day Adult Fare Passes. Staff advised that fare reviews take place every two years and the next fare review would take place in 2027. If the recommendation does not proceed then the 30-day Concession Pass would remain at \$45.00 until a new recommendation comes forward after the 2027 fare review.

**MOTION to implement Option 3 in the report for a \$55.00 Concession Pass to be implemented June 30, 2025.**

**DEFEATED**

**MOTION by Commissioner Colin Plant and SECONDED by Commissioner Maja Tait to implement Option 1 in the report for a \$50.00 Concession Pass to be implemented June 30, 2025.**

**DEFEATED**

**MOTION by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna and SECONDED by Commissioner Marianne Alto to direct staff to bring forward adoption in the 2027 fare review that would have Concession Pass fares increase at a predetermined percentage point when the Adult Fare Pass is increased.**

**CARRIED**

**12. Q2 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – FOR INFORMATION**  
*RYAN CAMPBELL*

The Commission was presented with a report outlining financial information for the second quarter of this fiscal year. In the financial summary, staff outlined that second quarter ended at

\$7.2M under budget due to lower than anticipated fuel prices after the elimination of the carbon tax and lower labour costs. Lease fees were also under budget due to a delay of several IT projects. Passenger revenue is forecast to be \$2.2M over budget due to the April 1, 2025 fare change and fuel tax revenue is forecast to be on budget by year end. Service hours are 1.9% under budget due to ongoing resource constraints and ridership is forecast to be 8.5% under budget by year end.

**The Q2 Financial Performance Report was received FOR INFORMATION.**

**13. 2026/27 DRAFT 3-YEAR BUDGET – FOR INFORMATION**

*RYAN CAMPBELL*

The Commission was presented with a report that showed a three-year budget that includes base service level of 1.063 million service hours and factors in anticipated inflationary pressures including an increase in the cost of maintenance parts, tariffs on parts and software cost increases. Fuel tax revenue is anticipated to remain flat in all three years and passenger revenues are projected to increase at seven per cent in the first year and one per cent each year after that. The transit fund balance at the end of 2025/26 is expected to be higher than budgeted due to lower expenses and higher revenue and will help to mitigate future increases to the transit levy. Key projects including the battery electric bus implementation, future corridor studies, RapidBus projects and Phase 1 of the Saanich Transit Centre were also highlighted in the 3-year budget projections.

**The 2026/27 Draft 3-Year Budget was received FOR INFORMATION.**

**14. DRAFT ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN – FOR INFORMATION**

*LEVI MEGENBIR*

The Commission was presented with a draft annual service plan based on the previous endorsement by the Commission for 15,000 annual service hours and the addition of three buses for fixed route transit service expansion for the 2026/27 fiscal year. These additional hours and resources will help to address passenger comfort and service reliability as well as support frequent transit network improvements. Staff advised that this expansion is subject to provincial funding. Due to increasing ridership, speed limit reductions and increasing traffic congestion throughout the region, the expansion of resources is needed for operational service and maintenance of current service level to ensure reliability. A final report will be brought back to the Commission at the March 2026 meeting for approval.

**The Draft Annual Service Plan was received FOR INFORMATION.**

**15. AIRPORT SERVICE REVIEW – FOR APPROVAL**

*LEVI MEGENBIR*

The Commission was presented with a recommendation for BC Transit staff to proceed with public engagement on proposed transit route changes to provide a direct connection between downtown Victoria to the Victoria International Airport (YYJ). The recommended option would

restructure the existing Peninsula network by extending Route 72 to serve YYJ on all trips. This would require Route 88, which currently serves the airport and Sidney, to be discontinued and hours reallocated. Additional changes would also need to occur to the Route 81. Sidney Mayor McNeil-Smith requested that BC Transit staff engage with the Town of Sidney, Sidney Council and Sidney Business Improvement Association on proposed change to transit on the Peninsula as outlined in the report, and staff agreed.

**MOTION by Commissioner Maja Tait and SECONDED by Commissioner Marianne Alto to APPROVE the recommendation to begin public engagement on proposed changes to the Victoria International Airport as set out in the Airport Service Review Report.**

**AMENDMENT MOTION by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna and SECONDED by Commissioner Dean Murdock to direct staff to discuss with both the Victoria International Airport and Destination Greater Victoria on cost sharing options for transit to the airport.**

**CARRIED**

**MOTION by Commissioner Colin Plant and SECONDED by Commissioner Jeremy Caradonna to add an option to changing Route 71 with the other options presented in the report when conducting public engagement.**

**CARRIED**

**16. PLANNING UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION**  
*JACOB BURNLEY AND LEVI MEGENBIR*

Staff presented the Commission with a report outlining upcoming service changes for the winter and spring. Staff advised that changes include the launch of Route 40 for UVic/Dockyard and increased service reliability on Route 39, 51, 65 as well routes on the Peninsula. In the spring, there will be new transit service to the new PEXSISEN Elementary School in the West Shore and an adjustment to Route 57 to improve coverage to the Thetis Heights neighbourhood. Engagement is now complete on the Victoria Regional Transit Plan with over 350 open house participants and almost 1,900 online survey responses. Staff also met with 23 key stakeholder groups including post-secondary institutions, local chambers of commerce, BC Ferries and the Sidney Business Improvement Area Society. Key themes included the desire for more frequency, reliability and direct routing on transit as well as improved connections to Swartz Bay, YYJ and UVic. There was also significant support for ongoing investment in Rapid Transit throughout the region.

**The Planning Update was received FOR INFORMATION.**

**17. INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION**  
*JAMES WADSWORTH*

Deferred to the March Commission meeting.

**18. OPERATIONS UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION**  
*STEPHEN ANDERSON*

Staff presented a report to the Commission on recent operations metrics for Q2 from August 15 to November 2025. They advised that the conventional transit system delivered 99.9% of scheduled service and 136,778 hours of service, a slight increase over this time last year. Pass-up events decreased by 41.8% from last year. The On Time Performance was 70.2%, which was slightly lower than targeted due to construction and road congestion within the city. Service-related complaints also decreased by 56% largely due to an 82% reduction in cancelled service complaints, a 72% decrease in schedule adherence complaints and a 36% decrease on pass-ups. Custom transit service was delivered at 96.6% and 236 new users were added to the system between July – September 2025.

**The Operations Update was received FOR INFORMATION.**

**19. ATAC UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION**  
*STEPHEN ANDERSON*

Deferred to the next Commission meeting.

**MOTION BY Commissioner Maja Tait and SECONDED by Commissioner Marie-Terese Little to adjourn meeting at 12:01 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**  
February 10, 2026