

TRANSIT *future*

▶ **service plan**

CITY OF CRANBROOK

Custom Transit Service

2026



Territorial Acknowledgement

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

Cranbrook is located within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Ktunaxa Nation.

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

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01 The Service Today

How handyDART works in Cranbrook today

Door-to-door, shared-ride service for residents who cannot use conventional transit independently. Operated by Keolis Canada under contract with BC Transit.

The operating model has remained largely unchanged since the 2013 service review, while Cranbrook's senior population has grown to nearly 1 in 4 residents.

An estimated 4,890 residents live with a disability. The system serves 191 registered clients, 184 of whom are active.

4 Accessible Fleet	184 Active Clients	Mon-Fri Service Days
\$3.00 Standard Fare	8am-5pm Service Hours	24hr Advance Booking
1,851 Wheelchair Trips	5,955 Annual Trips	1.30 Rides per Hour

BC Transit Operational data, FY2024/25

02 What the Community Told Us

How we heard from handyDART riders

The handyDART component was part of the broader Cranbrook Transit Future Service Plan engagement (January 15 to February 15, 2026).

Digital and hard-copy surveys were distributed through the City of Cranbrook, Keolis Canada, and community partners including long-term care homes, adult day programs, and the Community Living Centre.

Of 272 total survey respondents, 15 engaged with handyDART questions, representing approximately 8% of the active client base. Results are directional, reinforced by alignment with operational data.

15 handyDART respondents
(~8% of active client base)



272 total survey respondents
across the TFSP



6 weeks digital + hard copy
distribution



Partners: long-term care,
adult day programs, Community
Living Centre



Methodology: Mixed-mode survey, January-February 2026

03 The Dominant Finding

71% of respondents identified evening and weekend service unavailability as their top challenge.

Extended hours ranked first among service improvements; more flexible hours ranked second among most important future changes

Conventional transit operates evenings and weekends; handyDART does not. Riders who can use conventional transit on a Saturday have access. Riders who cannot are without any transit option.

71%

of respondents identified evening and weekend service unavailability as their top challenge

04 What Riders Want

Priorities for future handyDART service

Extended hours: Evening and weekend service ranked first among desired improvements

Flexible scheduling: More responsive booking and trip management

Electronic payment: 75% indicated they would use it

Driver courtesy is the system's strongest attribute (4.29/5 satisfaction). The limits are about when and how the service is available, not the people delivering it.

Riders identified the impact of improved service would be greater independence, improved health and well-being, more social participation.



05 In Their Own Words

Voices from Cranbrook handyDART riders

"Am very happy with everything about handyDART, only sometimes I have to take a cab. I believe Cranbrook is a retirement community that has a lot of needy seniors and many young people affected by mental health, therefore every day the demand for rides is high. I love the DART service and would be so stuck without it."

"Keep fares affordable. For those of us on low income or fixed income, our expenses go up, up, up only."

"It is hard to plan pick-up times when places like the lab and doctor can run so far behind."

— Survey respondents, Cranbrook Transit Future Service Plan



06 Service Performance

Budget delivery, ridership, and efficiency trends since FY2018/19

Cranbrook delivers virtually 100% of its budgeted service hours. The budget has grown 26% since FY2018/19, reflecting investment including the addition of a fourth vehicle.

Pre-pandemic, Cranbrook achieved 2.23 rides per hour, above the current provincial average of 2.14. COVID-19 cut ridership by 45%, and while service hours grew, ridership has not recovered at the same pace.

Late cancellations have nearly doubled in three years (385 to 660 per year), now ~11% of requested trips. Wheelchair rides have recovered to their highest level on record at 1,851.

~100% Budgeted Hours Delivered	1.30 Current Rides per Hour	+26% Budget Growth Since FY18/19
1,851 Wheelchair Trips	\$78 Operational Cost per Ride	11% Late Cancellations Rate
2.23 Pre-Pandemic Rides per Hour	660 Late Cancellations per Year	2.14 Average handyDART Rides per Hour

BC Transit operational data, FY2018/19–FY2024/25

07 Performance Against Standards

Metric	Cranbrook (FY24/25)	Standard
Unmet trips	0.4% ✓	≤1% (post-CTS benchmark)
No-shows	1.0% ✓	1% (current target)
Late cancellations	11%	≤5% (post-CTS benchmark)
Rides per hour	1.30	≥2.0 (post-CTS benchmark)

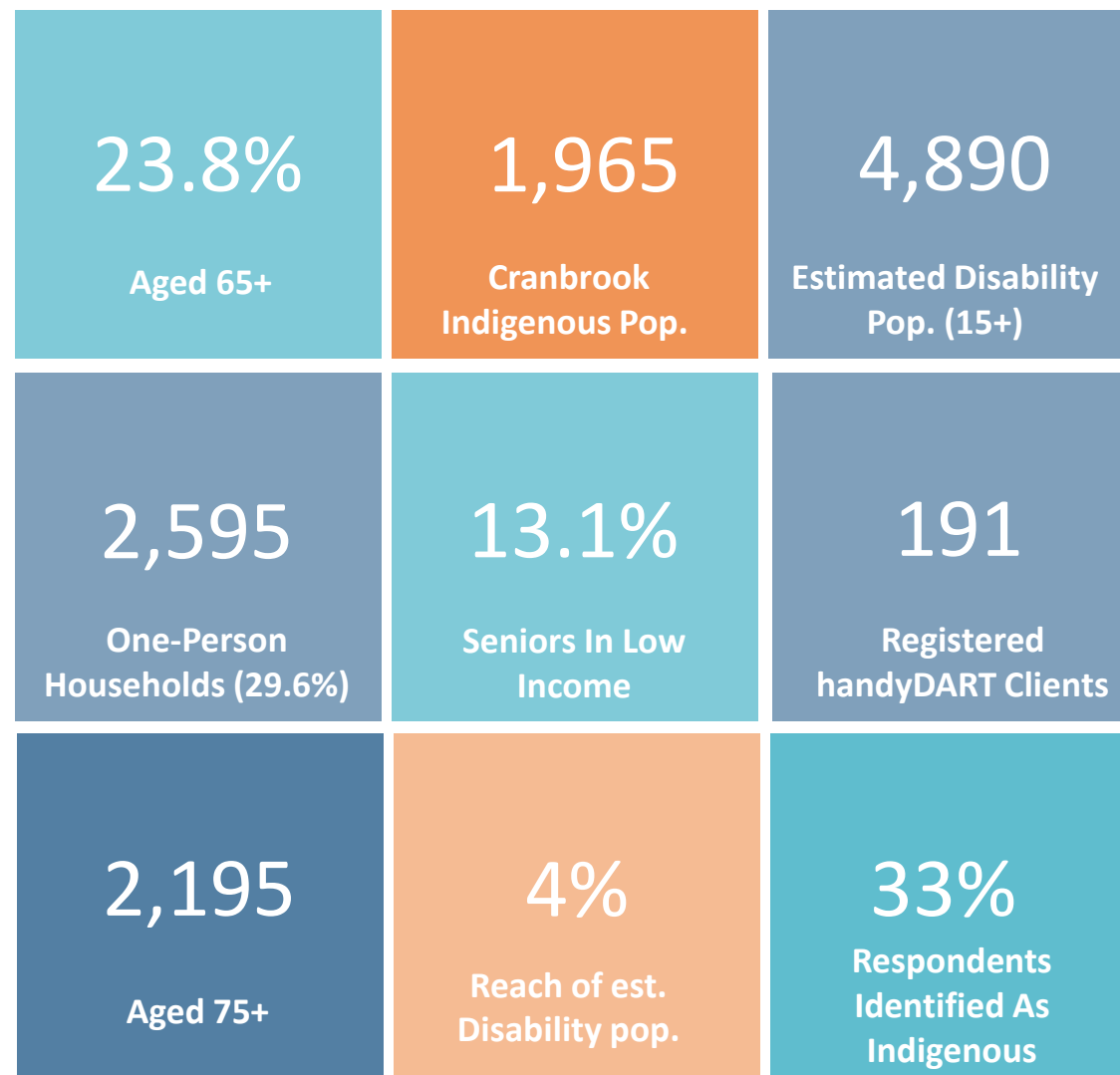
08 The Community Context

Demographics that shape demand for accessible transit

Cranbrook's population (20,499, 2021 Census) skews older than the provincial average: 23.8% are aged 65+ versus ~20% provincially.

The 75+ population, the group most likely to need custom transit, numbers 2,195. National disability rates applied to Cranbrook's population estimate 4,890 residents living with a disability.

With 191 registered clients, the system reaches roughly 4% of the estimated disability population. Narrow service hours and limited awareness likely constrain registration.



2021 Statistics Canada Census; BC Transit registration data

09 The Custom Transit Solution

BC Transit is deploying a province-wide Custom Transit Solution (CTS), delivered by Spare, that will modernize dispatch and booking across all 28 handyDART systems.

Cranbrook is scheduled as part of Wave 2, tentatively with go-live targeted for spring 2027.

Comparable deployments have demonstrated significant improvements in on-time performance and more efficient use of existing fleet resources.



Dynamic booking and scheduling



Self-service booking by app, web, or phone



Real-time trip notifications and vehicle tracking



Eventual electronic fare payment (cash still accepted)



Caregivers can book and manage trips on behalf of riders

10 Strategy Roadmap

Phase	Timing	Actions
Prepare	Now to November 2026	Change management with operating partner. Rider communication. Baseline data capture. Address late cancellation rate.
Deploy	November 2026 to 2028	Deploy CTS. Self-service booking and real-time notifications. Establish performance monitoring using CTS data. Quantify demand patterns including off-peak.
Grow	2028+	Use CTS data to optimize existing resources and identify priorities for future service span enhancements, aligned with available resources. Explore non-dedicated fleet for evenings/weekends. Implement electronic fare payment.

12 Acknowledgments

The development of this Custom Transit component of the Cranbrook Transit Future Service Plan was made possible by participation from riders, community partners, the operating partner, and provincial and local governments.

BC Transit would like to thank

- City of Cranbrook
- Keolis Canada
- handyDART riders who responded to the survey
- Long-term care homes, adult day programs, and the Community Living Centre
- Spare



13 Better Service Through Smarter Systems

Cranbrook's opportunity

Cranbrook's handyDART service provides essential mobility within its current service hours and continues to support riders effectively within that scope. As travel patterns evolve, there may be opportunities to further align service availability with emerging rider needs and demand.

Current operating practices, including paper-based scheduling, limited weekend and evening service, and observed ridership trends, reflect a system that has remained consistent over time. These factors present opportunities for measured service improvements and enhanced responsiveness.

The planned rollout of the Custom Transit Solution represents a significant milestone. It is expected to support the modernization of operations, improve the availability of actionable data, and enable informed, evidence-based decision-making regarding future service priorities.



14 Next Steps

- Pre-deployment and deployment change management for the Custom Transit Solution platform (All Parties)
- BC Transit establish the performance baseline from CTS data and monitor CTS data to inform future expansion and optimization efforts
- Continued engagement with the operating partner, riders, and community partners
- Explore the reintroduction of a Taxi Supplement Program

