

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

BC Transit 520 Gorge Road East
Minutes of the Meeting held July 28, 2026

DRAFT MINUTES

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

Present:

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

Regrets:

Commissioner Barbara Desjardins

Staff:

Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager; Christy Harrold, Vice-President, Strategy, Planning, and Public Affairs; Chris Fudge, Director, Government Relations; Ryan Campbell, Manager, Financial Planning and Analysis; Levi Megenbir, Manager, Service Planning; Jacob Burnley, Transit Planner; Stephen Anderson, General Manager, Victoria Regional Transit System; Matt Boyd, Director Integrated Service Planning; Katie McIlldoon, Executive Assistant and Divisional Coordinator (Recorder)

Quorum was established.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Windsor called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and acknowledged the territories of the Songhees and Xwsepsem First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Be it resolved the agenda be approved as presented. Moved/Seconded by Commissioner Little/Commissioner Caradonna. **Carried.**

3. CLOSED AGENDA SESSION

Motion: Be it resolved the Commission close the meeting to the public in accordance with Section 11 of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission Charter. Moved/Seconded by Commissioner Alto/Commissioner Little. **Carried.**

Section 11 - In-Camera – Items pertaining to confidential commercial information, or funding agreements with upper levels of government, will be conducted in-camera until such time as approvals have been achieved.

The Victoria Regional Transit Commission recessed to closed session at 9:03 a.m.

4. ADJOURNMENT OF CLOSED SESSION AND RECONVENING IN OPEN MEETING

The Victoria Regional Transit Commission reconvened in open meeting at 10:24 a.m.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 12, 2026

Motion: Be it resolved the minutes of the May 12, 2026 meeting be approved as presented. Moved/Seconded by Commissioner Tait/Commissioner Caradonna. **Carried.**

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair noted that the Victoria Regional Transit System continues to operate at 100 per cent service delivery. The Chair also provided updates on fleet modernization, including the arrival of new double-decker buses and the continued expansion of battery electric buses.

The Chair highlighted successful Canada Day service planning, which included 31 additional buses to support celebrations across the region.

The Chair advised that BC Transit is working toward launching the approved hybrid airport service model in September 2026 and is preparing customer communications to support the change.

An update was also provided on the Custom Transit Solution project, which will introduce new technology to improve handyDART booking, trip management, and real-time communication for riders.

Finally, the Chair welcomed Jessie Rousseau-Hanson as the new Student Representative to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission.

7. CORRESPONDENCE AND DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

7.1.1 A letter from Esquimalt Nation inviting BC Transit representatives to participate in the Reconciliation Corridor Initiative Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee was received.

7.2 Delegations

Director Al Wickheim – Transit Levies in the District of Juan de Fuca

Director Wickheim spoke to concerns regarding transit levies and service levels in the Juan de Fuca electoral area, noting the following:

- Willis Point residents pay transit levies while receiving little to no transit service.
- East Sooke and Otter Point residents receive some service; however, feedback indicates the service is of limited use to constituents and may create a financial burden. Director Wickheim also noted that vehicle size appears large relative to ridership and suggested exploring smaller vehicles or an on-demand service model.

Director Wickheim made the following requests:

- Review and consider removing transit levies for Willis Point residents.

- Reevaluate vehicle size in relation to ridership in East Sooke and Otter Point, including consideration of smaller vehicles or an on-demand service model.
- If transit service continues to be delivered in the region, consider representation for the Juan de Fuca electoral area on the Commission.

The Chair requested a copy of Director Wickheim's request.

8. REPORTS FOR APPROVAL

8.1 handyDART Service Area Amendment

Elise Wren presented a recommendation to amend the handyDART service area map to address service gaps in the northern Highlands and Willis Point areas. Staff became aware of the service gap through municipal engagement for the Victoria Regional Transit Plan. Staff noted that the proposed amendment was supported by the Mayor of the District of Highlands and Director Wickheim of the Juan de Fuca Electoral District and would have minimal financial and operational implications. Commissioners expressed support for the proposed change.

Motion: Be it resolved the Victoria Regional Transit Commission amend the handyDART service area map as presented to include custom transit service to Northern Highlands and Willis Point. Moved/Seconded by Commissioner Little/Commissioner Caradonna.
Carried.

9. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

9.1 Victoria Regional Transit Plan Draft – for Information and Feedback

Levi Megenbir presented the draft 25-year Victoria Regional Transit Plan.

- The plan was developed with input from the public through engagement surveys and open houses, as well as from the Ministry of Transportation and Transit, the Capital Regional District, First Nations, and municipal staff and councils across the region.
- Common themes included a desire for improved frequency and reliability, support for express and Rapid Transit connections between key regional centres, and interest in simplified routes and efficient connections.
- Engagement with 13 municipalities showed broad alignment on the need for improved transit and support for the plan. Staff noted that success will depend on funding, clear priorities, and strong partnerships.
- The plan identifies 10 *Big Moves* related to network modernization, interregional connections, new mobility hubs, higher-order transit between downtown Victoria and Six Mile, and areas identified for Rapid Transit.
- Staff noted that delivering the plan will require growth above the historic two per cent annual rate once the Saanich Transit Centre opens.

Commissioners generally expressed support for the overall direction of the draft Victoria Regional Transit Plan, describing it as ambitious, visionary, and a strong step toward a more integrated regional transit future. Commissioners acknowledged the work completed by staff, the consultation with municipal and regional partners, and the plan's role in

establishing a shared long-term vision for transit in the region. Discussion focused on areas where additional clarity, flexibility, or implementation detail could strengthen the plan, including funding requirements, alignment with regional planning processes, higher-order transit priorities, workforce capacity, and opportunities for regular review.

Commissioners emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility in the plan, particularly in relation to emerging regional initiatives such as the Reconciliation Corridor Initiative and ongoing work on the Capital Regional District Regional Transportation Plan. Discussion included the need for regular plan review, a clearer near-term implementation roadmap or companion action plan, and consideration of how higher-order transit, including potential light rail, should be reflected. Commissioners also noted that achieving the plan's long-term vision would require significant government support and funding.

Additional discussion focused on core-area service priorities, including network modernization in Saanich and the Mackenzie corridor, student ridership and September capacity pressures, workforce and operational readiness, and the role of On Demand Service and custom transit in supporting lower-density areas.

The draft plan was presented for information, and Commissioner feedback will be incorporated into the final draft which will be presented to Commissioners for approval on September 8, 2026.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Be it resolved the meeting be adjourned. Moved/Seconded by Commissioner Tait/Commissioner Little. **Carried.**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8, 2026.