Victoria Regional Transit Commission

DATE: September 22, 2026

PREPARED FOR: Victoria Regional Transit Commission

PREPARED BY: Levi Megenbir, Manager of Service Planning

SUBJECT: Victoria Regional Transit Plan

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission **APPROVE** the Victoria Regional Transit Plan

Attachment(s): Attachment A - Victoria Regional Transit Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Victoria Regional Transit Plan (VRTP) is a 25-year roadmap to increase transit mode share to 15 per cent by 2050 through significant investments in service, fleet, facilities, transit priority infrastructure, and network modernization. Developed through extensive public and stakeholder engagement, the VRTP identifies 10 long-term Big Moves to guide future transit growth and establishes a flexible implementation framework that aligns future investments with regional growth, funding opportunities, and operational capacity. Approval of the VRTP will provide the strategic direction needed to advance transit planning and partnerships across the region while maintaining flexibility as priorities evolve.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Commission approval of the VRTP. The report summarizes the Plan's purpose and direction, engagement undertaken, key considerations arising from the July 28 Commission discussion, and the approach to implementation.

BACKGROUND

The VRTP updates the 2011 Transit Future Plan and provides a 25-year investment and implementation roadmap for the Victoria Regional Transit System (VRTS). It responds to regional growth, changing travel patterns, housing and land use policy, climate objectives, and increasing congestion, and supports the Commission's goal of achieving a 15 per cent transit mode share by 2050.

Achieving this target will require substantial growth in transit investment. The Plan anticipates more than 1.7 million annual service hours and approximately 650 conventional buses by 2050, compared with approximately 890,000 annual service hours and 328 conventional buses today. It also identifies the need for new and upgraded Operations and Maintenance facilities, transit priority, RapidBus, Higher Order Transit and other supporting infrastructure. The Plan

recognizes that facility capacity will constrain expansion in the near term. Until the Saanich Transit Centre opens in the early 2030s, the system has limited ability to add fleet and service. The near-term focus will therefore include network modernization and improving bus speed, reliability and network efficiency, while positioning the system for accelerated growth as additional capacity becomes available.

PLAN DIRECTION

Beyond identifying the required transit service and facility investments, the VRTP identifies ten Big Moves needed to achieve the Commission's 15 per cent transit mode share by 2050:

- Modernize the Network
- Deliver Higher Order Transit
- Transform McKenzie Avenue
- Connecting the Peninsula
- Invest in the Core
- Invest in the West Shore
- Build the Uptown Mobility Hub
- Create the Six Mile Mobility Hub
- Modernize handyDART
- Connect Vancouver Island

The Big Moves are long-term priorities rather than individual project commitments. They provide direction for future service expansion, infrastructure investment and partnership opportunities as the region grows.

ENGAGEMENT

The VRTP was developed through extensive engagement during fall 2025 and winter 2026, including an online survey, nine community open houses, handyDART engagement, stakeholder and employee workshops, Local Government Partner workshops and presentations, and engagement with First Nations and rights holders.

Engagement identified strong demand for improved frequency, reliability and direct connections; support for transit priority, Rapid Transit and express-oriented service; improved West Shore and Peninsula connections; more direct connections to YYJ; interest in Higher Order Transit; and modernization of handyDART. First Nations engagement also highlighted the importance of service span and stronger inter-reserve and urban connections.

COMMISSION FEEDBACK

The draft VRTP was presented to the Commission on July 28, 2026. The discussion focused on areas where additional clarity, flexibility and implementation detail could strengthen the Plan.

In response, staff made minor adjustments to:

- **Funding and implementation:** Added a specific initiative within the short-term actions in the implementation roadmap to identify funding needs and opportunities for Plan implementation.

- **Regional planning alignment and flexibility:** Clarified the need for the Plan to remain flexible as related regional initiatives progress, including the CRD Regional Transportation Plan and Reconciliation Corridor Initiative.
- **Implementation roadmap and plan review:** Increased the visibility of the implementation roadmap and added a section on how the Plan will be monitored.
- **Core-area service and network modernization:** Reinforced the importance of network modernization and investments in the Core, including the McKenzie corridor.

FUNDING, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Achieving the VRTP's vision will require sustained investment from the VRTC, Province of British Columbia and Government of Canada, supported by coordinated action from Local Government Partners. Approval of the Plan does not authorize individual service expansions, capital projects or funding commitments; specific initiatives will continue to require detailed planning, funding consideration and future approvals.

The Plan includes a short, medium and long-term implementation roadmap. It is intended to remain a living document that can respond to changing travel patterns, regional growth, emerging opportunities and related planning processes. Progress will be reported to the Commission annually, with a formal review approximately every five years, or sooner where significant changes warrant an earlier review.

CONCLUSION

The VRTP provides a clear, ambitious and regionally coordinated framework for the next 25 years of transit planning in the Victoria Region. Approval will establish the shared strategic direction needed to advance transit service, infrastructure, fleet and investment planning while allowing future priorities and implementation to respond to funding, regional growth, operational capacity and emerging opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

1. Following VRTC approval, publish the final Victoria Regional Transit Plan.
2. Continue working with municipal, regional, provincial, federal, First Nations, and other partners to advance priorities identified in the Plan.
3. Begin work on a short-term network modernization process, with targeted implementation in 2028/29

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Title:	VP, Strategy, Planning and Public Affairs	Date:	August 24, 2026

BC Transit

VICTORIA REGIONAL TRANSIT PLAN

DRAFT

BCTransit

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BC Transit's Victoria Regional Transit System respectfully acknowledges that we operate on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the lək̓ʷəŋən Peoples, represented by the Songhees and Xʷsepsəm Nations; the W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples, represented by the W̱JOŁEŁP, STÁUTW̱, WSIḴEM, and BOḰEĆEN Nations; and the T'Sou-ke and SC'IÁNEW̱ Nations. We are grateful for the privilege of providing transit service on these lands and are committed to advancing respectful relationships and reconciliation.

A growing region deserves a transit system that grows with it. This plan is our roadmap to building the transit network the Victoria Region will need, not just for today, but for the next generation.

Executive Summary

The Victoria Region is entering a period of sustained growth and change. Population growth, especially in the West Shore, is increasing travel demand while housing, land use, climate and transportation policies increasingly rely on transit to deliver regional outcomes. In response to these challenges, the Victoria Regional Transit Commission has set an ambitious goal of achieving 15 per cent transit mode share by 2050. The Victoria Regional Transit Plan is how the region will get there.

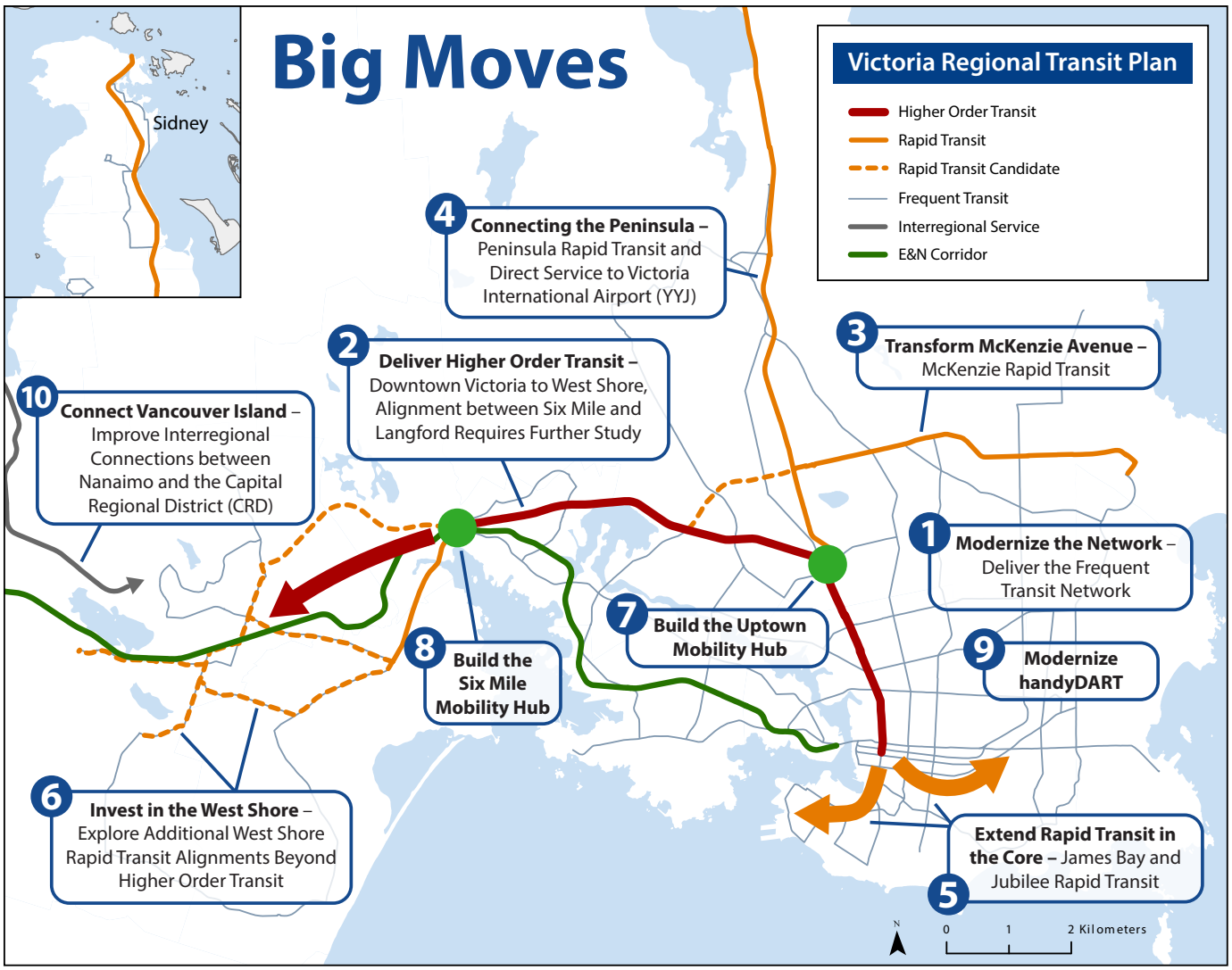
The Victoria Regional Transit Plan provides a 25-year investment and implementation roadmap to transform transit across the region. Reaching 15 per cent will require BC Transit and partners to make major investments in service and infrastructure including:

- Growing to more than 1.7 million annual service hours by 2050 – nearly double existing service levels
- Expanding the conventional fleet to approximately 650 buses
- Delivering new and upgraded operations and maintenance facilities
- Improving speed and reliability through targeted transit priority
- Advancing major capital investments in RapidBus and Higher Order Transit

The plan will deliver this through ten **Big Moves**. Responding to engagement, land use and population projections and recent trends in service delivery, the **Big Moves** modernize the network, expand rapid and frequent service, improve accessibility and create the regional connections needed to grow mode share.

BC TRANSIT'S BIG MOVES:

1. Modernize the Network
2. Deliver Higher Order Transit
3. Transform McKenzie Avenue
4. Connecting the Peninsula
5. Invest in the Core
6. Invest in the West Shore
7. Build the Uptown Mobility Hub
8. Build the Six Mile Mobility Hub
9. Modernize handyDART
10. Connect Vancouver Island



The Next 25 Years

Delivering the plan will require sustained partnership across all levels of government. Each partner has a distinct role in aligning investment, policy and implementation:

- **BC Transit** will plan and deliver service, manage fleet and infrastructure, improve the customer experience and lead implementation of the plan.
- **The Victoria Regional Transit Commission** will set service levels, fares and regional priorities while raising the local share of funding.
- **Local Government Partners** will align land use with transit, deliver transit priority, improve access to stops and support transit-oriented growth.
- **The Province and Government of Canada** will provide the legislative, policy and funding support needed for major capital projects, fleet expansion, facilities, RapidBus and Higher Order Transit.

The plan is ambitious, but achievable. The region has strong ridership, supportive land use policy, growing demand on major corridors and clear public support for more frequent, reliable and direct service. With sustained investment and partnership, the Big Moves will provide the capacity, reliability and customer experience needed to achieve 15 per cent transit mode share by 2050 and support a more connected, affordable and sustainable region.

Implementation Roadmap

Short Term (1-5 Years) Actions	Medium Term (5-15 Years) Actions	Long Term (15+ Years) Actions
Review existing exchange capacity to ensure infrastructure will support Investment Trajectory Identify funding needs and opportunities for plan implementation	**Big Move 1:** Modernize the Network Network Modernization Phase 2 - Restructure routes in conjunction with Rapid Transit implementation and regional growth/ development	**Big Move 1:** Modernize the Network Network Modernization Phase 3 - Work towards full alignment with Network and Route Guidelines
Big Move 1: Modernize the Network Network Modernization Phase 1 - review route duplication and stop spacing on major corridors, expand Frequent Transit Network	**Big Move 2:** Deliver Higher Order Transit Develop a business case and preliminary design	**Big Move 2:** Deliver Higher Order Transit Construct and implement Higher Order Transit
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit Update the West Shore Rapid Transit Alignment Study to confirm the alignment and technology for Rapid Transit between Victoria and Langford	**Big Move 2:** Deliver Higher Order Transit Implement RapidBus Phase 2 improvement to continue building capacity on existing service	**Big Move 4:** Connecting the Peninsula Fully implement Peninsula RapidBus service
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit Implement transit priority on Douglas Street in downtown Victoria	**Big Move 2:** Deliver Higher Order Transit Seek funding and create final designs	**Big Move 5:** Invest in the Core Implement Rapid Transit extensions
Big Move 3: Transform McKenzie Avenue Partner with District of Saanich to incrementally build stop and station infrastructure, targeted queue jumpers, and other transit priority	**Big Move 3:** Transform McKenzie Avenue Continue incremental investment in transit priority and customer amenities along McKenzie Avenue	**Big Move 6:** Invest in the West Shore Implement Rapid Transit on identified corridors
Big Move 3: Transform McKenzie Avenue Implement Express Transit along McKenzie Avenue as a pathway to RapidBus	**Big Move 3:** Transform McKenzie Avenue Fully implement McKenzie RapidBus	**Big Move 10:** Connect Vancouver Island Expand interregional services in partnership with Cowichan Valley Regional Transit and Nanaimo Regional Transit
Big Move 4: Connecting the Peninsula Develop a business case and construct the Sidney Transit Hub, implement Express Transit to key destinations on the Peninsula	**Big Move 4:** Connecting the Peninsula Work with Ministry of Transportation and Transit to advance transit priority along Highway 17	
Big Move 5: Invest in the Core Partner with City of Victoria to develop potential alignments, begin planning and engagement work	**Big Move 4:** Connecting the Peninsula Continue to build service levels and ridership	
Big Move 6: Invest in the West Shore Determine needs for Rapid Transit based on Updated Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Study	**Big Move 5:** Invest in the Core Fully develop plans, conduct engagement and potentially implement Rapid Transit extension	
Big Move 7: Build the Uptown Mobility Hub Continue partnering with the Province on potential concepts for the site	**Big Move 6:** Invest in the West Shore Refine needs through planning processes and determine next steps	
Big Move 8: Build the Six Mile Mobility Hub Work with the Province, View Royal, and other partners to advance planning for the Six Mile Mobility Hub	**Big Move 7:** Build the Uptown Mobility Hub Support the development and construction of the Uptown Mobility Hub	
Big Move 9: Modernize handyDART Develop Service Standards and Performance Guidelines	**Big Move 8:** Build the Six Mile Mobility Hub Support development and construction of Six Mile Mobility Hub and incorporate in BC Transit plans	
Big Move 9: Modernize handyDART Upgrade technologies that power service delivery: scheduling, dispatching, customer booking, and electronic fare payment	**Big Move 10:** Connect Vancouver Island Partner with Cowichan Valley Regional Transit and Nanaimo Regional Transit to develop potential service concepts	

Ongoing Actions
Look for opportunities to integrate Express, Regional, and OnDemand services into the network to improve customer experience
Leverage the Uptown Mobility Hub as a key resource in changes resulting from Network Modernization and in service changes
Leverage Six Mile Mobility Hub as a key resource in changes resulting from Network Modernization and in service changes
Expand transit hours and fleet as envisioned in the Investment Trajectory
Deliver capital projects needed to maintain investment trajectory: exchanges, operations & maintenance facilities, electrification supports, etc.
Partner with Province to develop sustainable funding tools that support service expansion
Work with Local Government Partners to advance transit priority and speed up the bus network

Introduction

What is the Victoria Regional Transit Plan?

Between now and 2050, the Victoria region will grow and change. This plan is the outline for how the Victoria Regional Transit System will adapt to these changes in the region. The Victoria Regional Transit Plan (VRTP) summarizes the major trends impacting transit service, what the future might look like and how transit services will evolve from today's system to meet tomorrow's needs. Beyond updating the 2011 Transit Future Plan, the plan aligns with municipal Official Community Plans, the Capital Regional District's (CRD's) Regional Growth Strategy and Regional Transportation Plan and the Province's South Island Transportation Strategy. Building upon those works, this plan outlines an ambitious vision to achieve the region's collective goals.

Transit needs will change in response to population growth, demographic shifts, development and land use, as well as policies at all levels of government. Since the previous plan, the region has seen significant growth in the West Shore, densification of many areas and policies that promote Transit Oriented Development. These trends are expected to continue and intensify over the next 25 years. The VRTP aims to deliver a transit system that accommodates these changes and supports the Victoria Regional Transit Commission's (VRTC's) goal of achieving a 15 per cent transit mode share by 2050.

To achieve this, significant investments in transit service, buses and supportive infrastructure will be needed. Building upon significant engagement with the public, local government partners and analysis of the existing system, this plan envisions ten **Big Moves** that will deliver the future transit system that the region will need.

The Victoria Regional Transit System

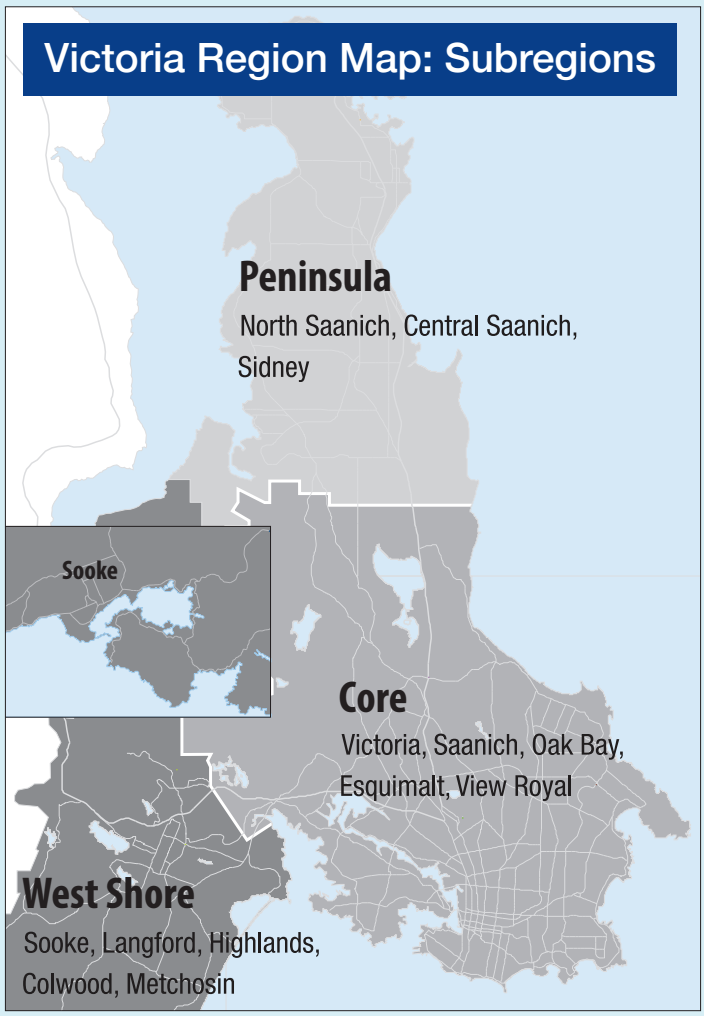
The Victoria Regional Transit System connects more than 430,000 residents across 13 municipalities, parts of the Capital Regional District, and eight First Nations. It links people to jobs, education, healthcare, recreation, ferry terminals, the airport, and communities throughout the region.

As BC Transit's largest transit system, it delivers more than 27 million passenger trips and over one million service hours each year.

For planning purposes, the region is organized into three distinct areas:

- **Core** – The region's primary urban centre and the highest concentration of transit demand
- **West Shore** – One of British Columbia's fastest-growing communities and an emerging urban centre
- **Peninsula** – A collection of smaller communities connected by key regional destinations, including Victoria International Airport and BC Ferries

Together, these three sub-regions form one integrated transit network that supports the movement of people across the Victoria region.



How will the plan be used?

Guiding Service Decisions

BC Transit has a robust planning process to ensure that the system is serving the region. At the highest level, the VRTP provides guidance on how the system will evolve over the next 25 years. This informs medium and short-term planning processes like Local Area Transit Plans and the Transit Evaluation Process (TEPS), which guides service changes each year. The VRTP provides clear goals, priorities and an overall network vision that serves as a reference when other decisions are made. This helps ensure that near-term decisions, like service adjustments and capital investments, are made in the context of a shared, forward-looking direction.

Supporting Land Use and Transportation Priorities

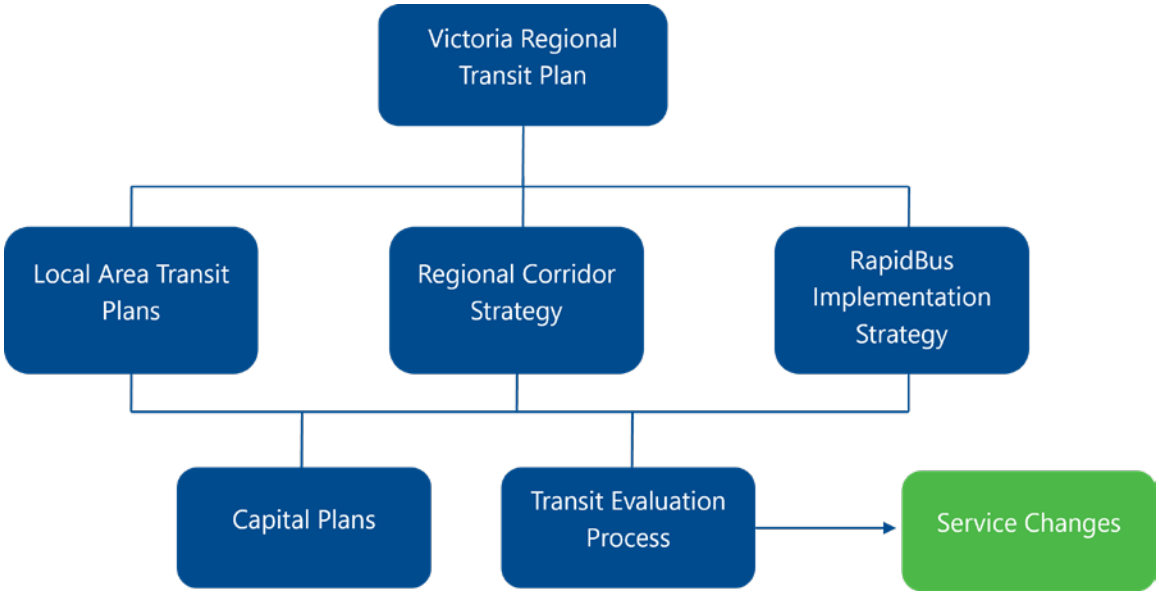
Local Government Partners, the CRD and the Province have all set ambitious targets to build housing, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support economic development and much more. Reviews of plans at all levels of government highlighted the critical role transit plays in supporting each community's vision. Many communities in the region, as well as the CRD's Regional Transportation Plan, rely on increasing transit mode share to ensure that the region can keep moving. This plan supports these efforts in two ways.

First, the VRTP was developed collaboratively with Local Government Partners, the Province, First Nations and other rights holders. Land use planning, growth and community goals are central components of how this plan was developed. The VRTP contains 10 Big Moves that will position BC Transit to deliver the transit services Local Government Partners need to achieve their goals.

Second, the VRTP clarifies how BC Transit will invest in the network moving forward. Through the Big Moves, Investment Trajectory and updated Network and Route Guidelines, this plan will enable Local Government Partners to adjust planning documents with greater certainty for how transit service will be delivered.

Investment Outlook

This plan reviewed what kind of system would be required to achieve 15 per cent mode share with the types of service that people said they wanted during engagement. The VRTP contains an **Investment Trajectory** that will help BC Transit understand when investments will need to be made in more buses, facilities and supporting infrastructure.



Major Accomplishments since 2011

2011

- ***Transit Future Plan*** established Frequent Transit and Rapid Transit Networks
- Completion of McTavish Exchange

2014/15

- Douglas Street bus only lanes implementation

2017

- Completion of West Hills Exchange

2018

- Douglas Street bus only lanes extension Tolmie/ Hillside to Tillicum

2019

- **NextRide** launch

2021

- Free fares for children 12 and under

2022

- UVic Exchange expansion and upgrades

2023

- **UMO** launch
- **95 Blink RapidBus**
- Sooke Park & Ride

2024

- West Shore Transit Network Restructure
- Island Hwy bus only lanes between Hwy 1 and Six Mile

2025

- New handyDART facility
- Completion of the Ravine Way bus lane and new Hwy 1 Stations at Uptown

2026

- Launch of contactless credit and debit fare payments
- Highway 1 bus only lanes
- Burnside and Colquitz Bridges

BC Transit's Role in the Victoria Regional Transit System

BC Transit is a Crown corporation charged with administering transit services in more than 130 communities across British Columbia. BC Transit is governed by the *British Columbia Transit Act*, which established the Crown corporation and a cost sharing model that splits funding between local governments and the Province for communities outside of Metro Vancouver. BC Transit's role includes supporting local government partners with planning, scheduling, contracting, financial management and fleet. The model is unique in Canada and helps efficiently deliver service to millions of British Columbians.

Transit services are locally governed, with BC Transit acting as a partner in delivering services. Decisions on fares, routes and service levels for the VRTS are made by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission, composed of elected officials appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council on the advice and recommendation of the Minister of Transportation and Transit. Members of the Commission vote to determine service levels, set fares, make budget recommendations and raise the local portion of annual transit costs.

Roles and Responsibilities in the VRTS

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

- Determines service levels
- Makes decisions about routes and local priorities
- Sets fares
- Makes budget recommendations
- Raises local share of funding

Province

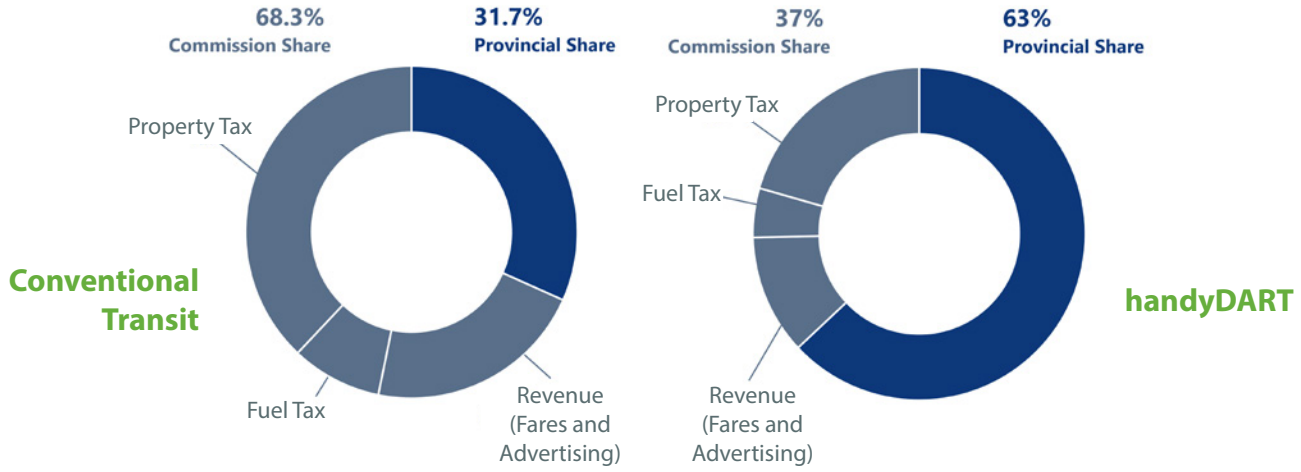
- Provides Provincial share of funding
- Establishes framework for partnership
- Provides public policy objectives to guide transit services through Provincial plans and Mandate Letters

BC Transit

- Planning
- Marketing
- Fleet management
- Contract administration
- Safety, training and security
- Human resources
- Financial management
- Infrastructure planning and implementation

The *British Columbia Transit Act* legislates funding apportionment for the system. The Province pays a fixed proportion of funding each year, with the remainder raised by the Commission through a combination of fares, advertising revenues, motor fuel taxes and property taxes. The funding formula limits funding each year to the amount each partner will provide. Neither the Province nor the VRTC can unilaterally pay for expansion.

The Victoria Regional Transit System's conventional service is unique in BC Transit's portfolio because it is the only system directly operated by BC Transit employees. All other services are contracted to third party organizations or local governments for operation.



Existing Services

Conventional Transit

KEY SYSTEM STATS

58 routes

890,000 hours of service

328 conventional buses

270 sq km service area

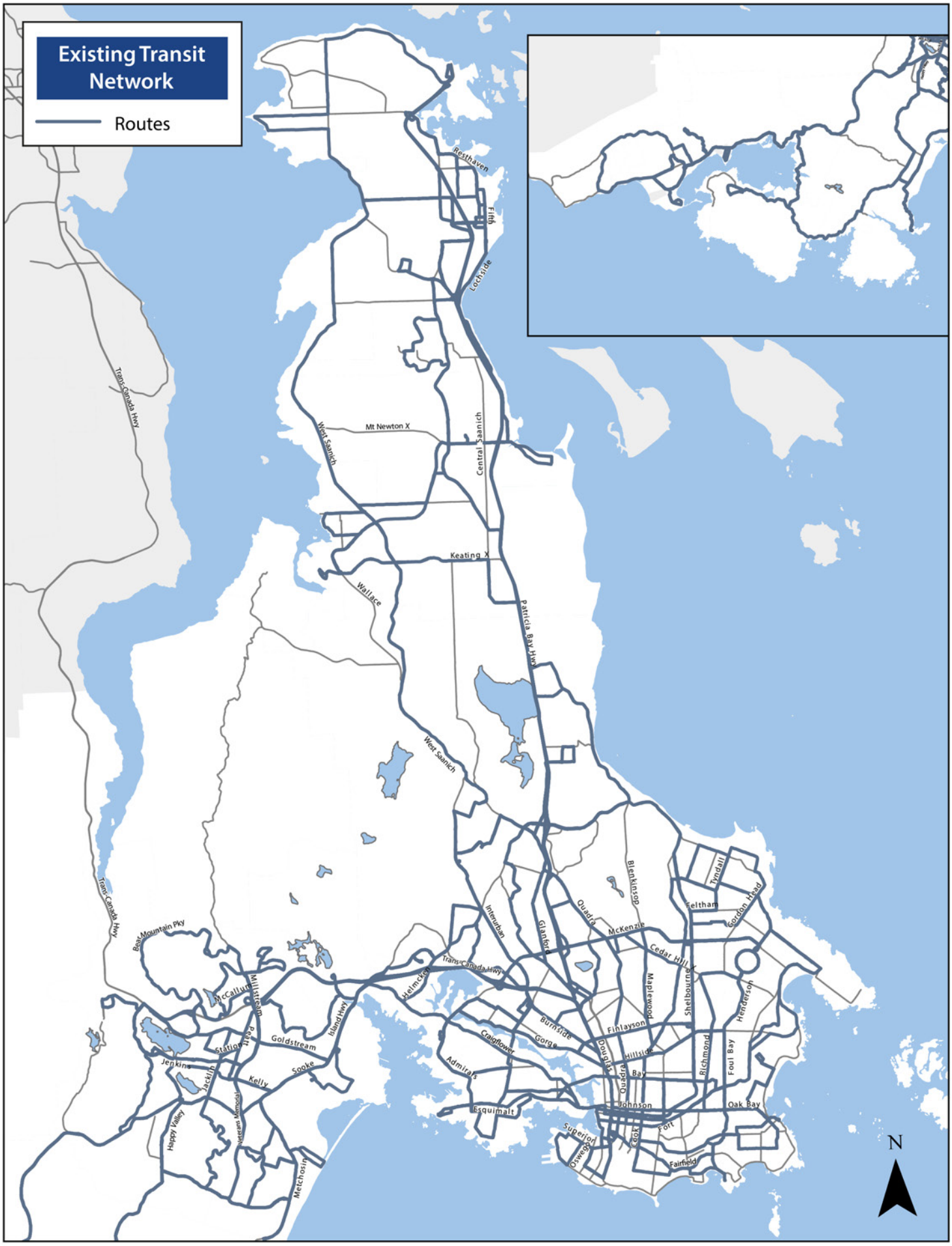
Approximately **400,000** people within 400 metres of transit service

The Victoria Regional Transit system is composed of 58 routes serving more than 400,000 residents with 328 buses. In 2025, the system provided more than 890,000 hours of conventional service. Fares are $3 for a single ride or $6 for a DayPASS. Electronic fares provide automatic fare capping to ensure customers never pay more than required.

Service Span

The span of service varies between routes, but services are provided approximately:

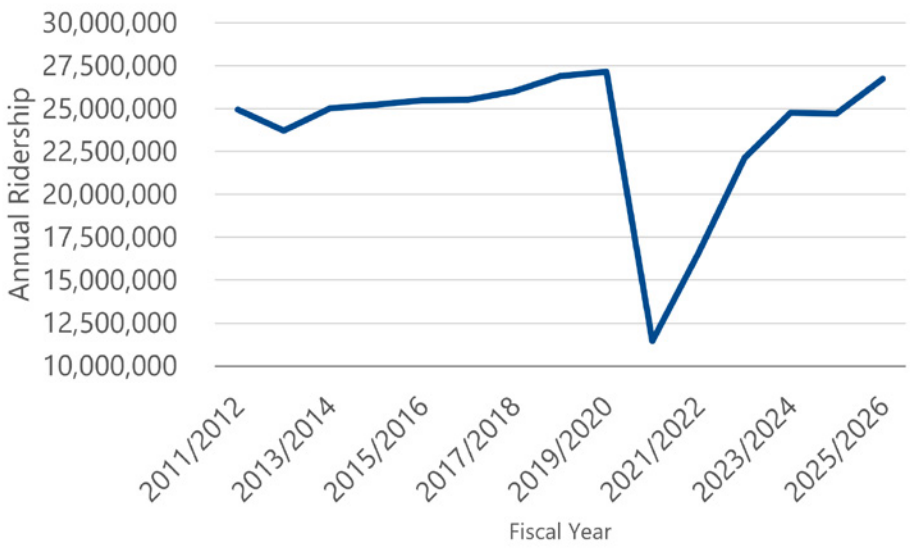
Day	Hours of Operation
Weekday	5 am – 2 am
Saturday	6 am – 2 am
Sunday	6 am – 12 am


Existing Transit Network
Routes
Resthaven
Fifth
Lochside
Trans-Canada Hwy
Mt Newton X
West Saanich
Central Saanich
Keating X
Wallace
Patricia Bay Hwy
West Saanich
Trans-Canada Hwy
Beaty Mountain Pky
McCallum
Millstream
Island Hwy
Helmcken
Trans-Canada Hwy
Interurban
Glanford
Quadra
Blenkinsop
McKenzie
Tyndall
Feltham
Gordon Head
Cedar Hill
Maplewood
Shelbourne
Henderson
Burnside
Gorge
Finlayson
Craigflower
Admirals
Douglas
Hillside
Bay
Richmond
Foul Bay
Oak Bay
Johnson
Esquimalt
Fort
Cook
Superior
Oswego
Fairfield
Station
Goldstream
Jenkins
Jacklin
Kelly
Sooke
Veterans Memorial
Happy Valley
Metchosin
N

Conventional Transit Ridership

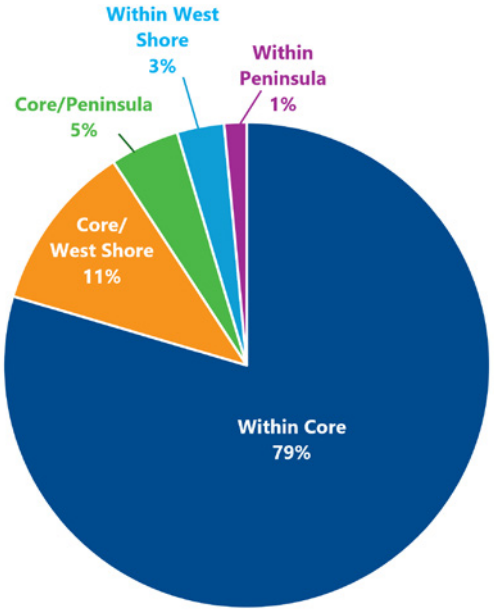
Ridership in the VRTS is strong, with transit providing more than 100,000 rides every weekday. Ridership was slowly increasing year-over-year until pandemic era restrictions and changes in 2020. By 2023, ridership recovered to more than 90 per cent of pre-pandemic levels. Ridership continues to rise with especially strong ridership on major corridors, Frequent Transit routes, and Route 95 Blink RapidBus.

2011-2026 Ridership in the Victoria Regional System



The proportion of ridership throughout the region has remained steady over time. Ridership is highest on trips entirely within the Core, followed by a smaller number of trips between the Core and West Shore and trips between the Core and Peninsula. Ridership wholly within the West Shore or within the Peninsula make up a small percentage of total ridership.

Percentage of Transit Trips by Sub-Region



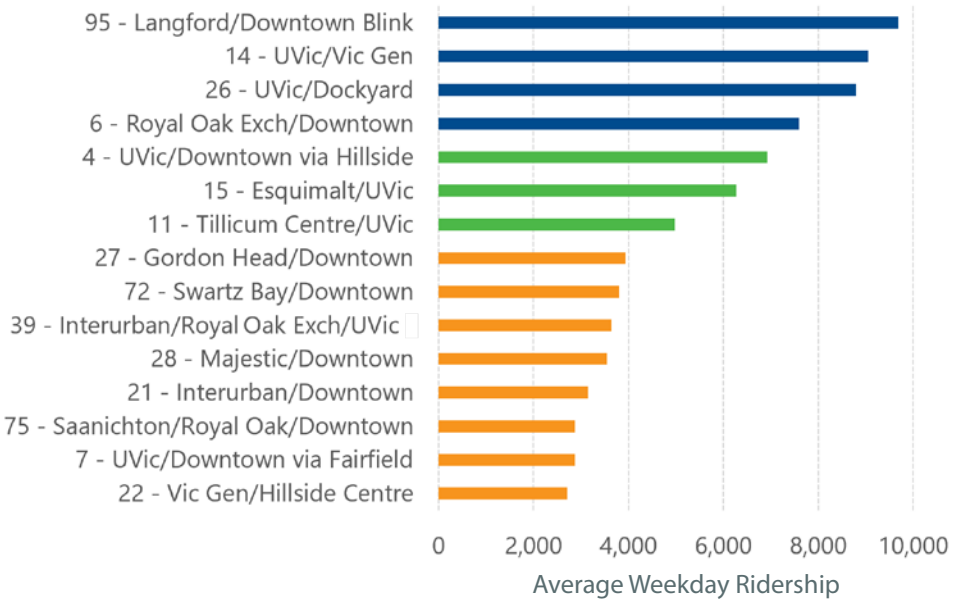
Source: CRD 2022 Origin-Destination Travel Survey

BC Transit has many coverage routes, but a very high percentage of trips happen on a relatively small number of routes. The top 15 routes in the system carry 75 per cent of all passengers on a typical weekday. Unsurprisingly the top performing routes either provide connectivity between mixed-use dense areas of the Core, or they connect the Core to key destinations in the West Shore and Peninsula.

33% of ridership
50% of ridership
75% of ridership

The remaining 25% of ridership is split between 43 other routes.

Top 15 Routes in the System



Peer Comparison

The VRTS compares favourably with peer systems across Canada. Absolute numbers are reported below and also adjusted to allow for comparison between systems of different sizes.

In terms of service provided, the VRTS leads peers for most service per capita at 2.1 revenue hours per person.

Service hours per capita are an indication of how much service is provided in the community. High service levels are accompanied by high ridership. The VRTS is second among peer agencies in terms of ridership per capita. High ridership per capita is a good measure of how much of the transportation demand in the community a system is satisfying.

	Victoria Regional	Halifax	Saskatoon	London	Kelowna Regional
Total Revenue Hours	869,220	898,379	352,676	719,657	222,072
Total Boardings	26,283,916	32,136,822	13,173,418	24,041,700	6,540,465
Service Area Population	417,631	477,398	308,400	448,100	164,014
Revenue Hours per Capita	2.1	1.9	1.1	1.6	1.4
Boardings per Capita	62.9	67.3	42.7	53.7	39.9
Boardings per Revenue Hour	30.2	35.8	37.4	33.4	29.4

Source: CUTA Fact Book 2024

KEY FACTS

3,000
active users

22,000
registered clients

128,000
service hours

56 **handyDart vehicles**

handyDART Service Model

Victoria's handyDART service provides door-to-door, shared-ride paratransit for persons with disabilities who are unable to use the conventional transit system some or all of the time. The service is operated by Transdev under contract with BC Transit.

Custom transit offers eligible customers three service options. Usage patterns across these options have shifted substantially in recent years. The current options include:

- **handyDART:** Door-to-door shared-ride service using lift-equipped vehicles, carrying multiple customers on the same trip
- **Taxi Supplement:** Dispatches ambulatory trips to taxis when handyDART vehicles are unavailable
- **Taxi Saver Program:** Provides a 50 per cent subsidy on taxi fares through vouchers for registered customers who book independently with a taxi company

Trips may be booked as subscription trips (recurring appointments such as work, school, or day programs) or reservation trips (one-time bookings such as medical appointments, shopping, or social activities). These are examples and not an exhaustive list of eligible trip purposes. At the time of this report, the fare is $3 per trip with a 30-minute pickup window and a 14-day advance booking requirement.

Service Span

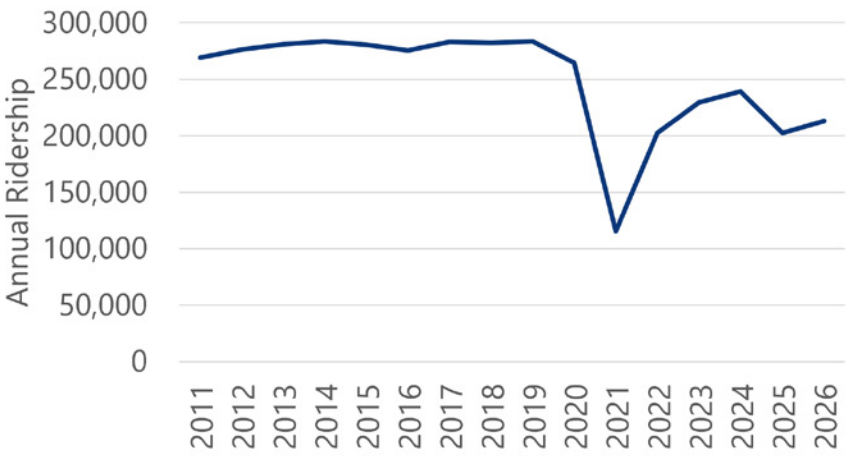
The handyDART system operates seven days a week with the following hours:

Day	Hours of Operation
Monday - Thursday	7 am - 10 pm
Friday	7 am - Midnight
Saturday	8 am - Midnight
Sunday and Holidays	8 am - 10 pm

handyDART Ridership

handyDART ridership was relatively flat for years before falling in 2020. Ridership remains below pre-pandemic levels, however taxi supplement trips have grown by more than four times. The increase in taxi supplement trips reflects capacity constraints in the core handyDART service. Unmet trips have fallen in recent years, but there are indications that there is significant unmet demand among users, who may not even make requests if they believe their trips will be denied. This calls for increased service hours and additional custom transit buses through the annual expansion process in order to keep up with demand.

2011-2025 handyDART Ridership



Note: Does not include Taxi Supplement trips. handyDART provided 38,030 Taxi Supplement trips in 2025.

Trends Shaping Transit

The VRTP will guide the transit system for the next 25 years. Central to this process is rigorous analysis of how transit services work today and how BC Transit will need to adapt to meet the growing needs of the community. Engagement with the public, First Nations, rights holders and governmental partners provides an additional lens to view current and future needs and how BC Transit might meet them.

Population growth, demographic changes and the distribution of population in the region are key challenges for BC Transit over the next 25 years. With strong growth expected to continue, especially in the West Shore, demand for transit will continue to grow. At the same time, Provincial and local policies are increasing density and leading to greater demand for transit services.

The current system is well used. However, ridership is concentrated on relatively few routes. The system also suffers from continued degradation of speed and reliability. Slower buses are less attractive as a transportation solution and a large portion of recent expansion hours have gone into keeping the same frequencies. Investment in service hours has not kept pace with population growth. The result is that transit mode share has remained roughly flat for the last 25 years.

Community members were unequivocal in voicing the need to invest in transit and to make transit work well. People expressed strong support for more frequency, more reliability and more direct routing. Transit priority and Rapid Transit, especially between key centres in the region, were highly supported in engagement.

BC Transit is an essential part of keeping the community moving. Riders count on BC Transit to get them to work, school, shopping and recreation. Local governments rely on transit as a key piece of meeting their land use, transportation, climate and other goals. Meeting the community's needs over the next 25 years will require BC Transit to invest in Rapid Transit, build out the Frequent Transit Network, partner with local governments to deliver speed and reliability improvements and implement other changes to modernize the network. At the same time, local governments and the Province will need to enable effective transit by continuing to support transit-supportive land use and implementing bus priority treatments.

The following sections provide an overview of some of the key trends that are impacting transit service and what they mean for BC Transit over the next 25 years.

Policies and Planning

› *The Trend*

Partners at all levels of government are engaged in crafting transit supportive policies. Notable recent efforts include:

Provincial:

- Bill 44: This bill requires local governments to enable development of four to six units of small-scale, multi-unit housing (SSMUH) on most lots previously zoned for single family homes. The bill ties transit service to land use by increasing required densities and removing parking requirements for SSMUH when a development is near frequent transit.
- Bill 47: This bill requires local governments to include Provincially identified Transit Oriented Areas (TOA) within land use plans. These TOAs are centered on transit exchanges and rapid transit stations and allow for increased densities, prescribed minimum building heights and eliminated parking requirements.
- Bill 16: Among other changes, this bill provides municipalities with a framework to include requirements for transportation demand management as part of the development process. Measures can include transit amenities, bicycle parking and end of trip facilities, among others.

Regional:

- The launch of the CRD's Regional Transportation Service. This funding stream will build capacity and provide resources to increase walking, cycling and transit use, reduce carbon pollution and tackle congestion.
- Updates to the Regional Transportation Plan, Regional Growth Strategy and Regional Transportation Model are underway. Transit is a key component of achieving the goals of both the Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Growth Strategy. The VRTP will help to form the basis for the updates to both plans, which will further link regional growth and transportation outcomes with transit service.
- The Reconciliation Corridor Initiative (RCI) is an Indigenous-led partnership exploring the revival of the E&N Corridor within the CRD for commuter transit.

Local:

Many communities in the region have adopted policies that support efficient transit service, including:

- directing growth towards nodes and corridors that can be more easily serviced by transit
- densification of new and existing areas
- reductions in parking minimums
- support for active transportation facilities that help people to access transit
- linking land use and parking policies to transit service

Additionally, several municipalities have strengthened their approaches to dedicating roadway space to provide transit priority.

› *Why It Matters*

Compact, transit-oriented land uses support higher ridership and service levels. Without transit priority, buses can become stuck in traffic, making transit a less attractive choice for riders and increasing costs for BC Transit.

Local, regional and Provincial partners each have a role in supporting transit through their own policies. Transit supportive policies include:

Enabling and encouraging compact, mixed urban land uses that are easily serviced by transit, promote active transportation and enable shorter travel distances

- Planning for and directing growth into defined nodes and corridors to enable efficient transit network design, increase ridership potential and support long-term service sustainability
- Transportation demand management (TDM) strategies such as managing the supply or cost of parking and development of programs and initiatives that encourage transit usage
- Transit supportive infrastructure investments, including sidewalks to improve walking conditions around transit stops, shelters and stop amenities to improve customer experience and transit priority measures like dedicated lanes, queue jumpers and signal priority to improve the speed and reliability of service

› *What It Means*

Recent policy work will help create environments that support efficient and effective investment in transit services. Achieving the outcomes of this plan will require all levels of government to continue supporting transit by:

- Prioritizing transit-oriented development around exchanges and Rapid Transit corridors
- Aligning growth with transit corridors and encouraging infill development
- Adopting TDM strategies
- Designing roadways that prioritize reliable transit service

Population growth

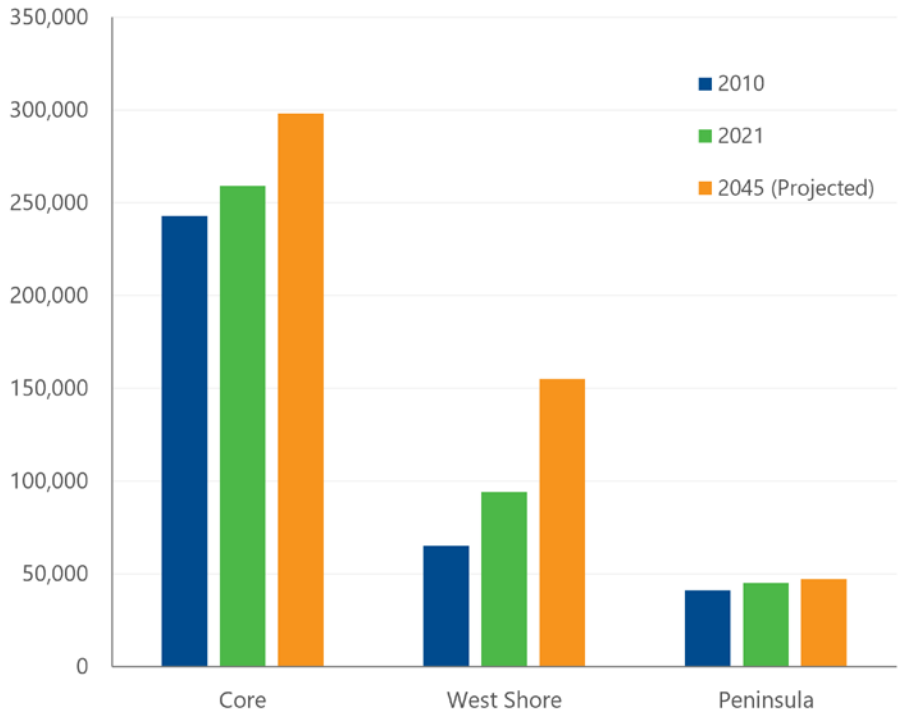
› *The Trend*

Since 2010, the Victoria region has added nearly 50,000 residents and is now home to over 400,000 people. This growth has not been evenly distributed: growth has been strongest in the West Shore, which grew by 45 per cent between 2010 and 2021. The Core, home to the majority of the region's residents, has also seen an influx of residents in recent years.

› *Why It Matters*

Strong population growth is a major source of increased transit demand. Increased demand requires service expansion or riders will experience overcrowding and reduced reliability. Population growth is increasing congestion on the roadways, which impacts bus speed and reliability. Transit service is the most effective way to increase capacity along major corridors.

Recent and Projected Population Growth in the Victoria Region



Source: Victoria Regional Transit Future Plan (2011), Statistics Canada (2022) and BC Statistics (2025)

Population projections for 2045 anticipate the region growing to nearly 500,000 people. Most of that growth is expected to happen in the West Shore, which could grow another 60 per cent compared to today. The remainder will happen largely in the Core area. Though growth on the Peninsula is expected to be modest, destinations like Victoria International Airport and Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal will increase the demand for transit to and from the Peninsula.

› *What It Means*

Growth and densification in both the Core and West Shore will require BC Transit to grow service hours and modernize the network to keep up with growing demand for transit. A strong Frequent Transit Network and Rapid Transit will be required to serve key corridors and ensure trips are easy and convenient. Service along the Peninsula will need to prioritize serving key destinations, while maintaining strong connections for communities along the way.

Demographic Shifts

› *The Trend*

The Greater Victoria Region has a higher proportion of seniors aged 65 and older than the Canadian average. Seniors are also among the fastest growing demographics in the region. Between 2011 and 2021, seniors 65 or older grew by 45 per cent (compared with 14 per cent overall growth).

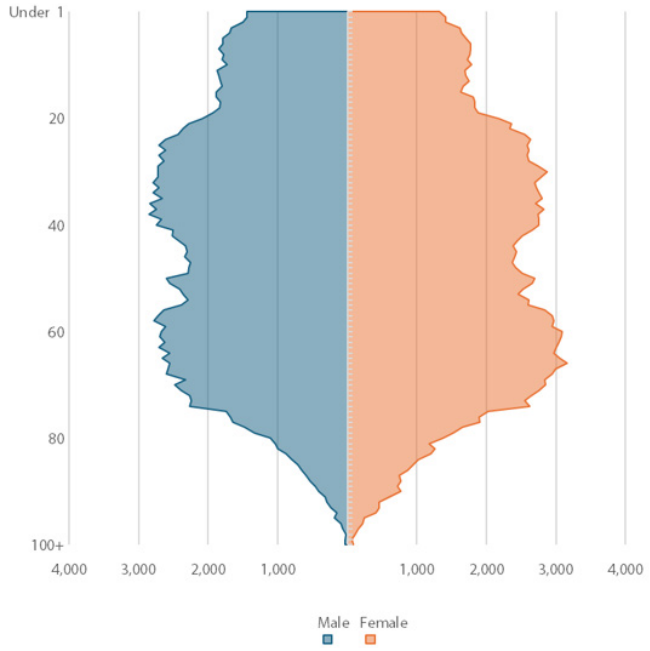
At the same time disability rates are increasing across all age groups. The overall disability rate rose from 22 per cent to 27 per cent between 2017 and 2022. An estimated 104,000 residents are currently living with a disability. The most common disability types among CRD residents are pain-related (62 per cent), flexibility (40 per cent), mobility (39 per cent) and mental health-related (39 per cent).

Disability Rates by Age Group in B.C.

Age Group	2017 Rate	2022 Rate
Overall	22%	27%
Seniors (65+)	35%	40%
Working Age	20%	24%
Youth	15%	20%

Source: Canadian Survey on Disability (2017 and 2022)

Age Distribution in Victoria



Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

› *Why It Matters*

Seniors tend to have different travel needs than youth and working-aged people. This shift will not only change potential travel destinations, but also the time of day and the types of service that people will need. Seniors are more likely to report having a disability than other age groups. The senior population is expected to continue to grow faster than the general population.

All BC Transit conventional buses are equipped with accessibility features; however, some types of disabilities make it challenging for people to ride the bus part or all the time. Not all trips for people with disabilities occur on handyDART, but increases in the disability rate will increase the demand for handyDART service. Mental health-related disabilities are the fastest growing type of disability, with significant implications for the types of accommodations and service design required for custom transit.

› *What It Means*

Demographic changes will impact how, when, and where people want to travel. Demand for transit to places like healthcare, seniors housing, and community centres will grow, especially during off-peak periods. Conventional services can accommodate much of this demand, but BC Transit will need to continue expansion of the handyDART system to ensure everyone is able to reach their destination. Alternative service models and programmatic initiatives will also help to meet everyone's needs.

Changes in Employment

› *The Trend*

Regional growth, technology and adjustments to employment arrangements have also changed how employment is distributed throughout the region. Employment in the West Shore is growing, albeit much slower than population growth. Jobs are still concentrated in the Core. The result is rapid growth in travel between the West Shore and Core.

At the same time, greater numbers of people are working from home, at least part of the time. CRD Travel Survey data from 2022 shows that the number of people exclusively working from home was falling from Statistics Canada data collected in 2021. However, the 2022 survey still showed a rate which had doubled since 2017. Nearly one third of people who reported having a usual workplace also reported that they work from home at least part of the time.

› *Why It Matters*

Commute trips are a significant source of transit demand. Changes to commute patterns shift how BC Transit needs to provide service. Increased regional travel during peak periods requires high capacity transit. BC Transit already operates the Route 95 Blink RapidBus between Victoria and Langford. As demand continues to grow, higher capacity vehicles will be required to accommodate demand.

At the same time, work from home and hybrid schedules impact BC Transit's ridership. Fewer people commuting to downtown Victoria means the region needs transit services that provide all-day frequency to more distributed locations. At the same time, hybrid schedules for many workers mean that they still need to commute several days per week.

› *What It Means*

BC Transit will need to invest in a transit network that provides flexible travel options. Modernizing the transit network will help to facilitate the higher off-peak, distributed travel demand that results from less commute-oriented travel. Modernizing the network will include higher frequency on major corridors, reduced service duplication, and implementation of new service layers (like Express).

Continued increases in demand for transit between the West Shore and Core are building towards ridership levels that can't be sustained by the existing Blink 95 RapidBus. By 2040, ridership levels are expected to be higher in peak periods than the system can accommodate. The Region will need to invest in Higher Order Transit, which uses higher capacity vehicles combined with greater transit priority to provide more ridership capacity. These investments are discussed more in the Big Moves section of this plan.

Mode Shift

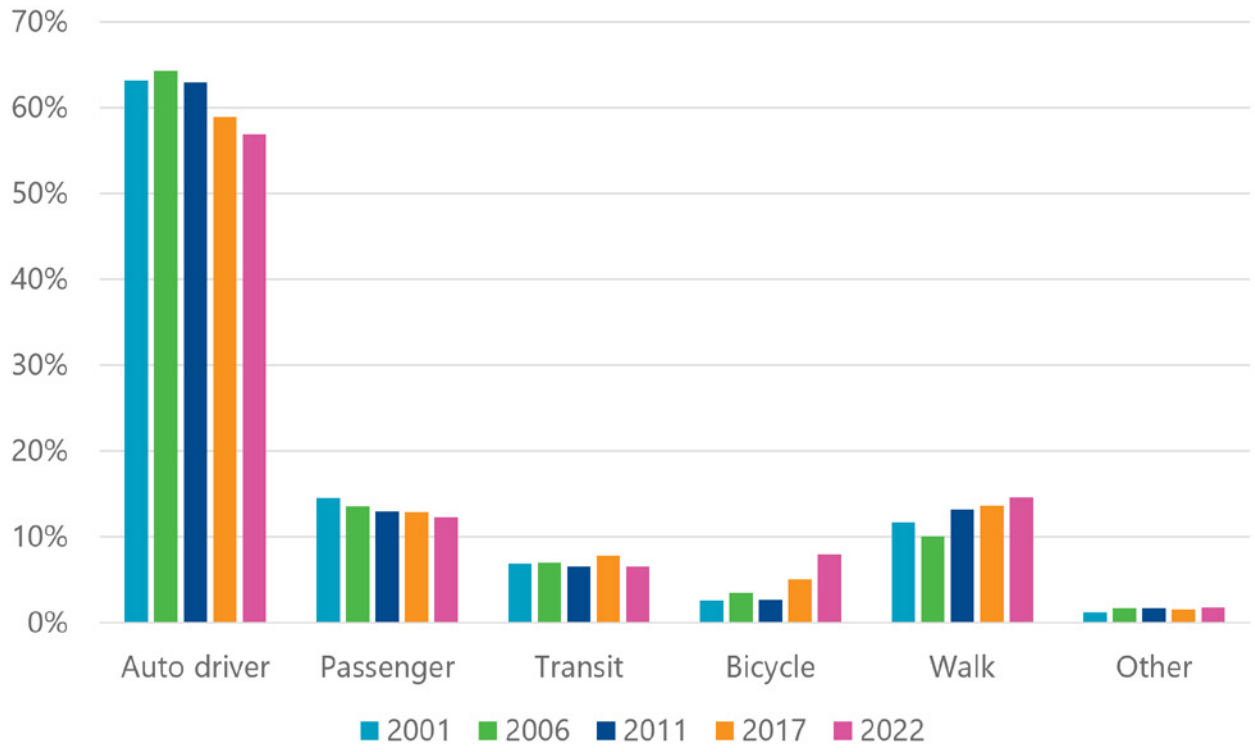
› *The Trend*

The CRD conducts an Origin-Destination Travel Survey every five years. The most recent survey in 2022 showed continued change in how people are traveling throughout the region. One of the most durable findings of the survey over time has been a shift toward active transportation from automobiles. Automobile mode share, for both drivers and passengers, has been decreasing since 2006, with walking and bicycling seeing sustained growth. Bicycle mode share grew rapidly in the 2017 survey and again in the 2022 survey.

In contrast, transit mode share has remained relatively static since 2001. After a slight increase in 2017, mode share declined slightly in 2022. Growth in transit service hours has not kept pace with population growth, leading to fewer service hours per capita over time. At the same time, increasing congestion levels degraded bus speeds on many corridors, especially at peak times when ridership is highest. Combined, these factors mean that transit service and customer experience are stagnant or declining over time.

Transit ridership has grown considerably since the 2022 survey. Growth in ridership suggests that transit mode share in the survey may have been impacted by lingering effects from pandemic-era remote work policies or other factors. Regardless, increasing mode share to meet community needs will require greater investment in the transit system.

Mode Share in the Capital Regional District Over Time



Source: CRD 2022 Origin-Destination Travel Survey

› *Why It Matters*

The Victoria Regional Transit Commission and many Local Government Partners have adopted mode share targets for transit and active transportation. The VRTC's goal is to reach 15 per cent mode share by 2050. Increasing transit mode share will allow the region to mitigate congestion as the population continues to grow. These mode share targets reflect the transportation network needed to provide the required capacity to keep the region moving. Transit provides a safe, efficient, affordable, low-carbon travel option that contributes to many of the region's goals.

TRANSIT MODE SHARE

Transit mode share has remained relatively flat for some time in the CRD Origin-Destination Travel Surveys. In 2022, transit provided about 6.5 per cent of daily travel, slightly down from 7.8 per cent in 2017, but in line with typical mode share in prior years. The Victoria Regional Transit Commission has established a goal of achieving 15 per cent mode share regionally by 2050. The table below shows the current and target mode share for each sub-region in the VRTS. Ridership trends in each sub-region match mode share outcomes, with the Core sub-region recording much higher mode share than the West Shore and Peninsula.

Increasing mode share will require delivering the Big Moves found in this plan.

Current and Target Mode Share in Each Sub-Region

Sub-Region	Current Mode Share	Target Mode Share
Core	7.7%	20%
West Shore	3.1%	10%
Peninsula	3.0%	5%
Region Total	**6.5%**	**15%**

› *What It Means*

Increasing transit mode share from 6.5 per cent to 15 per cent will require significant investment in the transit system. Delivery of this plan's **Big Moves** will provide the required capacity and enhance customer experience. However, BC Transit will need significant additional funding support to deliver the required service and capital investments.

Local Government Partners can help build transit mode share by continuing to enhance transit supportive policy work. Recent planning efforts to concentrate on infill development, especially along corridors and in nodes, is a positive step. BC Transit will also need Local Government Partners to strengthen transportation demand management policies and provide transit priority on roadways. Strategic investment in transit priority will improve the customer experience, build ridership, and ensure that investments in service hours are used efficiently.

Growing Regional Travel Demand

› *The Trend*

Daily per-capita trip making has been slowly declining in CRD Origin-Destination surveys since 2006. The most recent survey saw a sharper decline compared with the slower decline of previous surveys.

Decreased overall trip making resulted in fewer trips internally in the Core and Peninsula, as well as reduced trips between the Core and Peninsula and the Peninsula and West Shore. However, strong population growth in the West Shore resulted in increased trip making within the West Shore (+5 per cent) and between the West Shore and Core areas (+8 per cent).

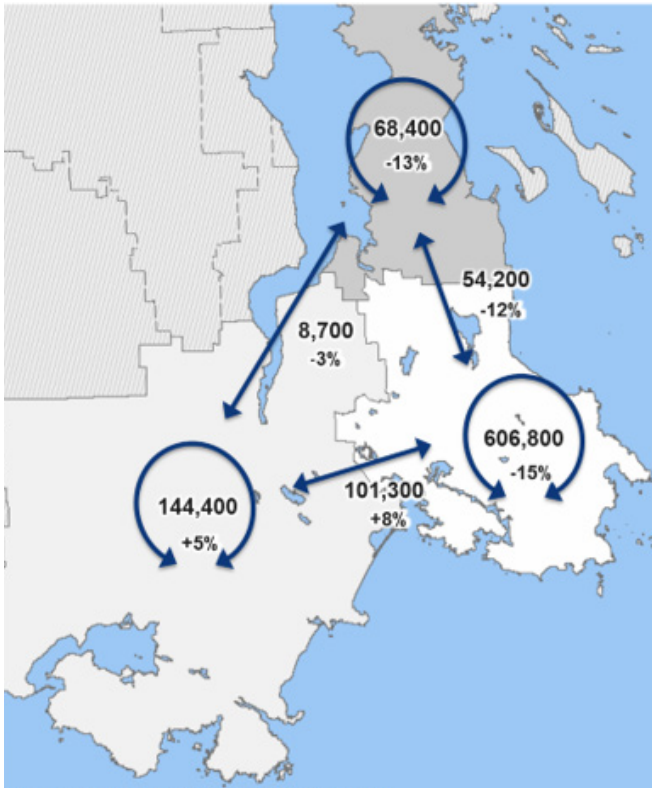
Two trends point to increased growth in trips originating in the West Shore: continued rapid population growth and faster growth in population than employment within the West Shore. These trends will result in continued growth in travel for daily needs within the West Shore and more people travelling to and from the Core.

› *Why It Matters*

Shifts in travel patterns lead to shifts in demand for transit services. Increased demand for local transit led BC Transit to restructure transit routes in the West Shore in 2024. Continued population growth will require continued investment in transit services to serve transit trips that begin and end in the West Shore.

Trips between the West Shore and Core are also rapidly growing. Key transportation corridors between the West Shore and Core already experience constrained capacity at peak periods. BC Transit has responded to increased transit demand by launching Route 95 Blink RapidBus. Transit priority infrastructure along the route has decreased travel times and improved service reliability. However, demand for transit is expected to exceed the capacity of a RapidBus line around 2040.

Selected Daily Trip Flows, 2022



Source: CRD 2022 Origin-Destination Travel Survey

› *What It Means*

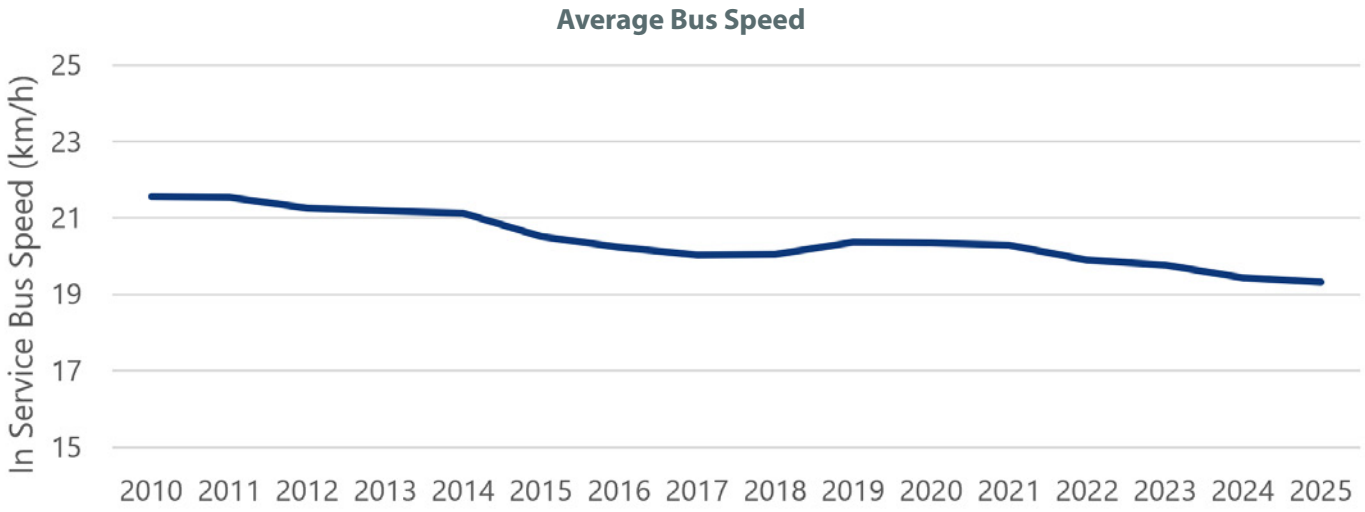
BC Transit must continue investing in service and supportive infrastructure to meet the growing demand for transit between the Core and West Shore. Around 2040, demand will exceed capacity on the existing RapidBus infrastructure. RapidBus Phase 2 investments can modestly increase capacity, but BC Transit will need to implement Higher Order Transit service to meet the expected future demand. Higher Order Transit combines higher capacity vehicles with transit priority to increase capacity compared to the existing services. The **Big Moves** found later in this plan outline a pathway to implementation for Higher Order Transit services.

Service Reliability

› *The Trend*

Average bus speeds have declined 10 per cent since 2010. Travel time variability leads to service reliability challenges like late trips, missed connections, and overcrowded buses. Transit priority can have a major impact on service reliability and average speeds.

The opening of bus lanes on Douglas Street in 2018 noticeably improved system-wide average speeds. Transit priority improvements on Route 95 have reduced travel times by over 20 minutes. However, delays across the system have led to consistently decreasing speeds.



› *Why It Matters*

For customers, lower speeds translate into longer trip times, more delays and generally worse service. BC Transit experiences declining speeds as a higher cost to operate the same level of service. In recent years, more than half of increased service hours have gone to maintaining the system, meaning there are fewer hours available to add trips and increase frequency. Speed and reliability issues are often the worst at peak commute times, impacting many riders.

A significant proportion of expansion hours in the Investment Trajectory are dedicated to maintaining existing service levels due to continued degradation of service. Reducing delays and mitigating future declines in speed will mean that BC Transit can provide the service envisioned by this plan sooner and at lower cost.

BC Transit is developing a Bus Speed and Reliability program that will identify traffic congestion hotspots and develop potential solutions to be implemented in partnership with local governments. Initial outputs from this process have shown that the system currently faces about 150,000 hours of delay annually. These hours degrade customer experience and take away from BC Transit's ability to expand service. For context, eliminating 150,000 hours of delay could allow BC Transit to implement two Route 95 Blink RapidBus lines.

› *What It Means*

BC Transit, the Province and Local Government Partners are addressing this trend in several ways. Work is currently underway to complete bus lanes from downtown Victoria to Six Mile Road along Douglas Street, Highway 1 and Island Highway. Implementation of transit lanes can greatly speed up the bus and prior work on Douglas Street produced significant results.

As congestion levels increase around the region, transit priority on key corridors will be necessary. As the owners of roadways, Local Government Partners and the Province are key partners in reducing delay.

Operations and Maintenance Capacity

› *The Trend*

Operations and maintenance facilities are at or nearing capacity for conventional service. Buses require space for parking, maintenance and general servicing. BC Transit operates the Victoria Transit Centre and Langford Transit Centre, both of which are near capacity for additional vehicles. A third facility, the Saanich Transit Centre (STC), is expected to provide additional capacity in the early 2030s. This plan's **Investment Trajectory** anticipates that additional operations and maintenance facilities will be needed between now and 2050 to grow the transit fleet.

handyDART facility constraints limited service expansion over the past decade. The completion of the Victoria handyDART Centre in 2025 removed this constraint and is expected to provide sufficient capacity to support handyDART service over the life of this plan.

› *Why It Matters*

Expansion in the VRTS will be limited without more operations and maintenance space. Projects at both Victoria and Langford Transit Centres are working to maximize existing facilities and provide for interim expansion. However, until Saanich Transit Centre opens in the early 2030s, expansion of service will be limited.

› *What It Means*

Limits to expansion will prevent BC Transit from investing in service early in this plan. As a result, once Saanich Transit Centre opens, the VRTS will need to expand at a faster rate to catch up on delayed investments. This plan's Investment Trajectory anticipates that additional facilities will be required by 2050.

Higher Order Transit will also require additional facilities. New technologies could require separate facilities (e.g. rail) or modifications to existing facilities. Regardless, Higher Order Transit will require expansion of the fleet and the ability to service new vehicle types.

BC Transit will need to work with the Province and the Government of Canada to ensure that planning, funding and construction for operations and maintenance facilities do not further constrain investments over the life of this plan.

Victoria handyDART Centre

Funding and Governance

› *The Trend*

The VRTS is funded through a cost-sharing model established under the *British Columbia Transit Act*, in which the Province of British Columbia (through BC Transit) and the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) each contribute a defined share of total system costs. This arrangement has historically enabled relatively high levels of transit service in the region. However, because the funding split is formula-based, service expansion depends on both partners increasing their contributions. Neither the Province nor the VRTC can independently fund improvements, which has generally constrained growth to modest, incremental increases over time (approximately 2 per cent per year on average).

To meet this share of costs, the VRTC relies on a mix of revenue sources. These include revenues from fares and advertising on the bus, property taxation within the service area (authorized under the Act), and a dedicated regional motor fuel tax (5.5 cents per litre) set by the Province in the *Motor Fuel Tax Act* in 2018. While this diversified approach provides stability, there are emerging pressures within the model. In particular, motor fuel tax revenues have not kept pace with rising operating costs due to relatively flat fuel consumption, reducing the contribution to the overall funding mix. In 2018, motor fuel taxes provided 16 per cent of funding for the system. In more recent budgets, motor fuel taxes have made up only around 10 per cent of funding. As a result, the VRTC increasingly relies on property taxes and fares to balance budgets and support any service growth.

› *Why It Matters*

Growing transit service to meet the community's needs will require a high level of investment. The existing funding model provides a stable source of revenue for BC Transit but lacks flexibility. Reliance on a limited set of funding tools and a governance structure that limits expansion to the lower amount between the partners has historically led to expansion at a lower rate than will be required to meet community goals.

› *What It Means*

Long term success will require stable, secure and growing funding from all partners. Growing transit service with demand will require a more rapid rate of expansion and large capital investment to support Higher Order Transit, operations and maintenance facilities, transit priority and more. This can only be accomplished through strong regional collaboration between Local Government Partners, the Province, the Government of Canada and the VRTC.

Beyond additional funding from existing sources, the exploration of new funding opportunities is critical to achieving the plan's **Investment Trajectory.**

Engagement

BC Transit centres public engagement as a key part of projects and initiatives. This plan relied on robust engagement with the community, Local Government Partners and First Nations. Engagement focused on:

- educating participants about changes and challenges in the system since the previous plan
- asking participants about how they envision the future transit system
- soliciting feedback on key trade-offs and concepts in **BC Transit's Network and Route Guidelines**

Each of the engagement approaches yielded important insights that have shaped the outcome of this plan.

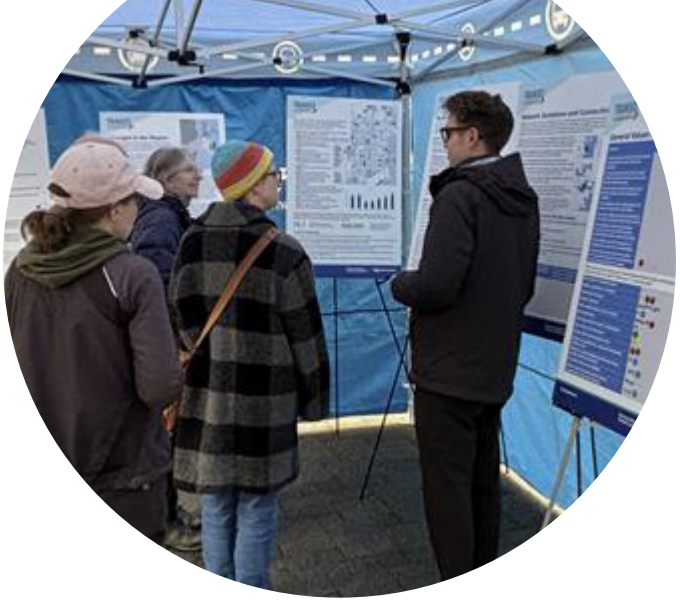
SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT

1,857 online survey responses

350+ open house participants

23 stakeholder groups engaged

6 local government workshops



Public Engagement

Public engagement was launched through the Fall of 2025, with targeted marketing to the community facilitated through a project website, media release, bus stop posters and newspaper and social media advertisements.

Open House Events

BC Transit hosted nine community-focused open house events to support in-person engagement with local residents and transit users. Over **350 attendees** participated in open house sessions, interacting with BC Transit staff across the region through mid-October.

Online Survey

BC Transit hosted an online survey from October 1 to October 26, 2025. Community members completed **1,857 surveys**. Respondents were well distributed throughout the region and represented a broad range of user groups including frequent and occasional riders.

handyDART Survey

BC Transit conducted targeted engagement with handyDART riders and caregivers to understand their experiences, challenges, and priorities for improvement. Engagement included an online survey as well as three in-person engagement sessions (each held in the Core, West Shore and Peninsula).

The **147 survey responses** revealed a diverse user base. About a third of respondents were over age 75, however 45 per cent were under 65. Slightly more than half of respondents reported being retired.

Stakeholder Workshops

BC Transit held workshops to engage with stakeholders, focusing on major employers, business groups, healthcare facilities, educational institutions and neighbourhood associations.

Stakeholder Groups	
University of Victoria	Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce
Island Health	Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce
Camosun College	West Shore Chamber of Commerce
CFB Esquimalt	Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
YYJ International Airport	Sidney Business Improvement Area Society
School District 61	
BC Ferries	
Butchart Gardens	
School District 62	
School District 63	

Thirty-eight neighbourhood groups were invited to attend, with representatives from eight attending.

BC Transit staff provided two presentations to the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC). ATAC is an advisory committee representing lived experience of those with a disability and serves the mandate to provide advice to the VRTC and BC Transit staff related to the application of recognized accessibility standards to the Victoria Region.

Employee Engagement

BC Transit held two transit operator-specific open house sessions at our facilities, with the purpose of connecting with local operators to capture and understand their on-the-ground experience in delivering service, to identify key areas of concern for future improvements and to receive feedback on proposed route and network design guidelines.

Local Government Partners

Staff from local municipalities, the CRD and the Ministry of Transportation and Transit provided key input throughout the project. BC Transit hosted three workshops on plan content and the **Network and Route Guidelines** over the course of the project. Three additional workshops were held focusing on Frequent and Rapid Transit corridors within the West Shore, Core and Peninsula sub-regions. Additionally, councils and committees received updates throughout this process.

Engagement with Local Government Partners at each step of the process ensured that local plans and goals are the foundational elements that the VRTP builds upon. The process highlighted the deep interdependence of municipal planning and BC Transit's planning processes. Local Government Engagement concluded with a presentation of the draft plan to each of the 13 municipalities in April though June 2026.

First Nations Engagement

BC Transit reached out to all First Nations within the Transit Service area with an opportunity to help shape this plan, including Tsawout, Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tseycum, Xwsepsum (Esquimalt), Songhees, Scia'new, and T'Sou-ke. Engagement opportunities included conversations with staff, Chief and Council, and a targeted online survey. Several First Nations participated, providing valuable feedback throughout the process. BC Transit will continue to work towards building these relationships and supporting ongoing conversations to better understand transportation needs, support reconciliation goals and facilitate improved accessibility.

WHAT WE HEARD

Across all of the engagement activities, several key themes emerged, including the following:

- Improved service frequency, reliability and direct or simplified routes were the most requested improvements for the transit system
- Support for additional transit-priority measures to improve on-time performance, service reliability and transit competitiveness
- Strong support for express-oriented and rapid service between key regional centres (including but not limited to Downtown, Uptown, West Shore, UVic, Swartz Bay)
- Strong support for improving connections within the transit system
- A general willingness amongst riders to make more connections between routes if frequency of service is increased, transfer points are safe and comfortable, transfer wait times improved and the current fare policy for transfers revisited
- Desire for improved service levels and span in the West Shore and the Peninsula
- Interest in more direct transit connections to the Victoria International Airport (YYJ)
- Interest and support for further exploration around Higher Order Transit (Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT)) and suggestions for utilization of the E&N corridor
- Support for additional Park and Ride facilities to support residents in outlying areas in accessing the future core network
- Challenges with the handyDART system include service availability and poor experiences booking trips, with strong desire for reducing the 14 day requirement to book service

First Nations specifically mentioned:

- The need for improved service span (early morning, late evening trips) on routes connecting First Nations communities to urban centres and higher-frequency services.
- Desire for improved inter-reserve connectivity to support access to First Nation community resources and facilities
- Desire for improved communication around service changes and transit programming

From Vision to Action

Victoria Regional Transit System Vision Statement:

"To be a leader of integrated transportation solutions connecting people and communities to a more sustainable future."

The Victoria region is changing. Population growth, evolving travel patterns, housing development, climate goals and increasing congestion are placing new demands on the transit system.

Meeting these challenges will require more than incremental improvements. The region needs a transit network that is faster, more reliable, more accessible and capable of supporting the communities of tomorrow.

The Victoria Regional Transit Plan sets a long-term direction for achieving that future. It establishes a shared regional vision for how transit should evolve over the next 25 years and identifies the investments needed to support a growing region.

Current and Target Mode Share in Each Sub-Region

Sub-Region	Current Mode Share	Target Mode Share
Core	7.7%	20%
West Shore	3.1%	10%
Peninsula	3.0%	5%
Region Total	**6.5%**	**15%**

A New Direction

To achieve this vision, the Commission has set an ambitious goal of 15 per cent transit mode share by 2050, which aligns with local government targets across the region. Meeting this goal requires a shift in how transit is both planned and delivered.

Historically, investments have focused on expanding service to meet immediate needs. While that approach has built a strong network, future growth demands a more strategic approach—one that prioritizes the highest-demand corridors, supports transit-oriented communities and improves the customer experience across the region.

Future investment must focus on:

- Building a faster and more reliable network
- Connecting growing communities with high-quality transit
- Improving accessibility for all riders
- Supporting housing, economic development and climate objectives
- Investing where transit can have the greatest regional impact

The Next 25 Years: The Big Moves

To achieve this vision, the Victoria Regional Transit Plan identifies 10 Big Moves. Together, these Big Moves provide the strategic framework for future investment decisions. They are not individual projects, but long-term priorities that will guide service expansion, infrastructure investment and partnerships as the region grows.

Collectively, they create a roadmap toward a transit system that is more connected, more reliable and better equipped to serve the Victoria region for decades to come.

The Shift

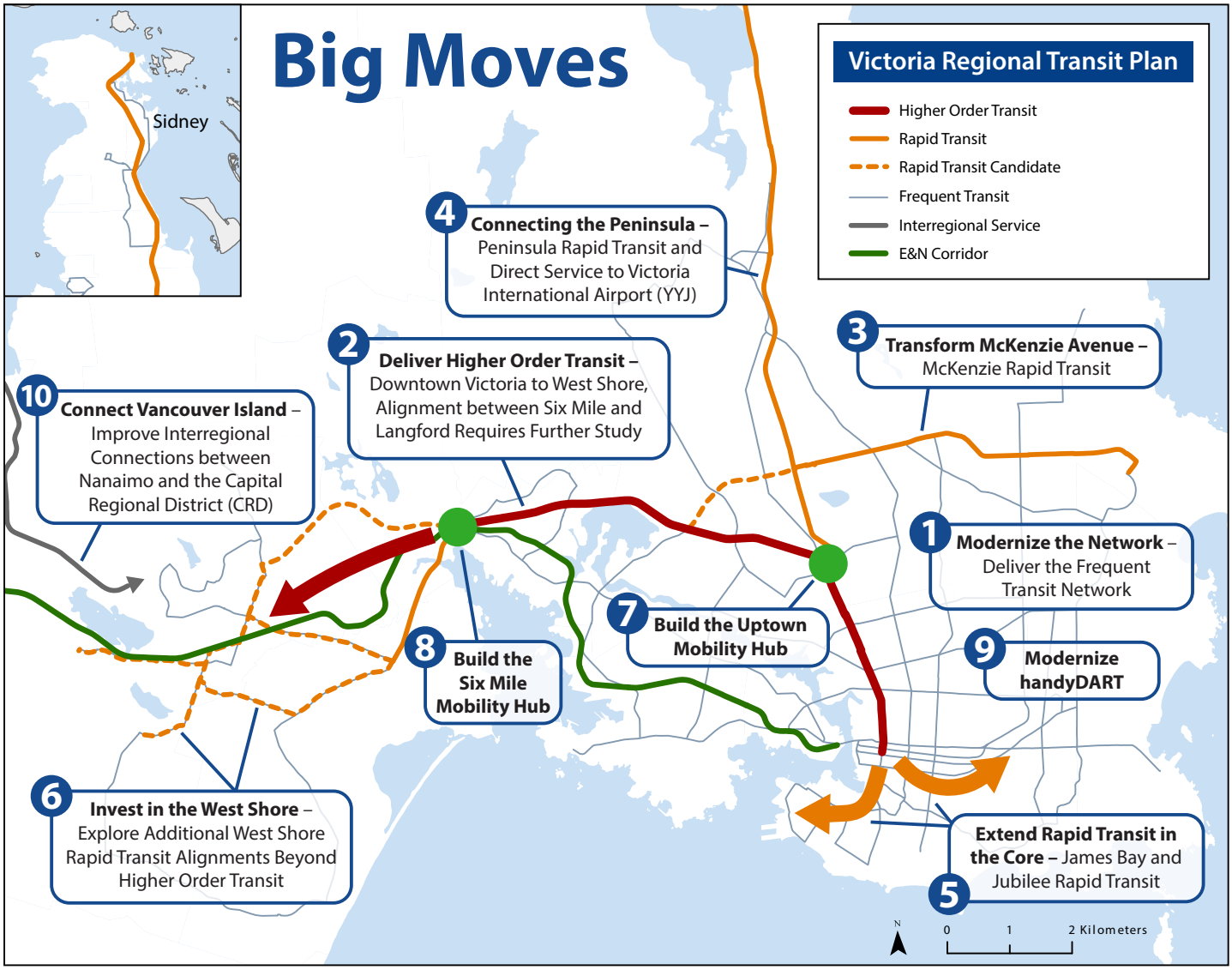
A goal of 15 per cent transit mode share is ambitious. Achieving it will require equally ambitious action from BC Transit, Local Government Partners and the Province. Each partner has responsibility for different actions that will collectively achieve the vision established in this plan. Recent work to integrate land use, population growth, and transit services is a step toward this vision. However, challenges like mitigating congestion-related declines in speed and reliability, improving customer experience, and building a network that serves a rapidly growing population will require new policies, additional funding, and coordination between agencies at all levels.

Realizing this shift will require implementing the plan's **Big Moves** over the next 25 years. Many will be led by BC Transit and require collaboration with partners, while others are led by partners in collaboration with BC Transit. The **Investment Trajectory** lays out the resources needed to make investments a reality. **Infrastructure Priorities** outline capital investments needed to support the future network.

These investments are required to achieve a 15 per cent transit mode share and deliver on sustainability targets across the region. However, every government within the region has an important role to play in achieving this goal. Local Government Partners can support the plan through continued integration of transit into land use planning, support for transportation demand management, and by mitigating or reversing declines in speed and reliability on their roadways. The Province can support the plan by providing funding for operating and capital, continued support for integrating land use and transportation, and creating additional, flexible funding levers for the VRTC to raise the local share of costs. Funding from the Government of Canada will be needed for transformational projects, operations and maintenance facilities, and other large capital projects. With support, BC Transit can deliver the transit service the region will need to thrive.

Big Moves: The Next 25 Years

Achieving the goals of this plan requires bold action and transformative investment, which is reflected by the 10 Big Moves below. Together they will allow BC Transit to deliver the transit service the community needs for the next 25 years. Some require partnership between multiple levels of government, and in one case with governments outside of the region. Several require large capital investments, while others are longer running processes to shape the network. Implementing these initiatives will take time and significant funding increases within the region. The Implementation Roadmap outlines concrete steps with high-level timelines on how these will be implemented over the life of the plan.



1. Modernize the Network

› *The Opportunity*

The Victoria region has changed significantly over the past decade. Network modernization encompasses a suite of changes that will help transit evolve alongside changing communities, travel patterns and customer expectations.

› *Why It Matters*

- **Route frequency and structure** – Prioritizing expansion of service in areas with more growth will allow BC Transit to focus resources into serving the highest demand areas. This can include more direct routing on Frequent Transit routes and more frequency on routes with higher demand.
- **Stop patterns** – Frequent stops along major corridors slow down buses. Ensuring stop spacing along major corridors aligns with the Network and Route Guidelines will speed up buses and improve reliability.
- **Technology** - Technological changes make it possible to try new service models like digital OnDemand and other demand responsive services. Technology can also improve customer experience through projects like electronic fare collection and custom transit software modernization.

› *What We'll Do*

As part of this plan, BC Transit has created updated **Network and Route Guidelines**. These guidelines help provide clarity to Local Government Partners, community members and BC Transit as to how the system will deal with tradeoffs like where to invest service or whether routes should make deviations to serve a neighbourhood.

The guidelines establish a demand-based framework, directing more service to areas where transit need is greatest. The framework is necessary to guide network changes as BC Transit works towards delivering on the goals of the VRTP. The guidelines also update route classifications to match community need. These updates include more frequency, longer span of service, changes to stop spacing on major corridors, and new service types. These updates will be essential for BC Transit as they work to modernize how service is implemented in the coming years.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

Network modernization will lead to **implementation of the Frequent Transit Network**. Frequent Transit in the VRTS is currently limited to a few major corridors. Expansion of the network will mean that many more people are within walking distance of service that comes every 15 minutes or better. The proposed network will create a gridded Frequent Transit Network serving the Core and parts of the West Shore. Riders will benefit from reduced wait times, more direct service and better connections on trips that require more than one bus.

Evolving the network towards a frequent grid will require BC Transit to **reduce service duplication**. Service duplication results from many routes providing a trip to downtown Victoria, without the need to make a connection (transfer). Corridors with duplication often have high numbers of buses on them, but service is not always useful for customers. Duplication can create buses that are too full or too empty and prevent service from being more evenly distributed on other corridors that need service. Reducing duplication will mean that some riders will have to make connections but will allow for the development of a network that prioritizes frequency, reliability and faster overall trips.

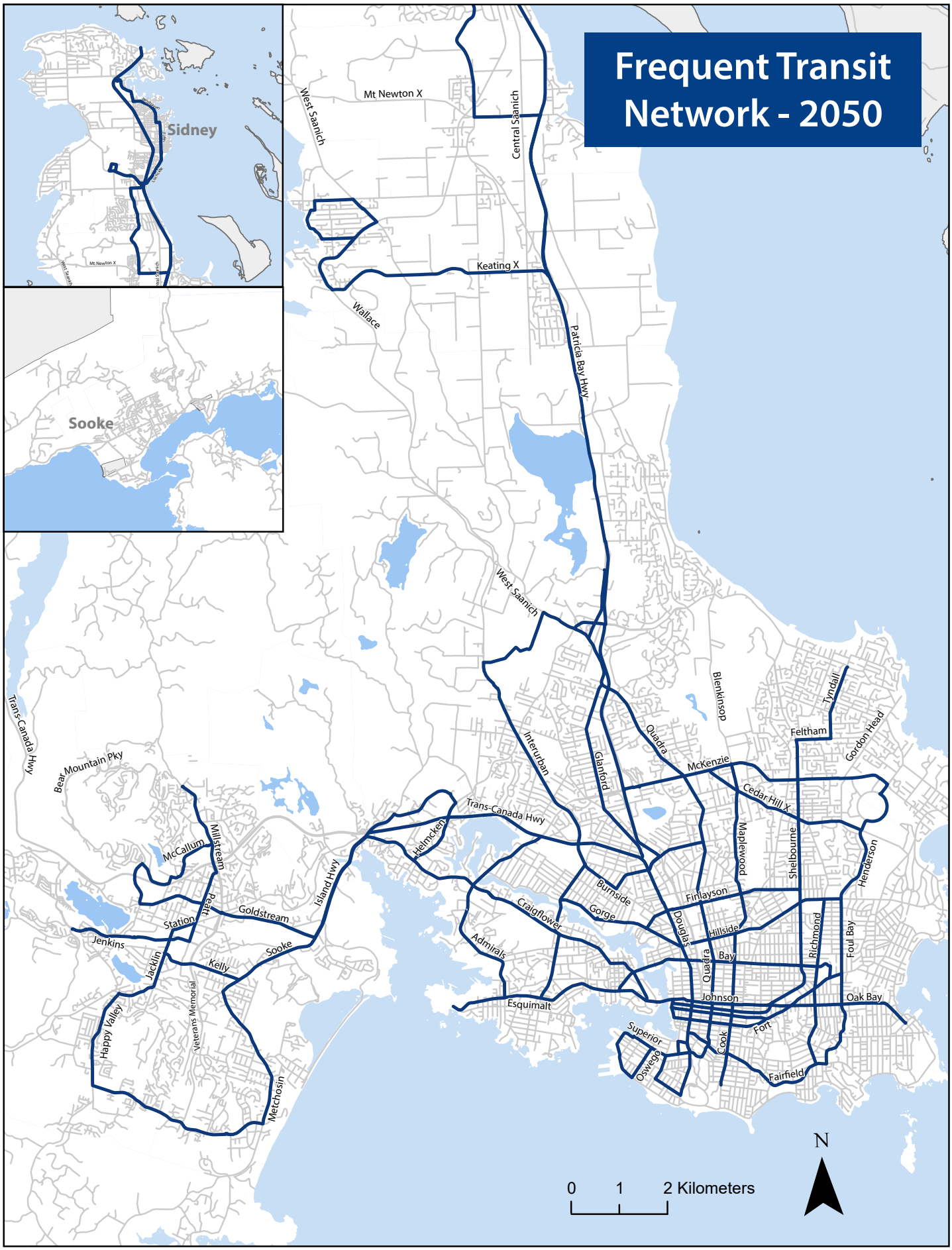
Modernization also includes expansion of service span to 24 hours per day on select routes. Late night service will be prioritized alongside other improvements and may occur later in this plan. BC Transit will continue to explore how different service models can serve the region. Engagement exposed a strong desire for Express services. OnDemand service can provide higher quality of service in lower density and rural areas. The Network and Route Guidelines will provide BC Transit with more tools to effectively serve the region.

What is OnDemand?

OnDemand service is a curb-to-curb service that picks up riders when they request a ride. The service does not operate on a fixed-route and provides potentially shorter wait times in lower density areas. OnDemand is powered by software that allows vehicles to respond to rider requests, allowing the vehicle to dynamically adjust routes to offer the best service based on where riders want to go at the time.

Service Layer	Service Description	Service Frequency	Minimum Service Span	Stop Spacing
Rapid	Rapid Transit routes provide frequent, high capacity service between major destinations. Wider stop spacing and infrastructure ensure faster travel times. Typically makes the connection between the most dense, highest demand areas and provides greater capacity than other services. Rapid Transit could include RapidBus, Trackless Trams, or Rail.	Minimum of every 10 minutes or better for most of the day, often more frequent	5 am - 12 am daily	Limited stops, typically every 800m - 2 km+
Frequent	Frequent Transit routes provide service every 15 minutes or better. These routes typically run on major, mixed-use corridors and provide service between more dense areas of the region.	Minimum of every 15 minutes or better for most of the day	7 am - 12 am Monday - Saturday 7 am - 11 pm Sunday	Frequent stops on corridor, every 300-500m.
Standard	Standard Transit routes serve a mixture of residential areas and smaller mixed-use corridors. These routes provide all day service, but with less frequency for more of the day. Routes may focus on connecting to more frequent routes and local centres.	Minimum of every 30 minutes at higher demand periods, with minimum 60 minutes at low demand times	7 am - 10 pm daily	Stops every 250-400m in neighbourhoods, but up to 500m on major corridors.
Basic	Basic Transit routes provide coverage service to lower density areas. Typically routes focus on connecting to more frequent routes and local centres.	Minimum of every two hours	7 am - 7 pm weekdays 8 am - 6 pm Saturdays 9 am - 5 pm Sundays	Stops every 250-400m in neighbourhoods, but up to 500m on major corridors.
Express	Express services provide a duplicated overlay on existing routes featuring fewer stops on part or all of the route to speed up travel times and reduce crowding at peak periods.	Varies based on service and demand	Varies depending on service	Fewer stops compared to typical routing.
Regional	Regional services connect between communities with longer, limited stop, regional trips. Services typically operate on highways and faster roads and limit stops in lower density areas to maintain faster trip times. Service may operate drop off only or have alternate stop pattern.	Varies based on service and demand	Varies depending on service	Limited stop spacing in lower density areas, but may be more frequent to serve higher density parts of the route. Service may provide drop off only or skip stops for part of a route before resuming the full stop pattern.
OnDemand	OnDemand Transit uses technology platforms to respond to rides when requested. Zones are often in lower density, rural areas where OnDemand could replace infrequent fixed-route services.	Varies based on service and demand	Varies depending on service	Varies depending on service, though potentially curb-to-curb service.

See BC Transit's Network and Route Design Guidelines for additional details on service layers.


Frequent Transit Network - 2050
Sidney
Sooke
Mt Newton X
West Saanich
Central Saanich
Keating X
Wallace
Patricia Bay Hwy
West Saanich
Trans-Canada Hwy
Bear Mountain Pky
McCallum
Millstream
Peatt
Station
Goldstream
Island Hwy
Jenkins
Jacklin
Kelly
Sooke
Happy Valley
Veterans Memorial
Metchosin
Helmcken
Trans-Canada Hwy
Interurban
Glanford
Quadra
Blenkinsop
Tyndall
Feltham
Gordon Head
McKenzie
Cedar Hill X
Maplewood
Shelbourne
Henderson
Burnside
Gorge
Craigflower
Admirals
Finlayson
Douglas
Hillside
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Bay
Richmond
Foul Bay
Oak Bay
Esquimalt
Johnson
Fort
Superior
Oswego
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2. Deliver Higher Order Transit

Rapid Transit encompasses a wide spectrum of transit vehicle types and supportive infrastructure, but all share features like dedicated transit lanes, bus priority treatments and higher vehicle capacity to provide faster trips and more capacity. Investments in speed and reliability are paired with higher frequencies and longer spans of service. BC Transit currently operates RapidBus between Victoria and Langford, with additional corridors in various stages of planning. To meet future demand, the region will need to implement Higher Order Transit. Higher Order Transit includes a range of technologies, including trackless trams and rail, that represent greater investment and benefit than RapidBus.

Rapid Transit

RapidBus: RapidBus, also sometimes called bus rapid transit or BRT, uses high capacity buses to deliver service. Transit priority, wider stop spacing, and station amenities speed up travel and enhance customer experience. Passenger capacity depends on frequency and travel time savings, but is lower than Higher Order Transit modes. However, RapidBus is usually cheaper and faster to implement.

Trackless Trams: A relatively recent technology that work similarly to light rail, but runs on rubber tires. Some trackless trams feature systems that help guide the vehicle along dedicated rights of way. Depending on the implementation, trackless trams may be considerably cheaper than rail systems, though benefits and costs are highly dependent on a range of factors.

Source: Brisbane Metro

Rail Transit: Rail can include different technologies like streetcars, light rail, tram-trains, heavy rail, and metro systems. Rail systems can run in mixed-traffic but often use exclusive guideways to improve speeds. Rail provides greater passenger capacity, but also has the highest cost.

Source: TransLink

HIGHER ORDER TRANSIT

› The Opportunity

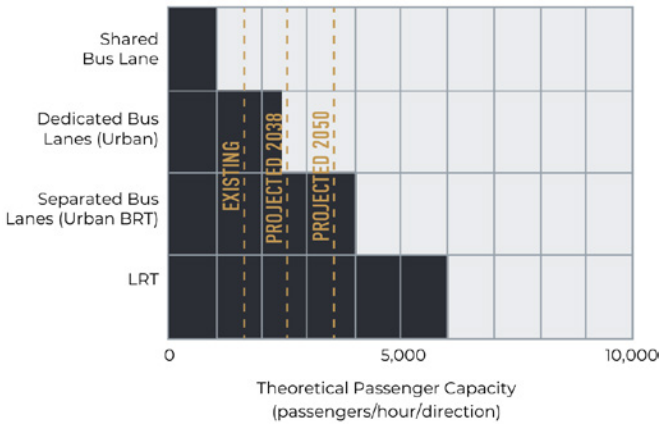
Planning for Higher Order Transit between downtown Victoria and Langford has been decades in the making. Existing Rapid Transit services will reach their maximum capacity by 2040. Implementing Higher Order Transit between the West Shore and downtown Victoria will create the capacity needed to keep a growing region moving and build towards 15 per cent mode share.

› Why It Matters

In 2011, BC Transit, the Province and the CRD completed a study recommending light rail (LRT) as the preferred Rapid Transit solution due to the ability of LRT to meet expected ridership demands in the future. Since that study, BC Transit, the Province and Local Government Partners have been working towards a phased implementation, beginning with the launch of the Route 95 Blink RapidBus and the construction of bus-only lanes between Victoria and Langford. Investments have already reduced travel time for buses significantly.

In 2025, the Province developed a technical review of light rail that updated key findings from prior work. A key finding from the study is that BC Transit will not be able to serve expected ridership within the next 15 years without further upgrades beyond the existing RapidBus service. The 2025 study concluded that the previously confirmed alignment was still feasible with modifications. Minimal alignment changes would be needed between Victoria and Uptown, with more changes needed in the West Shore.

Although LRT and a preferred alignment were identified in 2011, changes to rights-of-way, utilities and development will require elements of that work to be reconsidered. Additionally, Langford's recent Transportation Master Plan indicates a preference for alternate alignments to be considered. Outcomes from the Reconciliation Corridor Initiative may provide additional corridor alternatives, particularly between the Six Mile Mobility Hub and Langford.



Source: West Shore LRT Technical Review – MOTT (2025)

› What We'll Do

Achieving Higher Order Transit investments by 2050 will be a multi-step process:

1. **West Shore Rapid Transit Alignment Study:** BC Transit, the Province and Local Government Partners will need to create a West Shore Rapid Transit Alignment Study to reconfirm the preferred alignment and confirm which technologies are appropriate. Regional agreement on the most feasible alignment (especially between Six Mile and Langford), along with updated cost estimates and ridership projections will allow BC Transit and partners to advance a business case for the investments.
2. **Develop a Business Case and Preliminary Design:** Once an alignment and technology have been confirmed, BC Transit and partners will need to create preliminary designs and develop a more detailed business case for the investments required. This includes refining cost estimates and advancing more detailed analysis to inform implementation and support public consultation on key project decisions. This step will support VRTC decision making and provide clarity for seeking grants and other funding sources for implementation.
3. **Seek Funding and Create Final Designs:** BC Transit will need to work with partners at all levels of government to fund Higher Order Transit. Once funding is identified and all project partners have signed onto the project, final design work will be required to move to construction. This phase will include additional public consultation and decisions by the **VRTC**.
4. **Implementation:** Higher Order Transit will lead to large capital investments in roadway changes, fleet, technology and operations and maintenance facilities. Each of these requires procurement, policy and construction over a period of several years.

While these steps are being completed, BC Transit and partners will need to concurrently advance priority infrastructure leading to a RapidBus Phase 2 that can potentially expand capacity and deliver benefits to existing bus service in the interim. This can include additional priority measures, changes to fleet and other capital improvements to expand ridership capacity and improve bus operations.

› Long-Term Outcome

Higher Order Transit will form the backbone of the future transit system. Additional capacity will be necessary in the 2040s to meet ridership demand. Additional capacity along Douglas Street will create opportunities to fully realize Network Modernization.

3. Transform McKenzie Avenue

› *The Opportunity*

McKenzie Avenue is a key transit corridor for the region. District of Saanich and BC Transit recognize that Rapid Transit service is critical to keeping up with changes on the corridor and providing quality transit connections to key regional destinations. Rapid Transit service will connect several high growth centres, including Uptown Transit Oriented Area, with the University of Victoria. The route will also connect residents to the future Higher Order Transit line at Uptown and provide connections to the West Shore.

› *Why It Matters*

Prior planning studies like the RapidBus Implementation Strategy and McKenzie Avenue RapidBus Corridor Study have confirmed the importance of Rapid Transit on McKenzie Avenue to support mode share, land use development and community goals. The long-term vision includes Rapid Transit station upgrades, transit priority lanes at key points along the route, all ages and abilities cycling infrastructure, improved street tree coverage and other green infrastructure. Transit priority infrastructure is expected to reduce bus travel time more than 20 per cent along the corridor, while also improving reliability of bus service.

Transforming the corridor will support District of Saanich land use planning by providing Rapid Transit service to growing centres at Quadra/McKenzie and Shelbourne. This corridor is a key link between University of Victoria and the West Shore, via connections at Uptown.

› *What We'll Do*

Rapid Transit may take time to deliver. However, BC Transit will work to improve service incrementally and speed up much needed improvements by:

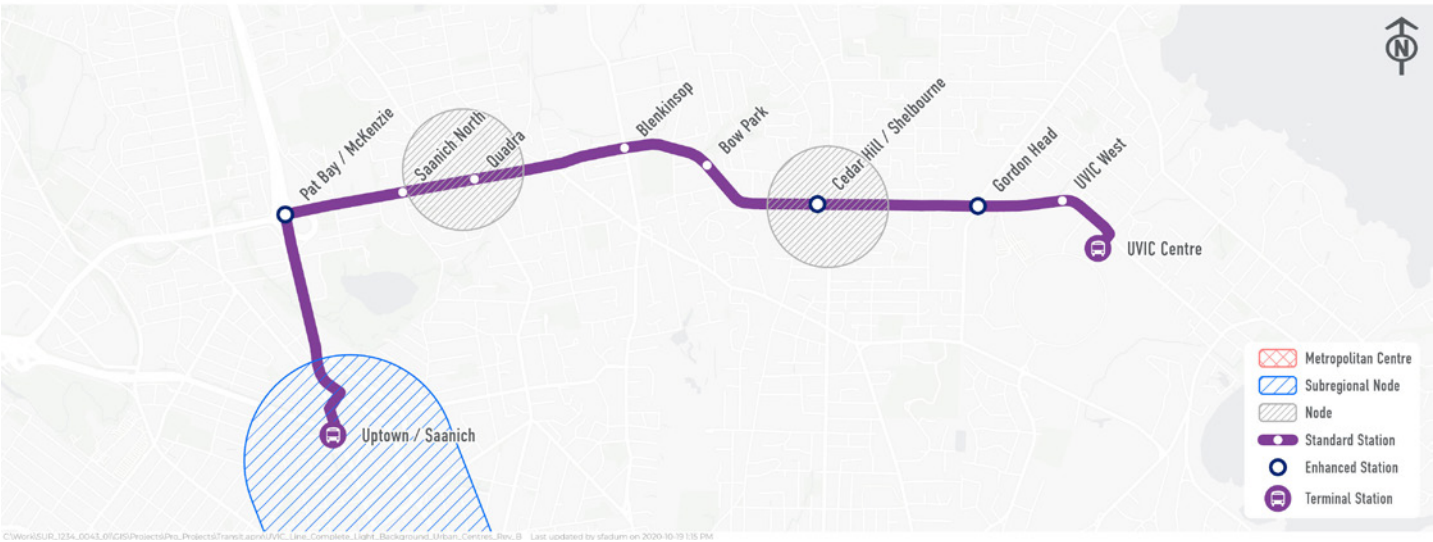
- Building ridership and service levels through implementation of Express Transit service. Like Rapid Transit, Express Transit features wider stop spacing and faster travel times compared to local services.
- Improving customer amenities and building Rapid Transit station infrastructure in phases as ridership levels increase and land uses intensify in centres.
- Investing in transit priority at targeted locations. Strategically investing in priority at the highest-delay segments and where rights-of-way are less constrained will allow BC Transit to get immediate benefit and continue to work with the community on the long-term vision.

As land uses in centres along the corridor intensify and ridership builds alongside increased service levels, District of Saanich and BC Transit will continue to invest in delivering the full corridor vision.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

In the long-term, District of Saanich and BC Transit will work to fully transform the corridor with Rapid Transit service, active transportation investments, and green infrastructure. The corridor will support convenient, efficient travel for the growing centres along it and provide regional connections between University of Victoria, Uptown and the region.

McKenzie Rapid Transit



Source: Victoria Regional RapidBus Implementation Strategy

4. Connecting the Peninsula

› *The Opportunity*

The Peninsula is home to several key regional destinations, including Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal, Victoria International Airport (YYJ), and the Town of Sidney. Population projections on the Peninsula do not anticipate high levels of growth like in the Core and West Shore, however trips to these regional destinations will grow with the region. Efficiently serving these trips, while maintaining service to smaller communities on the Peninsula, will require investments in Rapid Transit.

› *Why It Matters*

Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal, YYJ, and Sidney are key regional destinations. Improving service to these areas was identified as a priority in engagement and aligns with Network Modernization priorities. Routes serving the Peninsula are among the highest-ridership routes in the system.

› *What We'll Do*

Rapid Transit implementation on the Peninsula will require increased service levels, development of the Sidney Transit Hub, stations on Hwy 17 at Island View Road, and other investments along Highway 17 including Park & Rides, transit priority, and bus stop infrastructure improvements. Planning for the Sidney Transit Hub project is underway, with a business case expected around 2027, with construction to follow after funding and approvals. The hub will support improved transit services with five bus bays, space for Rapid Transit stations, and amenities for riders.

Given the importance of key regional destinations on the Peninsula, BC Transit will implement Regional express routes to destinations along Highway 17 as an interim step towards Rapid Transit. Regional express service to Swartz Bay, Sidney and YYJ will provide faster travel times and allow for more targeted frequency adjustments, while allowing BC Transit to maintain high combined levels of service along the Highway 17 corridor. This approach aligns with the significant support received through public engagement for direct service to YYJ. BC Transit will continue to work with the Province to identify appropriate locations for transit priority on Highway 17 and phase implementation of these investments and customer amenities.

The Peninsula Local Area Transit Plan envisions Frequent Transit connecting communities along the Peninsula to the Highway 17 corridor. This will be implemented as part of Network Modernization. These improvements will be phased with investments along the Highway 17 corridor.

Additional work is needed to determine exactly how Express and Rapid Transit services can most effectively serve key destinations and riders who live along the Peninsula.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

Riders from around the region will enjoy stronger connections with the key destinations at Swartz Bay, YYJ, and Sidney. People living on the Peninsula will enjoy stronger connections to the Core and to other communities on the Peninsula.

Peninsula Rapid Transit

Source: Victoria Regional RapidBus Implementation Strategy

5. Invest in the Core

› *The Opportunity*

Today, routes serving the Victoria Region's core have some of the highest ridership within the transit system. Within the core, the neighbourhoods of James Bay and Jubilee are among the densest, with a strong mix of both population and employment. Being adjacent to downtown Victoria, they are natural priorities for extending the Rapid Transit network. Current land use plans allow for significant infill development and densification, making investments in transit service and infrastructure within the core a critical priority over the next 25 years.

› *Why It Matters*

High ridership and growing congestion make investments in the Core a strategic priority. Planned infill development and population growth will require growth in transit services to ensure that the transportation system continues to get people where they need to go.

Rapid Transit extensions to James Bay and Jubilee would strengthen connections to downtown Victoria, improve access to major destinations, and increase the reach and capacity of the Rapid Transit network. These extensions would also create opportunities to relocate bus layover and terminal functions outside the downtown core, improving transit operations as the network grows.

Complementary investments in the Frequent Transit Network, transit priority, express services, and digital on-demand transit in lower-density areas will further improve the speed, reliability, and efficiency of the transit system. Additional Rapid Transit corridors may also be explored over the long term as travel demand and regional growth evolve.

› *What We'll Do*

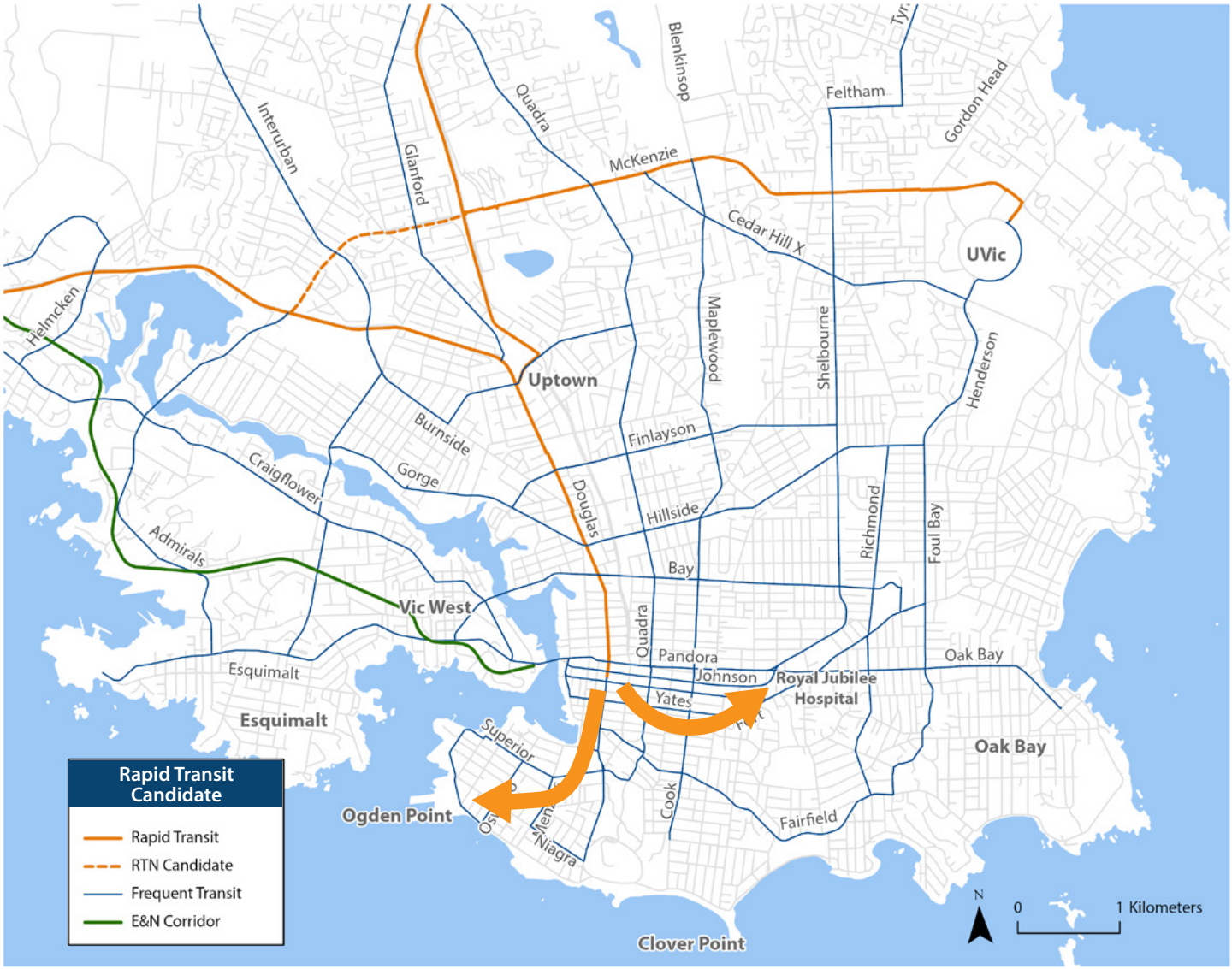
BC Transit will work with the City of Victoria and regional partners to advance planning for Rapid Transit extensions to James Bay and Jubilee, including identifying potential alignments, assessing transit priority opportunities, and engaging with affected communities. Beyond extending Rapid Transit to Jubilee and James Bay, this plan proposes significant investment within the Core network, including building out a frequent transit grid, and considering supplemental express service on key corridors, and digital on demand in lower density areas.

At the same time, BC Transit will continue investing in the urban core by expanding the Frequent Transit Network, supporting transit priority improvements, exploring express services on key corridors, and considering digital-on-demand service to improve access in lower-density areas.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

Rapid Transit extensions to James Bay and Jubilee will provide faster, more reliable connections to downtown Victoria, strengthen the regional transit network, and improve BC Transit operations. Together with a connected Frequent Transit Network, expanded transit priority, express services, and innovative service delivery, these investments will create a faster, more reliable, and more resilient transit system capable of supporting future growth. Additional Rapid Transit corridors may also be identified over the next 25 years where supported by future travel demand and regional priorities.

Core Area Rapid Transit Candidate Corridors



6. Invest in the West Shore

› *The Opportunity*

As the West Shore continues to grow rapidly, meeting the needs of the community and achieving a mode share of 10 per cent in the area will require Rapid Transit investment beyond the planned Higher Order Transit between Victoria and Langford. The outcome of the West Shore Rapid Transit Alignment Study will identify Higher Order Transit investments. Other corridors will still need Rapid Transit to provide efficient service to the rapidly growing population.

› *Why It Matters*

Previous planning efforts identified potential to extend the Rapid Transit to the West Hills Exchange and to the Happy Valley/Sooke Road area. Continued planning by the City of Langford has identified Peatt Road as a preferred transit alignment through downtown Langford. City of Langford work has also identified a mobility hub at Peatt Road that was not previously considered in Rapid Transit studies. Higher Order Transit cannot effectively serve all of the areas in the West Shore that will need Rapid Transit in 2050, which means that additional corridors will be needed.

› *What We'll Do*

Identification of the alignment for Higher Order Transit in the West Shore Rapid Transit Alignment Study will help to clarify how Rapid Transit services could tie into the network and best serve West Shore residents. Several corridors have been identified as potential candidates for Rapid Transit. These include:

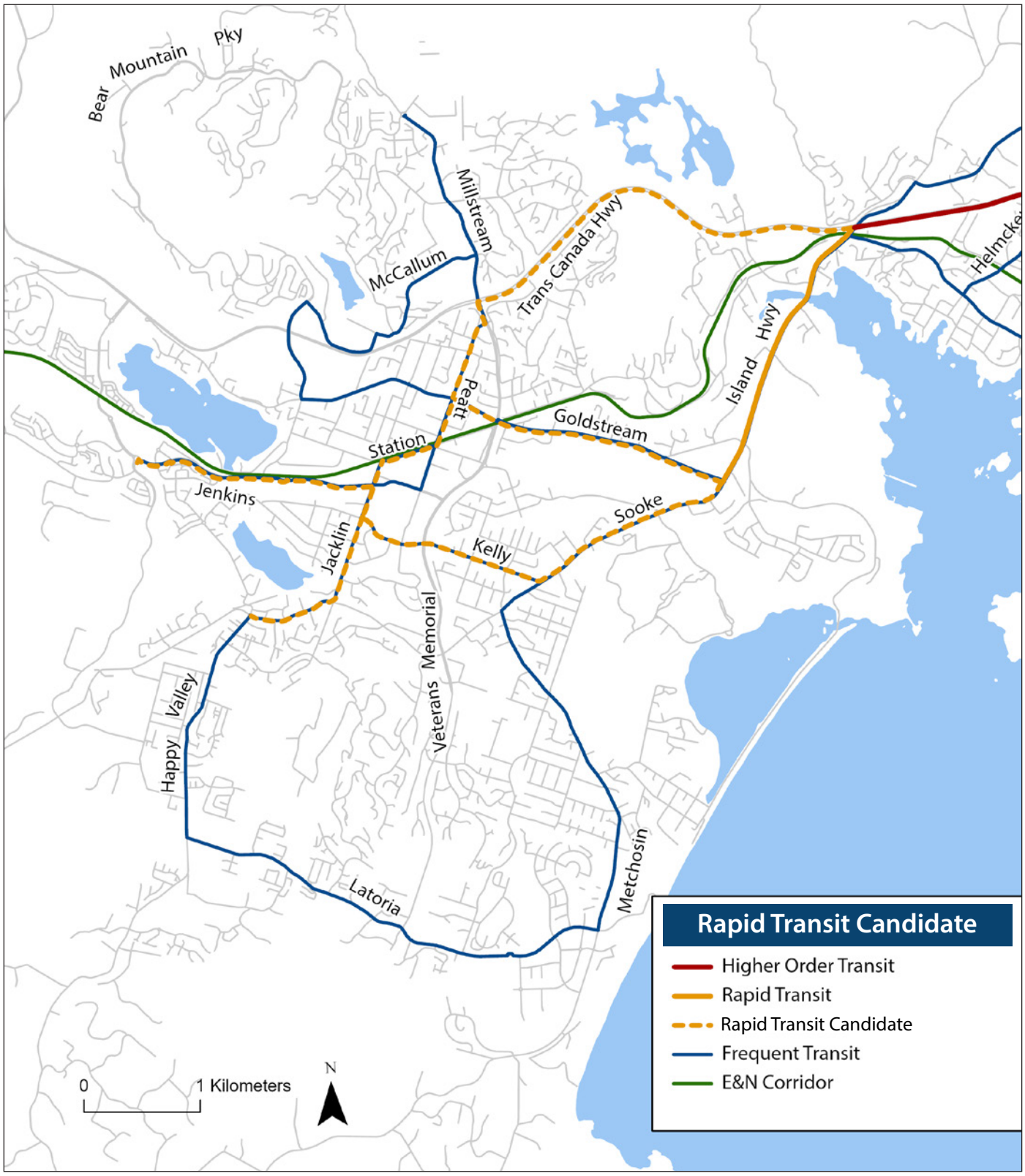
- Island Highway from Six Mile to Goldstream Avenue
- Goldstream Avenue
- Highway 1 and Peatt Road
- Sooke Road from Goldstream Avenue to Happy Valley Road
- Langford Parkway from Jacklin Road to West Hills Exchange

Further planning work on these corridors will proceed in partnership with Local Government Partners as part of revisiting the alignment for Higher Order Transit.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

High growth in the West Shore will need to be paired with significant expansion of the transit network. Planning for Rapid Transit will ensure that residents can travel throughout the West Shore on frequent, convenient transit options and build towards mode share goals. Transit service will help provide capacity and reduce congestion.

West Shore Rapid Transit Candidate Corridors



Note: Higher Order Transit alignment from Six Mile to Langford not shown. Further study will determine exact alignment.

7. Build the Uptown Mobility Hub

› *The Opportunity*

Led by the Province, the Uptown Mobility Hub will create a mixed-use community that includes housing, public spaces, updated transit facilities and multi-modal connections. The site, situated along the Galloping Goose and Lochside Regional Trails, already serves as a key exchange for some of BC Transit's highest ridership routes and will provide future-proofed exchange space as the network grows. The area includes a Provincial Transit Oriented Area (TOA), which will allow for high density development.

› *Why It Matters*

Network Modernization and development of Higher Order and Rapid Transit throughout the region will reinforce Uptown as a key connection in the network. Already home to a large shopping centre, the Province purchased land that is being used to create future-proofed transit facilities alongside improved connections to regional trails. The Province envisions a high density, mixed-use development that will include housing, retail and commercial space, government services and potentially other amenities like child care, educational services and community-health facilities. Situated within a TOA, the site is zoned for high density and is not subject to most parking requirements.

Uptown will serve as both a key destination and a major multimodal connection point.

› *What We'll Do*

Upgraded RapidBus stations were recently completed, as were improved connections to the Lochside and Galloping Goose regional trails. Development of the remainder of the land, including housing and commercial components, is being led by the Province. BC Transit will continue to work in partnership with the Province to develop a transit exchange on the site. Transit improvements will facilitate Network Modernization efforts, which will be led by BC Transit as part of the delivery of this plan.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

Further development of Uptown as a regional destination will occur in tandem with the emergence of Uptown as the region's premier multi-modal transit hub. Uptown will serve as the convergence of multiple Rapid Transit lines, connect many local routes, and provide a gateway to regional active transportation networks. Housing and commercial space will seamlessly integrate with the transportation network.

Artist impression of how a Bus Rapid Transit stop and Uptown Transit Exchange could look from Highway 1

Source: Uptown Transit-Oriented Development Stakeholder and Public Engagement Summary Report

8. Build the Six Mile Mobility Hub

› *The Opportunity*

The Six Mile Mobility Hub is situated at the convergence of the Galloping Goose and E&N Regional Trails, proposed Higher Order Transit, the E&N Reconciliation Corridor and many important transportation corridors. Regardless of how Higher Order Transit approaches a West Shore Terminus, the alignment will travel through the Six Mile area. Once Higher Order Transit is built, this will serve as a key transit exchange, park and ride and multimodal transfer point.

› *Why It Matters*

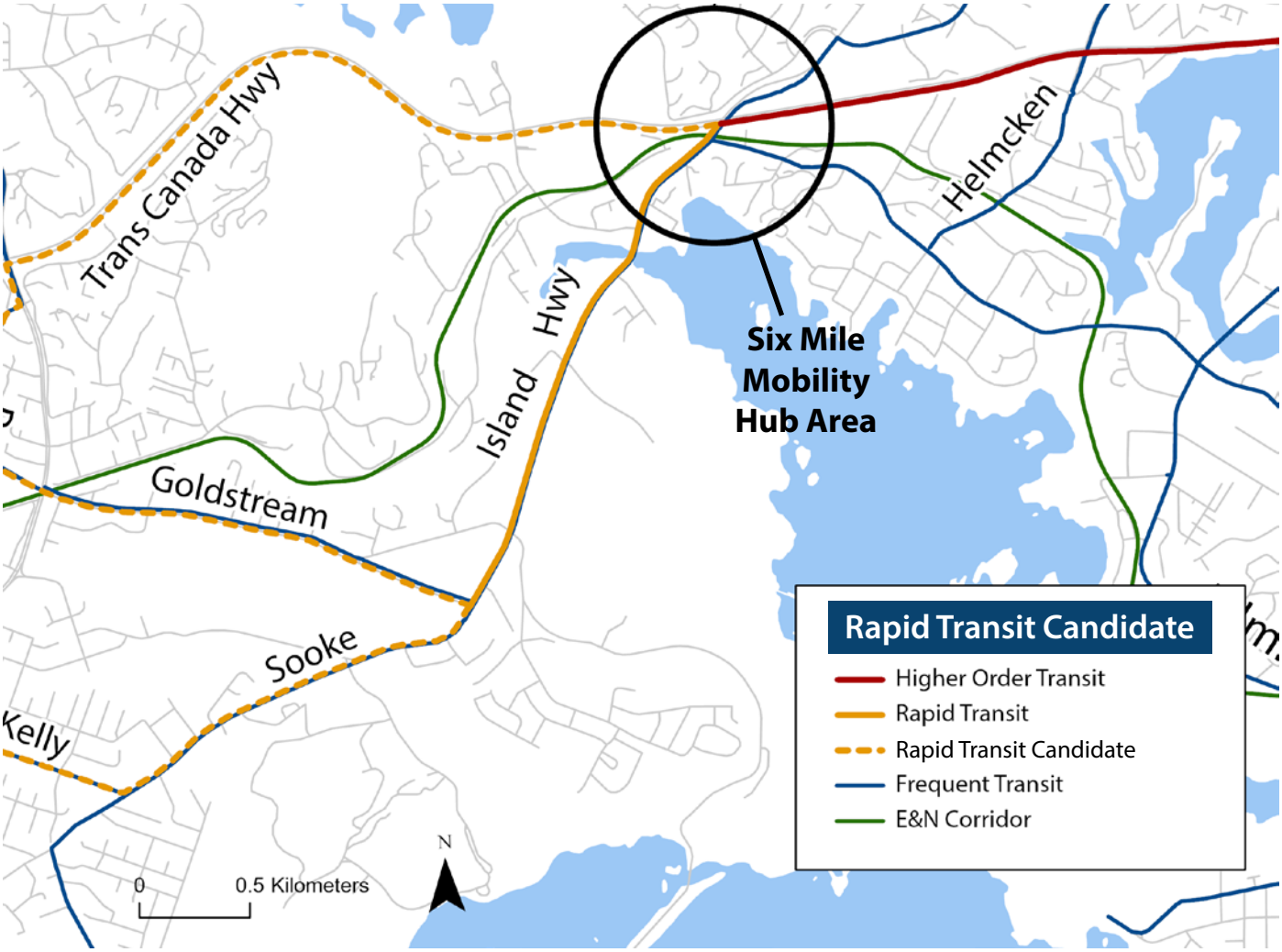
With the development of Higher Order Transit, BC Transit will need an exchange for West Shore routes to allow for transfers to the new service. Given the convergence of roadways from different parts of the West Shore and connections to active transportation, the Six Mile area is a unique opportunity to build a multimodal exchange.

› *What We'll Do*

Planning for the Six Mile Mobility Hub is not as advanced as for Uptown. As designs for Higher Order Transit are developed, BC Transit, the Province, and Local Government Partners will work to refine the concept. This will require identifying potential locations and desired outcomes. Future work may include visioning, planning, and technical studies to determine the exact nature of this key location.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

The Six Mile Mobility Hub will serve as the gateway between the West Shore and the Core.



Note: Higher Order Transit alignment from Six Mile to Langford not shown. Further study will determine exact alignment.

9. Modernize handyDART

Victoria handyDART facility

In 2025, BC Transit opened the Victoria handyDART Centre in View Royal. This facility will provide space for operations and maintenance of the handyDART fleet. The facility allows for expansion of the handyDART fleet, which has been a limiting factor in improving service quality and availability.

› *The Opportunity*

Growth in demand for handyDART is expected to continue over the course of this plan. With the opening of the Victoria handyDART Centre in 2025, BC Transit is once again able to invest in increasing the handyDART fleet and increase service levels. Investments in technology and updates to the service model will enhance mobility for riders.

› *Why It Matters*

Fleet constraints have been one impediment to improving handyDART service. The opening of the Victoria handyDART Centre is once again allowing fleet expansion. However, current processes and technology are limiting the efficiency of handyDART services. Modernizing handyDART service will allow BC Transit to better serve riders for each hour of service provided. Engagement revealed many improvements to customer experience that go beyond service availability.

› *What We'll Do*

Modernizing handyDART service will include:

- **Development of Service Standards and Performance Guidelines:** Service Standards and Performance Guidelines (SSPG) will develop key performance indicators and baseline reporting on service quality metrics. Standards and performance indicators will help staff and the VRTC to guide decisions about how to improve service quality.
- **Scheduling and dispatch technology upgrades:** Advances in dispatching software and on-vehicle technology will allow BC Transit to more efficiently deliver services and improve customer experience. Updated dispatching software is expected to create significant efficiencies, allowing handyDART drivers to provide more rides per hour. In addition to more capacity, customers will spend less time waiting and on-vehicle when they make trips. Software upgrades will also allow BC Transit to experiment with alternative service models that may benefit customers. Pilot projects will be key to determining how services can best serve customers.
- **Improved customer booking solutions:** As part of technology upgrades, BC Transit is working towards implementing technologies to offer self-service booking to handyDART riders. The goal of the upgrades is to allow customers to manage and plan trips online with more flexibility than current policies and receive real-time updates on their trip.
- **Electronic fare payment:** Work is underway to explore upgrading handyDART vehicles to accept electronic fare payments, providing additional options for customers.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

A strong handyDART system ensures that mobility is available to everyone in the community. Updating how service is delivered and the technology that powers service delivery will result in a handyDART system that has more capacity and improved customer experience.

10. Connect Vancouver Island

› *The Opportunity*

The VRTS serves Greater Victoria, but many people need and want to travel to other areas on the island. The Cowichan Valley Regional Transit System, in partnership with the VRTS, provides connections from Duncan and Shawnigan Lake to downtown Victoria; however, services are limited to a handful of trips each day. Connections to areas farther away, like Nanaimo, are difficult.

› *Why It Matters*

Public engagement revealed a strong desire to improve transit options that link the VRTS with other areas on Vancouver Island. Existing services are geared towards commuters and don't serve all trip types. Strengthening connections between transit systems on the Island will benefit all communities.

› *What We'll Do*

Improving connections between the Capital Regional District, the Cowichan Valley and Nanaimo will require coordination between many partners, including the Cowichan Valley Regional and Nanaimo Regional Transit Systems.

The Victoria Regional Transit System is committed to working with partners to deliver improved interregional connections. Making this happen will require negotiation of cost sharing and operational details with other communities and expansion funding. The result will be a seamless transit experience travelling up and down the island.

› *Long-Term Outcome*

Greater Victoria is connected to other communities on Vancouver Island with high-quality public transportation.

Investment Trajectory

Implementing these 10 **Big Moves** will require a high level of investment in transit service and infrastructure. Service hours in the VRTS have expanded an average of around two per cent per year. Modeling indicates that this level of investment could achieve a maximum of 10 per cent mode share, well short of the goal of this plan.

What's Needed

Achieving 15 per cent mode share and the **Big Moves** by 2050 will require growing the system to more than **1.7 million service hours**, including 76,000 hours of Higher Order Transit service. This is about twice as much service as provided today. At a steady rate of expansion, this would be nearly three per cent expansion per year, which is modestly greater than the historic expansion rate of the system.

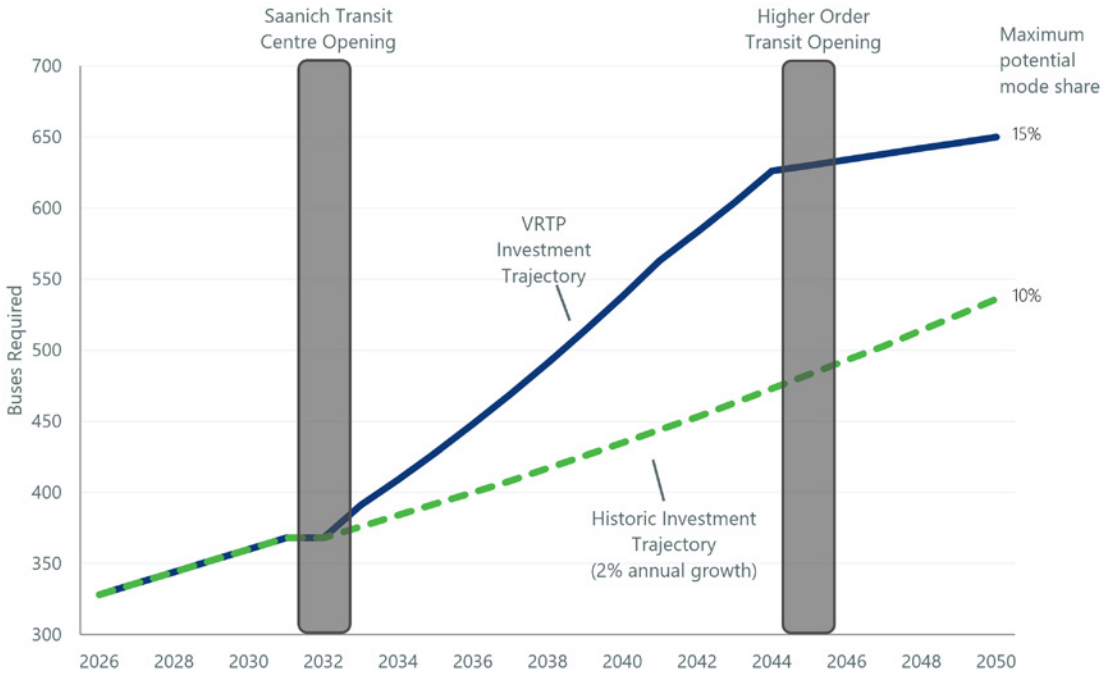
Managing Constraints

Delivering 1.7 million hours of service will require growing the bus fleet from 328 to **650 conventional buses**. Expansion of the fleet will be limited until Saanich Transit Centre opens in the early 2030s, which will require a short-term focus on modernizing the transit network and improving service efficiency.

Further, these expansion limitations will mean that after the opening of the new transit facility, **BC Transit will need to expand bus service at 4.4 per cent per year until 2045**, when Higher Order Transit services are expected to open. Expansion will proceed at a slower pace after the opening of Higher Order Transit as BC Transit restructures the network around the new service. Most new service hours will go towards implementing the Frequent Transit Network and Rapid Transit corridors.

Falling bus speeds have been a key issue for BC Transit in recent years. As the region grows and becomes denser, the problem is expected to continue. The investment trajectory assumes a continued degradation of bus speeds. A high proportion of new service hours are dedicated to mitigating the impact of slower speeds on service frequency and quality. **Implementing bus priority projects will allow BC Transit to deliver the Frequent Transit Network and other investments with fewer buses, hours of service and investment in infrastructure**. BC Transit will need the support of the Province and Local Government Partners to implement the needed priority measures.

Fleet Investment Trajectory



Fleet

The VRTS is currently served by a fleet of 328 conventional buses. This will need to grow to approximately 650 by 2050. Most of these buses will need to be added between the early 2030s and mid-2040s. This corresponds to the opening of the Saanich Transit Centre and the implementation of Higher Order Transit. Implementation of Higher Order Transit will take pressure off the need to grow the bus fleet as aggressively, though some expansion will still be required.

Higher Order Transit will create the need to develop a new fleet of vehicles. Depending on what technology is selected, this fleet could be a type of bus, trackless tram, or a rail vehicle. Future study will determine the appropriate technology. Regardless of what is selected, BC Transit will need to plan to accommodate a new vehicle type as part of planning for Higher Order Transit.

The handyDART fleet will need to grow at least as fast as population to maintain service levels. Efficiency gains are expected to increase productivity of service, but improving service availability will require more fleet. handyDART fleet requirements will be monitored based on program need.

Electrifying the Fleet

BC Transit is undergoing a phased approach to electrification of the transit fleet with a goal of full electrification. The current fleet is primarily composed of diesel- and compressed natural gas-powered heavy duty buses and gasoline-powered light duty handyDART vehicles. Electric heavy duty buses began entering the fleet in late 2025.

The first phase of electrification is underway with 62 battery electric buses planned for the VRTS (more than 15 per cent of the fleet). Existing electric bus technologies can deliver most, but not all, of the VRTS service. With battery improvements, heat pumps, and layover charging and schedule optimization BC Transit expects to be able to transition to a fully electric fleet over the life of the VRTP.

Electrification requires adapting facilities and building supportive on-street infrastructure. Upgrades to Victoria Transit Centre and Langford Transit Centre are part of the first phase of electrification. Future facilities like Saanich Transit Centre are expected to be made ready for the adoption of chargers and electric buses through design and construction of the facilities. On-street and exchange infrastructure will be needed to support a fully electric fleet. Planning and phasing of these upgrades will depend on developing business cases and securing funding for projects.

Electrification of light duty handyDART vehicles is also planned. The recently constructed Victoria handyDART facility was designed and constructed to support fleet electrification in the future. BC Transit will be testing electric light duty vehicles to determine how they meet operational and customer needs.

Facilities

Operations and Maintenance

Conventional Transit

Operations and Maintenance (O&M) facilities provide capacity for BC Transit to park, maintain and service buses. Conventional transit operations are currently supported through two O&M facilities: Victoria Transit Centre and Langford Transit Centre. Together, these facilities provide capacity for approximately 370 vehicles.

Planning is underway for a third conventional O&M facility: the Saanich Transit Centre. This facility will provide much-needed capacity for the VRTS. The full scope and timing of the project are being determined through an ongoing planning process. The facility is expected to be operational in the early 2030s and will provide space for vehicle maintenance, administration, fueling and other functions. The Saanich Transit Centre will be constructed with the necessary infrastructure to support the rollout of battery-electric buses.

The ambitious investment trajectory will require BC Transit to continue expanding O&M capacity over the life of this plan. O&M facilities can typically be expected to accommodate approximately 150 to 200 buses each. Following completion of the Saanich Transit Centre, an additional O&M facility is anticipated to be required around 2040, with a further facility anticipated in the early 2050s to support continued growth in the transit fleet and service levels. These facilities will need to be planned and funded well in advance to align with fleet expansion and the implementation of future service investments.

Higher Order Transit

The development of Higher Order Transit will introduce additional O&M requirements beyond those anticipated for the conventional bus network. Higher Order Transit will require BC Transit to introduce new vehicle types into its fleet. Rail-based technologies would require dedicated maintenance and storage facilities, while bus-like, rubber-tired vehicles used for trackless trams or similar technologies could potentially be accommodated within existing facilities through modifications.

Regardless of technology type, Higher Order Transit will accelerate the need for additional O&M capacity. If new vehicles are accommodated within existing facilities, they will reduce the space available for the conventional bus fleet, causing existing facilities to reach capacity sooner and advancing the need for future O&M investments. If Higher Order Transit is delivered using rail-based technology, a dedicated maintenance and storage facility will be required. In either scenario, additional O&M infrastructure will be needed before 2050 beyond the facilities currently identified for the conventional transit network. As a result, the timing, technology, and scale of Higher Order Transit investments must be considered alongside the broader O&M expansion strategy. Higher Order Transit will have significant implications for the timing, location, design, and capacity requirements of future O&M facilities.

handyDART

handyDART service is supported at the Victoria handyDART Centre, with capacity for 110 vehicles. The Victoria handyDART Centre is expected to provide capacity for handyDART expansion over the life of this plan and was designed to support future electrification.

Park & Rides

BC Transit operates five Park & Rides to allow riders to drive part way and then access a bus. Current facilities serve the McTavish Exchange, Langford Exchange, Colwood Exchange, Helmcken Road near Highway 1 and Sooke Road near Sooke River Road.

Future Park & Ride locations will be needed at:

- Peatt Road and Veterans Memorial Parkway
- Highway 14 and Happy Valley Road

Exchanges and Mobility Hubs

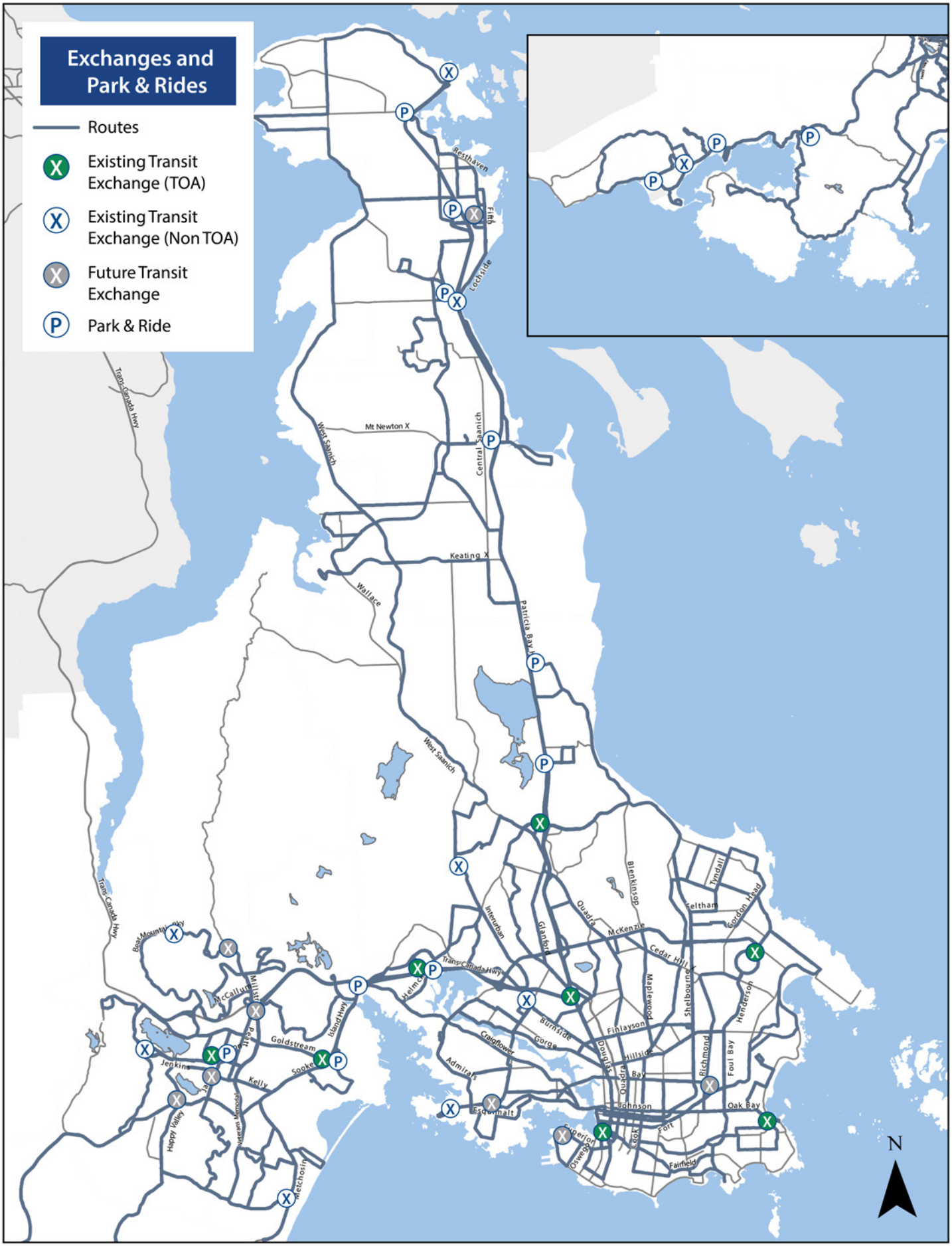
Exchanges are critical to providing customers the ability to make connections in the system and often provide operational space to facilitate service delivery. BC Transit currently uses 10 transit exchanges to provide service. Many of these exchanges are nearing capacity. Growth in the bus network will require updating existing exchanges and creating new ones. Existing exchange capacity will be reviewed as part of a separate project in the coming years.

By 2050, the network will require new exchanges at:

- James Bay
- Jubilee
- Esquimalt
- Millstream Road
- Belmont Market
- Highway 14 and Happy Valley Road
- Sooke
- Sidney

New mobility hubs will be required at:

- Six Mile
- Peatt Road and Veterans Memorial Parkway

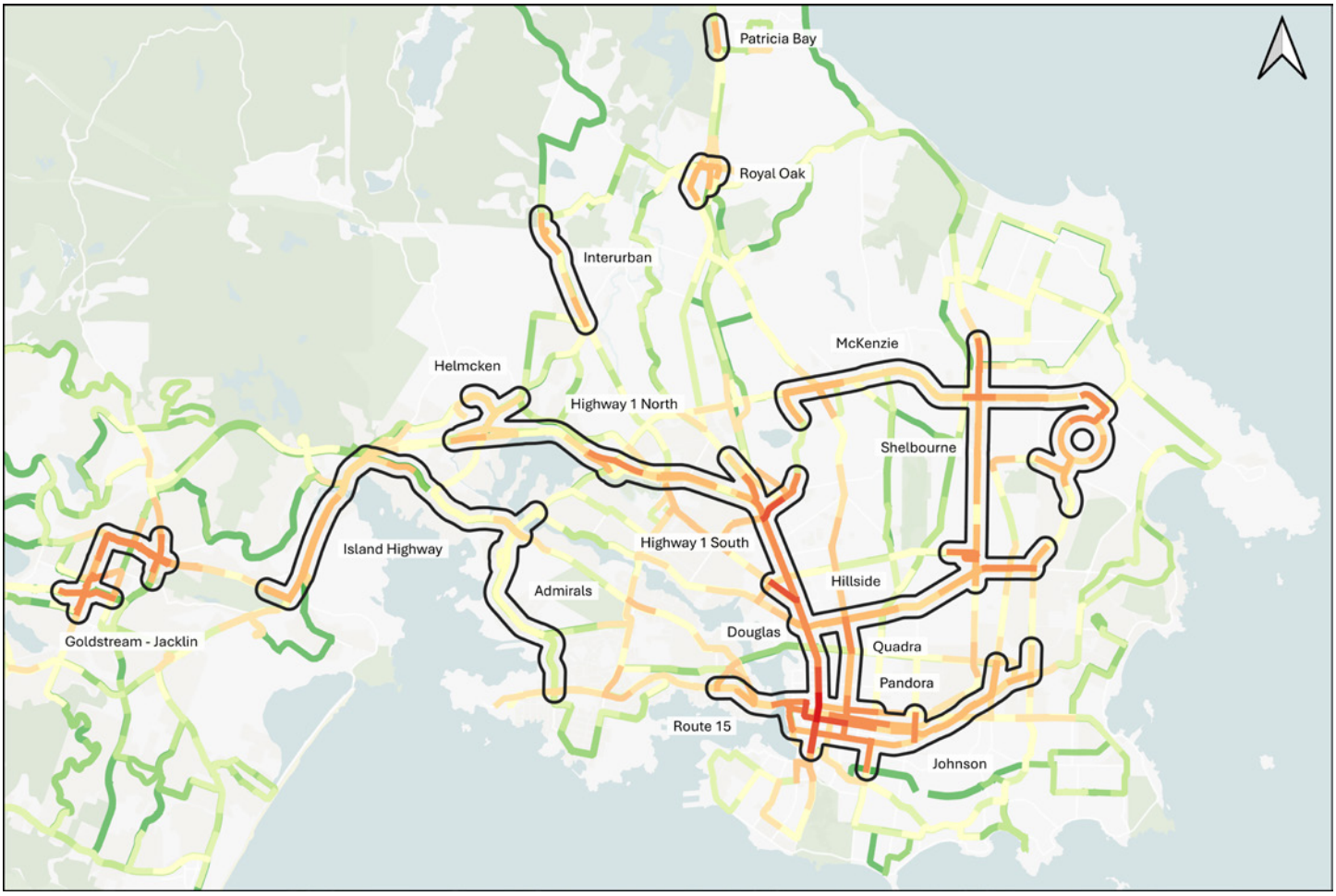

Exchanges and Park & Rides
Routes
Existing Transit Exchange (TOA)
Existing Transit Exchange (Non TOA)
Future Transit Exchange
Park & Ride
Resthaven
Fifth
Lochside
Mt Newton X
West Saanich
Central Saanich
Keating X
Wallace
Patricia Bay
West Saanich
Trans-Canada Hwy
Interurban
Glanford
Quadra
McKenzie
Blenkinsop
Tyndall
Feltham
Gordon Head
Cedar Hill
Maplewood
Shelbourne
Henderson
Trans-Canada Hwy
Helmcken
Burnside
Gorge
Craigflower
Admirals
Finlayson
Douglas
Hillside
Quadra
Bay
Richmond
Foul Bay
Johnson
Oak Bay
Fort
Fairfield
Esquimalt
Cook
Oswego
Superior
Beaver Mountain Hwy
McCallum
Millstream
Island Hwy
Goldstream
Sooke
Kelly
Jenkins
Happy Valley
Veterans Memorial
Metchosin
N

Bus Speed and Reliability

Bus speeds have seen annual declines with few exceptions for the last 15 years. Trends point towards increasing congestion along major corridors as the region grows and many areas densify. Implementing bus priority supports ridership and mode share goals through faster travel time for customers. At the same time, increasing bus speed will allow BC Transit to deliver transit services sooner and at lower cost. For these reasons, bus priority measures will be necessary to achieve the vision outlined by this plan. This will require partnership between BC Transit, the Province and local government partners.

BC Transit is working to develop methodologies and studies to measure and track the impacts of congestion on bus service. Considering bus service levels, ridership and how congestion is affecting service, this program will help to monitor issues and provide the data needed to tackle the biggest issues in the system.

Bus Speed and Reliability – Corridor Delay Hotspots



E&N Corridor

The Esquimalt and Nanaimo (E&N) Reconciliation Corridor is a significant regional asset, with the potential to support mobility and transportation connections between the West Shore, Canadian Forces Base (CFB), Esquimalt and Vic West locally. The full corridor is 234 km running from Victoria to Courtenay.

Constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the E&N was funded through federal-provincial land grants that claimed millions of acres of unceded First Nation lands. Parts of the rail corridor run through First Nation reserve lands. Questions about the viability of private rail services led to the creation of the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) in 2004. The ICF is a federally registered charity established to own and manage the corridor on behalf of rights holders and local governments. Fourteen First Nations and five Regional Districts along the route guide decision making.

The Reconciliation Corridor Initiative (RCI) is a collaborative table and jointly funded project, building a vision for the corridor within the CRD that addresses past harms, shares prosperity amongst members, and enables a connected future. Partners on the project include Esquimalt First Nation, Songhees First Nation, ICF, CRD, local governments and other stakeholders. The RCI is reassessing the feasibility and next steps for restoring passenger rail use on the corridor, recognizing the corridor's importance, strategic location, pre-existing land assembly, and existing rail infrastructure.

The outcome of the Reconciliation Corridor Initiative will influence the long-term evolution of the regional transportation network. However, it is important to note that the outcome will be complementary to the proposed **Big Moves** in this plan. Higher Order Transit from downtown Victoria along Douglas Street will be necessary to accommodate growing ridership demand. Transit use of the E&N Corridor may complement those investments, but does not eliminate the need for them.

As discussions continue, BC Transit will work collaboratively with Provincial and Regional partners to understand emerging opportunities and ensure that transit considerations are reflected in future planning. BC Transit supports the goals of the Reconciliation Corridor Initiative and will continue to engage with and support the outcomes of the project.

Implementing the Plan

The Victoria Regional Transit Plan sets out an ambitious vision for the future of transit in the Capital Region. Achieving this vision will require sustained commitment over the next 25 years, including significant increases in investment and renewed collaboration between all partners across the region.

The scale of change envisioned in this plan reflects the region's growth, housing and climate objectives and the increasing need to provide residents with reliable, affordable and convenient alternatives to driving. Success will require transit to be considered not simply as a transportation service, but as a foundational component of regional growth, economic development, environmental sustainability and community wellbeing.

Current Funding and Governance

The *British Columbia Transit Act* establishes the governance and funding framework for transit systems across the province, including the Victoria Regional Transit System (VRTS). Central to this model is the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC), which serves as the local decision-making body responsible for setting routes, service levels, fares and local taxes, as well as approving annual budgets and raising the local share of transit costs. The Province, through the Act, provides the overarching structure for how services are planned, funded, and delivered in partnership with local governments.

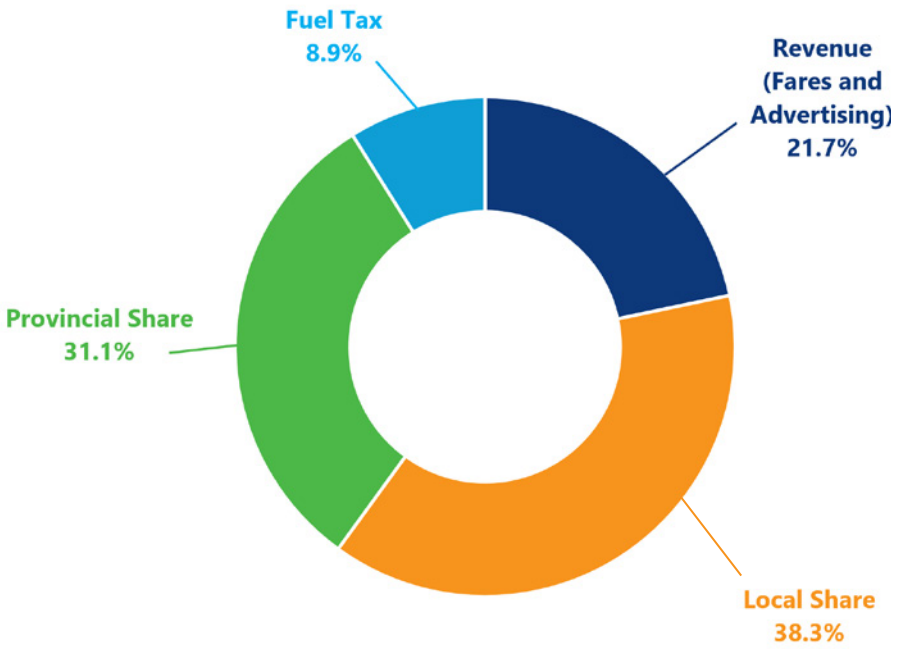
This shared model is reflected in how operating costs are allocated. For conventional (fixed-route) transit services, the Province contributes 31.7 per cent of operating costs, while for handyDART transit services, the Provincial share increases to 63 per cent. The remaining costs must be raised locally by the VRTC through a combination of fare revenue, property taxation, and a regional fuel tax (collected at 5.5 cents per litre). This structure ensures both senior government support and local accountability in determining service levels and investment priorities.

Capital funding follows a similar, though more complex, pattern. Smaller capital investments (such as roadway improvements like queue jumper lanes or minor infrastructure upgrades) are generally cost-shared between the Province and the VRTC. Fleet investments often include a federal contribution, which helps reduce overall costs to both provincial and local partners.

For larger, transformational projects, such as RapidBus expansion, Highway 1 bus-on-shoulder lanes, operations and maintenance facilities, and future higher order transit, senior government funding becomes essential. These projects typically exceed the financial capacity of local revenue tools employed by the VRTC and require substantial investment from both the Province and the Government of Canada. Federal transit programs are playing an increasingly important role in enabling these investments, particularly where they align with national priorities such as housing, growth and climate objectives. However, federal funding can be less predictable and is often tied to competitive processes, requiring the region to maintain a strong state of readiness to advance projects when funding becomes available.

At the local level, the VRTC has a defined set of tools to fund its share of costs. Fare revenue has historically contributed between 20-30 per cent of the total funding, supplemented by property taxes and a regional motor fuel tax authorized under provincial legislation. While these tools provide a stable base, they offer limited flexibility. In particular, fuel tax revenues (set by the Province) have declined as a proportion of total funding in recent years, even as overall transit costs have risen.

Funding sources for the VRTS



Total funding: $196.8 million

The governance and funding model established under the *British Columbia Transit Act* strikes a deliberate balance between local control and provincial partnership. The VRTC has authority over key service and taxation decisions, while the Province provides consistent funding and legislative oversight. This structure has supported steady growth of the system and enabled the delivery of reliable service across the region.

At the same time, the model introduces constraints on expansion. Because funding responsibilities are shared, service growth requires both the Province and the VRTC to increase their contributions at the same time. Neither party can independently fund expansion, meaning progress is effectively limited by the partner least able to scale up investment in a given year. In addition, the limited range of local revenue tools restricts the VRTC's ability to respond quickly to rising costs or pursue significant service increases.

As the VRTS moves forward with the major investments envisioned in this plan, addressing these constraints will be critical. Delivering large-scale projects and sustained service expansion will require continued provincial support, greater flexibility in local funding tools, and a proactive approach to securing federal investment. Strengthening the funding model will help ensure the region can deliver on its long-term transit vision and respond to continued population growth and travel demand.

GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

The VRTS is built on a strong partnership between local decision-makers and the Province, supported by federal investment. Maintaining and expanding the system will require all three levels of government to align funding, with particular emphasis on securing and leveraging federal programs to deliver major capital projects and support long-term growth.

Delivering the Plan Together

Achieving the vision of the Victoria Regional Transit Plan will require collaboration between all partners. While each organization has distinct responsibilities, success depends on coordinated investment, shared priorities and long-term commitment.

Province of British Columbia and Government of Canada

Higher levels of government are essential partners in delivering the transit system. The Province enables the VRTS through the *British Columbia Transit Act*'s governance and funding model, which also includes annual contributions to support transit operations. Delivering the plan will require sustained increases in funding to maintain current operations, combined with expansion funding. Additionally, this plan envisions large capital projects that include Higher Order Transit, new operations and maintenance facilities and expansion of the fleet. All of these will require large capital investments from the Province on top of annual operating increases.

The Province also provides leadership and policy supports that enable transit service. The Province can continue to support BC Transit through legislative and policy changes such as developing mobility hubs, creating sustainable funding tools and enabling additional flexibility in the BC Transit model. As the owner of several key roadways, the Province can also support transit operations through partnering on transit priority and transit-supportive roadway design.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Province:

- Contributing annual funding
- Maintaining legislative framework
- Setting Provincial transportation priorities
- Partnering on major capital investment

Government of Canada:

- Funding major capital investment

Provincial support must be paired with support from the Government of Canada. Investments in Higher Order Transit, RapidBus and operations and maintenance facilities will require federal capital spending. These investments are transformational but costly. The Government of Canada has been a strong funding partner on past projects and will need to continue providing funding support to realize many of the investments in this plan. The Province and Local Government Partners will need to continue to highlight the importance of federal transit funding in delivering on the region's sustainability, climate, housing and transportation goals.

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

The Victoria Regional Transit Commission is responsible for setting fares, approving budgets, establishing service priorities, and determining how to balance regional priorities. The VRTC has established the 15 per cent mode share goal for transit based on meeting regional needs. Meeting this goal will require continued investment and advocacy by the VRTC.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Establishing service levels
- Setting fares
- Raising local share of funding
- Determining regional priorities

BC Transit

BC Transit is responsible for planning, delivering and continuously improving the regional transit network. This includes leading service and network planning, identifying future service and infrastructure requirements, managing fare policies and customer programs and delivering technology solutions that improve the customer experience and system performance.

BC Transit will continue to work closely with local governments, the Province and community partners to design a transit network that responds to evolving travel patterns, supports regional growth objectives and provides reliable and attractive transportation choices.

Primary responsibility for ensuring the delivery of investments in this plan rests with BC Transit. The scale and ambition of the plan will require BC Transit to develop new processes and take an active role in engaging partners. Beyond project-related actions, BC Transit will need to develop more detailed financial planning. As part of the Implementation Roadmap, the VRTS will begin to work towards a 10-year financial planning tool that better outlines upcoming financial investments that all partners will need to make to ensure delivery of the VRTP.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Planning the system
- Delivering service
- Maintaining fleet and infrastructure
- Ensuring safety and quality customer experience
- Providing technical and professional services
- Managing handyDART operating company

Local Government Partners

Local governments, including municipalities and the Capital Regional District (CRD), play a central role in creating the conditions for successful transit. Land-use decisions, transportation investments and regional planning all influence the effectiveness and attractiveness of the transit system.

The CRD provides regional leadership in transportation and growth through plans that span the entirety of the VRTS. The Regional Transportation Plan establishes a shared vision for the movement of people and goods throughout the Capital Region and provides an important framework for aligning transit investments with broader regional objectives related to growth, climate action, active transportation and travel demand management. Through the Regional Transportation Service, the CRD will continue to assume a greater role in managing the region's transportation system over the life of this plan.

Municipalities control multiple policy levers and will need to work with BC Transit across these areas to achieve the plan's goal of 15 per cent mode share. Municipalities will need to prioritize transit on roadways, implement transit priority measures, protect rights of way for future transit investments and provide safe and convenient walking and cycling routes to transit services. Transit priority is a major policy tool that can speed up the implementation of the plan and reduce the cost of implementation at the same time. Municipalities are also primarily responsible for integrating transit into the streetscape and providing amenities at stops for comfort, safety and accessibility.

Municipalities also manage the land use process. Recent Provincial policies enabling more compact uses and reduced parking minimums near frequent transit are one support. However, municipalities can enable transit-supportive land uses by integrating transit with development, supporting transportation demand management and directing growth to areas planned for frequent transit.

Strong collaboration between BC Transit, municipalities and the CRD will be essential to align investments, policies and priorities, ensuring that transit improvements support and advance the goals of both the Victoria Regional Transit Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Land use planning
- Allocating space for transit priority
- Providing road and streetscape improvements
- Integrating bus stops and exchanges into the urban fabric
- Enabling transit-supportive development

A Shared Responsibility

The vision outlined in this plan cannot be achieved by any one organization acting alone. It requires a shared commitment among all four pillars, supported by long-term investment, coordinated decision-making and a common understanding that transit is essential to the region's future prosperity, livability and sustainability.

Through strong partnerships and sustained action, the Victoria Region can build a transit system that supports growing communities, expands travel choice, reduces emissions and improves access to opportunities for residents across the region.

Implementation Roadmap

The vision outlined in this plan cannot be achieved by any one organization acting alone. It requires a shared commitment among all four pillars, supported by long-term investment, coordinated decision-making and a common understanding that transit is essential to the region's future prosperity, livability and sustainability.

Ongoing Actions

Look for opportunities to integrate Express, Regional, and OnDemand services into the network to improve customer experience	Expand transit hours and fleet as envisioned in the Investment Trajectory
Leverage the Uptown Mobility Hub as a key resource in changes resulting from Network Modernization and in service changes	Deliver capital projects needed to maintain investment trajectory: exchanges, operations & maintenance facilities, electrification supports, etc.
Leverage Six Mile Mobility Hub as a key resource in changes resulting from Network Modernization and in service changes	Partner with Province to develop sustainable funding tools that support service expansion
Work with Local Government Partners to advance transit priority and speed up the bus network	

Short Term (1-5 Years) Actions

	Big Move 4: Connecting the Peninsula
Review existing exchange capacity to ensure infrastructure will support Investment Trajectory	Develop a business case and construct the Sidney Transit Hub, implement Express Transit to key destinations on the Peninsula
Identify funding needs and opportunities for plan implementation	**Big Move 5:** Invest in the Core
	Partner with City of Victoria to develop potential alignments, begin planning and engagement work
Big Move 1: Modernize the Network	**Big Move 6:** Invest in the West Shore
Network Modernization Phase 1 - review route duplication and stop spacing on major corridors, expand Frequent Transit Network	Determine needs for Rapid Transit based on Updated Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Study
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit	**Big Move 7:** Build the Uptown Mobility Hub
Update the West Shore Rapid Transit Alignment Study to confirm the alignment and technology for Rapid Transit between Victoria and Langford	Continue partnering with the Province on potential concepts for the site
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit	**Big Move 8:** Build the Six Mile Mobility Hub
Implement transit priority on Douglas Street in downtown Victoria	Work with the Province, View Royal, and other partners to advance planning for the Six Mile Mobility Hub
Big Move 3: Transform McKenzie Avenue	**Big Move 9:** Modernize handyDART
Partner with District of Saanich to incrementally build stop and station infrastructure, targeted queue jumpers, and other transit priority	Develop Service Standards and Performance Guidelines
Big Move 3: Transform McKenzie Avenue	**Big Move 9:** Modernize handyDART
Implement Express Transit along McKenzie Avenue as a pathway to RapidBus	Upgrade technologies that power service delivery: scheduling, dispatching, customer booking, and electronic fare payment

Implementation Roadmap

Medium Term (5-15 Years) Actions

Big Move 1: Modernize the Network	**Big Move 4:** Connecting the Peninsula
Network Modernization Phase 2 - Restructure routes in conjunction with Rapid Transit implementation and regional growth/development	Continue to build service levels and ridership
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit	**Big Move 5:** Invest in the Core
Develop a business case and preliminary design	Fully develop plans, conduct engagement and potentially implement Rapid Transit extension
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit	**Big Move 6:** Invest in the West Shore
Implement RapidBus Phase 2 improvement to continue building capacity on existing service	Refine needs through planning processes and determine next steps
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit	**Big Move 7:** Build the Uptown Mobility Hub
Seek funding and create final designs	Support the development and construction of the Uptown Mobility Hub
Big Move 3: Transform McKenzie Avenue	**Big Move 8:** Build the Six Mile Mobility Hub
Continue incremental investment in transit priority and customer amenities along McKenzie Avenue	Support development and construction of Six Mile Mobility Hub and incorporate in BC Transit plans
Big Move 3: Transform McKenzie Avenue	**Big Move 10:** Connect Vancouver Island
Fully implement McKenzie RapidBus	Partner with Cowichan Valley Regional Transit and Nanaimo Regional Transit to develop potential service concepts
Big Move 4: Connecting the Peninsula	
Work with Ministry of Transportation and Transit to advance transit priority along Highway 17	

Long Term (15+ Years) Actions

Big Move 1: Modernize the Network	**Big Move 5:** Invest in the Core
Network Modernization Phase 3 - Work towards full alignment with Network and Route Guidelines	Implement Rapid Transit extensions
Big Move 2: Deliver Higher Order Transit	**Big Move 6:** Invest in the West Shore
Construct and implement Higher Order Transit	Implement Rapid Transit on identified corridors
Big Move 4: Connecting the Peninsula	**Big Move 10:** Connect Vancouver Island
Fully implement Peninsula RapidBus service	Expand interregional services in partnership with Cowichan Valley Regional Transit and Nanaimo Regional Transit

Monitoring and Review

The Victoria Regional Transit Plan is intended to be a living document that responds to changing travel patterns, regional growth, emerging opportunities, and evolving community priorities. Regular monitoring and periodic review will help ensure the Plan remains relevant, responsive, and aligned with regional and provincial objectives.

Annual Progress Reporting

Progress toward implementing the Plan will be monitored and reported to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission on an annual basis. These updates will summarize progress on implementation actions, highlight key achievements, identify emerging opportunities or challenges, and provide transparency on advancement toward the Plan's vision and long-term objectives.

Periodic Plan Review

In addition to annual reporting, the Plan will undergo a formal review approximately every five years, or sooner if significant changes in regional context, funding, policy, or transportation priorities warrant an earlier update.

As part of each review cycle, BC Transit will also assess whether updates to the Network & Route Design Guidelines are warranted to reflect new policy directions, evolving best practices, changes in travel demand, or lessons learned through implementation. This approach will help ensure that both the Plan and the supporting Guidelines continue to provide a relevant and effective framework for future transit planning and investment decisions.

CRD PLANS AND THE RECONCILIATION CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

Several significant regional planning initiatives — including the Reconciliation Corridor Initiative and the CRD's Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Growth Strategy — are expected to conclude in the coming years. The outcomes of these processes could provide additional transit opportunities, making them a natural milestone for the first formal review of the Victoria Regional Transit Plan.

BCTransit

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