
SUBJECT: 2024/25 DRAFT ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN

PURPOSE

The 2024/25 Draft Annual Service Plan is submitted to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **APPROVAL**.

BACKGROUND

Each year, BC Transit develops an Annual Service Plan for the Victoria Regional Transit System (VRTS) to provide the Commission with a proposal for service improvements over the subsequent fiscal year.

In September 2023, in the Annual Service Expansion Request Letter, the Commission endorsed 20,000 annual service hours¹ and 8 buses for service expansion for the 2024/25 fiscal year². Based on BC Transit’s annual Transit Evaluation Process (TEPs)³, this Letter also recommended the following key strategic investment priorities over the next three years:

- RapidBus and Frequent Transit Network service improvements
- Development of the crosstown network on the Hillside/Gorge and Admirals/McKenzie corridors
- Simplifying and improving transit service on the Quadra corridor
- Improvements to YYJ Airport and Peninsula service

However, since the end of the declared COVID-19 Pandemic, ridership and traffic congestion have been returning rapidly, with the VRTS experiencing an almost 40 per cent increase in ridership over the last two years. Both operational data and Voice of the Rider survey feedback show a growing trend of more crowded buses, more pass-ups, and fewer buses arriving on time.

Therefore, to achieve the Victoria Regional Transit System’s 10 Year Vision targets for comfortable and reliable service delivery, BC Transit is recommending that the majority of potential expansion resources in the 2024/25 fiscal year be used to reduce passenger crowding and improve schedule reliability. A small portion of service investment would remain available to achieve the highest ranked strategic and operational priority within the system in 2025: launching the McKenzie RapidBus Line. The remaining three strategic investment priorities

¹ Based on the expansion start date and the budget annualization process, only 11,667 hours of the approved expansion will be implemented in 2024/25. The full 20,000 hours will be implemented in the 2025/26 fiscal year.

² The Province’s share of funding must be approved in February 2024 to support the implementation of the Commission’s endorsed 2024/25 expansion.

³ TEPs ranks each expansion identified in BC Transit’s strategic planning documents according to several factors including population served, potential ridership, environmental impact, accessibility, and impact on service reliability.

outlined above will be deferred to subsequent years, with the aim to implement them as soon as possible.

Table 1 provides an overview of the service changes and investments planned for 2024/25.

Table 1: 2024/25 ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN

Service Period	Proposed Service Change	Operational or Strategic	Expansion Resources
April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seasonal service reductions to post-secondary institutions to align with reduced demand, including routes 4, 7, 12, 14, 15, 21, 26, 39, and 51 Minor service improvements to routes 72 and 75 to support returning tourism demand for Swartz Bay and Butchart Gardens Cost-neutral adjustments to Gorge Road service⁴ Minor improvements to service reliability on Routes 2 and 5 	Operational	N/A
June 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seasonal removal of K-12 school overload and special trips Seasonal summer service increases to Butchart Gardens and BC Ferries on Routes 72 and 75 Seasonal service reliability improvements for Routes 2, 5, 10 and 70 	Operational	2,000 Service Hours
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinstate K-12 and post-secondary seasonal service improvements, including overload and special trips Service reallocation to address passenger comfort and service reliability, supported by public engagement in early 2024 	Operational	N/A
Winter Holiday 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard seasonal changes matching service with demand, and minor service reliability improvements 	Operational	N/A
January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the McKenzie RapidBus Line⁵ Improved peak weekday service to improve passenger comfort and on-time performance on highest risk routes Standard seasonal changes matching service with demand 	Operational and Strategic	9,667 Service Hours 8 Buses

*Any expansions indicated in this table are contingent on approval of the Province's share of the funding and subject to available labour and vehicle requirements. Route numbers only are provided in the table above; full route names are provided in Appendix 1.

⁴ Details pending outcome of the engagement survey launching October 30, 2023.

⁵ This initiative is dependent on the anticipated completion of MOTI transit priority infrastructure improvements planned at Uptown on Ravine and Carey Roads. This is a strategic initiative that also addresses passenger crowding, pass ups, and service reliability challenges on the existing Route 26.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

- **RECEIVE** the Draft 2024/25 Service Plan for **APPROVAL**

Respectfully,

Levi Megenbir
Senior Transit Planner Work Lead

Appendix 1: Victoria Regional Transit System Routes

Appendix 2: Annual Investment Guidelines for Operational Targets

Appendix 1 - Victoria Regional Transit System Routes

#	Route Name	Service Type	Area
1	South Oak Bay/Downtown	Local Transit - Coverage	Core
2	James Bay/South Oak Bay	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
3	James Bay/Royal Jubilee via Cook St. Village	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
4	UVic/Downtown	Frequent Transit	Core
5	James Bay/Willows	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
6	Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown	Frequent Transit	Core
7	UVic/Downtown	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
8	Interurban/Tillicum Centre/Oak Bay	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
9	Royal Oak Exchange via Gorge/UVic via Hillside	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
10	James Bay/Royal Jubilee via Vic West	Local Transit - Coverage	Core
11	Tillicum Centre/UVic	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
12	University Heights/UVic	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
13	Ten Mile Point/UVic	Local Transit - Coverage	Core
14	Vic General/UVic	Frequent Transit	Core
15	Esquimalt/UVic	Frequent Transit	Core
17	Cedar Hill	Targeted Routes	Core
21	Interurban/Downtown	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
22	Vic General/Hillside Centre	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
24	Cedar Hill/Admirals Walk	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
25	Maplewood/Admirals Walk	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
26	Dockyard/UVic	Frequent Transit	Core
27	Downtown Express/Majestic Express	Frequent Transit	Core
28	Gordon Head/Majestic/Downtown	Frequent Transit	Core
30	Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
31	Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
32	Cordova Bay/Royal Oak Exchange	Local Transit - Coverage	Core
35	Ridge	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
39	Westhills Exchange/Interurban/ Royal Oak Exchange/UVic	Local Transit - High Demand	Core
43	Royal Roads via Belmont Park	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
46	Dockyard/Westhills Exchange	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
47	Goldstream Meadows/Downtown	Targeted Routes	Westshore

#	Route Name	Service Type	Area
48	Happy Valley/Downtown	Targeted Routes	Westshore
51	Langford/UVic	Targeted Routes	Westshore
52	Colwood Exchange/Bear Mountain	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
53	Colwood Exchange/Langford Exchange via Atkins	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
54	Metchosin	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
55	Happy Valley	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
56	Thetis Heights/Langford Exchange	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
57	Thetis Heights/Langford Exchange	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
58	Goldstream Meadows	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
59	Triangle Mountain/Wishart	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
60	Triangle Mountain/Wishart	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
61	Sooke/Langford/Downtown	Local Transit - High Demand	Westshore
63	Otter Point	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
64	East Sooke	Local Transit - Coverage	Westshore
65	Sooke/Langford/Downtown	Targeted Routes	Westshore
70	Swartz Bay/Downtown	Regional Route	Peninsula
71	Swartz Bay/Downtown	Targeted Routes	Peninsula
72	Swartz Bay/Downtown	Local Transit - High Demand	Peninsula
75	Saanichton Exchange/Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown	Local Transit - High Demand	Peninsula
81	Brentwood/Saanichton/Sidney/Swartz Bay	Local Transit - Coverage	Peninsula
82	Sidney/Saanichton via Stautw	Local Transit - Coverage	Peninsula
83	Sidney/Brentwood/Royal Oak Exchange	Local Transit - Coverage	Peninsula
85	North Saanich	Local Transit - Coverage	Peninsula
87	Saanichton/Sidney via Dean Park	Local Transit - Coverage	Peninsula
88	Airport/Sidney	Local Transit - Coverage	Peninsula
95	Langford/Downtown	Rapid Transit	Westshore