

# TRANSIT *future*

▶ *service plan*

## Prince Rupert & Port Edward

2022



# Territorial Acknowledgement

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

*Here in Prince Rupert and Port Edward we are on the lands of the Tsimshian First Nations and Gitxaana First Nation.*

Here in Victoria we are on the lands of the Lkwungen People, also known as the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations Communities.

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

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# 01 Transit Vision

Transit is the preferred choice for residents and visitors, attracting customers through reliable, comfortable, safe, accessible and convenient service.

Transit Future Service Plan upholds community goals and objectives contained in the [Prince Rupert Official Community Plan](#) and [Port Edward Official Community Plan](#) and works to strengthen the link between transportation and land-use in support of sustainable growth.

**Prince Rupert Official Community Plan** contains several policies which seek to bolster transit in the community, including:

- Investing in improved transit infrastructure
- Locating mixed-use and multi-family housing near transit
- Increasing transit use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

**Port Edward Official Community Plan** states that the District will continue to work with BC Transit on the provision of transit service within Port Edward and to Prince Rupert and seek to create a service scaled appropriately to demand.



Transportation and Land Use to reduce emissions and traffic



Coordinated approach to make transit the preferred choice



Transit-supportive land use policies



Development of transit to integrate with active modes



Transit links between communities, Institutional buildings and high density development

# 02 Shaping Your Transit Future

The role of the Transit Future Service Plan is to:

**Build** on existing planning and add service and infrastructure priorities for the community

**Review** what has changed for the community

**Inform** both the planning and operational activities

**Drive** a range of objectives and actions that will deliver a fit for purpose network across the community

**Guide** decision making to procure and deliver the desired network

**Engage** with the community



# 03 BC Transit Future Initiatives

BC Transit's Strategic Plan provides the blue print for how we will facilitate the transformation and pursue our common vision of the future to create responsive and reliable services, improving integration with other mobility providers, introducing electronic fares, building more transit supportive infrastructure and transitioning to greener fleets.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.bctransit.com/transforming-your-journey>

## Low Carbon Fleet Program

<https://www.bctransit.com/low-carbon-fleet-program>

## Digital On Demand

## Electronic Fare Strategy

## NextRide

## BC Transit Development Referral Program

<https://www.bctransit.com/development-referral-program>

# BC Transit Future Initiatives

## Low Carbon Fleet Program

The first deployment of electric buses will happen in the Victoria Regional Transit System in 2022.

BC Hydro will help determine the readiness of the electricity infrastructure to support electric fleets across the province.

BC Transit will work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to refine the anticipated funding requirements, for buses and new operation and maintenance facilities.

## Electronic Fare Strategy

Smart ticketing providing new ways to pay. BC Transit is working to not only improve rider convenience but also enable mobility partnerships and create new data collection opportunities. Systems will also accommodate a mix of fare products, including cash fares. The system will also be able to operate in areas with low-cell phone coverage/service.

## Digital On Demand

Digital On Demand transit uses technology to dynamically dispatch a bus, van or fleet of vehicles dictated by riders. BC Transit is currently completing a feasibility to determine how and where digital on demand transit may be delivered in communities across BC. The feasibility study findings are expected to be shared in early 2022.

## NextRide

Door to door journey planning. Provides bus location information to customers via transit apps, enhances operations control and route information for the operator. We are now in the planning to determine how the NextRide program will be implemented into 19 additional Regional Transit Systems across BC and we will provide a further update when details are confirmed.

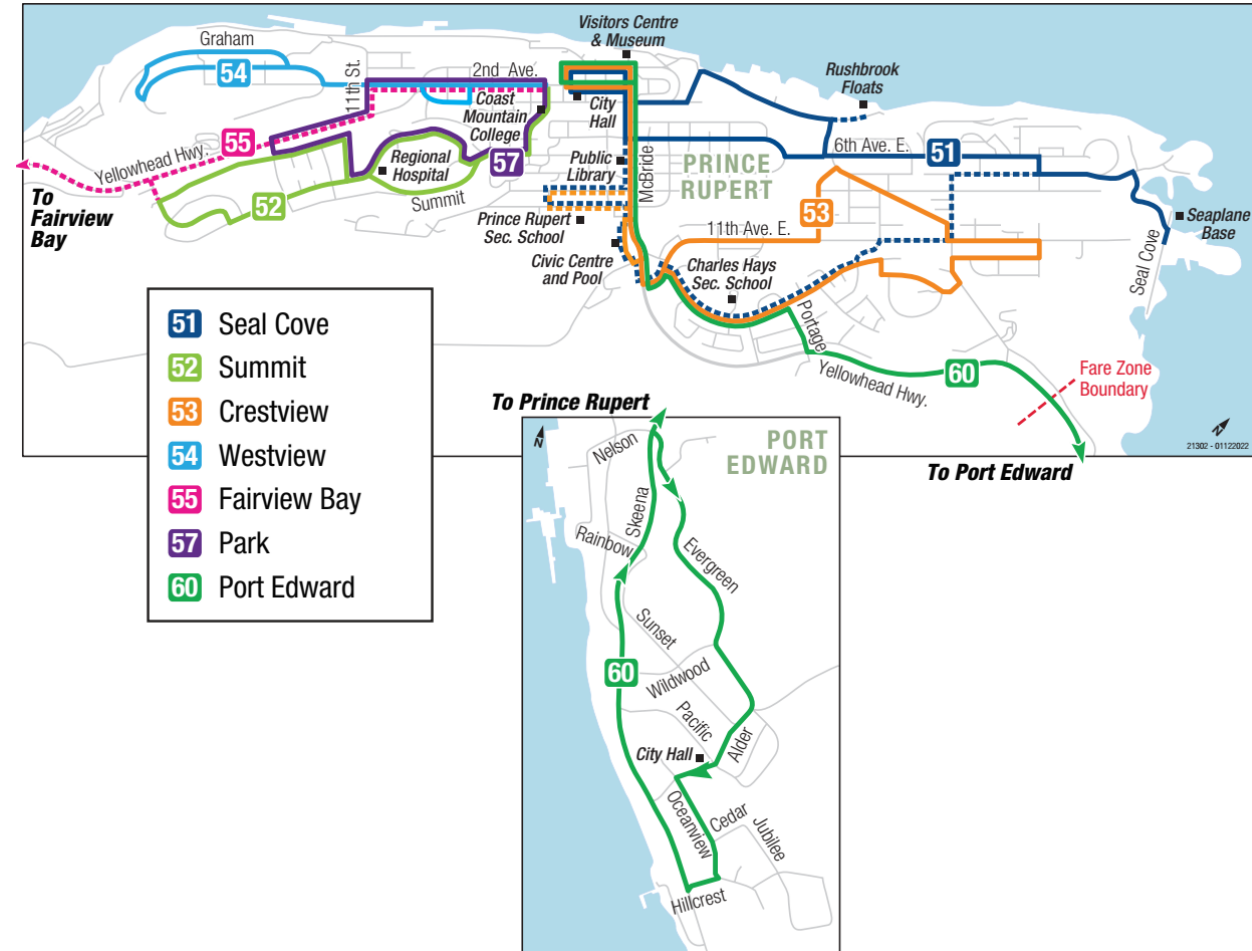
## Development Referral Program

Local governments or developers can send any referrals and supporting information to BC Transit to review and provide comments to the local government or developer about how the proposal may effect current of future transit service and infrastructure and how the application or plan could be changed to better support current or future transit service and infrastructure.

# 04 Transit Today

## Prince Rupert & Port Edward Transit Network

Together, the Prince Rupert Transit and Port Edward network consists of eight routes and provide local transit service throughout Prince Rupert and a regional connection between Prince Rupert and Port Edward. All routes connect at the downtown exchange and provide service outwards from the core of Prince Rupert.





# Transit Today

Most routes operate Monday to Saturday, excluding statutory holidays. Schedule changes occur in June after schools are out of session and in September, when schools return to session.

**51 Seal Cove** provides a connection between Downtown Prince Rupert and Seal Cove, primarily along 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenues. By request service to Rushbrook Floats is also available.

**52 Summit** provides a connection between Downtown Prince Rupert and south-west Prince Rupert including the Prince Rupert Regional Hospital and Pineridge Elementary School.

**53 Crestview** provides a connection between Downtown Prince Rupert and north-east Prince Rupert including Prince Rupert Middle School, the Civic Centre & Pool, Charles Hays Secondary School, and Conrad Elementary School.

**54 Westview** provides service between Downtown Prince Rupert to Graham Avenue and Atlin Avenue primarily along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

**55 Fairview Bay** connects Downtown Prince Rupert with the ferry terminal at Fairview Bay.

**57 Park** similar to the 52 Summit, this route provides service to the Prince Rupert Regional Hospital and other central locations to the south-east of Downtown Prince Rupert.

**60 Port Edward** provides regional service connecting Port Edward and Prince Rupert while also providing some local service within Port Edward.

**99 Special** is the school special providing transit service to school-age children throughout Prince Rupert. This route only operates when school is in session.

# 04 Transit Today Prince Rupert

Prince Rupert transit ridership is shrinking

Since the 2012 Prince Rupert Transit Service Review, ridership has fluctuated between 329,000 and 277,000 annual riders with average decrease of 1.5% per year from 2012 to 2020. Starting in March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted transit ridership.

Despite the drop in transit ridership the service continues to provide essential service for many in the community. Ridership losses can be contributed to a number of factors including population loss, economic shifts, and the impact of outside factors, such as COVID-19. It is important that the right level of service is maintained to be available to customers as they return and resources can be redirected to where the greatest need is.



Source: 2020/2021 Information and Performance Summary

# 04 Transit Today Port Edward

Port Edward transit ridership is shrinking

Since the 2012 Port Edward Transit Service Review, ridership has fluctuated between 34,000 and 24,000 annual riders with average decrease of 3.3% per year from 2012 to 2020. Starting in March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted transit ridership.

Despite the drop in transit ridership the service continues to provide essential service for many in the community. Ridership losses can be contributed to a number of factors including population loss, economic shifts, and the impact of outside factors, such as COVID-19. It is important that the right level of service is maintained to be available to customers as they return and resources can be redirected to where the greatest need is.



Source: 2020/2021 Information and Performance Summary

# 05 Transit Need

## Prince Rupert

The population of Prince Rupert decreased by 2.8% between 2011 and 2016 to 12,687 residents.

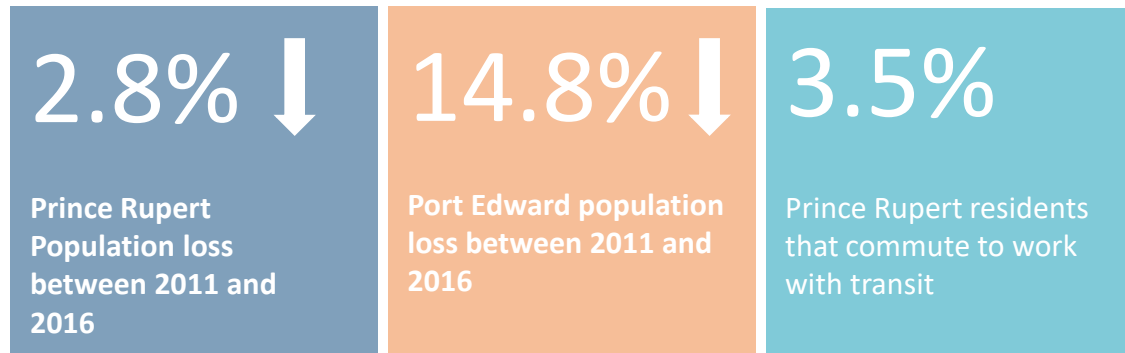
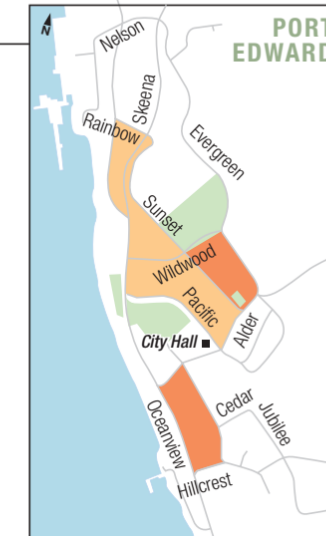
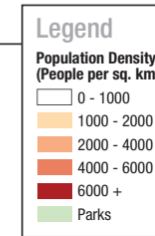
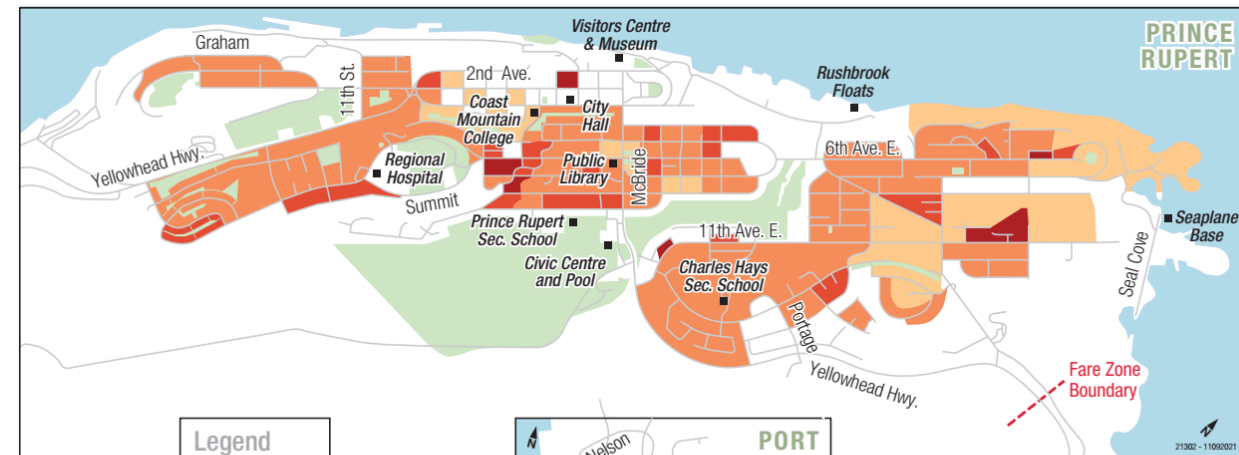
- 18.2% of the population is youth 14 and under (compared to the BC average of 14.8%)
- 14.3% of the population is seniors 65 and older (compared to the BC average of 18.3%)

## Port Edward

The population of Port Edward decreased by 14.2% between 2011 and 2016 to 467 residents.

- 17.2% of the population is youth 14 and under (compared to the BC average of 14.8%)
- 16.1% of the population is seniors 65 and older (compared to the BC average of 18.3%)

There is a large population of youths in both communities, providing an opportunity to encourage transit use from a young age to create lifetime transit riders. This can be incentivized through the Free Transit for Children 12 and Under Program.

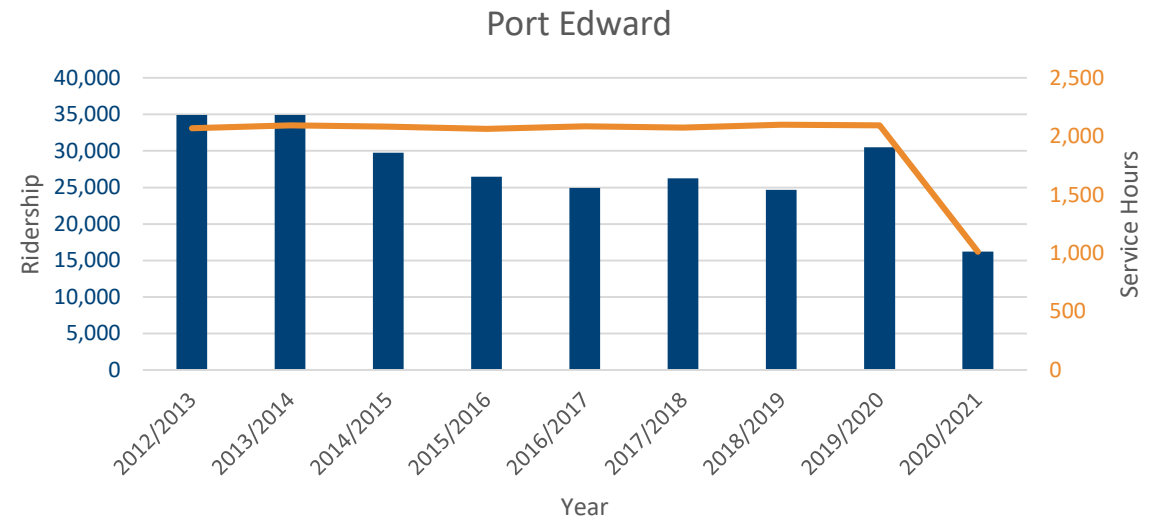
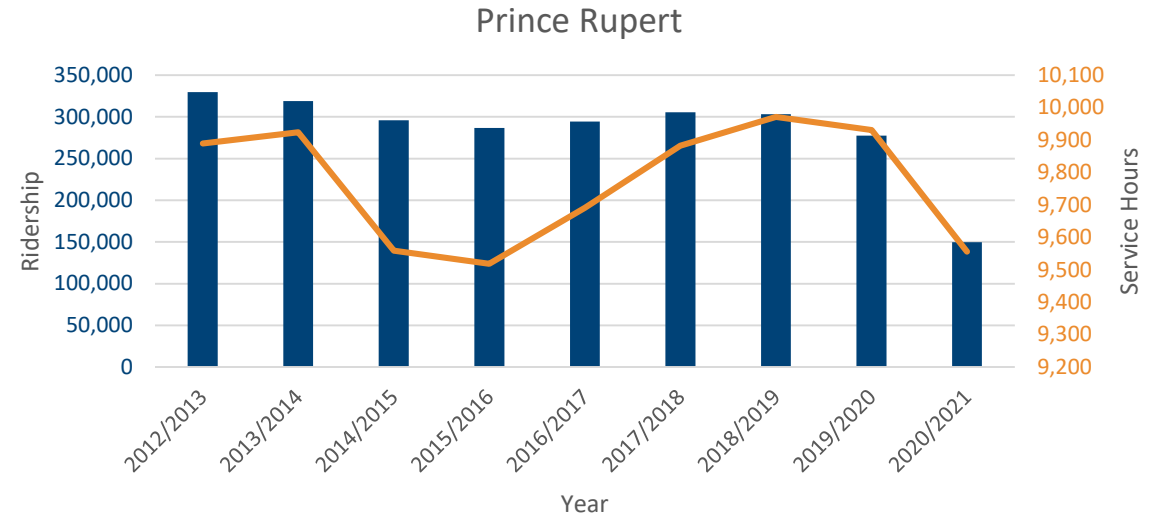


# 06 System Performance

Both Prince Rupert and Port Edward had steady ridership and consistent funding for many years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Ridership in both systems historically is reliable with small variations, but is facing a downwards trend. The service hours dedicated to transit service has also remained relatively stable with only small variations in Prince Rupert and almost none in Port Edward. There is a relationship between a decrease in service hours and a decrease in ridership.

Rides per service hour have also been relatively stable prior to 2020 with an average of 31 rides per hour in Prince Rupert and an average of 14 rides per hour in Port Edward.



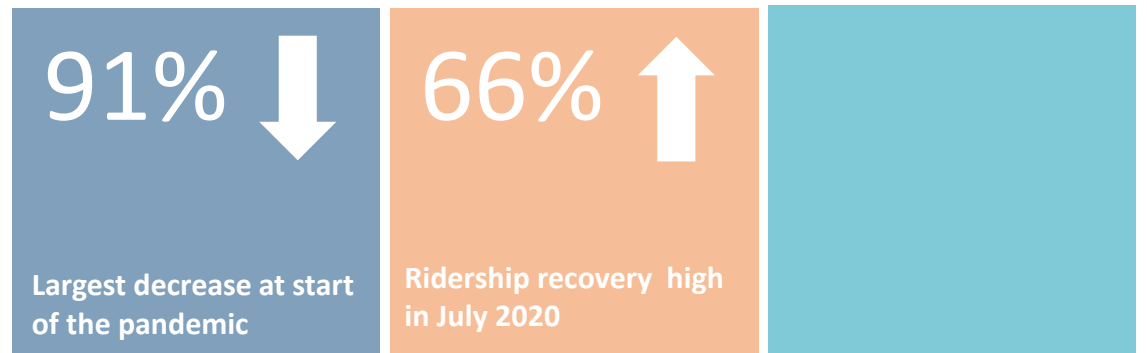
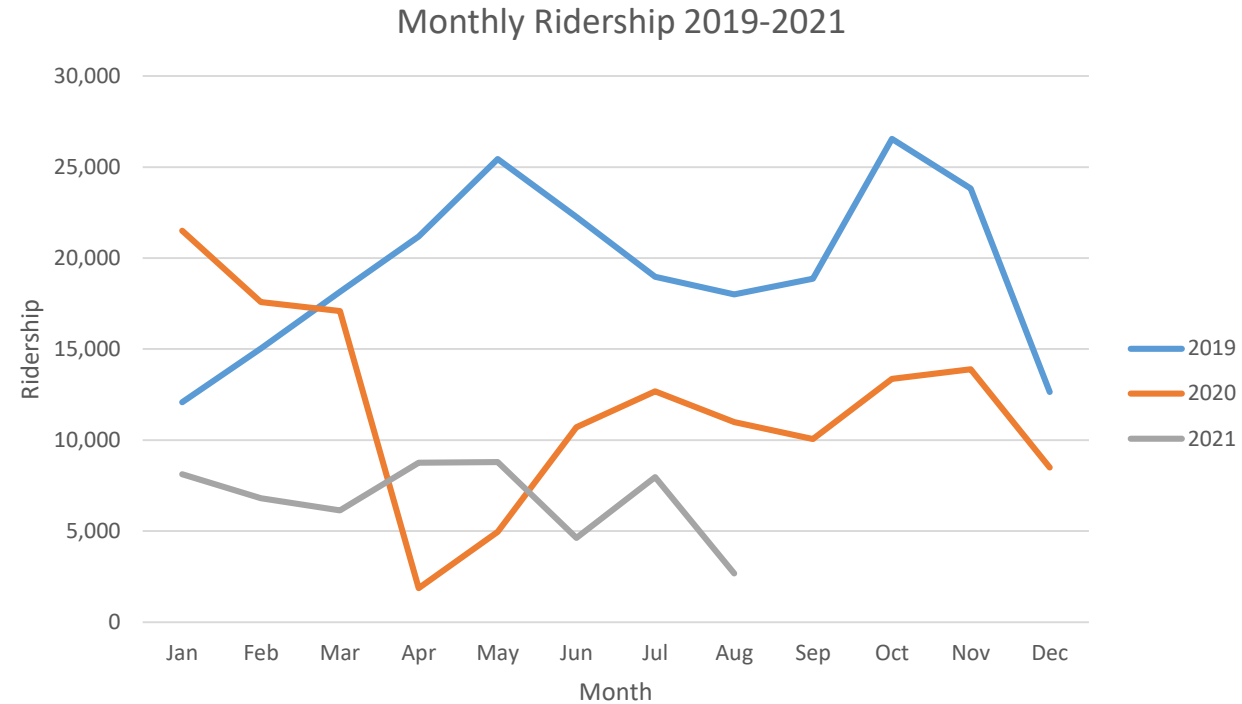
# 06 System Performance

## COVID-19 Impacts

As expected, given the British Columbia's Public Health Officer's advice to limit non-essential travel, transit ridership in Prince Rupert and Port Edward was impacted.

## Key Takeaways

- Ridership decreased dramatically in mid-March 2020
- Ridership fell by up to 91.2 per cent compared to 2019 levels (across the province ridership decreased by 75 per cent) and has seen a gradual increase as services and some businesses reopened in July 2020
- Ridership recovery has varied since July 2020, plateauing in 2020 before slowly decreasing in 2021



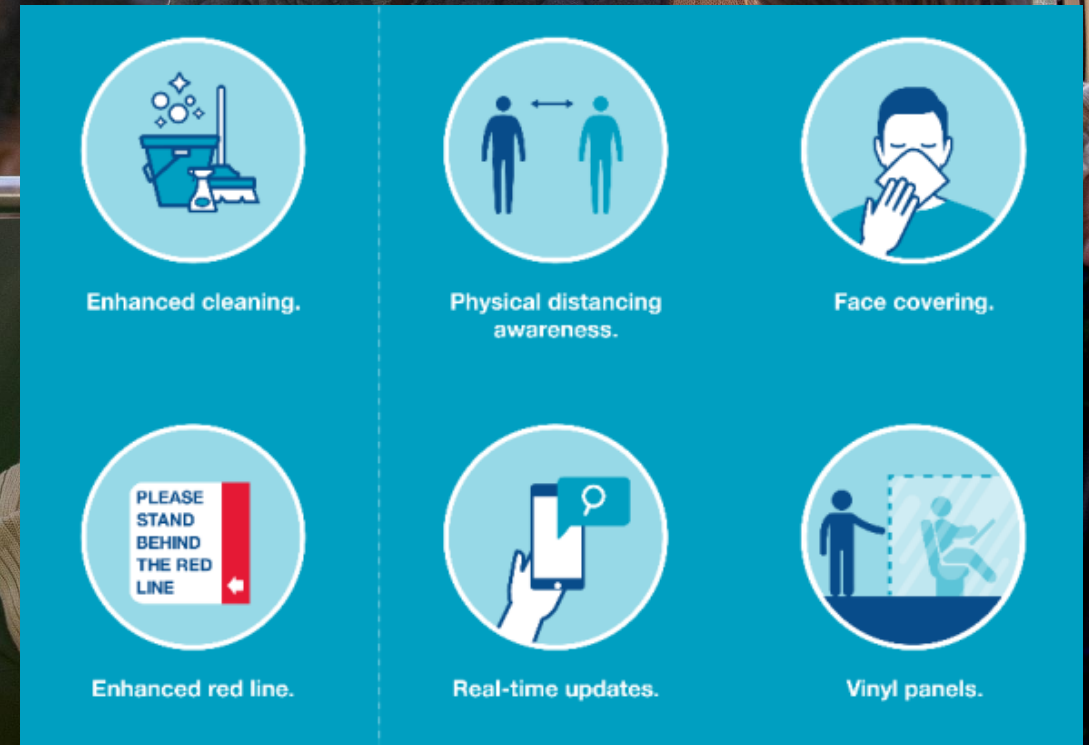
# 07 COVID-19 Response Plan

BC Transit's top priority is the safety of our passengers and operators.

Following the guidance of the Provincial Health Office and WorkSafeBC, and drawing on the best practices of the transit industry worldwide, BC Transit has implemented measures on our buses to respond to COVID-19, and have put a plan together to align with BC's Restart Plan. The key measures are summarized in Figure 1, but the full strategy and details can be found at <https://bctransit.com/COVID19>.

To support ridership return, the Province of British Columbia has provided restart funding to the Local Government sponsors to ensure the continued effective delivery of transit across your transit system.

The **Free Transit for Children 12 and Under Program** was introduced in September 2021 and will be instrumental in boosting ridership and rebuilding confidence in our post pandemic recovery. This program also aligns with BC Transit's commitment to delivering initiatives to drive new and effective measures to improve the transit experience. The program will help grow young ridership, create life-long transit users and further reduce congestion on our roads.



Source: BC Transit's COVID-19 Response Plan

Prince Rupert & Port Edward- Transit Future Service Plan

# 08 Engagement

How we engaged with the Prince Rupert and Port Edward communities

As part of BC Transit's commitment to public engagement, outreach was carried out to identify draft service and infrastructure priorities through workshops and conversations with key stakeholders, who are critical to the success of transit in the community, and the vehicle operators, who know the local conditions better than anyone.

Public engagement was launched online from March 12, 2021 to April 12, 2021. Marketing to the community was facilitated through a variety of tools including: a project website, newspaper ads, radio ads, internal bus ads, and social media.

8 key stakeholders represented the community

50 online survey completed



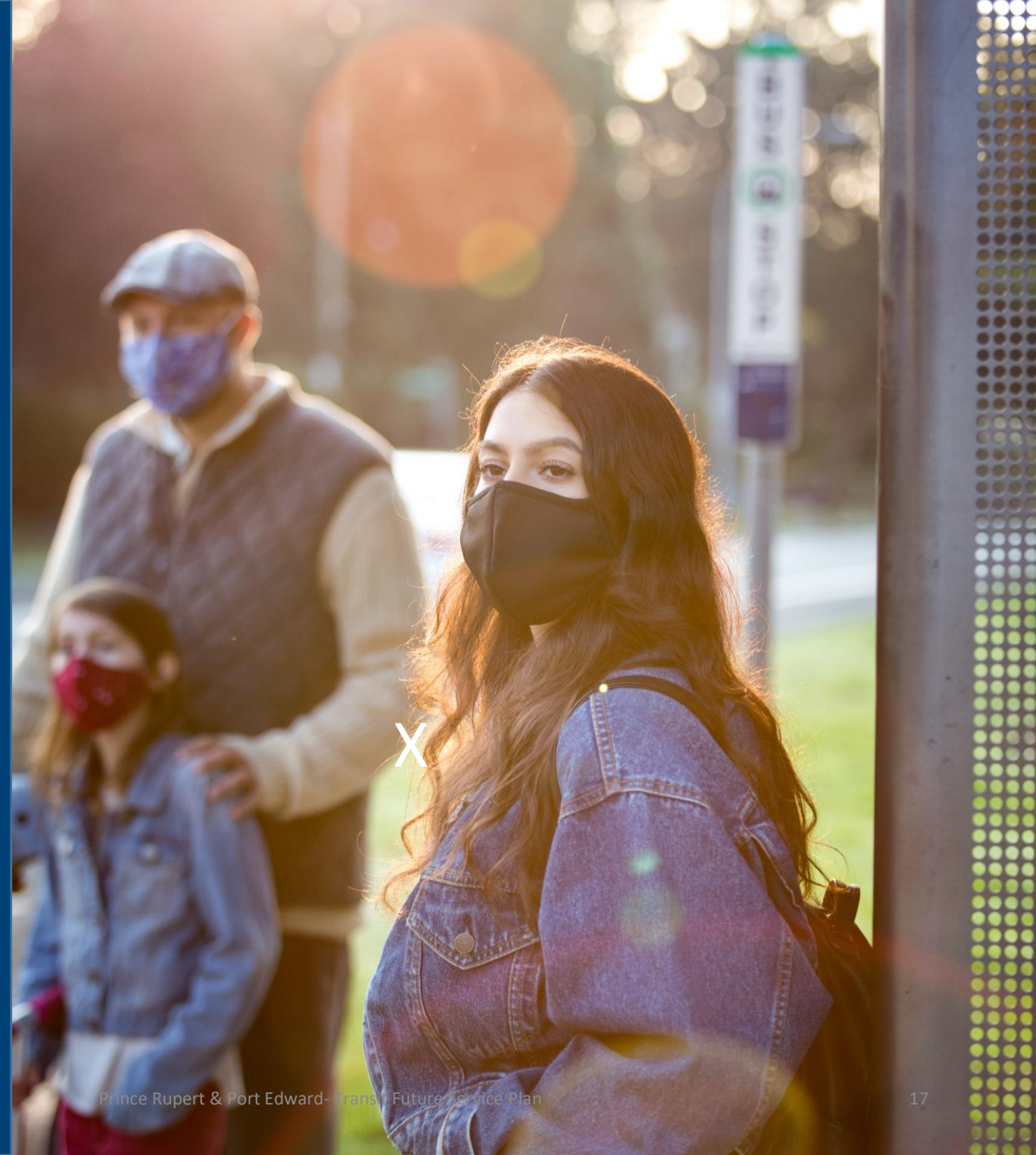
Stay Engaged !

Check out the full engagement summary report and register for future updates.  
<https://engage.bctransit.com/prr-pte-2021>



## 09 What we heard

- The 53 Crestview is consistently identified as needing additional service, followed by the 52 Summit and then the 51 Seal Cove
- Improving the weekday service span is more important than improving the Saturday service span
- Introducing Sunday service is a priority
- Improving existing service is more important than introducing new service to the container port or airport
- Safety, comfort, and accessibility at bus stops are a concern
- The majority of participants are satisfied or very satisfied with the transit system (94% in Prince Rupert, 84% in Port Edward)



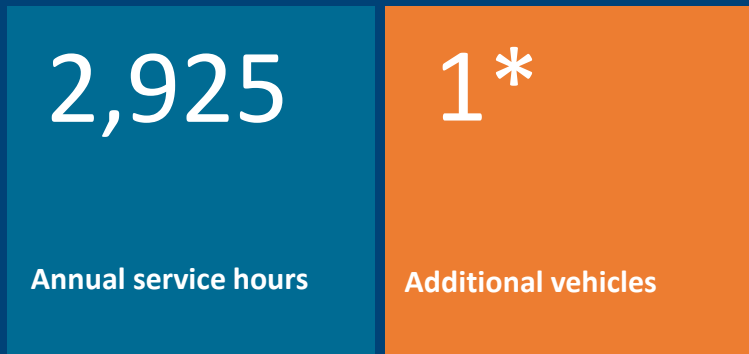
# 10 Service Priorities 2022-2026

Priority	Description	Expansion Resources
Later evening service on Weekdays	Increase evening service span to approximately 11:00 p.m.	<b>2,275 annual service hours, 1 bus</b>
Introduce Sunday Service	Introduce Sunday service on all Prince Rupert routes, excluding the 99 Special	<b>1,925 annual service hours, 1 bus</b>
Earlier morning service on Weekdays	Increase morning service span to 6:00 a.m.	<b>650 annual service hours</b>
Adjust 60 Port Edward Routing and Schedule	Changing routing and schedule based on feedback provided by the public.	<b>Reallocation</b>

# Increasing Weekday Service Span

Adding trips later into the evenings to approximately 11:00 p.m. and earlier in the mornings to approximately 6:00 a.m. to increase the span of service with 60 minute frequency.

\*Based on the increase in service hours, an additional bus may be required at implementation to maintain the appropriate spare ratio.



Route	Additional Annual Hours	Additional Buses
51 Seal Cove	Morning: 150 Evening: 475	0
52 Summit	Morning: 125 Evening: 450	0
53 Crestview	Morning: 150 Evening: 700	0
54 Westview	Morning: 75 Evening: 375	0
57 Park	Morning: 150 Evening: 275	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Morning: 650</b> <b>Evening: 2,275</b>	<b>1*</b>

# Introducing Sunday Service

Introduce transit service on Sundays on the routes 51 Seal Cove, 52 Summit, 53 Crestview, 54 Westview, 55 Fairview Bay, and 57 Park. The proposed level of service would be roughly equivalent to the current Saturday level of service.

\*Based on the increase in service hours, an additional bus may be required at implementation to maintain the appropriate spare ratio.

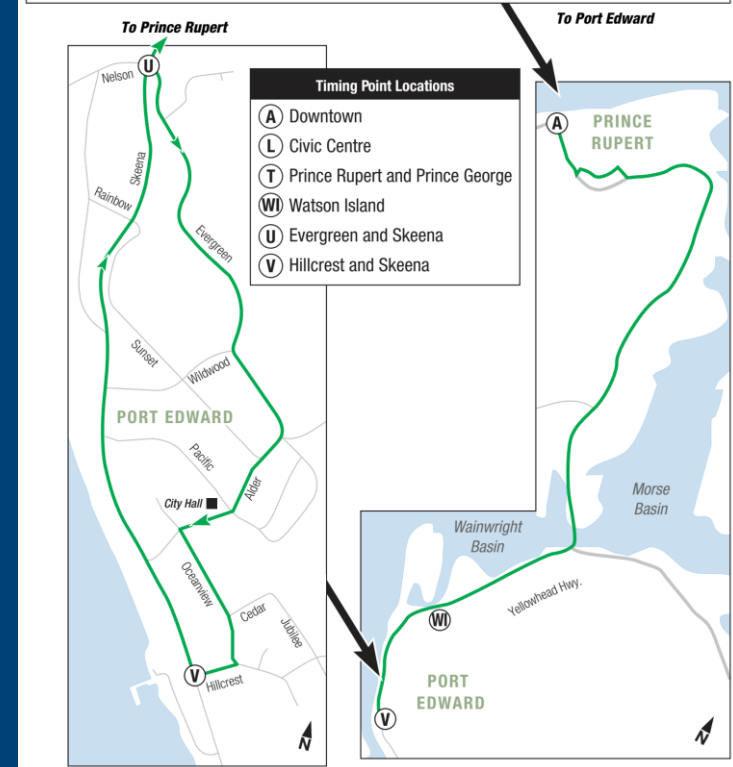
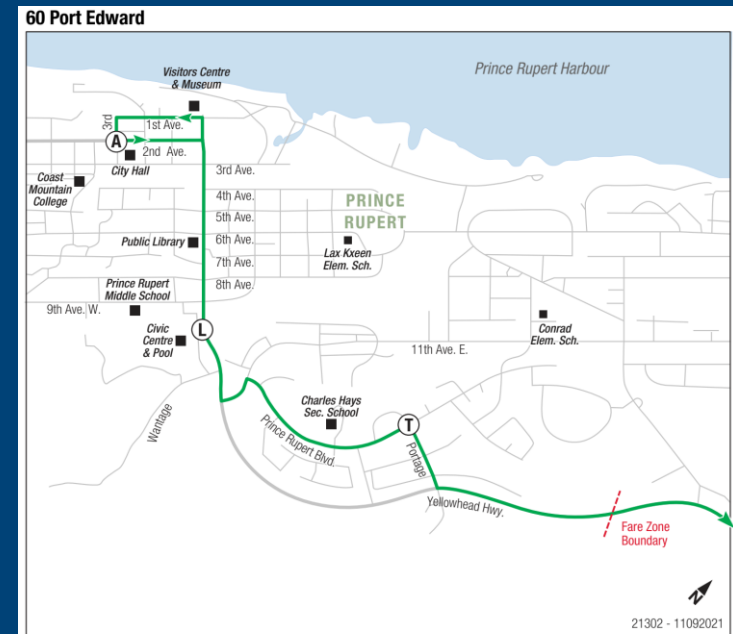
Route	Additional Annual Hours	Additional Buses
51 Seal Cove	625	0
52 Summit	350	0
53 Crestview	675	0
54 Westview	175	0
55 Fairview Bay	50	0
57 Park	50	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,925</b>	<b>0*</b>



# Adjusting the 60 Port Edward Routing & Schedule

Adjusting the routing of the 60 Port Edward by:

- Rerouting a portion of the route along Prince Rupert Boulevard rather than Highway 16
- Adding additional stop at Watson Island
- Permanently removing the portion of route to cannery
- Adjusting the schedule based on the reduce number of trips based on feedback from the public.



# 11 Long Term Service Priorities

Priority	Description	Expansion Resources
New route to container port	Introduce a new route providing service to the container port. Reallocation of resources from the 55 Fairview Bay could reduce the amount of resources required for this expansion	<b>TBD</b>
Later evening service on Saturdays	Increase evening service span to approximately 9:00 p.m. on Saturdays	<b>400 annual service hours</b>
Earlier morning service on Saturdays	Increase morning service span to 7:00 a.m. on Saturdays	<b>200 annual service hours</b>

# 12 Infrastructure Priorities 2022-2026

## Priority

## Description

Invest in bus stop infrastructure

Improving accessibility, safety and providing additional amenities.

- Seek investment in shelters through the [BC Shelter program](#)
- Seek investment through Prince Rupert's and Port Edward's capital planning.
- Minor Betterments funding



# 13 Moving Forward

## Monitoring + Implementation

Performance of the transit system is monitored on an annual basis, which is typical for transit systems of this size. Performance may be monitored more closely after a significant service change to evaluate the change.

Service improvements will be integrated into the Three Year Transit Improvement Process (TIP), which is updated on an annual basis. Infrastructure improvements will be incorporated into BC Transit's Capital Plan. Prior to implementation of service changes, BC Transit planning staff will work with staff from both communities to ensure service improvements appropriately reflect local needs. Additional targeted engagement may be conducted.





# 14 Investment Strategy

## Funding the plan

To achieve the goals of this plan capital and operating investments in the transit system will be required over the next five years and beyond. Annual operating costs are based on service hours that are projected to increase by over 5,450 hours.

The plan also calls for capital investments that include:

- An additional two buses added to the transit fleet
- Improvements to customer amenities at transit stops

Given the level of transit investment anticipated over the coming decades, BC Transit and its funding partners will need to evaluate stable and predictable funding sources beyond the existing mechanisms. When funding is not available for service expansion at the provincial level, both communities should continue to invest in their transit systems' infrastructure.



# 15 Acknowledgments

Thank you,

The development of this Transit Future Service Plan provides the planning overview for the development of the Prince Rupert and Port Edward transit systems.

This plan was made possible by participation from provincial and local governments, key stakeholders and the public. BC Transit would like to thank staff from:

- City of Port Edward
- District of Port Edward
- Pacific Western Transportation
- School District 52
- Prince Rupert and District Chamber of Commerce
- Prince Rupert Port Authority
- DP World
- North Pacific Cannery

