

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

BC Transit 520 Gorge Road East and WebEx
February 23, 2021 | 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

DRAFT AGENDA

OPEN SESSION AND FIRST NATIONS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT		SPEAKER
1. Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda	APPROVAL	Susan Brice
2. Approval of Minutes from January 19, 2021	APPROVAL	Susan Brice
3. Chair's Remarks		Susan Brice
CORRESPONDENCE		
4. Claremont School Project		
5. District of Saanich letter regarding support of transit climate action targets		
6. City of Victoria: Appointment of Councillor, Ben Isitt to VRTC		
7. Vancouver Island Rail Transit		
8. UVSS VRTC Request Letter - moved receipt December 1, 2020		
NOTICE OF MOTION		PRESENTER
9. That the Commission Chair write a letter to the Minister of Transportation requesting that the student seat on the Victoria Regional Transit Commission be made into a voting seat.		Mayor Helps
REPORTS		PRESENTER
10. Financial and Performance Summary: Q3 YTD	INFORMATION	Megan Hill
11. 2021/22 Annual Service Plan Budget & Tax Requisition		
a. Annual Service Plan Summary	APPROVAL	Megan Hill Levi Megenbir
12. Special Fare Days	APPROVAL	Chris Gregory
13. Planning Update	INFORMATION	Levi Megenbir
14. Local Area Transit Plans		
a. Esquimalt-View Royal	APPROVAL	Levi Megenbir
b. Broadmead-Cordova Bay		
15. Infrastructure Update	INFORMATION	Levi Timmermans
16. Operations Update – Winter 2021 Implementation	INFORMATION	Kevin Schubert
17. ATAC Minutes	INFORMATION	Kevin Schubert
18. Student Update	INFORMATION	Quinn Cunningham
19. In Camera		
NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS		
• May 11, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. Strategic Workshop		

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

BC Transit Boardroom 520 Gorge Road East and WebEx
January 19, 2021 | 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

DRAFT MINUTES

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

Present:

Councillor Susan Brice, Chair, Mayor Fred Haynes, Mayor Geoff Orr, Mayor Kevin Murdoch, Mayor Maja Tait, Mayor Rob Martin, Councillor Sharmarke Dubow and Quinn Cunningham

BC Transit Staff:

Christy Ridout, *Vice President, Business Development*; Roland Gehrke, *Vice President Finance & CFO*; Kevin Schubert, *General Manager, Victoria Regional Transit*; Levi Timmermans, *Director, Infrastructure Management*; Lisa Trotter, *Senior Manager, Government Relations*; Megan Hill, *Director, Budgeting and Forecasting*; Ryan Dennis, *Manager, Sales and Revenue*; Levi Megenbir, *Senior Transit Planner*, Seth Wright, *Transit Planner*, and Tina Sulea, *Executive Assistant (Recorder)*

Regrets:

Mayor Lisa Helps

1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Susan Brice called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Motion MOVED by Mayor Tait and SECONDED by Mayor Orr to approve the agenda as written.

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 1, 2020

Motion MOVED by Mayor Tait and SECONDED by Mayor Murdoch to approve the minutes as written.

CARRIED

3. CHAIR'S REMARKS

It is acknowledged that this is a special meeting to approve the financials. Transit has become an area of interest with the CRD Transportation Committee. Staff are encouraged to engage with the CRD Transportation Committee as required moving forward.

4. REVISED 2020/21 ANNUAL VICTORIA SERVICE PLAN BUDGET – MEGAN HILL

The revised 2020/21 Annual budget is being presented as a result of the Safe Restart Plan that was signed at the end of October 2020. Under the federal Safe Restart Plan the federal and provincial governments have committed to provide joint contributions in support of transit services. BC Transit has entered into a Contribution Agreement to receive \$86 million to provide relief to the VRTC and other local government partners in BC. Under this agreement \$42,102,810 has been allotted to the Victoria Conventional transit system and \$543,439 allocated to the Victoria Custom transit system.

Discussion

- There was a question with regard to how the funds will be allocated over a two year period

- The funds will cover COVID related lost passenger revenue and PPE costs from 2020 and any funds remaining will go into the Transit Fund for 2021

Motion MOVED by Mayor Murdoch and SECONDED by Mayor Orr to approve the Revised 2020/21 Annual Victoria Service Plan Budget.

CARRIED

5. Q2 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT – MEGAN HILL

Passenger revenue is \$12.1M below budget year to date due to lower ridership and no collection of fares in April and May 2020. Passenger trips are 8.8M below budget for Q2 or an average of 62% below prior year. Passenger revenue is forecast to be \$1.8M below the revised budget at year end due to lower ridership. All passenger fare types (cash, tickets, passes, UPASS) are impacted by lower ridership with the exception of BC Bus Pass revenue that has remained unchanged. Passenger trips are forecasted to be 0.2M below revised budget based on projected ridership levels for the remainder of the year at 50% of prior year actuals. This is based on current trend.

Year to date operations expenses excluding fuel are below budget due to fewer service hours delivered, lower labour costs due to those service hours and offset by higher insurance costs and unbudgeted COVID related expenses. Year to date fleet maintenance is under budget due to lower labour costs, but offset by increased COVID related costs. Administration costs are below budget due to lower marketing and information systems expenditures. Lease fees are below budget primarily due to the suspension of vehicle lease fee charges from July to September 2020 as BC Transit provided COVID relief to the VRTC and local government partners across the province.

Motion MOVED by Mayor Murdoch and SECONDED by Mayor Orr to receive the Q2 Financial Performance Report for information.

CARRIED

6. 2021/22 DRAFT BUDGET – MEGAN HILL

The 2021/2022 fiscal draft budget was presented to the commission as information. BC Transit is required to submit operating and capital projections to the Province which form the basis for the provincial budget request and the development of the BC Transit Service Plan. As part of this annual process, BC Transit works with all local government partners to provide preliminary annual costs and funding requirements and confirm service levels for the following year. The Commission's local contribution towards expenses for 2021/22 will be funded through transit levy and/or a portion of the contributed surplus in their Transit Fund. The final budget will be presented at the February 23, 2021 VRTC meeting for approval.

Discussion

- Budget Day is now happening in April 2021 so staff will get back to the VRTC regarding what the options are for presenting the final budget and potential taxation increases to the VRTC for approval.
- The budget for passenger revenue is targeting 55% of 2019-20 levels which is what the Safe Restart Agreement is based on
- The uncertainty regarding Universities and Colleges returning to in-person classes for September 2021 will impact ridership

Motion MOVED by Mayor Murdoch and SECONDED by Mayor Haynes to receive the 2021/22 Draft Budget for information.

CARRIED

Motion MOVED by Councillor Dubow and SECONDED by Mayor Tait to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 a.m.

ADJOURNED

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Claremont School Project

Hello, My name is Parker and I'm a Grade 11 student at Claremont Secondary School and am enrolled in the Institute for Global Solutions class. For a group project, my group members and I were wondering if it would be possible for the buses on the route past our school (the 35) to be free for a period of time of no more than a week to encourage the use of environmentally cleaner transportation. If there was someone in your organization that I could speak to further about this it would be greatly appreciated. If this could be implemented I see this being beneficial to both BC Transit and the environment as the goodwill gesture could encourage higher ridership along with lower emissions.

Any assistance you could provide would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks so much.

Parker

Student of School District 63 Saanich



The Corporation of the District of Saanich | Mayor's Office

770 Vernon Avenue Victoria BC V8X 2W7 | T 250-475-5510 | F 250-475-5440 | www.saanich.ca

January 21, 2021

The Honourable Rob Fleming, M.L.A.
Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure
PO Box 9055 Prov Stn Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2
VIA EMAIL: Minister.Transportation@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister,

Re: Victoria Regional Transit System – Investment to support Climate Action and Targets
File: 2560-50 – Climate Change

This letter will confirm that District of Saanich Council, at their meeting held January 18, 2021, considered a staff report and a presentation by staff and BC Transit further to the above and resolved as follows:

“That Council send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to outline their support for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission’s 2021 funding requests and to advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion, infrastructure, and other improvements within the region over the coming years as necessary to meet climate and sustainability goals and targets.”

In 2019, Saanich Council declared a Climate Emergency in response to decades of scientific research that demonstrates the need for urgent action to reduce global warming and adapt to a changing climate. In January 2020, Council approved the Climate Plan, which includes a target for Saanich to become a 100% renewable energy community and cut our community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in half by 2030 and to net zero by 2050. The Climate Plan was recognized in 2020 with a Silver Award from the Planning Institute of British Columbia and the Community Energy Association Climate & Energy Action Award for Community Planning and Development.

In 2018 Saanich Council adopted the Active Transportation Plan which mirrors the mode share targets of our Climate Plan, has a host of strategies and actions needed to improve the transit user experience and make transit more attractive and accessible to all. The Active Transportation Plan was recognized in 2019 with a Silver award for Excellence in Policy Planning - City & Urban Areas presented by the Planning Institute of British Columbia.

Transportation is the largest source of our community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, responsible for 57 percent of our total emissions in 2018. The majority of these emissions are from the use of personal vehicles, light trucks and SUVs, which could be reduced considerably by a mode shift to transit and active transportation.

Public transit is the most efficient and cost-effective way of moving large numbers of people through limited urban space or between regional centres and the case for public transit is even stronger when the buses are powered by renewable BC Hydro electricity.

The Saanich Climate Plan modelled a pathway of actions to our 2030 and 2050 targets and this identified that transit improvements and electrification of the transit fleet could result in a 7 percent reduction in our community-wide GHG emissions by 2050. This would require:

- 14% of all trips to be taken by transit by 2030 (i.e. a 14% transit mode share)
- 20% of all trips to be taken by transit by 2050 (i.e. a 20% transit mode share)
- All BC Transit buses to be electrified by 2030

The Victoria Regional Transit System 10 Year Vision, approved by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) in November 2020, is aligned with the Saanich Climate Plan and includes the same 2030 ridership targets. It outlines that additional ridership is attracted by a transit service that is fast, reliable, frequent, connected, convenient and easy to use and it identifies the key actions to achieve this, including:

- Service expansion
- RapidBus Project implementation
- Electric bus deployment
- 3rd Victoria Operations and Maintenance Facility

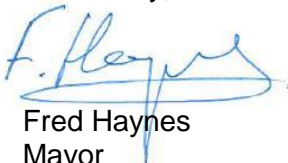
District of Saanich staff is actively working with BC Transit on several of the actions identified in the 10 Year Vision amongst others. However, it is clear that accelerated action and considerable investments are needed in both infrastructure and service hours if we are to achieve our aligned goals and targets, including an average of approximately 33,500 additional conventional service hours each year over the next 19 years for service expansion alone. As a start, the VRTC approved 20,000 additional conventional expansion service hours for 2021 to be submitted for consideration as part of Provincial Budget deliberations.

While COVID-19 has impacted transit ridership during 2020 and the effects are likely to continue to be felt in the short-term, transit remains of critical importance for reaching our GHG emissions targets and contributing to the region's social wellbeing and economic vibrancy. BC Transit is developing and implementing strategies to recover ridership that will address emerging service needs, but investment in service expansion and infrastructure projects are a critical component to both recover and further expand ridership.

As such, the District of Saanich wishes to declare its support for the VRTC's 2021 transit service expansion funding request to the Province and to advocate for increased Provincial funding for transit service expansion and infrastructure over the coming years, including implementation of RapidBus, the Uptown Centre Multi-Modal Hub Plan, a third Victoria Operations & Maintenance Facility and electrification of the transit fleet as necessary to meet our climate and sustainability goals and targets.

A copy of the report and January 18, 2021 meeting minutes are attached for further information.

Yours truly,



Fred Haynes
Mayor
Enclosures

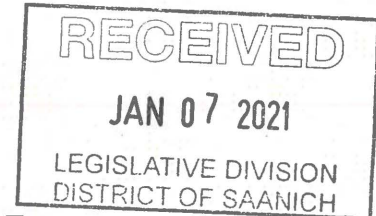
cc: Saanich Council
Paul Thorkelsson, CAO, District of Saanich
Angila Bains, Legislative Manager, District of Saanich
Sharon Hvozdzanski, Director of Planning, District of Saanich
Harley Machielse, Director of Engineering, District of Saanich
Susan Brice, Chair, Victoria Regional Transit Commission



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Sharon Hvozanski, Director of Planning
Harley Machielse, Director of Engineering
Date: January 7, 2021
Subject: Transit Investment to support Climate Action and Targets
File: 2560-50 • Climate Plan



RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receives this report for information; and
2. That Council sends a letter to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to outline their support for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission's 2021 funding requests and to advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion, infrastructure and other improvements within the region over the coming years as necessary to meet our climate and sustainability goals and targets.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Provide an overview of how transit contributes to the District of Saanich strategic goals and targets, in particular, those within the Climate Plan;
2. Provide an update on the progress made on actions within the Victoria Region Transit Future Plan and BC Transit 10 year vision that deliver on Saanich goals and targets and the next steps for BC Transit and Saanich to collaboratively accelerate its implementation; and
3. Request that Council send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, to outline their support for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission's 2021 funding requests and to advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion, infrastructure and other improvements within the region over the coming years as necessary to meet our climate and sustainability goals and targets and in order to support implementation of "Climate Action M2.5 Advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion and improvement" and "Active Transportation Plan Strategy 1G Improve Transit Access and Experience".

DISCUSSION

Aligned Vision and Targets

The Climate Plan, adopted by Council in 2020, outlines the actions needed to:

- Cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in half by 2030 and net zero by 2050;
- Transition to 100% renewable energy by 2050; and
- Prepare for a changing climate.

Transportation is the largest source of our community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, responsible for 57% of our total emissions in 2018. Majority of these emissions are from the use of personal vehicles, light trucks and SUVs, which could be reduced considerably by a mode shift to transit and active transportation.

Public transit is the most efficient and cost-effective way of moving large numbers of people through limited urban space or between regional centres. Even for buses that are fueled by diesel or gasoline, the fuel use (and GHGs) per person is lower for a trip by bus than for the same trip by single-occupant vehicle. The case for public transit is even stronger when the buses are powered by BC Hydro electricity, which is currently 97% renewable.

The Climate Plan modelled a pathway of actions to our 2030 and 2050 targets and this identified that transit improvements and electrification of the transit fleet could result in a 7% reduction in our community-wide GHG emissions by 2050. This would require:

- 14% of all trips to be taken by transit by 2030 (i.e. a 14% transit mode share);
- 20% of all trips to be taken by transit by 2050 (i.e. a 20% transit mode share); and
- All BC Transit buses to be electrified by 2030.

These mode share targets are also reflected in our Active Transportation Plan, which recognizes that “Walking, cycling and transit are key contributors to Saanich’s economic vibrancy, cultural and recreational experiences, social wellbeing, natural environment, physical beauty, and neighbourhood and social connections”, in its vision statement. In addition to the mode share targets that are shared with the Climate Plan, the Active Transportation Plan has a host of strategies and actions needed to improve the transit user experience and make transit more attractive and accessible to all.

BC Transit Aligned Vision & Targets

The Victoria Region Transit Future Plan (TFP), approved in 2011, provides a vision for improving the region’s transit network to 2035 and identifies a Transit Future Network with four layers of service:

- Rapid transit
- Frequent transit
- Local transit
- Targeted services

At their December 1, 2020 meeting, the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) approved the 10 year vision for the Victoria Regional Transit System, as an update to the TFP (see Attachment 1). This includes a 14% mode share target for core areas of the region by 2030, and a 20% mode share target for core areas of the region by 2039 (15% for the region overall), which are aligned with the Saanich Climate Plan and Active Transportation Plan.

Further, BC Transit has committed to a fully electric fleet by 2040 and recently released the Request for Proposal for their first 10 electric buses that are expected to be in service in the region by summer 2022.

As such, Transit plays a critical role in contributing to the District of Saanich's Climate targets, sustainability goals, active transportation goals, affordability and overall quality of life for our residents. Likewise, transit supportive land use and transportation planning by the District of Saanich are fundamental to a successful regional transit system. Therefore, integration and collaboration between BC Transit and the District of Saanich are key to achieving the transit mode shares necessary to meet our aligned goals.

Achieving Increased Ridership & Mode Share

Transit must be an attractive alternative to the private vehicle in order to increase ridership and attract discretionary riders. Transit is already an affordable means of transportation and the Victoria Regional Transit System has multiple fare programs for low-income riders.

Prior to COVID-19, the Victoria Regional Transit Service suffered from latent demand on specific routes and times, particularly in early fall with the return of students to university and school. The ability to take advantage of this demand for transit service has been limited by funding, which results in pass-ups where the bus must leave passengers behind because it is full, and reduced reliability due to the high number of passengers boarding and alighting, which can cause delays.

Therefore, while changes to fares can impact ridership (primarily fare increases resulting in a decrease in ridership as they switch to other modes of transportation vs. fare decreases attracting new riders), it is improvements in service levels that can contribute significantly to increased ridership and meeting our mode share targets. Additional ridership is attracted by a transit service that is:

- **Fast and reliable** – trip times that are competitive with travelling by car and that arrive at destinations on time;
- **Frequent** - with buses arriving every 5 to 15 minutes at peak times on the Rapid and Frequent network routes;
- **Connected and Convenient** - routes that are direct and connect urban centres and key destinations; and
- **Easy to use** – employing technology that makes it easy to pay, use and know when the next bus will arrive.

Therefore, ridership increases are heavily driven by investment in the above in comparison to expanding transit to include additional routes or later/earlier service that tends to result in considerably lower ridership increases per dollar invested. These service improvements are achieved through several measures:

- Additional service hours - including the associated additional buses;
- Additional maintenance and operation facility(s) - to allow for additional buses to be added to the fleet;
- Transit Priority Measures – e.g. dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, bus queue jump lanes, quality transit stop shelters/amenities/lighting;
- Investment in Technology – e.g. real time information supporting user confidence, electronic fare payment increasing ease of use; and
- Transit oriented development – land use and design, with density focussed on key nodes and corridors and the development of compact, complete communities that supports a fast and reliable, frequent and connected transit service for less investment.

It should be noted that the emphasis of this report relates to climate action and investments that achieve considerable ridership increases. While these also address equity and achieve multiple other co-benefits by increasing the quantity and quality of an affordable form of climate friendly transportation, there are additional areas of investment beyond those noted above that further enhance transit service and it's accessibility to users. Example of this are investment in handyDART and fare programs.

Transit Progress to Date

The Victoria Region Transit Future Plan (TFP) identified specific actions and funding investment required to increase ridership and achieve the approved mode share targets. This was based upon benchmarking and analysis of best practice from other comparable communities who invested in transit service to achieve similar targets. There have been multiple actions undertaken for the Victoria Regional Transit System since approval of the TFP that support increased ridership, including:

- Introduction of NextRide with real time technology;
- Expansion of the UVic Exchange Facility;
- Completion of several phases of the Victoria Region Douglas-Westshore Transit Priority Corridor – the dedicated bus lanes shorten travel times for passengers, increase the reliability of public transit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- New handyDART facility is expected to open in 2023 – freeing up space for new conventional vehicles at the existing Maintenance and Operations Centre to allow for additional service expansion; and
- Operations and Maintenance Facility Masterplan developed and approved.

However, while it is recognized that investment in transit service expansion is also critical to increasing ridership, there has been a notable shortfall in service hour expansion since the TFP was approved. The TFP identified the need to go from 760,000 total annual conventional service hours in 2010 to 1.5 million total annual conventional service hours by 2035 in order to implement the plan and meet the approved mode share and ridership targets. This equates to 29,600 hours of conventional service expansion per year. However, there were only 864,000 annual service hours for the whole system in 2019, equivalent to an annual average increase of 11,550 hours per year (see Figure 1).

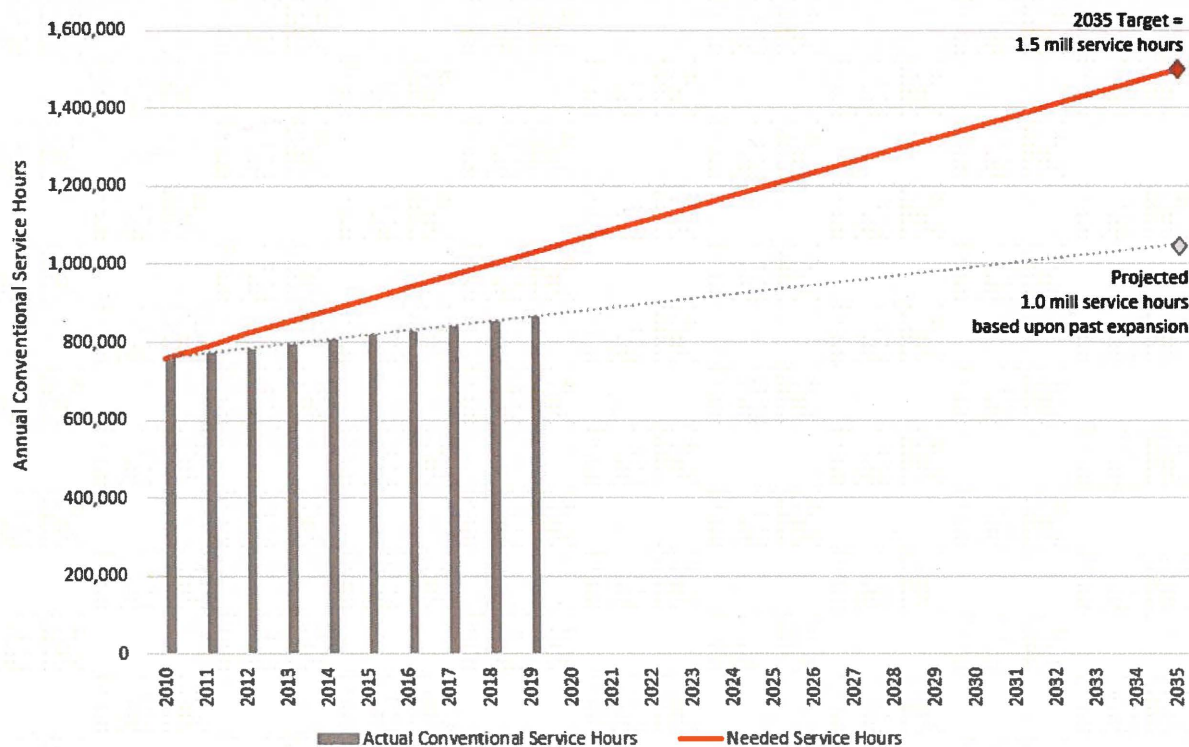


Figure 1: Conventional Transit Service Hours required to meet Transit Future Plan Mode Share Targets vs. Actual Expansion

Several things have contributed to this shortfall; expansion has been limited by available space for new vehicles at the two existing Maintenance and Operation centres and a third facility is needed; transit in the Victoria region requires agreement for funding from both the Province and local municipalities through the VRTC and there can be occasions where the local partners wish to expand service but the funding is not available from the Provincial partner; finally, while 20,000 hours of expansion had been approved by the VRTC for implementation in 2020, COVID-19 has caused major disruptions to transit ridership globally, and this expansion funding was put on hold for the 2020 year.

It should be noted that service expansion must be combined with other actions to improve transit service and increase ridership. In addition, investment in RapidBus and transit priority effectively saves service hours for investment in other areas of the transit system. However, considerable investment in service expansion hours is still critical to see ridership grow. The Transit Future Plan mode share targets have been updated by the 10 Year Vision and the timeline has shifted to 2039 in order to align more closely with the Capital Regional District population projections. Based upon current service levels and the amended targets and timeline, an additional 636,000 conventional service expansion hours are now needed over the next 19 years to meet the mode share targets, this equates to approximately 33,500 hours of conventional service expansion each year to 2039. To begin addressing this, the VRTC approved 20,000 additional conventional expansion service hours in late 2020 to be submitted for consideration as part of the 2021 Provincial Budget deliberations.

Necessary Transit Actions Moving Forwards

While COVID-19 has impacted transit ridership during 2020 and the effects are likely to continue to be felt in the short term, transit remains of critical importance for reaching our GHG emissions targets and contributing to the region’s social wellbeing and economic vibrancy. In collaboration

with their partners, BC Transit is developing and implementing strategies to recover ridership that will address emerging service needs, new cleaning and comfort standards, communication and technology enhancements, and infrastructure projects that will continue to show the value of transit in our community.

The 10 year vision, approved by the VRTC board on December 1, 2020, outlines the actions needed to increase ridership and meet our aligned mode share targets. Key actions include:

- Service Expansion – considerable investment in service hours and associated increased number of buses. The VRTC has approved an additional 20,000 conventional service hours expansion for 2021, to be submitted for consideration as part of the Provincial Budget deliberations.
- RapidBus Project implementation, including but not limited to:
 - Multiple Transit Priority Measures across the region.
 - Island Highway Transit Priority.
 - Uptown “Centre” Multi-Modal Hub Plan in the short-term and build in the medium-term.
 - Mckenzie Corridor Transit Study.
 - Highway 17 Keating Cross Road Fly Over.
- Electric Bus deployment.
- Electronic fare collection pilot.
- Operations and Maintenance Facility Infrastructure:
 - Victoria’s third Operations and Maintenance Facility pre-implementation work in the short-term and build by the medium-term.
 - Victoria’s fourth Operations and Maintenance Facility – medium and/or longer-term.
 - Victoria Transit Centre (VTC)/Langford Transit Centre (LTC) Operations and Maintenance Facility Enhancements and Modernization.
- Local Area Transit Plan development and implementation.
- Rapid Implementation Study.

The Saanich Climate Plan “Strategy M2: Prioritize transit-supportive policies and practices”, includes specific actions to support increased transit ridership:

- M2.1 Work with partners (VRTC, BC Transit) to accelerate service level improvement and increase transit mode share.
- M2.2 Support increased residential density along public transit routes.
- M2.3 Make transit travel time-competitive.
- M2.5 Advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion and improvement.

M2.7 Work with BC Transit to incorporate latest best practices and new technology needs

The Saanich Active Transportation Plan “Strategy 1G: Improve Transit Access and Experience” also includes specific actions to support increased ridership:

- 1G.1 Prioritize new pedestrian infrastructure on transit routes.
- 1G.2 Install bike parking at high activity stops.
- 1G.4 Integrate transit amenities with new development.
- 1G.7 Improve transit amenities at existing stops.

The District of Saanich staff is actively working with BC Transit on several of the actions identified in the 10 Year Vision amongst others. However, it is clear that accelerated action and investment are needed if we are to achieve our aligned goals and targets.

As such, this report requests that Council send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, copying VRTC, to outline their support for the VRTC's 2021 funding request and to advocate for increased Provincial funding for transit service expansion, infrastructure and other improvements within the region over the coming years as necessary to meet our climate and sustainability goals and targets. A draft letter is included as Attachment 2.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That Council approve the recommendations as outlined in the staff report.

This would highlight to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) and Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure the District of Saanich support for accelerated transit investment in the region and the critical role it plays in achieving our climate goals and targets. It would also demonstrate the support for and desire by Saanich to see considerable progress on transit projects identified in the 10 Year Vision and commitment to collaborate on their implementation. This would assist in achieving Climate Plan Action M2.5 Advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion and improvement. This would also assist in achieving the actions in Active Transportation Plan Strategy 1G Improve Transit Access and Experience.

2. That Council do not approve the recommendations as outlined in the staff report.

Should Council not approved the recommendations outlined in the staff report, this may result in a missed opportunity to demonstrate to the Province and Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) our commitment to transit in the region, identify the role it plays in meeting our climate targets and advocate for the Provincial share of funding for transit necessary to meet those targets.

3. That Council provide alternate direction to Staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Investment in the Victoria Regional Transit System and integrated action between Saanich and BC Transit, including plans, policies, programs and infrastructure will support the following 2019-2023 Council Strategic Plan goals:

Affordable housing, land use and infrastructure management

- Active transportation networks help our residents commute and connect.
 - Integrate sustainable modes of transportation with land use planning.
 - Build connected neighbourhoods with a focus on active transportation and accessible services.

Climate action and environmental leadership

- Steward the natural environment
 - Work towards our goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.
 - Contribute to the mitigation of climate change and its effects.
- Balanced transportation initiatives are supported to reduce our environmental impact.
 - Manage our transportation system efficiently as the community evolves.

- Prioritize walking, cycling, transit, and other sustainable modes of transportation.
- Work to enhance accessibility and usability of transit.

CONCLUSION

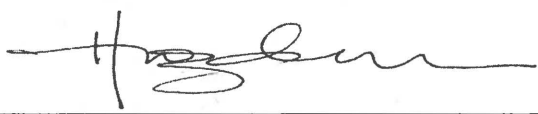
The Victoria Regional Transit Commission (VRTC) approved the Victoria Regional Transit System 10 Year Vision as an update to the Transit Future Plan at their December 1, 2020 meeting. This includes a 14% mode share target for core areas of the region by 2030, and a 20% mode share target by 2039, which are aligned with the Saanich Climate Plan and Active Transportation Plan. The 10 year vision outlines the actions and timeline needed to achieve these targets and alongside the Transit Future Plan, includes a need for considerable investment and service expansion hours.

While multiple actions have been implemented since the Transit Future Plan (TFP) was approved, and the District of Saanich staff is actively working with BC Transit on several of the actions identified in the 10 Year Vision, past investment has fallen short of that identified in the TFP as necessary to achieve the transit mode share targets and our climate goals. It is clear that accelerated action and considerable investments are needed in both infrastructure and service hours if we are to achieve our aligned goals and targets.

The recent approval of the Victoria Regional Transit System 10 Year Vision presents a key opportunity to demonstrate support by the District of Saanich for the actions identified within the plan and to advocate to the Province for the funding required to deliver on those actions. As such, this report requests that Council send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, copying VRTC, to outline their support for the VRTC's 2021 funding request and to advocate for increased provincial funding for transit service expansion, infrastructure and other improvements within the region over the coming years as necessary to meet our climate and sustainability goals and targets (see Attachment 2). It would also demonstrate the support for and desire by the District of Saanich to see considerable progress on transit projects identified in the 10 Year Vision and commitment to collaborate with BC Transit on their implementation. This would assist in achieving Climate Plan Action M2.5 Advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion and improvement and the Active Transportation Plan Strategy 1G Improve Transit Access and Experience.

Prepared by: 

Rebecca Newlove
Manager of Sustainability

Approved by: 

Sharon Hvozdzanski
Director of Planning

Approved by: 

Harley Machielse
Director of Engineering

RN/rh

Attachments: Attachment 1: Victoria Regional Transit System 10 Year Vision
Attachment 2: Draft Letter to Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Finance and Director of Planning.



Paul Thorkeisson, Administrator

2560-50

Resilient Saanich

TRANSIT INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT CLIMATE ACTION AND TARGETS

Report of the Director of Planning and the Director of Engineering dated January 7, 2021 recommending that Council:

1. Receive the report for information; and
2. Send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to outline their support for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission's 2021 funding requests and to advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion, infrastructure and other improvements within the region over the coming years as necessary to meet climate and sustainability goals and targets.

R. Newlove, Manager of Sustainability and L. Trottier, Senior Manager, Government Relations and L. Megenbir, Senior Transit Planner, BC Transit presented the Transit Investment and Climate Action Plan and made the following comments:

- Saanich is working with BC Transit to align vision and goals.
- Transit is funded through the BC Transit Commission, revenue, property taxes, fuel tax and the Province of BC.
- BC Transit has adopted a 10-Year Vision with active and scheduled projects and plans for transit infrastructure, mobility innovation, expansion, planning and safety.
- BC Transit requests Saanich continue to invest in transit infrastructure, have dedicated right-of-ways for transit if possible, continue to focus density in key nodes and along key transit supported corridors and continue to advocate for service expansion.
- Public transit is the most significant action in meeting climate and sustainability goals and targets.
- Public transit is an affordable way to commute; investing in transit service in terms of frequency and accessibility has an impact on ridership.
- There are social programs to assist with affordability.
- BC Transit is taking a phased approach in the development of the Uptown Transit Hub.
- A pilot project for an electronic fare collection system will be undertaken.
- Funding to replace the loss of gas tax as a result of electrified vehicles will be examined.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Nil

COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS:

MOVED by Councillor Chambers and Seconded by Councillor Taylor:
"That it be recommended that Council:

1. Receive the report of the Director of Planning and the Director of Engineering dated January 7, 2021 for information; and
2. Send a letter to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to outline support for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission's 2021 funding requests and to advocate for increased funding for transit service expansion, infrastructure and other improvements within the region over the coming years as necessary to meet climate and sustainability goals and targets."

Council discussion ensued with the following comments:

- Better coordination with transportation authorities and building on the synergies of land use planning and transportation policies are supportable.
- A strong transit system is a critical part of meeting climate action goals.
- Making transit more reliable and frequent will help to increase ridership.
- Regular updates from BC Transit would be appreciated.
- Saanich continues to work with BC Transit on climate action and on the Active Transportation Plan.
- Grants for more bus shelters should be explored.

**MOVED by Councillor de Vries and Seconded by Councillor Chambers:
 “That, due to technical difficulites, the rules of procedure contained in the Council Procedure Bylaw be temporarily suspended to allow public input to take place after the Chair closed the Public Input opportunity.”**

CARRIED

PUBLIC INPUT:

T. Barry, North Quadra area

- Public transit is one of the great opportunities to address climate change.
- Investment in technology for public transit will be important.
- Transit priority measures help to reduce maintenance costs from stop-and-go traffic.
- Electric vehicles will be less costly to maintain.

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED

The Manager of Sustainability exited the meeting at 8:04 p.m.



Legislative
Services

January 20, 2021

VIA EMAIL: victoria_commission@bctransit.com

#1 Centennial Square
Victoria
British Columbia
V8W 1P6

Victoria Regional Transit Commission
520 Gorge Road East
Victoria, BC V8W 9T5

Dear Victoria Regional Transit Commission,

**Re: City of Victoria Council Nominations to the Victoria Regional Transit
Commission**

Tel (250) 361.0571
Fax (250) 361.0348
www.victoria.ca

I am writing to advise that Victoria City Council passed the following resolution at the January 14, 2021 Council Meeting:

That Council approve the following appointment:

*That Councillor Ben Isitt be appointed to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission
for the term 2021-2022.*

The mailing address for the Councillor is:
City of Victoria
Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Other contact details are as follows:

Councillor Ben Isitt – bisitt@victoria.ca; Cell: 250.882.9302

If you require further information please contact me at 250.361.0346.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Havelka".

Christine Havelka
Deputy City Clerk

cc: Mayor and Council
City Manager

Dear Victoria Regional Transit Commission,

The attached is an update to the Vancouver Island Rail Transit that would supplement the Rapid Bus and may eliminate the need for a full Light Rail or Light Metro within the CRD

I have also left the type of Multiple Units for the Intercity open (Dual mode, Hydrogen, or Battery).

The Ottawa Trillium Line is a single-track rail line operating throughout the day with up to a 12-minute frequency in both directions. In the CRD a similar system could be built using EMUs instead of DMUs which can be configured from 2 to 6 single deck or double deck rail vehicles. Single deck or double deck EMUs have a higher number of seats than a Tram Train and run at a higher speed.

From the Westshore to Victoria the E&N would be used and upgraded to the Ultimate Phase per the IRCCA report. The line would be extended to Douglas St, and electrified from Westhills to Victoria to allow for EMUs. The E&N has a different route than the Rapid Bus so having both would enhance transit options from the Westshore and include Esquimalt.

A new single track rail line along Blanshard St and the Pat Bay Hwy from Victoria to Sidney would provide rail service to the Saanich Peninsula connecting the bus exchanges and major bus stops. The rail line would not interfere with the Rapid Bus lanes along Douglas St including the Cowichan Commuter Service. It may be easier to build a rail line than building two bus lanes along the Pat Bay Hwy.

A UVIC to Downtown Victoria Rapid Bus would connect to the Westshore Rapid Bus and the Victoria & Sidney Line at Uptown. It would also connect to the E&N at the Downtown Exchange.

Based on the recent estimates for LRT in Surrey, the cost of upgrading the entire E&N rail line and building a new rail line in the Saanich Peninsula would be equivalent to a full LRT from Westhills to Victoria.

BC Transit argues that there are not enough passenger numbers to implement rail from the Westshore. I agree with that for full Light rail, Light Metro, and Commuter Rail but not for the rail configuration I have mentioned. A 2 car EMU has 100 seats which is not much more than a double decker bus at 88 seats. An articulated bus carries around 140 passengers but only has 60 seats. Only 2 trains are required for a frequency of every 30 minutes and 4 trains for a frequency of every 15 minutes. Each train can expand up to 6 cars when ridership demand increases.

This version of the Vancouver Island Rail Transit provides a more cost effective rail transit for the CRD. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Gwyer Webber

Vancouver Island Rail Transit

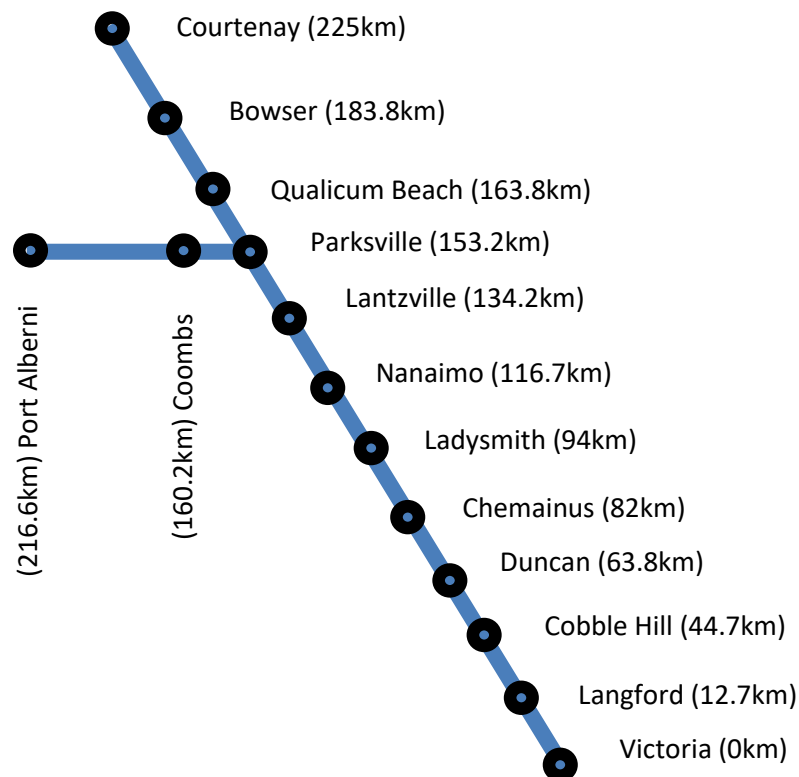
Mar v4 2021

Written by Gwyer Webber 2018-2021

This rail transit option would connect most of the communities on Vancouver Island with the E&N and an automated metro in the CRD. Each phase would be built when funding is available.

Phase 1: E&N Inter City Rail - 289km (Approximately \$750 million dollars)

- The entire line would be upgraded to the Ultimate Phase per the **IRCCA** report.
- Stations at Victoria, Langford (Exchange), Shawnigan Lake/Cobble Hill, Duncan, Chemainus, Ladysmith, Nanaimo, Lantzville, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Bowser, Courtenay, Coombs, and Port Alberni. A future station at Nanaimo Airport.
- A new bridge across the Inner Harbour and the track extended to Douglas St.
- A maintenance building for the Multiple Units in Nanaimo.
- Six Multiple Units (4 in service 2 spare). Hybrid, Dual Mode, Hydrogen (Plant required), BEMU (Battery only and requires charge points and overhead lines at an additional cost).



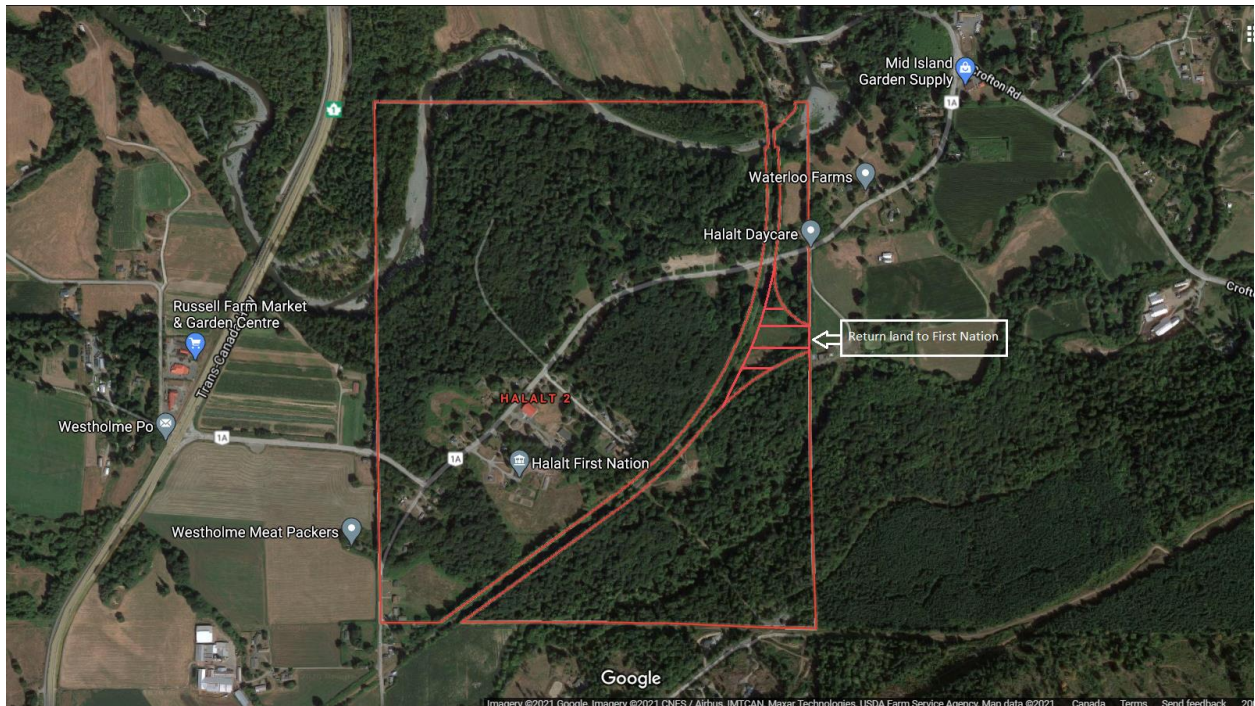
Example Schedule: For BEMUS overhead lines a layover at Duncan and Parksville would charge the batteries along the way reducing.

Southbound				
Station	Train 1	Train 2	Train 3	Train 4
Courtenay	08:00:00	*	16:00:00	*
Bowser	08:31:00	*	16:31:00	*
Qualicum Beach	08:46:00	*	16:46:00	*
Port Alberni	*	10:00:00	*	18:00:00
Coombs	*	10:48:00	*	18:48:00
Parksville	08:54:00/08:59:00	10:54:00/10:59:00	16:54:00/16:59:00	18:54:00/18:59:00
Lantzville	09:14:00	11:14:00	17:14:00	19:14:00
Nanaimo	09:27:00	11:27:00	17:27:00	19:27:00
Ladysmith	09:44:00	11:44:00	17:44:00	19:44:00
Chemainus	09:53:00	11:53:00	17:53:00	19:53:00
Duncan	10:07:00/10:12:00	12:07:00/12:12:00	18:07:00/18:12:00	20:07:00/20:12:00
Cobble Hill	10:23:00	12:23:00	18:23:00	20:23:00
Langford	10:55:00	12:55:00	18:55:00	20:55:00
Victoria	11:20:00	13:20:00	19:20:00	21:20:00
Northbound				
Station	Train 3	Train 4	Train 1	Train 2
Victoria	08:00:00	10:00:00	16:00:00	18:00:00
Langford	08:25:00	10:25:00	16:25:00	18:25:00
Cobble Hill	08:57:00	10:57:00	16:57:00	18:57:00
Duncan	09:08:00/09:13:00	11:08:00/11:13:00	5:08:00/17:13:00	7:08:00/19:13:00
Chemainus	09:27:00	11:27:00	17:27:00	19:27:00
Ladysmith	09:36:00	11:36:00	17:36:00	19:36:00
Nanaimo	09:53:00	11:53:00	17:53:00	19:53:00
Lantzville	10:06:00	12:06:00	18:06:00	20:06:00
Parksville	10:21:00/10:26:00	12:21:00/12:26:00	18:21:00/18:26:00	20:21:00/20:26:00
Coombs	*	12:32:00	*	20:32:00
Port Alberni	*	13:20:00	*	21:20:00
Qualicum Beach	10:34:00	*	18:34:00	*
Bowser	10:49:00	*	18:49:00	*
Courtenay	11:20:00	*	18:20:00	*

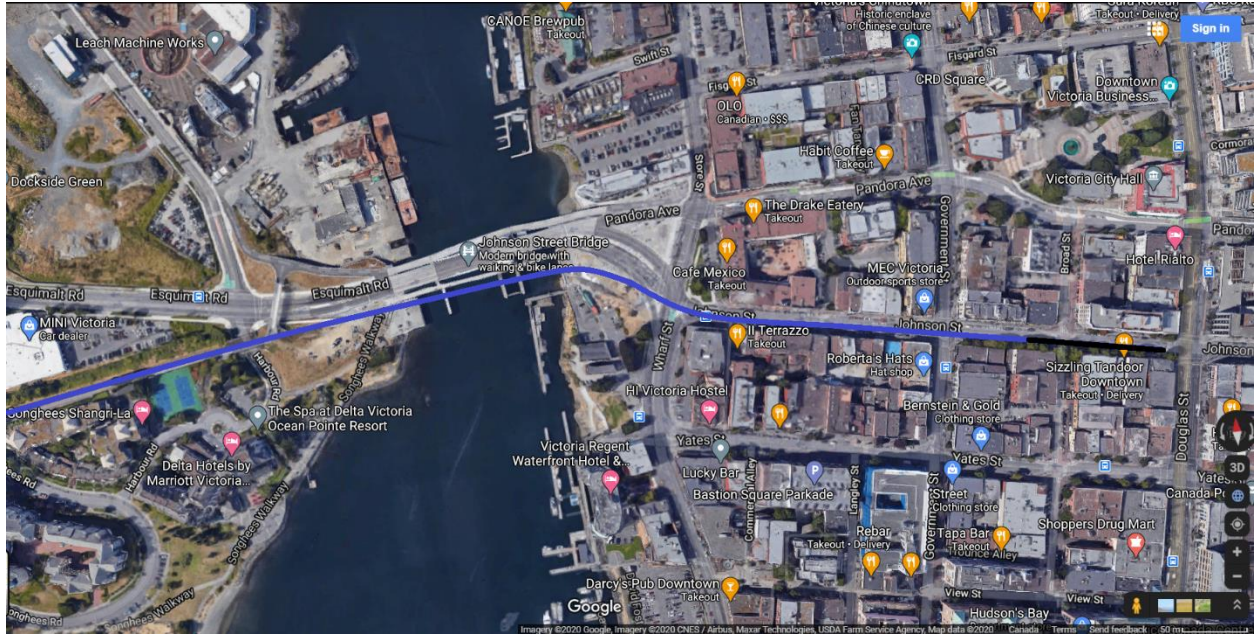
Snaw-Naw-As: Reroute the E&N through a tunnel and return the existing E&N right of way to the Nanoose First Nation.



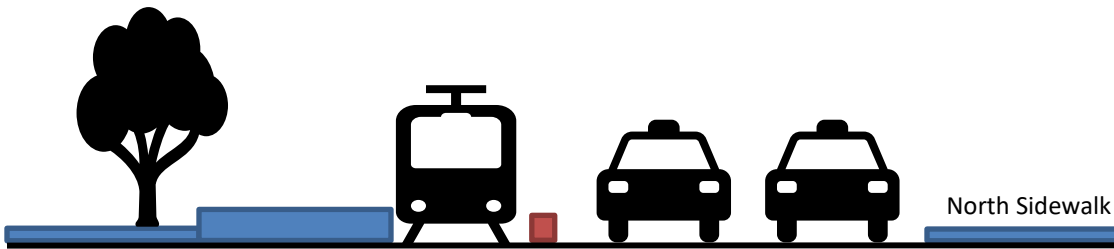
Halalt: A portion of the Osbourne Junction returned to the Halalt First Nation.



Downtown Victoria



Johnson St



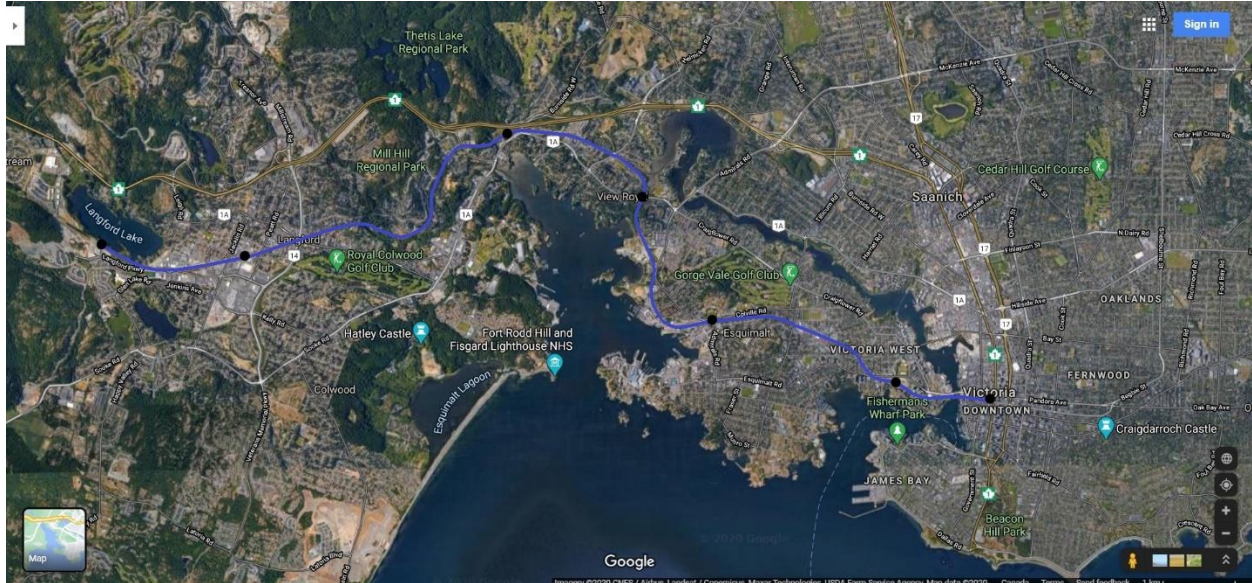
E&N Rail Vehicles

TEXRail in Texas is running four car Stadler Flirt which are FRA compliant and can run with freight. Ottawa has purchased the Stadler Flirt DEMU (Pictured below) for their Trillium Line. San Bernardino California has ordered the Stadler Flirt H2 hydrogen fuel cell powered vehicles. Germany has ordered Stadler Flirt BEMU (Battery Electric Multiple Unit) and there will be a BEMU for North America. Hybrid Multiple Units run on diesel and batteries.



Phase 2: E&N Westhills to Victoria (Approximately \$150 million dollars)

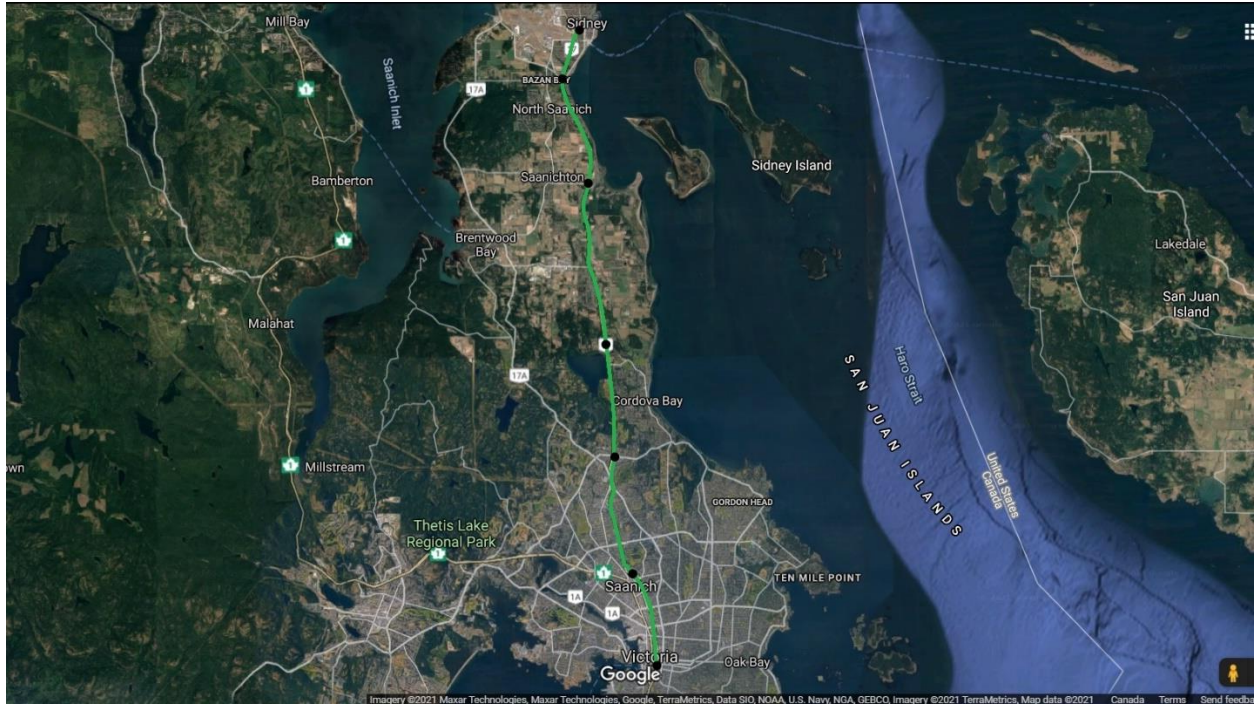
- Add stations at Westhills, Six Mile, Four Mile, Esquimalt, Roundhouse.
- Electrify the rail line from Westhills to Victoria.
- Optional Maintenance building for the EMUs (Six-Mile?).
- 3 Electric Multiple Units (2 in service and 1 spare) for 30-minute service.
- 6 Electric Multiple Units (4 in service and 2 spare) for 15-minute service.



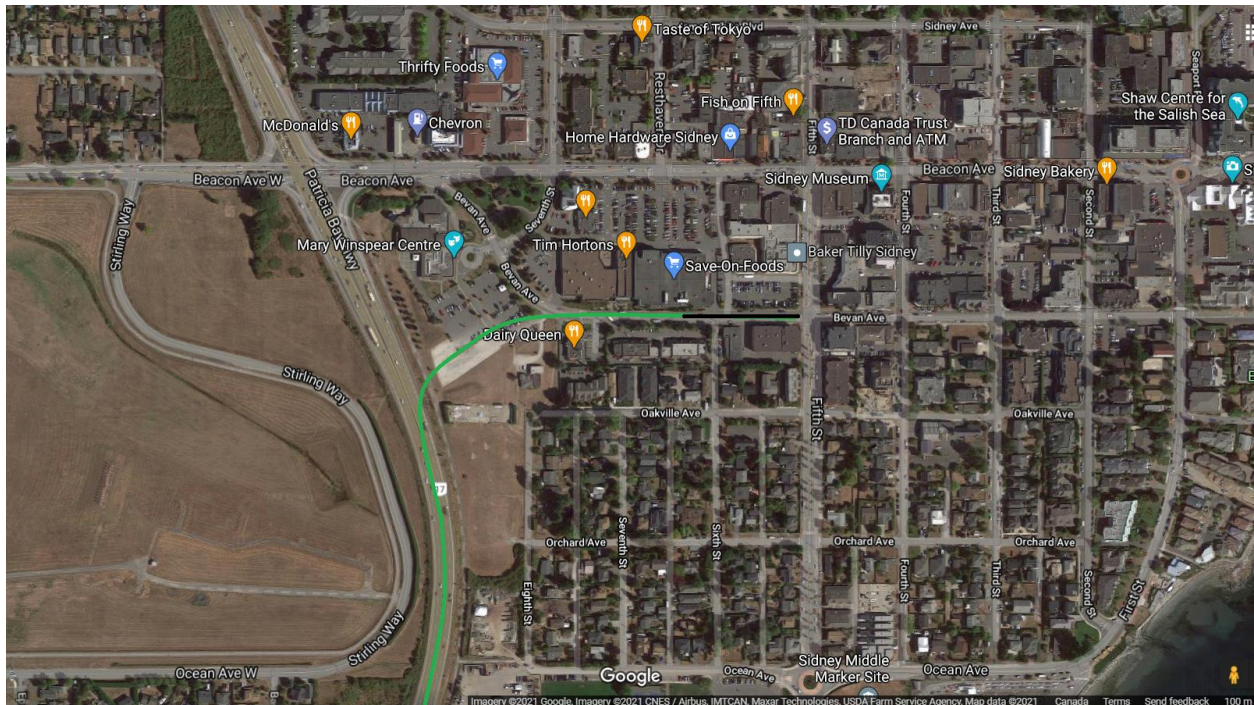
Phase 3: Victoria & Sidney Line - 26km (Approximately \$1.5 billion dollars)

- The single track fully electrified line would run from Bevan Ave in Sidney along the Pat Bay Hwy, Blanshard St to Fort St. The line would be mainly on the surface with no level crossings from Sidney to the Memorial Arena. The section from the Memorial Arena to Fort St would be on the surface in its own right of way with level crossings. The track would be elevated along Bevan Ave, Uptown to Memorial Arena, and over highway intersections north of Uptown. Passing sidings where applicable. Another option would be to extend the line to the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal instead of to Fifth St in Sidney.
- Stations at Fifth Ave, McTavish Rd, Mt Newton Cross Rd, Sayward Rd, Royal Oak Dr, Uptown, and ending at Fort St.
- The travel time from Sidney to Downtown Victoria would be approximately 30 minutes.
- 3 trains (2 in service 1 spare) would provide a 30-minute frequency
- 6 trains (4 in service 2 spares) would provide a 15-minute frequency.

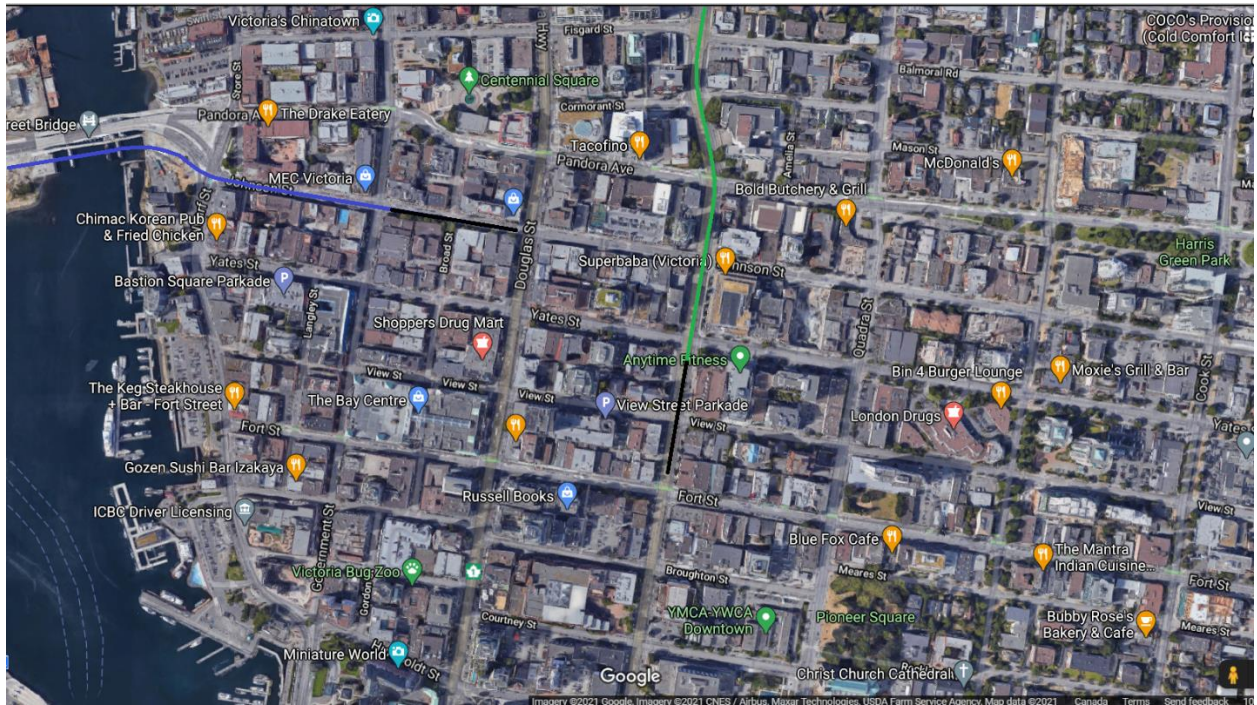
Saanich Peninsula



Sidney



Downtown Victoria



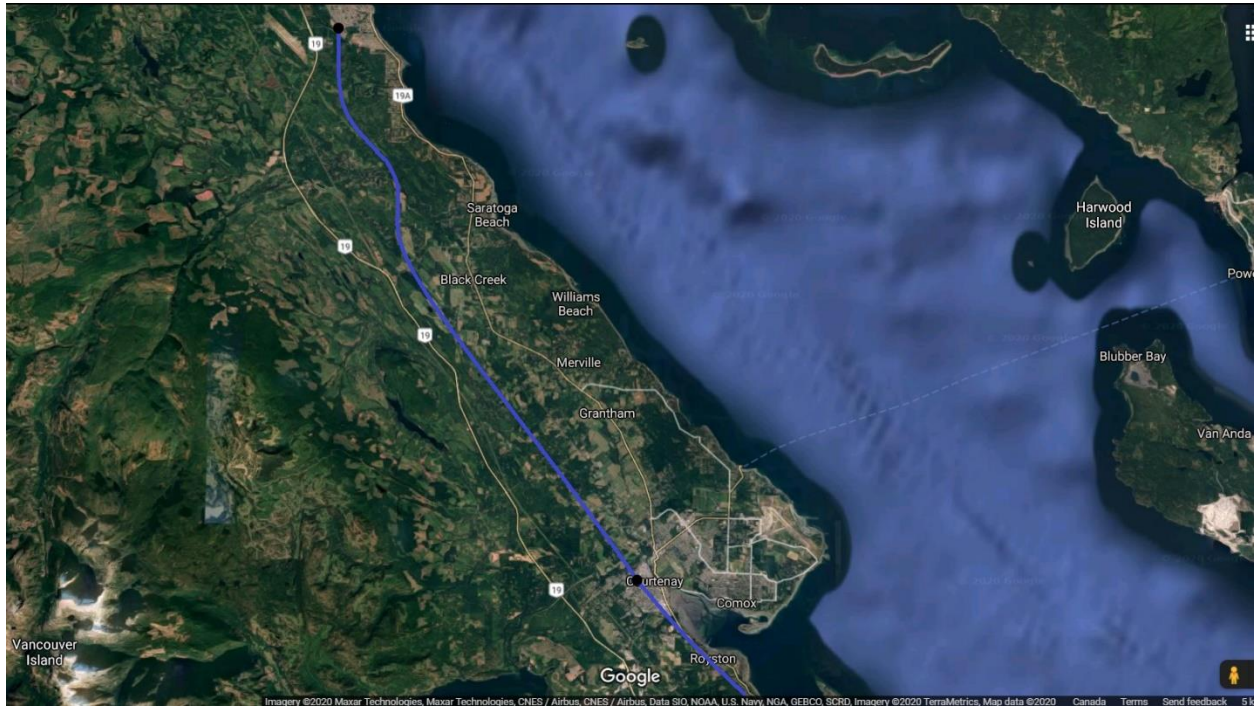
V&S Rail Vehicles

A four car all electric Stadler Flirt (EMU) would be similar to the Ottawa Stadler Flirt DEMU (Pictured below) without the small power car in the middle and can expand to six cars.

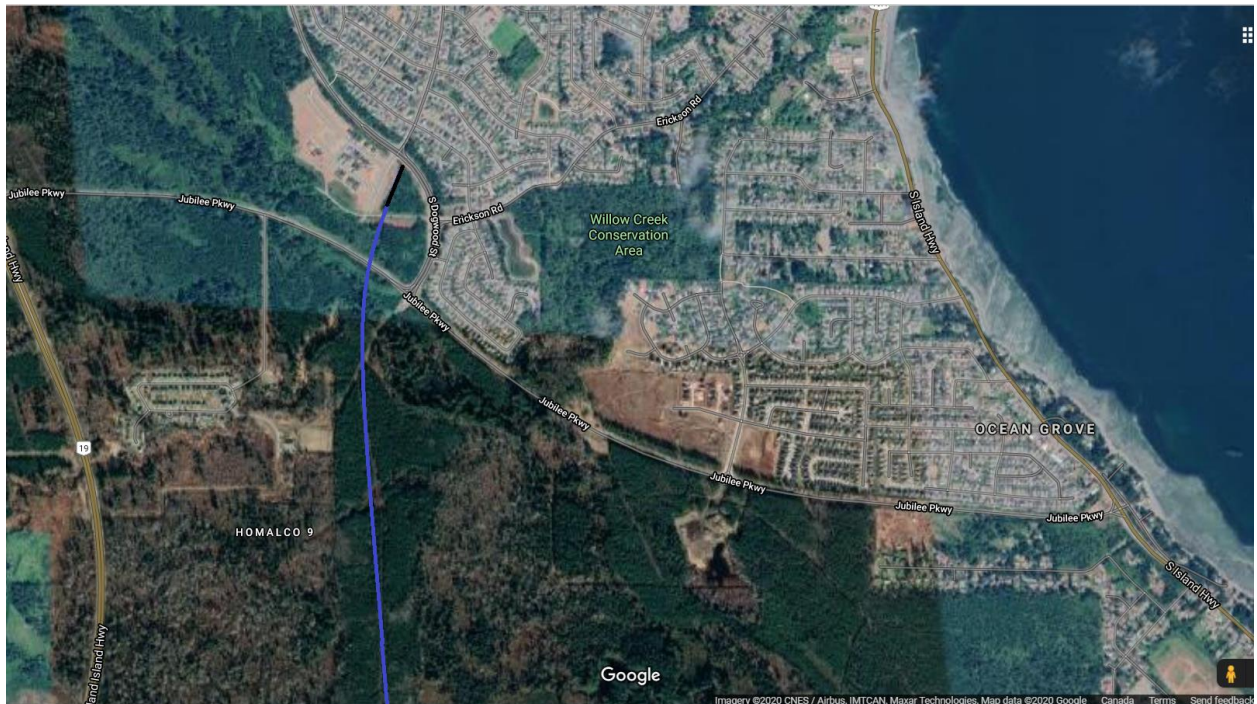


Another option is the Stadler Kiss which is a double decker train and was ordered by CALTRAIN for the run from San Francisco to San Jose.

Phase 4: E&N to Campbell River – 39km (Approximately \$750 million dollars)



Campbell River Station



Disclaimer

The author is not a professional planner or affiliated with any transportation body, consulting group, lobby group, or committee. The document is written to show possible rail transit options. The calculations are as accurate as possible based on information available on the internet.

November 30, 2020

This letter was written on the unceded, unsundered territories of the Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ peoples.

To the members of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the Commission),

The University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) and Camosun College Students' Society (CCSS) have a long-established record of advocating for improved transit at all levels of government. Together, the UVSS and the CCSS represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria and the funding provided by the UVSS and CCSS U-Pass program constitutes a significant portion of public funding for transit in the Greater Victoria region. In 2017, the Commission approved a motion to request that the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure amend the British Columbia Transit Act to add a rotating voting seat on the Commission for the UVSS and the CCSS (see attached motion). This request was denied from the former Minister of Transport and Infrastructure.

As there is a new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, there is an opportunity for obtaining substantive representation for this large stakeholder group. In order to achieve this, both the UVSS and the CCSS hope to have your support in lobbying the province to amend the British Columbia Transit Act to add a voting student seat on the Commission once more. We look forward to discussing this opportunity soon, and working together to ensure appropriate representation on the VRTC.

Sincerely and in solidarity,



Motion to request that the non-voting student seat on the Transit Commission be made into a voting student seat

Whereas the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) and the Camosun College Students' Society (CCSS) together represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria; and,

Whereas UVSS and CCSS members live in every area serviced by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission; and,

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS U-Pass funding represents a major portion of existing funding for transit in Greater Victoria; and

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS have a vested interest in improving transit for all riders in all areas of the region and are already actively engaged in advocating at all levels of governance for transit in Victoria; therefore,

Be it resolved that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission support that the non-voting student seat be made into a voting student seat; and

Be it further resolved that the Chair of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission send a letter to the Minister of Transportation, Claire Trevena, requesting an amendment to the British Columbia Transit Act to add a voting student seat on the Commission.

**Victoria Regional Transit Commission
Minutes of the Meeting
Held at BC Transit
520 Gorge Road East
Tuesday, December 12, 2017
9:00 AM**

PRESENT: Councillor Susan Brice, Chair
Mayor Richard Atwell
Mayor Barbara Desjardins
Mayor Carol Hamilton
Mayor Lisa Helps
Mayor Maja Tait
Anmol Swaich, Student Representative, UVSS
Councillor Geoff Young

REGRETS: Mayor Alice Finall

BC TRANSIT STAFF: Manuel Achadinha, President & Chief Executive Officer
Brian Anderson, Vice President Operations & Chief Operating Officer
Aaron Lamb, Vice President Asset Management
Alan Thomas, Vice President Finance & Chief Financial Officer
Ryan Dennis, Supervisor, Sales and Revenue Development
Dave Guthrie, General Manager Victoria Operations
Megan Hill, Director, Budgeting and Forecasting
James Wadsworth, Planning Manager
Jonathon Dyck, Communications Manager
Cara Weirmier, Executive Assistant (*Recorder*)

OPEN SESSION

1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 9:01AM by Chair Susan Brice.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the agenda as presented

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 19, 2017

Moved by Mayor Hamilton and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the minutes as presented

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None

4. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair is pleased to report that the meeting with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure went very well. Extensions of the bus priority lanes and the Commission's request for an increase in the dedicated gas tax were confirmed as the top priorities.

Looking ahead, there are exciting enhancements and announcements for the region:

- a) An electric bus will be coming to Victoria as part of a pilot project to learn more about the emerging technology;
- b) A full driver door is now fitted into three buses in the region and surveys are live for Transit Operators and public feedback;
- c) Enhanced service is being implemented with the Tsawout First Nation; and
- d) The Santa Bus will be making its rounds this upcoming weekend

5. DELEGATIONS

- a) Camosun College – Shane Busby represented Camosun College with a request for more service
- b) Raegan Elford – requested that the BC Transit fiscal year be changed to August 1 to July 31
- c) Better Transit Alliance – Eric Doherty reported that the Alliance is happy to see that BC Transit is moving forward on extending the bus lanes and infrastructure in the downtown core, but would like to see BC Transit continue to pressure the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to complete the portions on highway land
- d) Bus Riders’ Union – (represented by Larry Wartels) would like to see money from ICBC used to fund transit and infrastructure initiatives

6. 2017/18 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – for APPROVAL

Megan Hill

Passenger revenue is trending \$0.97 million above budget and is forecast to be \$1.45 million above budget at year end. Fuel is trending \$2.1 million below budget year-to-date and is forecast to be \$2.8 million below budget at year end. Operating expenses (excluding fuel) are forecast to be \$1.9 million below budget at year end. The forecasted impact on the Transit Fund is an increase of \$1.9M over budget to \$4.6 million at year end.

The Operating Reserve Fund (which can only be used to offset inflationary impacts of existing service) is forecasted to be at \$13.2M by year end.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Atwell to APPROVE the report as presented

CARRIED

7. 2017/18 DRAFT BUDGET – for INFORMATION

Megan Hill

Every December, BC Transit is required to submit operating and capital projections to the Province and at that time, BC Transit provides the Commission with a draft budget for review and information. The draft budget summarized the anticipated cost and revenues associated with base service levels. A decision on the Commission’s fuel tax request is expected when the provincial budget is tabled in February 2018. At the February 27, 2018 Commission meeting, the final 2018/19 budget will be presented for approval, incorporating any approved expansion hours and the revenue impact of the fuel tax, or change in the funding formula, if applicable.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

8. 2018/19 ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN – for APPROVAL

James Wadsworth

At the June 20, 2017 meeting, the Commission approved the implementation of an additional 10,000 hours of expanded conventional transit service for implementation in September 2018, subject to the Commission receiving additional provincial funding through either an increase to the dedicated fuel tax, or re-alignment of the provincial cost-sharing formula.

The Annual Service Plan forecasts allocation of service hours by time of year and route type. It also identifies service change dates and describes significant changes and expansions to service to be implemented for 2018/19 (April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019). Key transit service improvements include cost-neutral changes to the local bus network in the Westshore to reflect road network improvements, and increased service levels on the Saanich Peninsula local bus network.

Subject to funding, the additional 10,000 service hours would be allocated to a new crosstown route that would provide service between the University of Victoria and the Interurban Camosun College Campus via Hillside Ave and Gorge Rd, to continue to improve service levels on Hillside and Gorge and accommodate growth in Interurban Campus population.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait to APPROVE the report as presented

CARRIED

9. DOUGLAS STREET BUS LANES BUDGET AMENDMENT – for APPROVAL

Aaron Lamb

In November, The City of Victoria (the “City”) issued the revised tender for Phase 2B of the bus lanes. The tender closed on November 30, 2017 with five bids received. The preferred proponent’s total bid price is \$365,000 less than the lowest bid received in the previous tender and \$840,000 below the design engineer’s price estimate. Construction could commence in early 2018, with substantial completion expected by October 31, 2018.

The bus lanes represent a priority investment in the region and the increase can be funded from the Transit Fund. A budget increase of \$2.2 million was requested, bringing the total budget for this phase of work to \$4.30M.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the requested budget increase for the Douglas Street Bus Lanes project

CARRIED

10. 2018 REFUGEE PASS PROGRAM - for APPROVAL

Ryan Dennis

The program to date has been well received and appreciated by the refugee community. The recommendation was made to continue the program for another year.

Motion by Mayor Tait and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the continuation of the Refugee Pass Program for another year

CARRIED

11. EcoPASS PROGRAM – for APPROVAL

Ryan Dennis

BC Transit distributed the proposed Program to the planning departments of all of the municipalities in the Capital Regional District for feedback. The Program is generally accepted as a viable transit-oriented solution that is suitable as part of a larger suite of transportation demand management (TDM) measures. BC Transit will continue to engage with regional planning departments and will promote the Program as a component of comprehensive TDM measures used in parking variance requests.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Hamilton to APPROVE the EcoPASS Program

CARRIED

12. SERVICE UPDATE – for INFORMATION

David Guthrie

A general update on service performance and customer feedback was presented. Of note, staff have been out in the James Bay community talking to residents about the service changes to be implemented in January 2018.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins to RECEIVE the update for information

CARRIED

13. TRANSIT FUTURE PLAN and RAPID TRANSIT BUSINESS CASE – for INFORMATION

James Wadsworth

An summary of business planning activities, including the development of a comprehensive business case was presented. Subsequent to the business case, BC Transit has worked with local municipalities, the Capital Regional District and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to align transit investment in the region, including the phased implementation of bus priority lanes along Douglas/Highway 1.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait to RECEIVE the report for information

CARRIED

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins, that the Commission allocate funding from the Transit Fund to update the business case, cost projections and implementation plan for Bus Rapid Transit Corridor between the Westshore and downtown (as presented on the Rapid Transit Alignment Map, pages 14 and 22 of the presentation in Item #13)

CARRIED

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to identify to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure the importance of preserving the E&N corridor to support overall transportation movements in the region

CARRIED

14. PLANNING UPDATE – for INFORMATION

James Wadsworth

A general update on service planning and community engagement activities was presented.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

15. INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE – for INFORMATION

Aaron Lamb

A general update on infrastructure planning and construction activities in support of transit services was presented. Of note, 34 new bus shelters have been approved for the Victoria region with installations to be completed by March 31, 2018.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Hamilton to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

16. ATAC MINUTES – for INFORMATION

Dave Guthrie

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to RECEIVE the minutes as distributed

CARRIED

17. CORRESPONDENCE

None

18. MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

- a) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to build on the electric bus pilot project and to prepare a business case and implementation plan for the transition of the Victoria Transit Commission fleet to electric by 2030.

It was clarified at the meeting that asset investment decisions are the responsibility of the BC Transit Board of Directors and the results of the electric bus pilot project will inform future investment strategies.

Amended motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission indicate to the BC Transit Board of Directors that the Victoria Region would like to be the pilot community in British Columbia for the transition to electric vehicles

CARRIED

- b) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to work with the University of Victoria Students' Society and the Camosun Students' Society to develop a summer semester Transit Pass to be administered by the student societies.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait with the amendment that all students be included in the program

CARRIED

- c) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to develop a “Park and Ride bus pass subsidy” that will encourage parking providers to create more park and ride spaces in a way that allows industry to at least break even.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins with direction to staff to prepare a report

CARRIED

- d) Mayor Atwell - Request that the non-voting student seat on the Transit Commission be made into a voting student seat

Whereas the University of Victoria Students’ Society (UVSS) and the Camosun College Students’ Society (CCSS) together represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria; and,

Whereas UVSS and CCSS members live in every area serviced by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission; and,

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS U-Pass funding represents a major portion of existing funding for transit in Greater Victoria; and

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS have a vested interest in improving transit for all riders in all areas of the region and are already actively engaged in advocating at all levels of governance for transit in Victoria; therefore,

Be it resolved that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission support that the non-voting student seat be made into a voting student seat; and

Be it further resolved that the Chair of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission send a letter to the Minister of Transportation, Claire Trevena, requesting an amendment to the British Columbia Transit Act to add a voting student seat on the Commission.

Motion by Mayor Atwell and seconded by Mayor Helps to have a letter written on behalf of the Commission to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to request the student representative be made a full voting position on the Victoria Regional Transit Commission

CARRIED

19. COMMISSION AGENDA DEVELOPMENT – for DISCUSSION

Chair Brice

Going forward, any items members would like added to the meeting agenda will need to be submitted two weeks’ prior in order to give staff time to prepare.

20. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Helps seconded by Mayor Tait to ADJOURN

CARRIED

Adjourned 12:52

Next meeting scheduled for February 27, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

Motion to request that the non-voting student seat on the Transit Commission be made into a voting student seat

Whereas the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) and the Camosun College Students' Society (CCSS) together represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria; and,

Whereas UVSS and CCSS members live in every area serviced by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission; and,

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**Victoria Regional Transit Commission
Minutes of the Meeting
Held at BC Transit
520 Gorge Road East
Tuesday, December 12, 2017
9:00 AM**

PRESENT: Councillor Susan Brice, Chair
Mayor Richard Atwell
Mayor Barbara Desjardins
Mayor Carol Hamilton
Mayor Lisa Helps
Mayor Maja Tait
Anmol Swaich, Student Representative, UVSS
Councillor Geoff Young

REGRETS: Mayor Alice Finall

BC TRANSIT STAFF: Manuel Achadinha, President & Chief Executive Officer
Brian Anderson, Vice President Operations & Chief Operating Officer
Aaron Lamb, Vice President Asset Management
Alan Thomas, Vice President Finance & Chief Financial Officer
Ryan Dennis, Supervisor, Sales and Revenue Development
Dave Guthrie, General Manager Victoria Operations
Megan Hill, Director, Budgeting and Forecasting
James Wadsworth, Planning Manager
Jonathon Dyck, Communications Manager
Cara Weirmier, Executive Assistant (*Recorder*)

OPEN SESSION

1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 9:01AM by Chair Susan Brice.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the agenda as presented

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 19, 2017

Moved by Mayor Hamilton and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the minutes as presented

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None

4. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair is pleased to report that the meeting with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure went very well. Extensions of the bus priority lanes and the Commission's request for an increase in the dedicated gas tax were confirmed as the top priorities.

Looking ahead, there are exciting enhancements and announcements for the region:

- a) An electric bus will be coming to Victoria as part of a pilot project to learn more about the emerging technology;
- b) A full driver door is now fitted into three buses in the region and surveys are live for Transit Operators and public feedback;
- c) Enhanced service is being implemented with the Tsawout First Nation; and
- d) The Santa Bus will be making its rounds this upcoming weekend

5. DELEGATIONS

- a) Camosun College – Shane Busby represented Camosun College with a request for more service
- b) Raegan Elford – requested that the BC Transit fiscal year be changed to August 1 to July 31
- c) Better Transit Alliance – Eric Doherty reported that the Alliance is happy to see that BC Transit is moving forward on extending the bus lanes and infrastructure in the downtown core, but would like to see BC Transit continue to pressure the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to complete the portions on highway land
- d) Bus Riders’ Union – (represented by Larry Wartels) would like to see money from ICBC used to fund transit and infrastructure initiatives

6. 2017/18 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – for APPROVAL

Megan Hill

Passenger revenue is trending \$0.97 million above budget and is forecast to be \$1.45 million above budget at year end. Fuel is trending \$2.1 million below budget year-to-date and is forecast to be \$2.8 million below budget at year end. Operating expenses (excluding fuel) are forecast to be \$1.9 million below budget at year end. The forecasted impact on the Transit Fund is an increase of \$1.9M over budget to \$4.6 million at year end.

The Operating Reserve Fund (which can only be used to offset inflationary impacts of existing service) is forecasted to be at \$13.2M by year end.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Atwell to APPROVE the report as presented

CARRIED

7. 2017/18 DRAFT BUDGET – for INFORMATION

Megan Hill

Every December, BC Transit is required to submit operating and capital projections to the Province and at that time, BC Transit provides the Commission with a draft budget for review and information. The draft budget summarized the anticipated cost and revenues associated with base service levels. A decision on the Commission’s fuel tax request is expected when the provincial budget is tabled in February 2018. At the February 27, 2018 Commission meeting, the final 2018/19 budget will be presented for approval, incorporating any approved expansion hours and the revenue impact of the fuel tax, or change in the funding formula, if applicable.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

8. 2018/19 ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN – for APPROVAL

James Wadsworth

At the June 20, 2017 meeting, the Commission approved the implementation of an additional 10,000 hours of expanded conventional transit service for implementation in September 2018, subject to the Commission receiving additional provincial funding through either an increase to the dedicated fuel tax, or re-alignment of the provincial cost-sharing formula.

The Annual Service Plan forecasts allocation of service hours by time of year and route type. It also identifies service change dates and describes significant changes and expansions to service to be implemented for 2018/19 (April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019). Key transit service improvements include cost-neutral changes to the local bus network in the Westshore to reflect road network improvements, and increased service levels on the Saanich Peninsula local bus network.

Subject to funding, the additional 10,000 service hours would be allocated to a new crosstown route that would provide service between the University of Victoria and the Interurban Camosun College Campus via Hillside Ave and Gorge Rd, to continue to improve service levels on Hillside and Gorge and accommodate growth in Interurban Campus population.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait to APPROVE the report as presented

CARRIED

9. DOUGLAS STREET BUS LANES BUDGET AMENDMENT – for APPROVAL

Aaron Lamb

In November, The City of Victoria (the “City”) issued the revised tender for Phase 2B of the bus lanes. The tender closed on November 30, 2017 with five bids received. The preferred proponent’s total bid price is \$365,000 less than the lowest bid received in the previous tender and \$840,000 below the design engineer’s price estimate. Construction could commence in early 2018, with substantial completion expected by October 31, 2018.

The bus lanes represent a priority investment in the region and the increase can be funded from the Transit Fund. A budget increase of \$2.2 million was requested, bringing the total budget for this phase of work to \$4.30M.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the requested budget increase for the Douglas Street Bus Lanes project

CARRIED

10. 2018 REFUGEE PASS PROGRAM - for APPROVAL

Ryan Dennis

The program to date has been well received and appreciated by the refugee community. The recommendation was made to continue the program for another year.

Motion by Mayor Tait and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the continuation of the Refugee Pass Program for another year

CARRIED

11. EcoPASS PROGRAM – for APPROVAL

Ryan Dennis

BC Transit distributed the proposed Program to the planning departments of all of the municipalities in the Capital Regional District for feedback. The Program is generally accepted as a viable transit-oriented solution that is suitable as part of a larger suite of transportation demand management (TDM) measures. BC Transit will continue to engage with regional planning departments and will promote the Program as a component of comprehensive TDM measures used in parking variance requests.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Hamilton to APPROVE the EcoPASS Program

CARRIED

12. SERVICE UPDATE – for INFORMATION

David Guthrie

A general update on service performance and customer feedback was presented. Of note, staff have been out in the James Bay community talking to residents about the service changes to be implemented in January 2018.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins to RECEIVE the update for information

CARRIED

13. TRANSIT FUTURE PLAN and RAPID TRANSIT BUSINESS CASE – for INFORMATION

James Wadsworth

An summary of business planning activities, including the development of a comprehensive business case was presented. Subsequent to the business case, BC Transit has worked with local municipalities, the Capital Regional District and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to align transit investment in the region, including the phased implementation of bus priority lanes along Douglas/Highway 1.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait to RECEIVE the report for information

CARRIED

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins, that the Commission allocate funding from the Transit Fund to update the business case, cost projections and implementation plan for Bus Rapid Transit Corridor between the Westshore and downtown (as presented on the Rapid Transit Alignment Map, pages 14 and 22 of the presentation in Item #13)

CARRIED

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to identify to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure the importance of preserving the E&N corridor to support overall transportation movements in the region

CARRIED

14. PLANNING UPDATE – for INFORMATION

James Wadsworth

A general update on service planning and community engagement activities was presented.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

15. INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE – for INFORMATION

Aaron Lamb

A general update on infrastructure planning and construction activities in support of transit services was presented. Of note, 34 new bus shelters have been approved for the Victoria region with installations to be completed by March 31, 2018.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Hamilton to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

16. ATAC MINUTES – for INFORMATION

Dave Guthrie

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to RECEIVE the minutes as distributed

CARRIED

17. CORRESPONDENCE

None

18. MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

- a) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to build on the electric bus pilot project and to prepare a business case and implementation plan for the transition of the Victoria Transit Commission fleet to electric by 2030.

It was clarified at the meeting that asset investment decisions are the responsibility of the BC Transit Board of Directors and the results of the electric bus pilot project will inform future investment strategies.

Amended motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission indicate to the BC Transit Board of Directors that the Victoria Region would like to be the pilot community in British Columbia for the transition to electric vehicles

CARRIED

- b) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to work with the University of Victoria Students' Society and the Camosun Students' Society to develop a summer semester Transit Pass to be administered by the student societies.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait with the amendment that all students be included in the program

CARRIED

- c) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to develop a “Park and Ride bus pass subsidy” that will encourage parking providers to create more park and ride spaces in a way that allows industry to at least break even.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins with direction to staff to prepare a report

CARRIED

- d) Mayor Atwell - Request that the non-voting student seat on the Transit Commission be made into a voting student seat

Whereas the University of Victoria Students’ Society (UVSS) and the Camosun College Students’ Society (CCSS) together represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria; and,

Whereas UVSS and CCSS members live in every area serviced by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission; and,

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS U-Pass funding represents a major portion of existing funding for transit in Greater Victoria; and

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS have a vested interest in improving transit for all riders in all areas of the region and are already actively engaged in advocating at all levels of governance for transit in Victoria; therefore,

Be it resolved that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission support that the non-voting student seat be made into a voting student seat; and

Be it further resolved that the Chair of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission send a letter to the Minister of Transportation, Claire Trevena, requesting an amendment to the British Columbia Transit Act to add a voting student seat on the Commission.

Motion by Mayor Atwell and seconded by Mayor Helps to have a letter written on behalf of the Commission to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to request the student representative be made a full voting position on the Victoria Regional Transit Commission

CARRIED

19. COMMISSION AGENDA DEVELOPMENT – for DISCUSSION

Chair Brice

Going forward, any items members would like added to the meeting agenda will need to be submitted two weeks’ prior in order to give staff time to prepare.

20. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Helps seconded by Mayor Tait to ADJOURN

CARRIED

Adjourned 12:52

Next meeting scheduled for February 27, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.



Victoria Regional Transit Commission Financial and Performance Report

Period Ending December 31, 2020

Financial Presentation

This Financial Summary is presented on the following basis:

- Effective March 31, 2020, upon instruction from the Ministry, the operating reserve for the Victoria Regional Transit Commission is to be fully drawn down by March 31, 2020 and;
- Effective April 1, 2020 Provincial Operating Contributions are based on actual operating expenses at traditional cost sharing ratios for Conventional and Custom.



Financial Summary

<i>(figures in thousands)</i>	Dec 2020 Year to Date				Revised 2020/21			
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable		Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable	
Revenues								
Passenger & Advert. Revenue	\$18,695	\$16,981	(\$1,714)	(9.2%)	\$24,738	\$22,470	(\$2,268)	(9.2%)
Safe Restart Funding	21,323	21,323	-	0.0%	21,323	21,323	-	0.0%
Provincial Operating Contribution	32,460	29,762	(2,698)	(8.3%)	43,164	40,506	(2,658)	(6.2%)
Fuel Tax Revenue	13,679	12,351	(1,328)	(9.7%)	18,360	16,850	(1,510)	(8.2%)
Local Contribution	14,552	12,790	(1,762)	(12.1%)	29,923	28,752	(1,171)	(3.9%)
Total Revenue	\$100,709	\$93,207	(\$7,502)	(7.4%)	\$137,508	\$129,901	(\$7,607)	(5.5%)
Expenses								
Operations	\$59,872	\$54,656	\$5,216	8.7%	\$79,951	\$74,042	\$5,909	7.4%
Maintenance	22,668	21,644	1,024	4.5%	30,118	29,643	475	1.6%
Administration	10,706	10,313	393	3.7%	14,530	14,246	284	2.0%
<i>Total Operating Expenses</i>	93,246	86,613	6,633	7.1%	124,599	117,931	6,668	5.4%
Lease Fees	7,463	6,594	869	11.6%	12,909	11,970	939	7.3%
Total Expenses	\$100,709	\$93,207	\$7,502	7.4%	\$137,508	\$129,901	\$7,607	5.5%

Revenue and Passenger Trips

(figures in thousands, except ratios)

	Dec 2020 Year to Date				Revised 2020/21			
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable		Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable	
Passenger	\$18,185	\$16,473	(\$1,712)	(9.4%)	\$24,058	\$21,790	(\$2,268)	(9.4%)
Advertising	510	508	(2)	(0.4%)	680	680	-	0.0%
Total Passenger & Advertising	\$18,695	\$16,981	(\$1,714)	(9.2%)	\$24,738	\$22,470	(\$2,268)	(9.2%)
<i>Passenger Trips (Total)</i>	10,489	8,461	(2,028)	(19.3%)	13,729	11,397	(2,332)	(17.0%)
<i>Passenger Trips (excluding Taxi)</i>	10,468	8,445	(2,023)	(19.3%)	13,701	11,376	(2,325)	(17.0%)
<i>Average Fare</i>	\$1.74	\$1.95	\$0.21	12.1%	\$1.76	\$1.92	\$0.16	9.1%

Year to Date

- Passenger revenue is \$1.7M below budget due to lower ridership and no collection of fares in April and May offset by receipt of 100% of BC Bus Pass revenue.
- Passenger trips are 2.0M below budget or an average of 59% below prior year's YTD actuals.

Forecast

- Passenger revenue is forecast to be \$2.3M below budget at year end. All passenger fare types (cash, tickets, passes, UPASS) are impacted by lower ridership except for BC Bus Pass which is forecasted to be slightly above budget.
- Passenger trips are forecasted to be 2.3M below budget with ridership for the remainder of the year projected at 50% of prior year actuals.

Provincial Operating Contribution, Fuel Tax and Local Contribution

(figures in thousands, except ratios)

	Dec 2020 Year to Date			Revised 2020/21		
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable
Safe Restart Funding	\$21,323	\$21,323	\$0 0.0%	\$21,323	\$21,323	\$0 0.0%
Provincial Operating Contribution	32,460	29,762	(2,698) (8.3%)	43,164	40,506	(2,658) (6.2%)
Fuel Tax Revenue	13,679	12,351	(1,328) (9.7%)	18,360	16,850	(1,510) (8.2%)
Local Contribution	14,552	12,790	(1,762) (12.1%)	29,923	28,752	(1,171) (3.9%)

Safe Restart Funding is recognized as of November 2020 with half of the total allocation of \$42.6M to be used by March 31.

Provincial Operating Contribution is \$2.7M below budget year to date and is forecast to be below budget by \$2.7M by year end due to lower operating costs. Effective April 1, 2020, Provincial operating contribution is based on actual operating expenditures.

Fuel Tax Revenue generated from a 5.5 cent per litre fuel tax is \$1.3M below budget year to date. The full year forecast reflects a 17% drop in fuel sales over the prior year.

Local Contribution is \$1.8M below budget year to date due to lower operating expenses and lease fees. By year-end, local contribution will be below budget due lower operating costs and lease fees offset by lower passenger and fuel tax revenues.

Operations

<i>(figures in thousands, except ratios)</i>	Dec 2020 Year to Date				Revised 2020/21			
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable		Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable	
Operations (excl. Fuel)	\$52,245	\$49,698	\$2,547	4.9%	\$69,794	\$67,228	\$2,566	3.7%
Fuel	7,627	4,958	2,669	35.0%	10,157	6,814	3,343	32.9%
Total Operations	\$59,872	\$54,656	\$5,216	8.7%	\$79,951	\$74,042	\$5,909	7.4%
<i>Service Hours</i>	741	681	(60)	(8.1%)	991	927	(64)	(6.5%)
<i>Operations Cost/Service Hour</i>	\$80.80	\$80.26	\$0.54	0.7%	\$80.68	\$79.87	\$0.80	1.0%

Year to Date

- Operations expenses excluding fuel are \$2.5M below budget due to fewer service hours delivered, lower labour and taxi costs offset by unbudgeted Covid-19 related expenses and higher insurance costs.
- Fuel is \$2.7M below budget with the average litre price of \$0.88 compared to a budget of \$1.18 and lower service hours.
- Service hours are 60,000 (52,000 Conventional and 8,000 Custom) below budget.

Forecast

- Operations expenses excluding fuel are forecasted to be \$2.6M below budget due to fewer service hours delivered, lower labour and taxi costs partially offset by unbudgeted Covid-19 related expenses and insurance costs.
- Fuel is forecasted to be \$3.3M below budget based on an average annual diesel price of \$0.90/litre, compared to a budget of \$1.18/litre.
- Service hours are forecast to be 64,000 hours below budget reduced service hours due to Covid-19 (54,000 Conventional and 10,000 Custom).

Maintenance

(figures in thousands, except ratios)

	Dec 2020 Year to Date				Revised 2020/21			
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable		Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable	
Fleet Maintenance	\$18,883	\$18,022	\$861	4.6%	\$24,924	\$24,415	\$509	2.0%
Facilities Maintenance	3,785	3,622	163	4.3%	5,194	5,228	(34)	(0.7%)
Total Maintenance	\$22,668	\$21,644	\$1,024	4.5%	\$30,118	\$29,643	\$475	1.6%
<i>Service Hours</i>	741	681	(60)	(8.1%)	991	927	(64)	(6.5%)
<i>Fleet Maintenance Cost/Service Hour</i>	\$25.48	\$26.46	(\$0.98)	(3.8%)	\$25.15	\$26.34	(\$1.19)	(4.7%)

Year to Date

- Fleet maintenance is \$0.9M under budget due to vacancies and lower labour costs offset by Covid-19 related costs.
- Facilities maintenance is \$0.2M below budget due to the capitalization of CNG fueling equipment.

Forecast

- Fleet maintenance is forecasted to be \$0.5M above budget due lower labour costs offset by one-time to inventory write-off scheduled for year-end, lower than budgeted warranty recoveries and Covid-19 related costs.
- Facility maintenance is forecasted to be on budget with higher expenses for Victoria Facilities Master Plan and Covid-19 costs offset by savings by capitalization of the CNG equipment lease.

Administration

<i>(figures in thousands)</i>	Dec 2020 Year to Date			Revised 2020/21		
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable
Administration	\$10,706	\$10,313	\$393 3.7%	\$14,530	\$14,246	\$284 2.0%

Year to Date

- Administration expenses are below budget by \$0.4M due to vacancies, lower marketing and information system costs.

Forecast

- Administration expenses are forecast to be below budget \$0.3M.

Lease Fees

(figures in thousands)

	Dec 2020 Year to Date			Revised 2020/21		
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable	Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable
Lease Fees	\$7,463	\$6,594	\$869 11.6%	\$12,909	\$11,970	\$939 7.3%

Lease Fees are \$0.9M below budget year to date due to in-service timing for equipment, information system and building projects.

The year-end debt service forecast is \$0.9M under budget due to in-service timing of capital projects.

Transit Fund

VICTORIA REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION <i>(figures in thousands)</i>	2020/21 Original Budget	2020/21 Revised Budget	2020/21 Forecast
LOCAL CONTRIBUTION			
Total Local Contribution Required	\$39,619	\$29,923	\$28,752
Funds generated from Transit Levy	\$34,528	\$34,528	\$34,528
Balance from / (to) Transit Fund	\$5,091	(\$4,605)	(\$5,776)
TRANSIT FUND			
Final Balance, March 31, 2020	\$17,051	\$17,080	\$17,080
Victoria Regional Transit System			
Budgeted Contribution	(5,091)	4,605	4,605
Lower lease fees			939
Lower operating costs (Commission share)			4,010
Lower fuel tax revenue			(1,510)
Lower passenger revenue			(2,268)
Cowichan Valley Commuter			
Budgeted Contribution	(96)	(62)	(62)
Other			
Safe Restart funding contribution		42,646	42,646
Safe Restart funding usage (2020/21)		(21,323)	(21,323)
Interest & Other	100	100	100
Balance, March 31, 2021	\$11,964	\$43,046	\$44,217

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

Performance and Benchmarking

Conventional Transit Performance

<i>(figures in thousands, except ratios)</i>	Dec 2020 Year to Date				Revised 2020/21			
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable		Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable	
Passenger Trips ('000)	10,376	8,362	(2,014)	(19.4%)	13,580	11,255	(2,325)	(17.1%)
Service Hours ('000)	646	594	(52)	(8.0%)	864	810	(54)	(6.3%)
Total Operating Cost ('000)	\$84,473	\$79,246	\$5,227	6.2%	\$112,884	\$107,957	\$4,927	4.4%
Passenger Trips per Service Hour	16.1	14.1	(2.0)	(12.4%)	15.7	13.9	(1.8)	(11.6%)
Operating Cost per Service Hour	\$130.76	\$133.41	(\$2.65)	(2.0%)	\$130.65	\$133.28	(\$2.63)	(2.0%)
Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	\$8.14	\$9.48	(\$1.34)	(16.5%)	\$8.31	\$9.59	(\$1.28)	(15.4%)
Operating Cost Recovery	22.1%	21.4%	(0.7%)	(3.2%)	21.9%	20.8%	(1.1%)	(5.0%)
Service Hours per Capita	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.5	2.4	(0.1)	(4.0%)
Passenger Trips per Capita	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	40.1	33.2	(6.9)	(17.2%)

Conventional Service Area Population of 339,026 used in per capita calculations

Custom Transit Performance

(figures in thousands, except ratios)

	Dec 2020 Year to Date				Revised 2020/21			
	Budget	Actual	Variance (Un) Favourable		Budget	Forecast	Variance (Un) Favourable	
Passenger Trips ('000) (Total)	113	99	(14)	(12.4%)	149	142	(7)	(4.7%)
Passenger Trips ('000) (excluding Taxi)	92	83	(9)	(9.8%)	121	121	-	0.0%
Service Hours ('000)	95	87	(8)	(8.4%)	127	117	(10)	(7.9%)
Total Operating Cost ('000)	\$8,773	\$7,367	\$1,406	16.0%	\$11,715	\$9,974	\$1,741	14.9%
Passenger Trips per Service Hour (excl. Taxi)	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0%	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0%
Operating Cost per Service Hour (excl. Taxi)	\$85.81	\$85.70	\$0.11	0.1%	\$85.72	\$85.68	\$0.04	0.0%
Operating Cost per Passenger Trip	\$77.64	\$74.41	\$3.23	4.2%	\$78.62	\$70.24	\$8.38	10.7%
Operating Cost Recovery (excl. Taxi)	0.60%	0.60%	0.00%	0.4%	0.59%	0.64%	0.05%	8.6%
Service Hours per Capita	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.34	0.31	(0.0)	(8.8%)
Passenger Trips per Capita	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0%

Custom Service Area Population of 379,088 used in per capita calculations

SUBJECT: 2021/22 ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN, BASE BUDGET AND TAX REGULATION

PURPOSE

The 2021/22 Annual Service Plan, Budget and Tax Regulation is submitted to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **APPROVAL**.

BACKGROUND

BC Transit develops an Annual Service Plan for the Victoria Regional Transit System every year to provide the Victoria Regional Transit Commission with a proposal for service improvements over the following Fiscal period. Due to additional complexities associated with COVID-19, the 2021/22 Annual Service Plan includes two distinct plans including the following:

Base Plan - Return to Targeted Essential Service Levels:

- a) In response to COVID-19, 2020/21 service levels were reduced in alignment with changes to ridership demand¹. In addition, passenger fares and fuel tax revenue also fell below budget. In October 2020, the Safe Restart Agreement was signed in order to support transit services and assist the Commission in meeting their share of costs to maintain Essential Transit Service levels during the COVID-19 recovery period. The service plans for phasing service levels back to the targeted Essential Transit Service levels are outlined in Table 1.

Expansion Plan:

- a) In the December 1st, 2020 Commission Meeting, the Victoria Regional Transit Commission approved BC Transit to submit an expansion funding request to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure for the 2021/22 Fiscal for the deferred expansion previously approved for the 2020/21 Fiscal period of 20,000 service hours and 8 buses. If approved by the Province, Table 3 outlines a revised version of the 2020/21 Annual Service Plan that the Commission approved in February of 2020, which proposes how those expansion hours would be used within the transit system for the 2021/22 Fiscal period onwards. These service improvements would be in addition to the service changes identified in the ‘Base - Return to Targeted Essential Service Levels’ plan.

This document also presents the 2021/22 Base Budget for approval, along with multiple options for taxation levies to support the Commission share of expenses.

¹ See Report 12a – Ridership Performance Report for more details.

BASE PLAN - RETURN TO TARGETED ESSENTIAL SERVICE LEVELS

Table 1 identifies the proposed service changes under the return to targeted essential service levels scenario.

Table 1: 2021/22 SERVICE PLAN – Base Plan – Return to Targeted Essential Service Levels

Service Period	Proposed Service Change
April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule changes to improve weekend service reliability • Service level changes to better match changing demand conditions, including improvements to Routes 2, 6, 8, 27/28, 30/31, 50, 52, and 75 • Change to Route 1, moving service from Humboldt Street to Fairfield Road • Minor service improvements from endorsed Local Area Transit Plans, including added midday and early evening service on Route 46 and later evening service span on Routes 3 and 10
June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove school overload and special trips. • Realign Route 53: Extend to terminate at the Victoria General Hospital, with year-round service to Thetis and select trips continuing to downtown Victoria • Regular seasonal summer service increases to Butchart Gardens and BC Ferries postponed for 2021.
September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinstate school overload and special trips. • Investment to address opportunities arising from a comprehensive weekday service reliability review being conducted by the Scheduling team this Spring. • Minor weekday investment in higher-ridership routes to address emerging capacity issues.
Winter Holiday 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard seasonal changes matching service with demand
January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service improvements to address demand from potential return of Post-Secondary institutions to in-person classes • Further schedule changes based on opportunities arising from a comprehensive weekday service reliability review being conducted by the Scheduling team in Spring 2021 • Investment in the Frequent and Rapid Transit Networks based on ridership performance

This scenario proposes to gradually increase service back to the service levels required to meet the Safe Restart Agreement for the 2022/23 Fiscal period. Due to initial COVID-19 service level reductions, actual service delivered in this proposal will fall slightly below originally budgeted service levels for the 2021/22 Fiscal period as identified in Table 3, and elaborated upon in Figure 1.

The gradual approach identified in this scenario is recommended to align with anticipated demand changes over this Fiscal period. Although there is still significant uncertainty, short-term ridership is not anticipated to grow significantly until the return of Post-Secondary institutions to in-person classes; according to current discussions with UVIC and Camosun, this is unlikely to happen until the Winter 2022 service period. Consequently, additional resources must be withheld for that service period.

EXPANSION PLAN

Subject to Provincial operating funding approval, this service plan reflects the 20,000 annual service hours and 8 bus expansion request for 2021/22, which was reaffirmed by the VRTC at the December 1, 2020 meeting. Table 2 provides details on how those expansion resources would be incorporated into the 2021/22 Fiscal period.

Table 2: 2021/22 SERVICE PLAN – Expansion

Fiscal	Service Period	Annual Hours	2021/22 Fiscal Hours	Peak Expansion Buses	Proposed Service Expansion
2021/22	January 2022	1,500	380	1	Expand service to new areas.
		5,000	1,260	1	Improvements to service reliability.
		7,250	1,820	2	Improvements to the Frequent and Rapid Transit Networks
2022/23	April 2022 ²	6,250	0	2	Develop the Local Transit Network - Realign Westshore and Sooke routes to better serve areas of growing demand
Total		20,000	3,460	6[†]	

† The expansion of 8 new high capacity vehicles requires the allocation of 2 vehicles for maintenance spare ratio.

² This item falls into the 2022/23 Fiscal. This expansion initiative needs to be bumped to the 2022/23 Fiscal to allow the completion of the Westshore LAMP Refresh process, which will identify the associated network restructure for this expansion priority.

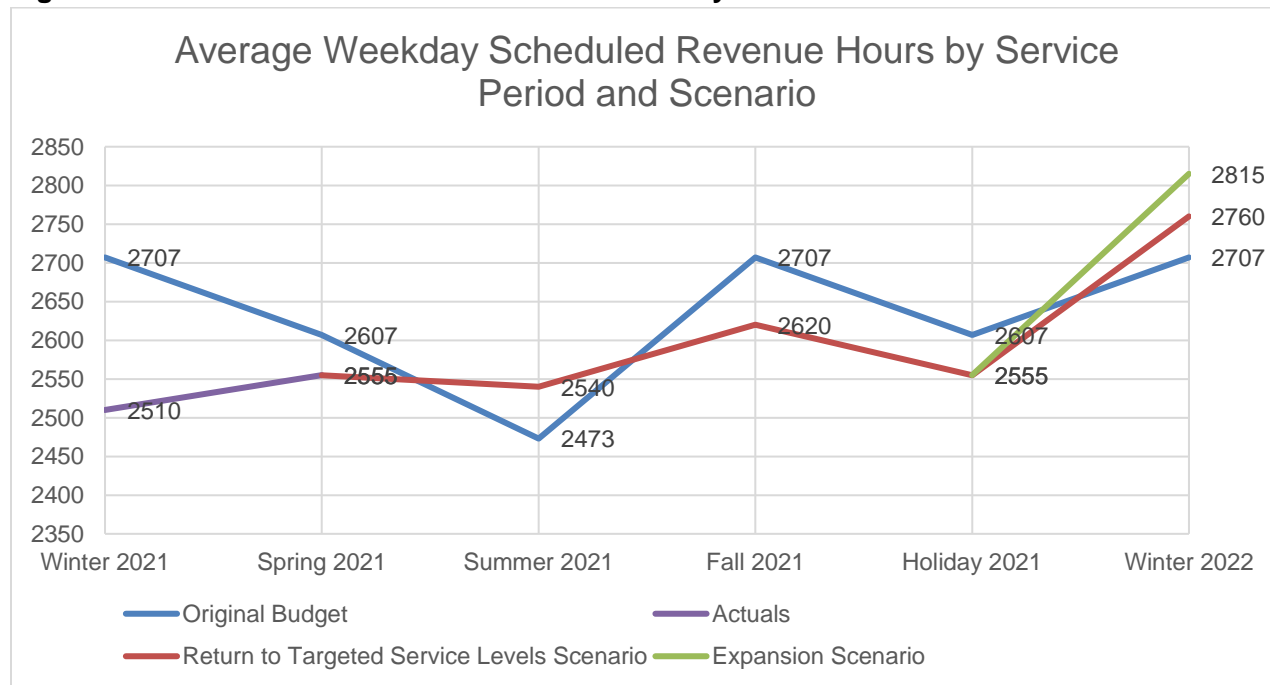
SEASONAL SERVICE LEVEL VARIATION

The Victoria Regional Transit System (VRTS) provides varying levels of service at different periods throughout the year to match transit investment to passenger demand. Figure 1 summarizes the original 2021/22 budgeted scheduled revenue hours for the Conventional Transit System, and compares that to the 2021/22 Annual Service Plan scenarios outlined in this report.

Changes in planned service levels for 2021/22 have arisen from a number of factors, including changes in maximum bus capacity, the funding uncertainty before the Safe Restart Agreement was signed, and changes to seasonal ridership patterns and the reduction in ridership generated by Post Secondary students through COVID-19. Overall, this has led to lower service level requirements in our traditionally busy fall and winter service periods while also rationalizing a service level increase in the traditionally lower-demand summer service period.

Based on the most recent conversations with Post Secondary institutions in the Greater Victoria Region, it is anticipated that there may be some return to in-person classes as of January 2022 (Winter 2022), which has prompted a larger proposed increase to service hours for that service period in both scenarios.

Figure 1: Allocation of Conventional Service Hours by Service Period and Scenario for 2021/22



2021/22 BASE BUDGET

The 2021/22 Base Budget for the Victoria Regional Transit System includes the following assumptions:

Revenue

- Passenger revenues reflect a medium scenario in line with the Safe Restart agreement where passenger trips and passenger revenues are 55% of the 2019/20 levels.
- Fuel tax revenue is estimated at 95% of 2019/20 actuals.
- \$21.3M of Safe Restart Funding used to offset lower passenger revenue and increase costs due to Covid-19.

Operating Expenses

- Labour and benefit increases for union and non-unionized staff in alignment with provincial mandate.
- Average fuel price of \$1.00 per litre.
- Lower operating costs (\$.5M) associated with reduced travel, conferences, and training.
- Additional \$1.9M operating expenses for Covid-19 related costs.
- Additional \$1.5M operating expenses in 2021/22 for the Rapid Transit Project (\$3.8M over 2 years) and Island Highway Priority Study (\$1.2M).

Lease fees

- Commission share of use of asset fees associated with planned replacement of vehicles and major capital repairs.
- Ongoing facility maintenance.

The 2021/22 Base Budget is summarized in Table 3:

Table 3: 2021/22 Base Budget

<i>(figures in thousands)</i>	Revised Budget 2020/21	Q3 Forecast 2020/21	Base Budget 2021/22
Revenues			
Passenger & Adv Revenue	\$24,738	\$22,470	\$25,866
Safe Restart Funding	21,323	21,323	21,323
Provincial Oper Contribution	43,164	40,506	45,202
Fuel Tax Revenue	18,360	16,850	18,360
Local Contribution	29,923	28,752	36,474
Total	\$137,508	\$129,901	\$147,224
Expenses			
Operating Costs	\$124,599	\$117,931	\$130,765
Lease Fees (local share)	\$12,909	\$11,970	16,459
Total	\$137,508	\$129,901	\$147,224
Conventional	864	810	854
Custom	127	117	127
Service Hours	991	927	981
Conventional	13,580	11,255	14,396
Custom	149	142	205
Passengers	13,729	11,397	14,601

Table 5 identifies options for the average per household transit levy and associated use of the Transit Fund to fund the local Commission share of expenses for the 2021/22 Base Budget. Estimates for transit levies are calculated using the January 2021 valuations from BC Assessment. The tax levy increases for the prior two years are identified in Table 4.

Table 4: Average Per Household Transit Levy (2018/19 to 2020/21)

	Average levy per household	\$ increase	% increase
2018/19	\$134.50		
2019/20	\$138.50	\$4.00	3.0%
2020/21	\$145.50	\$7.00	5.1%

Table 5: Options for Average Per Household Transit Levy
VICTORIA REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM
TRANSIT FUND

			Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21
<i>(figures in thousands)</i>	Budget	Forecast	Base Budget	Base Budget	Base Budget	Base Budget
FUNDS GENERATED FROM PROPERTY TAXATION						
Estimated Transit Levy per Average Household	\$145.50	\$145.50	\$145.50	\$148.50	\$153.00	\$156.00
(% increase)			0.0%	2.1%	5.2%	7.2%
Current funds generated from Transit Levy	\$34,528	\$34,528	\$32,704	\$33,354	\$34,337	\$35,042
Balance from/(to) Transit Fund	(\$4,605)	(\$5,776)	\$3,770	\$3,120	\$2,137	\$1,432
Total Local Contribution	\$29,923	\$28,752	\$36,474	\$36,474	\$36,474	\$36,474
TRANSIT FUND						
Opening Balance	\$17,080	\$17,080	\$44,217	\$44,217	\$44,217	\$44,217
Contribution to expenses	4,605	5,776	(3,770)	(3,120)	(2,137)	(1,432)
Cowichan Valley Commuter						
Contribution to expenses	(96)	(62)	(90)	(90)	(90)	(90)
Other						
Safe Restart Funding and Interest	21,423	21,423	(21,223)	(21,223)	(21,223)	(21,223)
Ending Balance	\$43,012	\$44,217	\$19,135	\$19,785	\$20,768	\$21,473
Restricted Balance (2.5% of Operating Costs)	\$3,037	\$2,990	\$3,269	\$3,269	\$3,269	\$3,269
Unrestricted Balance	\$39,975	\$41,227	\$15,866	\$16,516	\$17,499	\$18,204

2021/22 EXPANSION BUDGET

Table 6 represents the three year budget for proposed expansion. At the time of this report, provincial expansion funding has not been confirmed. Therefore it is recommended that, if approved, the local commission share of expansion in 2021/22 be funded 100% from the Transit Fund.

Table 6: 2021/22 Expansion Budget

(figures in 000s)

	2021/22 YEAR 1	2022/23 YEAR 2	2023/24 YEAR 3
Revenues			
Passenger & Adv Revenue	51	349	536
Provincial Oper Contribution	121	697	697
Local Contribution	257	1,538	1,350
Total	429	2,584	2,584
Expenses			
Operating Costs	381	2,200	2,200
Lease Fees (local share)	48	384	384
Total	429	2,584	2,584
Service Hours	3	20	20
Passengers	30	205	315

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

- **APPROVE** the 2021/22 Service Plan
- **APPROVE** the 2021/22 Base Budget
- **APPROVE** either Option 1, 2, 3, or 4 for a tax regulation.

Respectfully,

Megan Hill
Director of Budgeting and Forecasting

Levi Megenbir
Senior Transit Planner Work Lead

Attachment 1: Victoria Regional Transit System Routes
Attachment 2: 2021/22 Operating Budgets (Conventional and Custom)

Attachment 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/Willows	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
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	Frequent Transit	Core
12	University Heights/UVic	Local Transit - Coverage	Core
13	Ten Mile Point/UVic	Local Transit - Coverage	Core
14	Vic General/UVic	Frequent Transit	Core
15	Esquimalt/UVic	Rapid Transit	Core
16	UVic/Uptown	Rapid 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

#	Route Name	Service Type	Area
28	Gordon Head/Majestic/Downtown	Frequent Transit	Core
30	Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown	Frequent Transit	Core
31	Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown	Frequent Transit	Core
32	Cordova Bay/Royal Oak Exchange	Local Transit - Coverage	Core
35	Ridge	Local Transit - Coverage	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
48	Happy Valley/Downtown	Targeted Routes	Westshore
50	Langford/Downtown	Rapid Transit	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

#	Route Name	Service Type	Area
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	Rapid Transit	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
76	Swartz Bay/UVic	Targeted Routes	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

Attachment 2: 2021/22 Operating Budgets

VICTORIA CONVENTIONAL TRANSIT	2021/22 BUDGET
EXPENDITURES	
Operations Wages	\$55,827,903
Tires	398,562
Major Operating Project	2,975,800
Fuel	7,324,861
Uniforms	199,120
Insurance	3,022,009
Vehicle Maintenance	21,242,610
Information Systems	4,260,476
Facility Maintenance	2,969,507
Safety/Security	507,102
Training	1,440,234
Marketing	703,500
Property Leases	624,445
Property Taxes	436,883
COVID expenses	1,567,033
Shared Services	15,286,373
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	\$118,786,418
Lease Fees	15,743,248
TOTAL COSTS	\$134,529,666
Local Share of Costs	\$96,874,371
Provincial Share of Costs	\$37,655,295

VICTORIA CUSTOM TRANSIT	2021/22 BUDGET
EXPENDITURES	
Fixed Costs (Contracted Services)	\$2,530,549
Hourly Costs - Wages & Benefits	5,485,190
Fuel	643,918
Tires	118,843
Fleet Maintenance	938,427
Custom Registration Program	60,000
COVID expenses	100,000
Taxi Programs	455,400
Insurance	218,584
Information Systems	312,484
Rental - Property & Land	14,420
Property Taxes	48,410
Property Maintenance	73,673
Training	102,966
Marketing	12,000
Shared Services	863,252
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	\$11,978,115
Lease Fees	716,239
TOTAL COSTS	\$12,694,354
Local Share of Costs	\$5,148,142
Provincial Share of Costs	\$7,546,212

SUBJECT: SPECIAL FARE DAYS

PURPOSE

This report, providing a summary of special fare days and recommended special fare days is provided to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **APPROVAL**.

BACKGROUND

Historically special fare days have resulted in a need for approvals from the Commission on an on demand basis outside of the regular meeting cycle. This report has been developed to reduce the occurrence of these ad-hoc approvals and move towards a standardized calendar of special fare days. This will ensure staff can better plan for these special events.

DISCUSSION

To reduce the need of these ad-hoc approvals the following table has been developed for advance approval of special fare days. It has been organized into two categories (1) Current Special Fare Days in the Victoria Regional Transit System (“VRTS”) (2) New Special Fare Day Considerations. Each of these come with the benefit of positive outlooks on transit’s image, and added goodwill in that customer segment at the cost of lost fare revenue for the targeted audience/day. The following list seeks to identify pros and cons outside of these base understandings.

	Day**	Details	Pros	Cons
Current*	Remembrance Day (NOV)	Complimentary transit is extended to current and retired armed forces and police officers in uniform.	Recognizes service members and reduces vehicle congestion at ceremonies.	
	New Year’s Eve (DEC)	Complimentary transit is extended to all customers after 6pm until end of service.	Encourages the public to make safe choices.	Capacity may be an issue.
	Election Days (Varies)	Complimentary transit is extended to all customers on municipal, provincial and federal election days.	Encourages participation in the democratic process.	

	Day**	Details	Pros	Cons
New Considerations	Go By Bike Week & Day (FALL/FEB)***	Complimentary transit is extended to customers using the bicycle racks or carrying a bicycle helmet.	Encourages active multi-modal transportation.	May encourage otherwise active transportation commuters to ride transit.
	Earth Day (APR)	Complimentary transit is extended to all customers.	Encourages local constituents to try transit and builds awareness about climate change.	
	Clean Air Day (JUN)	Complimentary transit is extended to all customers.	Encourages local constituents to try transit and builds awareness about climate change.	

*Previously complimentary transit on election days have resulted in special approvals as elections are called. Remembrance Day and New Year's Eve have previously been approved on an ongoing basis.

**Specific dates may change year over year. Month/season are provided for informational purposes. Staff will work to implement complimentary transit on the specific dates each year.

***Previously known as Bike to Work Week

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission:

1. **APPROVE** the continuation of following days for complimentary transit on both handyDART and Conventional service on an ongoing basis without additional approvals:
 - a. Remembrance Day
 - b. New Year's Eve
 - c. Election Days
2. **APPROVE** the addition of the following days for complimentary transit on both handyDART and Conventional service on an ongoing basis without additional approvals:
 - a. Earth Day
 - b. Clean Air Day
 - c. Go By Bike Week & Day

Respectfully,
Christopher Gregory
Senior Revenue Advisor, Sales and Revenue

SUBJECT: PLANNING UPDATE

PURPOSE

This update on transit planning activities in the Victoria Region is provided to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **INFORMATION**.

SERVICE CHANGES

Winter 2021 Seasonal Service Change (Effective January 4, 2021)

The winter seasonal service change provided minor modifications to service levels and running times to reflect the ongoing changes in travel demand and travel times due to COVID-19. Significant analysis was carried out to appropriately target service levels to minimize overcrowding, maintain frequency and coverage, and ensure service reliability within the transit system.

Spring 2021 Seasonal Service Change (Effective April 5, 2021)

The spring seasonal service change will provide modifications to service levels and running times to reflect the ongoing change in travel demand and travel times due to COVID-19. New service will be added to Route 46 during midday and early evening, later evening service span on Routes 3 and 10. There will be a routing change on Route 1 to move service from Humboldt Street onto Fairfield Road. Route 75 will have a schedule redesign to offer better connections to Route 72 at Saanichton Exchange, and will have service level improvements on Saturday to meet increased passenger demand at Butchart Gardens.

PLANNING INITIATIVES

Work undertaken or proposed since the last Commission meeting includes:

Local Area Transit Plans

- The Broadmead-Cordova Bay and Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plans have both been completed, and will be presented at this Commission Meeting for approval.
- The Peninsula Local Area Transit Plan has begun, with stakeholder engagement slated for April and public engagement in May.
- The West Shore Local Area Transit Plan Refresh will begin in spring 2021.

Related Municipal Work and Transit Initiatives

BC Transit participated in a number of local initiatives on behalf of the Commission over the last few months, including the following:

- **RapidBus Implementation Strategy** – BC Transit is providing a project update to the Commission at this February 23rd Commission Meeting. The final strategy and public release will be completed soon after, and BC Transit will proceed to detailed implementation planning for Phase 1 of RapidBus (Westshore to Downtown Victoria) in

Spring 2021. In addition, additional analysis for Phase 2 corridors (McKenzie and Peninsula) will be initiated as required in collaboration with local governments.

- **Bus Stop Improvements** – BC Transit staff work with operators and customers to track concerns with bus stops on an ongoing basis. Since the last Commission meeting, BC Transit has worked with the City of Victoria, the District of Saanich, the Township of Esquimalt, the Town of Sidney, the District of Sooke, the City of Langford, the Town of View Royal and the City of Colwood to coordinate improvements to stop configuration and layout to improve accessibility and customer experience. The bus stop shelter program process for 2021/2022 is underway and BC Transit has received requests for shelters from Central Saanich, North Saanich, the District of Saanich, and the District of Sooke.
- **Development Referral Process** – BC Transit receives and responds to development referrals from local governments considering rezoning and large-scale development proposals. BC Transit provides comment on opportunities for transit supportive development, improvements to transit supportive infrastructure such as bus stops and sidewalks, and provides comments on the feasibility of future transit service to the proposed development.

Planning staff have received approximately 20 development referrals since the last Commission Meeting in December and January and provided comment to five local governments.

SERVICE MONITORING

COVID Service Ridership Report

The attached Service Ridership Report provides information on ridership performance. It summarizes ridership over the Fall 2020 service period from September 8 to December 6, 2020 and provides some evaluation of ridership trends through the period impacted by the COVID pandemic to the end of 2020.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission receive this report for **INFORMATION**.

Respectfully,

Levi Megenbir
Senior Transit Planner – Work Lead

Attachment: 13a Fall 2020 Ridership Performance Report

**Attachment: Victoria Regional Transit System
Fall 2020 Ridership Performance Report**

1.0 Introduction

This report compares the system-level ridership performance for the Victoria Regional Transit for 2020 in relation to 2019. Further, this report provides more detailed ridership information at the sub-regional and route-type levels for the fall 2020 service period, occurring between September 8 and December 6, 2020¹.

1.1 Data

Ridership information is collected through Automated Passenger Counter (APC) units, which are in place on over 60 per cent of the buses assigned to the Victoria Region's conventional fleet. This system counts the number of persons boarding and disembarking from a vehicle. If a person boards multiple buses in a single journey or in a specific day, this is reflected as multiple boardings.

1.2 External Factors

In addition to service changes, there are a number of external factors that may affect transit ridership. Some of these include fare increases, changing fuel prices, changing community economics, land use changes and major interruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.0 Performance Trends

This report presents ridership performance information at the system, sub-regional, and route-type level.

2.1 System Level Performance Trends

For the purposes of this report, overall system ridership has been presented weekly from January to the end of December for both 2019 and 2020. As of March 12, when non-essential travel was discouraged, the transit system experienced a significant decline in ridership of about 75 per cent. Since that time, as the Province's Restart Plan has come into effect, BC Transit has moved to enact measures that support safe and reliable travel options – from the introduction of vinyl barriers to the phasing of physical distancing standards. Through the implementation of these measures and the reopening of the economy, BC Transit has realized a gradual and steady return of ridership with ridership down 49 per cent in comparison to 2019 by the end of December 2020. December 2020 did see the typical decrease in ridership that occurs due to the holidays.

¹ The previous fall 2020 Ridership Performance Report (provided to the Commission on December 1st) assessed performance for the fall 2020 period using the available ridership data for that period up to October 31, 2020. This revised report provides data from the entire fall 2020 service period up to December 6, 2020.

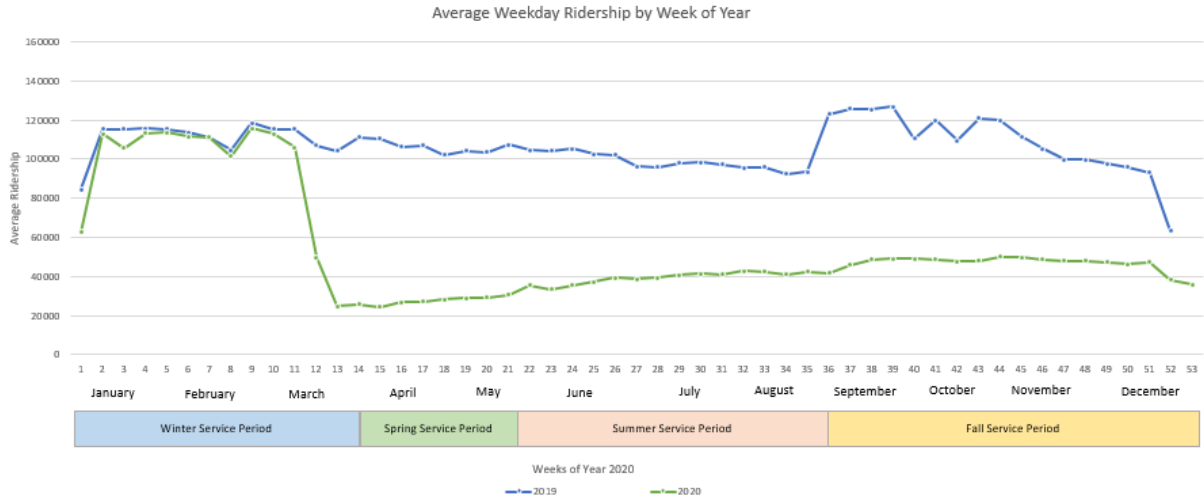


Figure 1: Average Weekday Ridership

2.2 Sub-Regional Performance Trend

Ridership was reviewed sub-regionally, comparing ridership impacts between the Core, Peninsula, and the West Shore. Looking at routes at a sub-regional basis, we see that the impact of the pandemic is fairly consistent across the regions; with ridership decreasing by 58 per cent in the Peninsula, 63 per cent in the Core, and 64 per cent in the West Shore

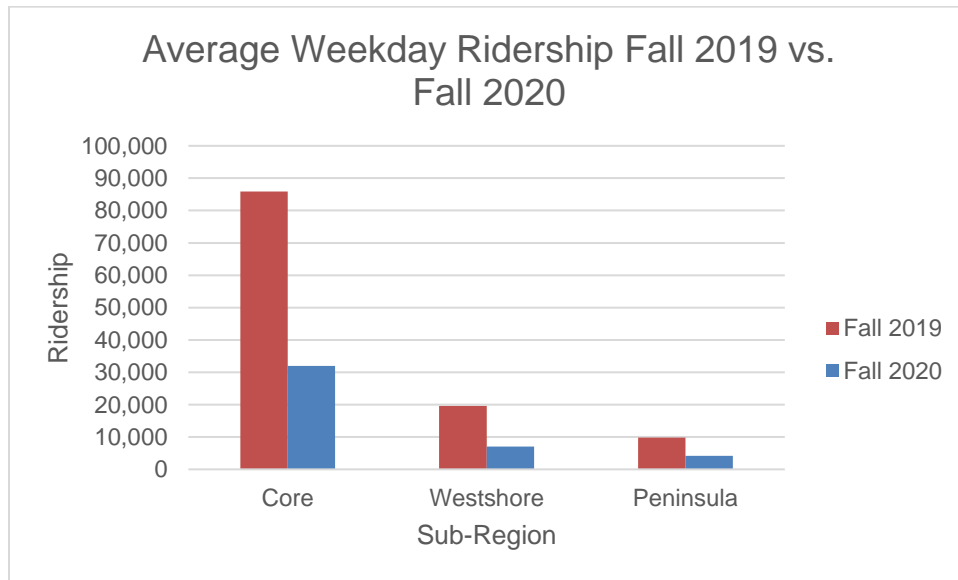


Figure 2: Average Weekday Ridership by sub-region

2.3 Route Level Performance Trends

For the purposes of this report, ridership performance has been aggregated and presented in five route-type categories, including Rapid Transit, Frequent Transit, Local Transit (High Demand), Local Transit (Coverage) and Targeted Transit. In accordance with the 2011 Transit Future Plan and the Victoria Regional Transit System 2013/14 Service Review.

Looking at route by route type, we similarly see that impact has been quite consistent across all route types with the exception of targeted routes which provide school trips, peak commuter trips, and unique routes.

When comparing fall 2019 with fall 2020, ridership has fallen due to the impacts of COVID-19, falling between 58 and 64 per cent on the rapid, frequent, and local routes and falling 68 per cent for targeted routes.

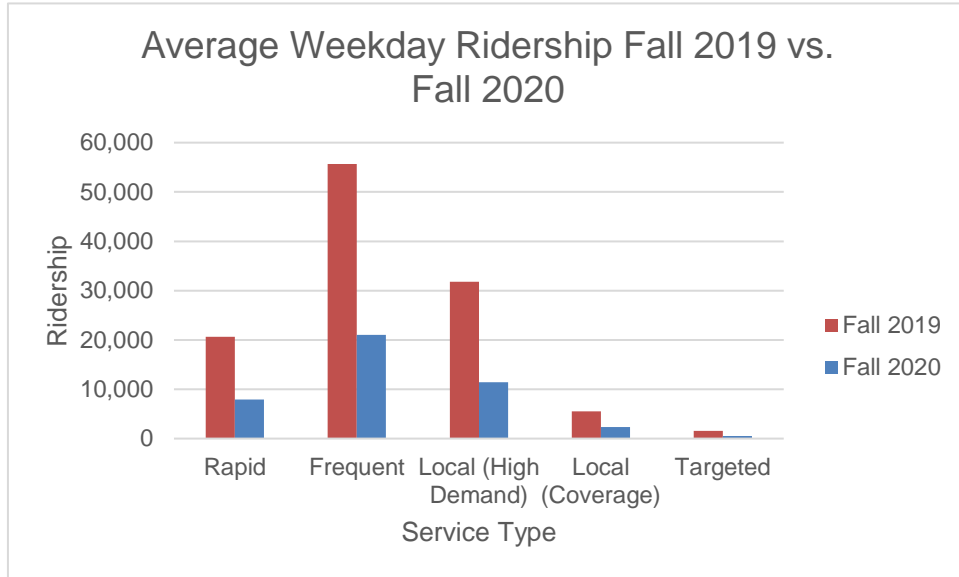


Figure 3: Average Weekday Fall Ridership by Route Type

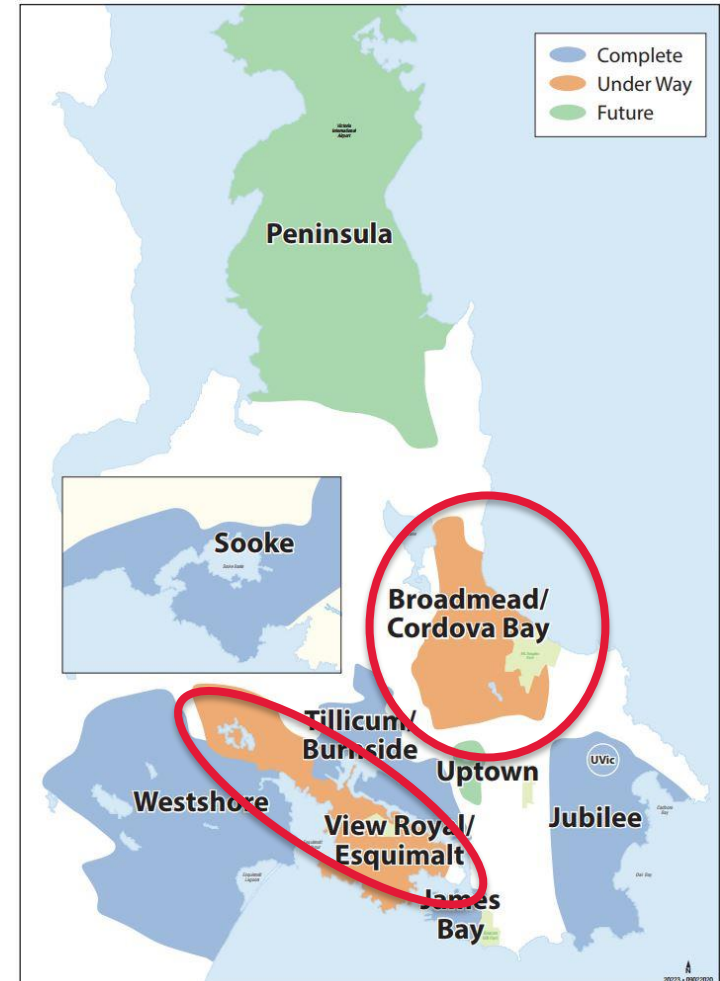


Victoria Regional Transit Commission Local Area Transit Plans Update

FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Local Area Transit Plans

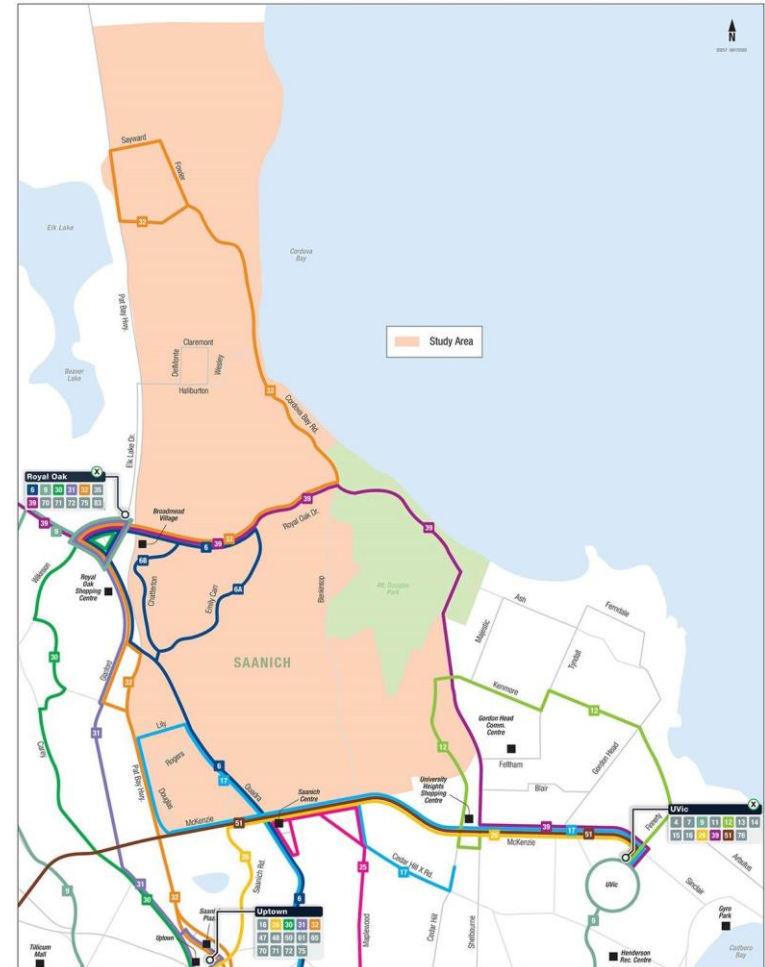
- Supports the implementation of the Transit Future Plan
- Defines service and infrastructure strategies and priorities
 - Expansion & Optimization
 - Identification of infrastructure needs
- Broadmead-Cordova Bay and Esquimalt-View Royal plans now complete
- Peninsula plan to start early 2021



Broadmead-Cordova Bay

Introduction and Background

- 2016 population: 26,180
- Continued population growth and land use changes provide an opportunity for transit investment and ridership growth
- Area currently served by Frequent, Local and Targeted routes, with higher/lower levels of service in certain areas.
- No transit service in the Blenkinsop Valley



Broadmead-Cordova Bay

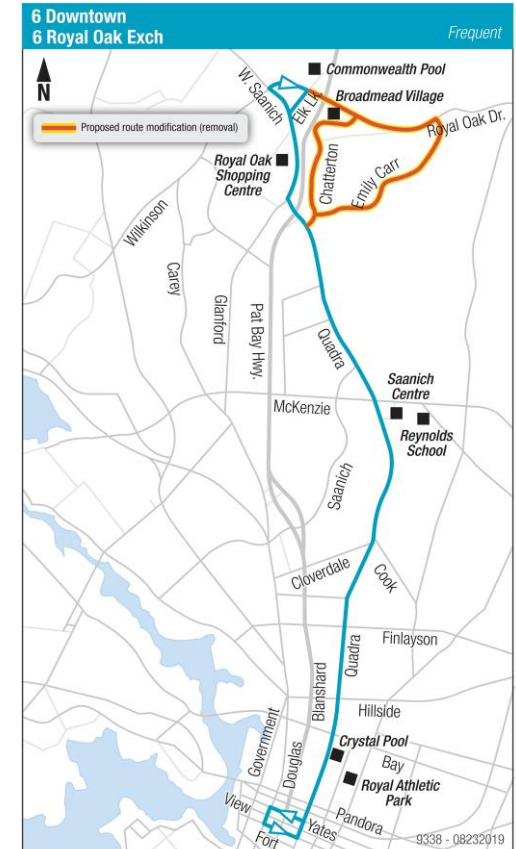
Public Engagement

- Phase 1: Four open houses, two workshops, online survey
 - Review of previously identified priorities for transit in the area
- Phase 2: Route design consultation, additional online survey, open houses
- Over 1,000 respondents across both phases
- Key themes:
 - Some concern about proposed modifications for Route 6
 - Strong support for introduction of service on Blenkinsop
 - Desire to see more frequent service and increased span on Routes 33, 34 and 35

Broadmead-Cordova Bay

Service Proposals

- **Route 6:** Optimize routing by removing 6A and 6B variants, increase service frequency
- **Route 25:** Extend service to Blenkinsop Road, Chatterton Way and Emily Carr Drive
- **Route 35:** Extend route to cover Greenlea Drive and Wilkinson Road, add weekend service
- **Route 34:** Implement new route, bring new service to Sea Ridge, Lochside and Santa Clara



Broadmead-Cordova Bay

Infrastructure Proposals

- **Blenkinsop bus stops:** Collaborate with the District of Saanich to determine appropriate locations for future bus stops on Blenkinsop
- **Royal Oak Exchange review:** Review capacity and functional requirements at Royal Oak Exchange, implement facility improvements as required
- **Route 34/35 operational constraints:** Collaborate with the District of Saanich to address operational constraints on roads currently served by transit, or identified for future transit service

Esquimalt-View Royal

Introduction and Background

- 2016 population: 30,055
- Plan area includes the Township of Esquimalt, Town of View Royal, Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations
- Experiencing growth and intensification, especially along corridors in Esquimalt
- Nine existing transit routes, ridership accounting for ~30 per cent of system ridership



Esquimalt-View Royal

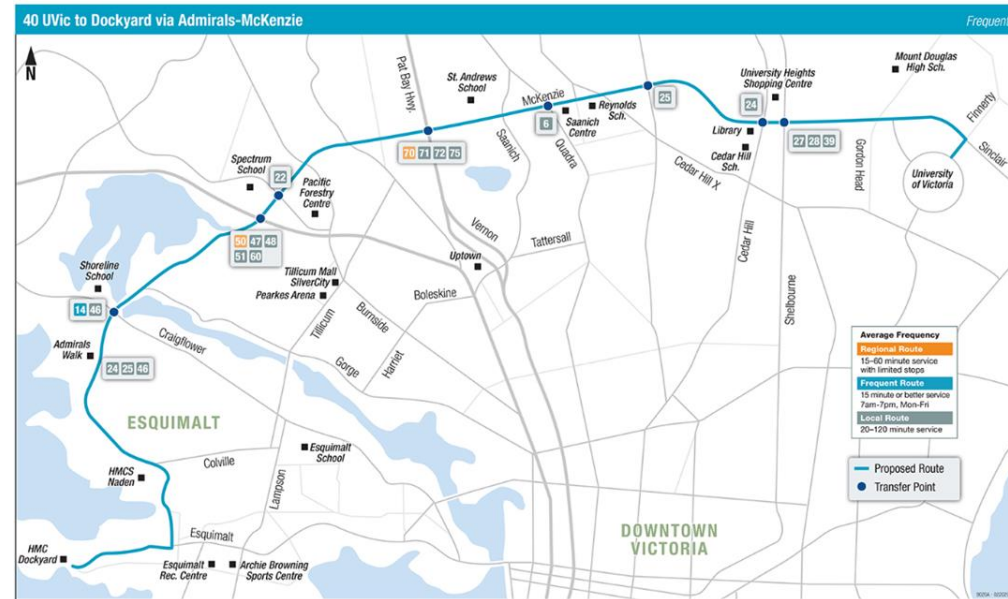
Public Engagement

- Phase 1: Three open houses, stakeholder workshop, online survey
 - Open-ended discussions about improvements to the transit network
- Phase 2: Feedback on service proposals, additional online survey, open houses
- Over 2,000 respondents across both phases
- Key themes:
 - Desire for direct service between destinations
 - More frequent service requested
 - Support for crosstown route development
 - High level of support for proposed changes overall

Esquimalt-View Royal Service Proposals

Short Term Priorities:

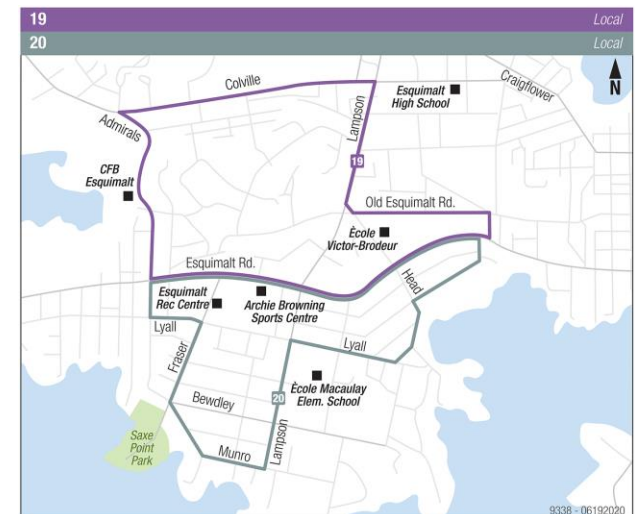
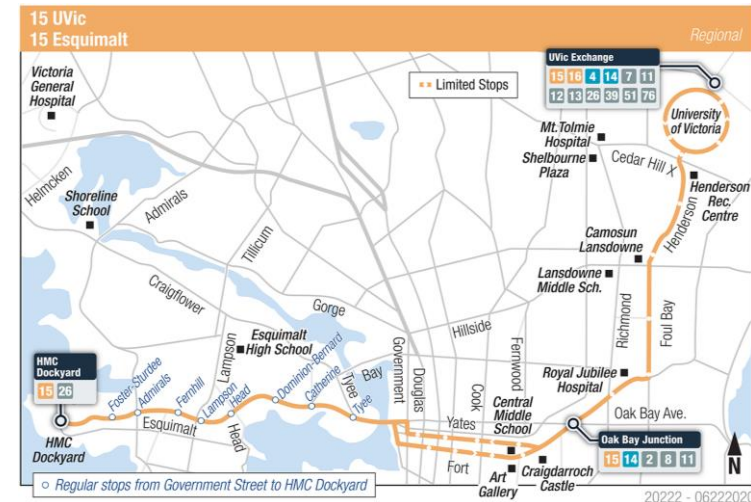
- **Route 40:** New route providing direct access to UVic from Esquimalt, additional service on McKenzie. Phased approach
- **Route 24:** Realign existing route, extend to Tillicum Mall
- **Route 53:** Realign existing route to improve access to Victoria General Hospital. Add commuter service downtown and year-round service to Thetis Lake



Esquimalt-View Royal Service Proposals

Medium/Long Term Priorities:

- **Route 10:** Extend service span to 10 PM on weekdays, one hour later on weekends
- **Route 46:** Introduce midday and weekend service
- **Route 15:** Implement RapidBus service, beginning with transitioning to a limited stop service (pending further planning and engagement)
- **Route 19/20:** Introduce new coverage routes for north and south Esquimalt, connecting to the Township's core



Esquimalt-View Royal

Infrastructure Proposals

- **Additional layover capacity:** Develop additional recovery capacity at Dockyard and within Esquimalt core
- **Six Mile park and ride:** Collaborate with the Town of View Royal and the Province to develop a park and ride near Island Highway/Six Mile
- **Island Highway transit priority:** Work with partners to support transit priority upgrades on Island Highway
- **RapidBus stations and transit priority measures:** Develop and implement RapidBus service on Route 15

Next steps

- Evaluate the priorities in these plans along with all other regional priorities in the upcoming Transit Expansion Prioritization process (TEPs)
- The outcome of this TEPs process will assist in forming future Three Year Service Expansion Requests and the Annual Service Plans.
- Further refine proposals as necessary, carrying out additional outreach as required

SUBJECT: LOCAL AREA TRANSIT PLAN UPDATE

PURPOSE

This update on the Local Area Transit Plans is provided to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (“the Commission”) for **APPROVAL**.

SUMMARY

The Victoria Region Transit Future Plan (2011) established a 25-year vision of an integrated regional transit system to meet the transportation needs of the region. The subsequent 2013/14 Service Review builds upon the Transit Future Plan by identifying specific transit priority measures, infrastructure needs and service initiatives to effectively implement the Transit Future Plan. The Service Review identifies seven local areas where the transit network deserved closer analysis: the Westshore, Tillicum-Burnside, James Bay, Sooke, Jubilee, Esquimalt and Peninsula.

To date, seven Local Area Transit Plans have been completed: the Westshore (2015), James Bay (2017), Sooke (2020), Jubilee (2020), Burnside-Tillicum (2020), Broadmead-Cordova Bay (2020) and Esquimalt-View Royal (2020). The final Local Area Transit Plan for the Peninsula has been identified to start in spring 2020.

Each Local Area Transit Plan builds upon the vision and goals of the Transit Future Plan and Service Review. They establish transit service (route design and service levels) and infrastructure priorities for their respective areas in the short-term (1-3 years) and medium-term (4-7 years). This report includes the Local Area Transit Plans for Broadmead-Cordova Bay and Esquimalt-View Royal.

Broadmead-Cordova Bay Local Area Transit Plan

The Broadmead-Cordova Bay area is made up of four neighbourhoods, Cordova Bay, North Quadra, Blenkinsop and Royal Oak, and had a total population of 26,180. Continued population growth and land use changes provide an opportunity for transit investment and transit ridership growth. The Broadmead-Cordova Bay area is currently served by both Frequent and Local transit routes, with individual neighbourhoods receiving higher or lower levels of service than others. An exception to this is the Blenkinsop Valley, which is primarily a rural residential and agricultural area that has no service currently serving the area. However, there are some routes which serve its northern and southern borders. The Broadmead-Cordova Bay Local Area Transit Plan considers route revisions and new routes to better serve the growing area.

Public consultation carried out for the Broadmead-Cordova Bay Local Area Transit Plan included two online surveys, targeted stakeholder workshops and a number of open houses. Over 1,000 people participated in the consultation, which was divided into two phases:

- Phase one gathered information on broad concepts of service improvements, seeking feedback on previously identified priorities for transit. Feedback received during phase one primarily related to a desire for increased service frequency at peak travel times,

more direct service between destinations, and increased service frequency on weekends. Respondents also indicated a desire to see local transit service introduced on Blenkinsop Road and along the Cordova Bay ridge, as well as more frequent service connecting Cordova Bay to downtown Victoria.

- Phase two focused on gathering feedback on specific service proposals, including the introduction of new routes and modification of existing ones. Support for the proposals was generally positive, particularly for proposed modifications to the Route 35 Ridge and Route 25 Maplewood/Admiral's Walk. Some concerns were voiced around proposed changes to Route 6 Downtown/Royal Oak Exchange; these concerns have largely been addressed through other service change proposals in the plan.

The plan contains service proposals to extend Routes 25 and 35 and the establishment of one new local coverage route to serve the Sea Ridge/Santa Clara area. The plan also recommends removing the 6A and 6B variants of Route 6 while maintaining service on Chatterton Way and Emily Carr Drive through modifications to the Route 25. Removing these variants will reduce user confusion and improve clarity, while simultaneously providing faster, more frequent service for users travelling between Royal Oak Exchange and downtown Victoria. Frequency increases are also proposed on Routes 35 and 6, and weekend service is proposed for Route 35.

Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan

The Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan contains eight recommendations for changes to routes that serve the Esquimalt-View Royal area and identifies four infrastructure improvements within the plan area. The plan area encompasses the entirety of the Township of Esquimalt, the Songhees Nation, the Esquimalt Nation and the Town of View Royal. This area is experiencing significant growth and redevelopment, particularly along key corridors in Esquimalt where intensification is occurring. There are nine existing routes that serve the Esquimalt-View Royal area, which account for an average of approximately 30,000 trips each weekday. This represents nearly 30 per cent of all ridership in the Victoria system.

Over 2,000 people participated in consultation for this LATP, which was divided into two phases:

- Phase one focused on discussions about improvements to the transit network. Through open houses and an online survey, respondents expressed a desire for direct service between key destinations, more frequent service, and more options for travelling across the system without having to go downtown.
- Phase two sought feedback on specific service proposals developed in response to priorities identified in the first phase of engagement. There was a high level of support for the proposed service changes, with the strongest support being shown for suggested improvements on Routes 40, 46 and 53. The proposed rerouting of Route 15 Esquimalt/UVic received less support, but the majority of respondents still expressed a favourable opinion of the modifications.

The plan recommends realignment of Routes 24 Admirals Walk/Cedar Hill and 53 Colwood Exchange/Langford via Atkins. The plan further proposes the introduction of three new routes, service span increases on Route 10 James Bay/Royal Jubilee via Vic West, and the introduction of weekend and midday service on Route 46 Dockyard/Westhills. Finally, this LATP recommends the implementation of RapidBus service along the existing Route 15 Esquimalt/UVic, which would involve providing limited stop express service to downtown and the University. As with other proposals in this plan, additional planning and engagement is required to finalize the service levels and determine broader associated network changes as a result of this service proposal.

Next Steps

- Integration of the short term service change recommendations into the Victoria Three Year Service and Financial Strategy
 - Service change details may be further refined through additional detailed planning and scheduling work
 - As some service changes constitute a considerable restructuring of transit within the Broadmead-Cordova Bay and Esquimalt-View Royal areas, additional outreach may be required prior to implementation
- Integration of key infrastructure priorities into Capital Planning processes

Status of Ongoing and Future Local Area Transit Plans

The final Local Area Transit Plan for the Peninsula has been identified to start in spring 2020.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission **APPROVE** the Broadmead-Cordova Bay and Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plans.

Respectfully,

Levi Megenbir
Senior Transit Planner, Work Lead

Attachments: Broadmead-Cordova Bay Local Area Transit Plan
Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan

TRANSIT *future*



VICTORIA REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan



Victoria Regional
Transit Commission



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 the Township of Esquimalt and the Town of View Royal.

BC Transit would also like to thank key stakeholders who participated in the Stakeholders Advisory Group by attending meetings, and providing written or verbal comment.

Finally, thank you to the nearly 2,000 members of the public, riders and non-riders alike, who contributed to the plan's development by attending open houses, taking surveys, or submitting written or verbal comment.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan builds upon the 25-year vision for development of the Victoria Regional Transit System identified in the 2011 Transit Future Plan. This Plan provides specific transit network modifications, service level changes and infrastructure improvements to support the development of the transit network within the Township of Esquimalt, the Songhees Nation, the Esquimalt Nation, and the Town of View Royal.

The tables below detail the proposed service (Table 1) and infrastructure changes (Table 2) that are discussed in greater detail in this Plan.

Route	Improvement	Implementation Timeline	Estimated Additional Hours (annual)	Vehicle Requirements
40 UVic to Dockyard via Admirals-McKenzie	Provide direct access to UVic from Esquimalt and provide additional service on McKenzie, as well as more direct access along Admirals Road. Implementation would be phased, beginning with weekday-only service.	Short-term	14,700	7
24 Admirals Walk/ Cedar Hill	Realign the existing Route 24, extending it to Tillicum Mall via Cowper Street and Obed Avenue.	Short-term	10,000	4
53 Colwood Exchange/ Langford via Atkins	Improved access for residents of Atkins Road and area, as well for Langford residents accessing Victoria General Hospital.	Short-term	3,550	3
10 James Bay/Royal Jubilee via Vic West	Extend the Route 10 service span to 10:00 p.m. on weekdays and one hour later on weekends.	Medium-term	2,200	1
46 Dockyard/ Westhills	Introduce midday and weekend service to the existing peak-only service.	Medium-term	6,600	3
40 UVic to Dockyard via Admirals-McKenzie	Once stable ridership is established, invest additional hours and develop the route into a Frequent Transit route.	Medium-term	30,000	12
15 Esquimalt/ UVic RapidBus	Implement RapidBus service along this route, providing limited stop express service to downtown and UVic.	Long-term	TBD	TBD

19/20	Esquimalt	Introduce two new routes to provide coverage between north and south Esquimalt.	Long-term	TBD	TBD
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Table 1: Proposed service changes for the Esquimalt-View Royal area.

Proposal	Improvement	Implementation Timeline
Additional layover capacity	Develop additional operational recovery capacity at Dockyard and within the Esquimalt core, which will be required as the transit system grows.	Short-term
Six Mile Park and Ride	Work with the Town of View Royal and the Province of British Columbia to advance the objective of developing a Park and Ride in the vicinity of the Island Highway and Six Mile Road.	Medium-term
Island Highway transit priority	Work with the Town of View Royal and the Province of British Columbia to support transit priority upgrades to this stretch of the road network.	Medium-term
RapidBus stations and transit priority measures	Develop a corridor plan exploring potential design concepts and evaluating costs associated with implementing the RapidBus corridor along Esquimalt Road. Following this, work to convert the entirety of Route 15 to a RapidBus service.	Long-term

Table 2: Proposed infrastructure changes for the Esquimalt-View Royal area.

Service improvements will be integrated into the three year Transit Improvement Process (TIPs), which is updated on an annual basis. Infrastructure priorities will inform Capital plans for the Victoria Regional Transit System. Prior to implementation of service changes, BC Transit planning staff will work with Town of View Royal and Township of Esquimalt staff to ensure service improvements appropriately reflect local needs. Additional targeted engagement may be required.

While the Esquimalt-View Royal LATP was in development, the global COVID-19 pandemic began to take hold in Canada, causing significant and rapid changes to the transit landscape.

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, it is possible that the timelines laid out in this document will need to be revisited in the future, prior to implementation. The transit landscape is continuing to evolve rapidly due to COVID-19, and as community needs shift so will transit service.

1. INTRODUCTION

The [Victoria Region Transit Future Plan \(May 2011\)](#) established a 25-year vision of an integrated regional transit system to meet the transportation needs of the region. The [2013/14 Service Review](#) builds upon the Transit Future Plan by identifying specific transit priority measures, infrastructure needs and service improvement priorities to effectively implement the Transit Future Plan.

This Local Area Transit Plan builds upon the Transit Future Plan and the 2013/14 Service Review by establishing specific route improvements within the Township of Esquimalt, the Town of View Royal as well as the to the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations. Local area transit plans provide specific infrastructure and route proposals that can inform the development of the three-year service expansion plan and the annual service plan for the entire Victoria Regional Transit System.

Each local area transit plan furthers community goals by supporting the strategic objectives of the respective municipal Official Community Plans (OCPs). Development of local area transit plans includes consultation with the public and local municipal partners.

The Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan details improvements for transit service and infrastructure over the next three to ten years. Additional public consultation may be required prior to implementing medium or long-term initiatives identified in this plan.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on ridership and government budgets. In light of this, transit network expansions are likely to be delayed for some time. This plan, nonetheless, provides a number of proposals that have received positive feedback from public consultation and can support the development of a future transit network.

1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan are as follows:

- To support the implementation of the Transit Future Plan and associated ridership targets as well as the goals of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS);
- To examine future transit requirements based on community plans, demographic trends, proposed land development and road network changes, as well as public priorities expressed through consultation;
- To review existing transit facilities and identify future transit facility needs such as transit terminals and stops;
- To identify future transit service expansions to inform three year service and financial strategies;
- To identify measures to maximize transit system legibility and ridership through improved customer information;

These objectives will be realized by:

- Realignment of routes to ensure service levels are appropriate for the streets they serve;
- Identifying improvements to service levels and span of service; and
- Identifying infrastructure needs required to support transit.



2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 Plan Area

The Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area discussed in this plan encapsulates the Township of Esquimalt, the Town of View Royal, as well as the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations. A map of the plan area, showing the current transit network, is shown below.



Figure 1: Geographic area and existing transit network of Esquimalt-View Royal.

2.2 Community Context

The Capital Regional District's (CRD) 2019-2038 Population, Dwelling Units and Employment Projection Report forecasts growth of nearly 20 per cent over the next 20 years or a sustained 1 per cent annual growth rate – from 412,465 in 2019 to 493,975 in 2038. Sub-regional projections suggest that the core municipalities – Saanich, Victoria, Esquimalt, Oak Bay and View Royal – will grow slightly more than the regional average – by about 1.4 per cent annually.

Key areas of development in the Esquimalt and View Royal areas include:

Township of Esquimalt	<p>The Township of Esquimalt was incorporated in 1912 and is one of the core municipalities in the Victoria region. Esquimalt is bounded by the City of Victoria to the east, by the District of Saanich to the north, by the Songhees and Esquimalt reserves to the northwest and by more than 10 kilometres of marine shoreline to the south.</p> <p>Esquimalt has an established housing stock, a commercial core currently undergoing some redevelopment, and a high degree of future redevelopment potential. Key corridors throughout the municipality are experiencing redevelopment and intensification of aging housing stock.</p> <p>Esquimalt is home to Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt, which is the community's largest employer and makes up almost 30 percent of Esquimalt's land base. Additionally, Esquimalt's Graving Dock is the largest non-military site for shipbuilding and repair on the West Coast. Esquimalt's demographic composition skews younger than the region with a higher proportion of young children and young adults (20-40 years).</p> <p>The Township of Esquimalt Official Community Plan provides the following description of the community:</p> <p><i>The Township of Esquimalt is a closely-knit caring community whose citizens represent a wide socioeconomic and demographic spectrum. It is also a community that embraces newcomers to Canada and strives to be more diverse and inclusive by providing a range of multicultural services and programs. A key goal of the OCP is to put into place a land use policy framework that will promote a vibrant community for all of its residents.</i></p> <p>2016 Population: 17,655</p> <p>Area: 7.08 km²</p> <p>Population density per square kilometre: 2,497</p>
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View Royal

The Town of View Royal was incorporated only in 1988 and has experienced significant growth and development while maintaining much of its small town character. View Royal functions as a gateway between Victoria’s urban core and the West Shore municipalities. View Royal’s main employer is Victoria General Hospital – the largest hospital on southern Vancouver Island.

The Town is bordered by the Esquimalt and Songhees reserves to the southeast, by the District of Saanich to the east, by the District of Highlands to the north and by the City of Langford and Colwood to the west.

Key corridors include the Island Highway, Helmcken Road, Burnside Road, and Watkiss Way. A number of commercial hubs provide commercial amenities for the community including, most notably, Admiral’s Walk Shopping Centre and Eagle Creek Village.

2016 Population: 10,408

Area: 14.36 km²

Population density per square kilometre: 725

Esquimalt Indian Reserve

The Esquimalt Nation is a small nation on the water of Esquimalt Harbour. Their connection with the land and the resources of their large territory goes back thousands of years.

The Esquimalt Nation Land Use Plan (2018) provides the following statement about the current and future community context:

The Esquimalt Nation is experiencing population growth and demographic changes. Like many other First Nation communities, they are seeing a characteristically young, growing membership with unique needs. Most importantly, the Nation’s residents are suffering from the critical shortage of housing on the Nation’s land. In addition to community growth, the Nation would like to create opportunities for off-reserve members to return to Esquimalt Nation.

It is likely that the current housing shortage plays a large role in regulating the number of members that currently live on the Nation’s reserve. Thus, the Nation can anticipate that future growth will correspond with the development of housing.

2016 Population: Approximately 150

Area: 0.18 km²

Population density per square kilometre: 833

New Songhees Indian Reserve

The Songhees Nation is a high-density urban reserve with a large population of both members of the Songhees nation and settlers living on reserve. The Songhees originally resided on the west side of the Victoria Harbour, but were relocated to the reserve in 1912.

The Songhees Nation have been effective in building partnerships to support economic development and have a number of affordable housing complexes within their reserve lands as well as some commercial tenants, such as Slegg's Lumber on Admirals Road.

2016 Population: 1,842

Area: 0.64 km²

Population density per square kilometre: 2,896

2.3 Existing Transit Service

There are nine routes that service the Esquimalt and View Royal areas. These routes provide over 700 daily trips and account for approximately 30,000 boardings per average weekday, which represents close to 30 per cent of all ridership in the Victoria Regional Transit System. See figure 3 in Section 1.2 for a map of the routes within this local plan area.

The plan area has several key corridors: Esquimalt Road, Admirals Road and Craigflower Road in Esquimalt; and the Trans-Canada Highway (Hwy 1) and the Island Highway in View Royal. The plan area has two existing minor transit exchanges: Victoria General Hospital and Dockyard.

The 2014 Victoria Regional Transit System Service Review identified a hierarchy of transit services to support the implementation of the long-term transit strategy and satisfy various market segments, including existing transit rider and potential transit riders. Below are definitions for these types of transit service:

Rapid Transit: Rapid Transit routes are designed to move large volumes of passengers between major destinations with very frequent service and a limited number of transit stops or stations.

Frequent Transit: Frequent routes that operate at a minimum 15-minute frequency over a specific span of service. Routes generally operate on arterial roads, serve corridors with mixed land use and provide connections between urban centres.

Local Transit - Ridership: Local ridership routes generally serve less densely populated suburban areas with a focus on providing connections to local centres and to rapid and frequent transit routes, but has ridership that generally merits a reasonable service level.

Local Transit Coverage: Local coverage routes generally serve less densely populated suburban and rural areas at a basic service level with a focus on providing connections to local centres and to rapid and frequent transit routes.

In accordance with these types of transit service, service levels and resources are allocated to meet ridership demand. At the time of this report, the routes 14, 15, and 26, provide a frequent transit service from 7 am to 7 pm, 7 days a week with additional evening and Friday and Saturday late night service. The route 39, as well as the routes 24 and 25 provide a reasonable level of service throughout the day, while the routes 10, 46 and 53 provide a basic level of service to connect those low density area with nearby destinations and connections to other routes.

Route	Route Type	Daily Trips Operated	Avg Daily Boardings
10 James Bay/Royal Jubilee via Vic West	Local Transit - Coverage	54	374
14 Vic General/UVic	Frequent Transit	160	6,441
15 Esquimalt/UVic	Rapid Transit	167	6,052
24 Cedar Hill/Admirals Walk	Local Transit - High Demand	37	780
25 Maplewood/Admirals Walk	Local Transit - High Demand	35	926
26 Dockyard/UVic	Frequent Transit	126	5,069
39 Westhills Exchange/Interurban/Royal Oak/UVic	Local Transit - High Demand	66	2,223
46 Dockyard/Westhills Exch.	Local Transit - Coverage	16	252
53 Colwood Exch./Langford Exchange via Atkins	Local Transit - Coverage	24	91

Table 3: Weekday service levels of routes serving Esquimalt and View Royal.

Pre-COVID 2019 actual ridership exceeded ridership performance targets on all three key rapid and frequent routes (14, 15 and 26). The route 39 is out performing its targets while the routes 24 and 25 are falling slightly short. For local coverage routes, the 46 is performing well, while the 10 and the 53 are performing poorly.

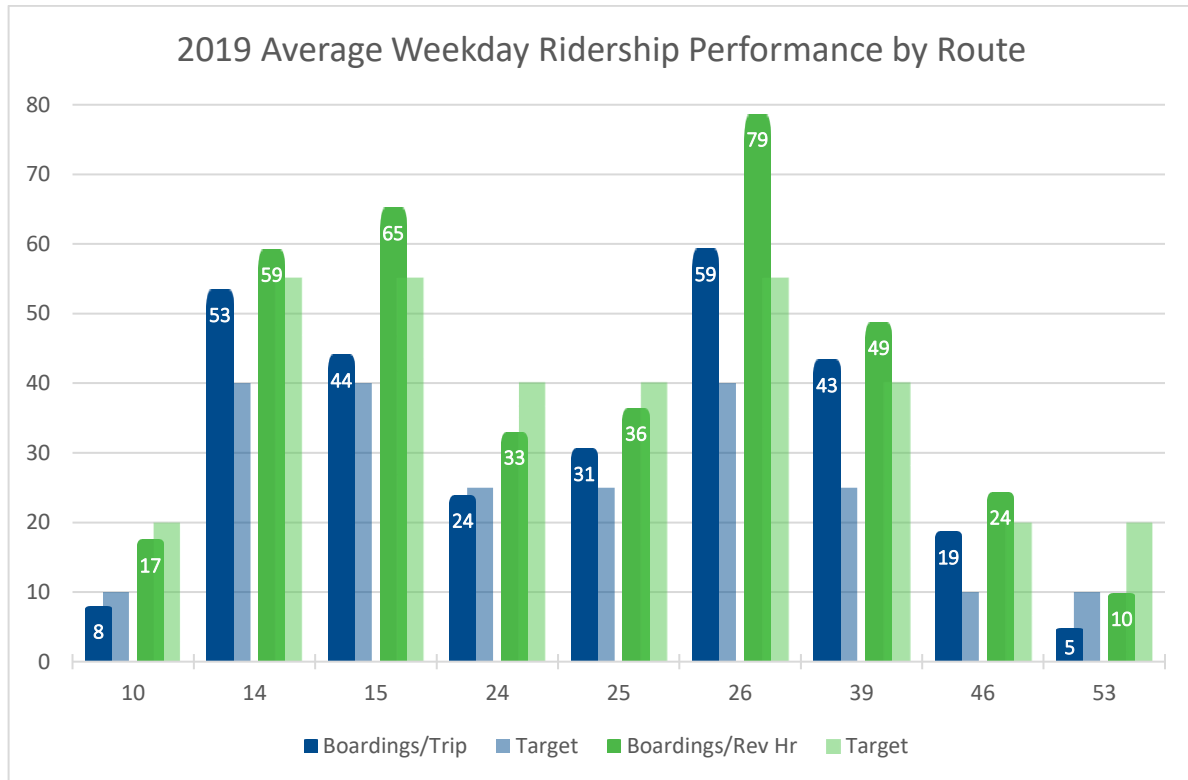


Figure 2: Ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic shown as average weekday boardings for 2019 and 2020.

2.4 Challenges and Opportunities

2.4.1 ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS AND TRANSIT

Frequent transit is supported on higher capacity roads, including arterials, secondary arterials and collectors, while local transit is supported on secondary collectors and local streets. Heavy-duty 12-metre buses, typical for most frequent transit routes, are similar to large trucks in their spatial requirements for turning. As such, they are frequently limited to arterial and collector streets where such turns can be accommodated. As arterials and collectors form a small portion of the total road network, preserving sufficient road space for transit vehicles within the area of this local area transit plan is critical for the long-term development of the transit network.

2.4.2 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT

A key policy direction identified by both municipalities is the development of active transportation amenities, including bike lanes and pedestrian amenities. The implementation of bike lanes often involves the reduction of lane travel widths, the alteration of bus stop design and the redesign of intersections. Such changes can have adverse

impacts on transit speeds, reliability and ability to navigate constrained roads. Therefore, in developing such infrastructure, the needs of transit need to be carefully considered so that transit such impacts can be effectively mitigated and avoided. In addition, the three municipalities within the plan area will need to work together to ensure consistency between infrastructure.

2.4.3 COVID-19 IMPACT ON SERVICE AND PLANNING

In March 2020, the World Health Organization officially declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) global outbreak a pandemic. In response, the Province of British Columbia declared a State of Emergency. Within this, Emergency Management BC declared public transit to be an essential service. To mitigate the spread of the virus, the Office of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) ordered the indefinite limitation of all travel and transportation (except for essential purposes) and to suspend all mass gatherings to encourage physical distancing. This included the suspension of in-person classes at all schools, the closing of most service industry establishments, the transition of most office and administrative jobs to work remotely and the introduction of new strict protective health measures.

These orders had an immediate and profound impact on BC Transit services across the province. Figure 3 below shows that transit usage in Victoria decreased sharply in mid-March 2020 and remained low through the summer, as COVID-19 cases rose and the curve of infections flattened. Ridership fell by up to 78 per cent compared to 2019 levels, but has begun to return as services and some businesses opened in mid-June. This ridership response is typical of other large to medium size transit systems across the province, though the drop was the most dramatic in the Victoria system.

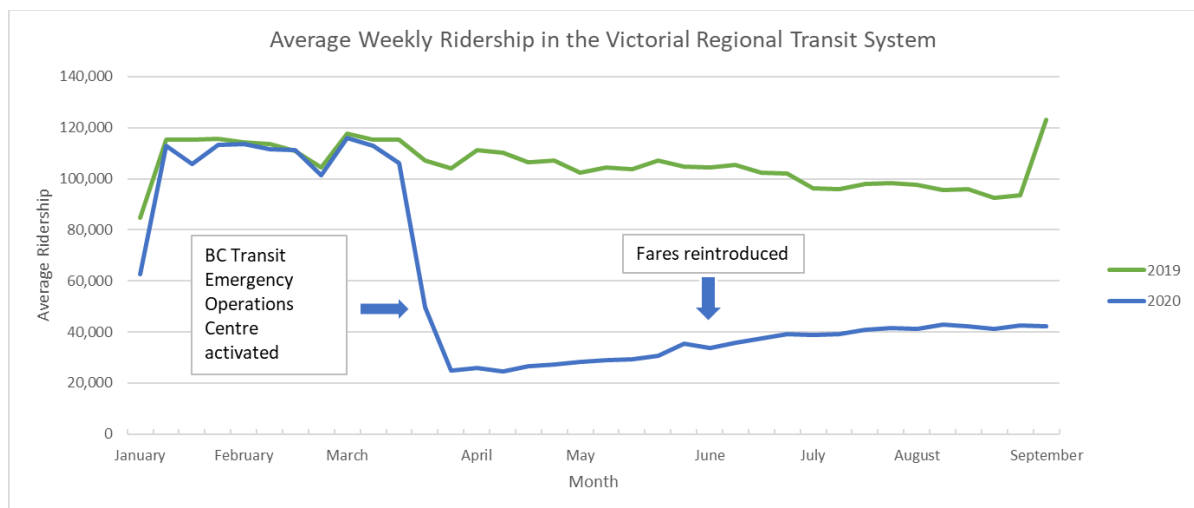


Figure 3: Ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic shown as average weekday boardings for 2019 and 2020. Note that the spike in ridership in September 2019 reflects the return to school, which was delayed in September 2020.

This LAMP sets out a number of service expansions and transit network modifications for the Esquimalt and View Royal area. Due to the ongoing pandemic, the timelines and

priorities established in this plan and through community engagement may need to be re-evaluated as the Victoria Regional system transitions through the recovery phases of the pandemic, and ridership demand returns.

3. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public consultation for the Esquimalt-View Royal Local Area Transit Plan was carried out in two phases. Phase 1 was conducted in September through to November 2018 and Phase 2 was carried out in February 2020. Each phase included open house events and an on-line survey. The open house events were located and scheduled to solicit feedback from a broad cross section of the community and facilitated to provide ample opportunity for one-on-one conversations with staff.

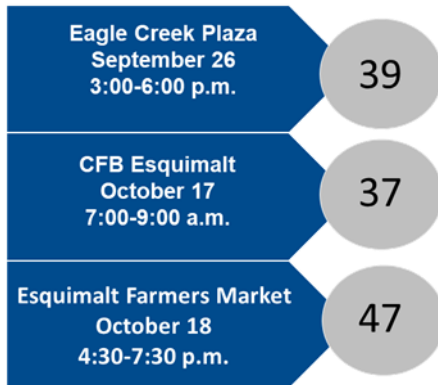
Public consultation was critical in providing transit staff with insights into community priorities and needs to enable the further shaping of service.

3.1 Phase 1: Open Engagement



The first phase of engagement provided an opportunity for open-ended conversations on how transit currently functions and what improvements are needed to build a future transit network. This phase consisted of three open house events, an online survey, and a workshop for key stakeholders. The open house events provided an opportunity for in-person dialogue with transit planners and invited written comments on poster boards. Open houses were carried out on the Transit Future bus – a decommissioned BC Transit bus. A total of 123 individuals provided input at these events. An online survey was held concurrent with the open houses and received nearly 400 responses.

Open House Events



Online Survey



Sept. 25, 2018
- Nov. 10, 2018

399 respondents

The following themes were identified at these open houses and through the online survey:

1. **Desire for direct service between key destinations – village centres, employment hubs, recreation centres and hospitals**
 - Desire for a local service to connect to Esquimalt Town Centre

- Desire for a local connection to Tillicum Mall
- 2. Desire for more frequent service**
- Improve frequency on route 24 Cedar Hill / Admirals Walk and route 25 Maplewood / Admirals Walk
 - Address pass ups on 14 UVic / Vic Gen and 15 Esquimalt / UVic
 - Provide midday and weekend service on 46 Westhills / Dockyard along the Old Island Highway
- 3. Support for further crosstown route development**
- Desire for more choices to travel to destinations without going downtown
 - Preference to transfer to more direct service rather than travel on circuitous routes

Following this phase – and drawing heavily on input received during the workshop for key stakeholders, staff developed a number of transit network and service change proposals to better meet evolving community transit needs. The second phase of engagement then displayed those specific proposals in a second series of open houses and through a second online survey.

3.2 Targeted Stakeholder Workshops

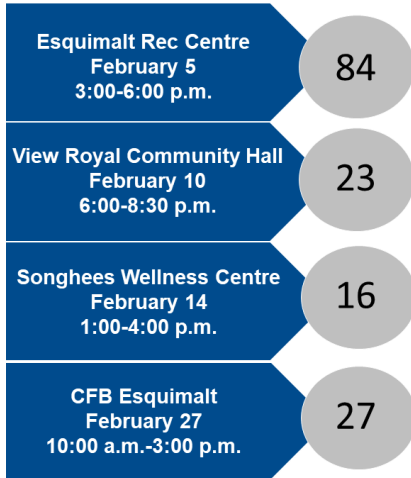
Stakeholder workshops were subsequently held to refine feedback received during the first phase of engagement. The workshops were comprised of local community group members, staff from the Township of Esquimalt and the Town of View Royal and a handful of transit riders that had previously expressed interest in continued engagement.

A second workshop was held for BC Transit operators familiar with the routes in the Esquimalt-View Royal area. During the workshops participants are asked to review transit priorities communicated to BC Transit during Phase 1, conduct a community mapping exercise, and lastly work to develop routing ideas that that will help address priorities heard in the plan.

3.3 Phase 2

The second phase of engagement sought to evaluate specific service proposals that had been developed from priorities identified during the first phase. Four open house events were carried out as well as a second online survey. The open house events were again tailored to solicit feedback from a diverse cross-section of community members, provided an opportunity for in-person dialogue with transit planners, and invited written comment on mini-surveys. Open houses were carried out on at key community locations and received feedback from a total of 150 individuals. The online survey, held concurrent with the open houses, received over 1500 responses.

Open House Events



Online Survey



February 1, 2020
- February 29, 2020

1,589 respondents

The online survey clearly identified that there was a high level of general support for the transit network changes and service change proposals. Five of the eight proposals had strong support (more than 80 per cent of respondents indicated support for the proposed change), while the other three had moderate support (between 50 and 80 per cent of respondents indicated support of the proposed change).



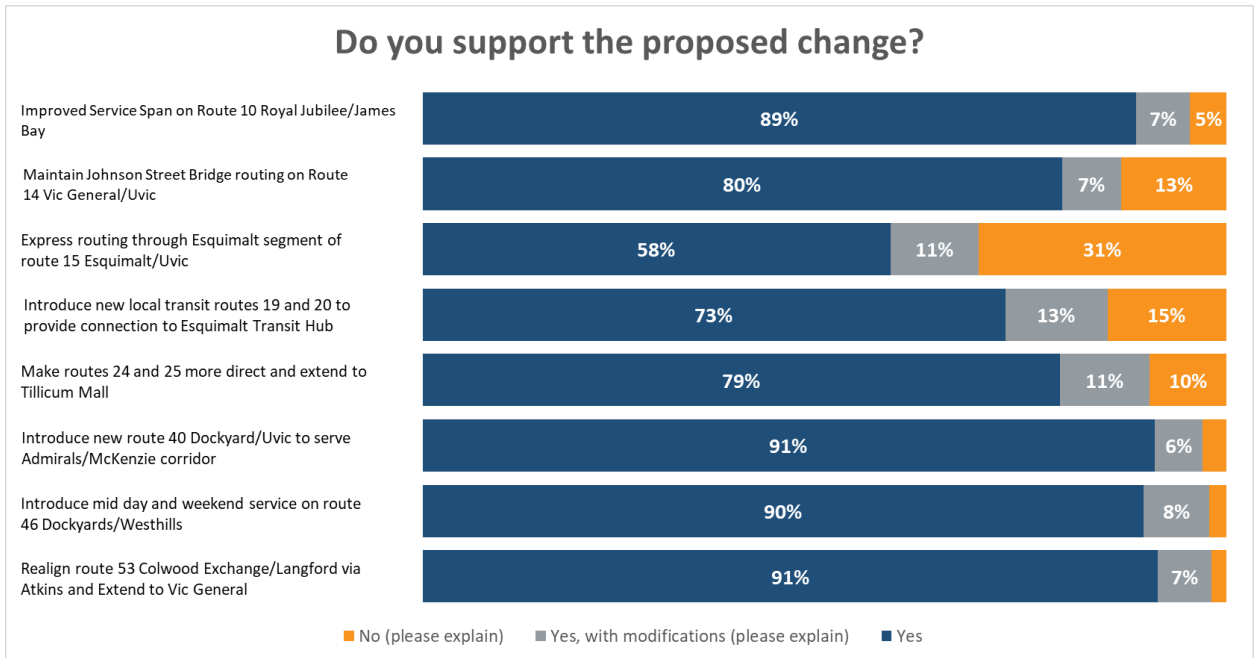


Figure 4: Support for transit network and service changes indicated in online survey.

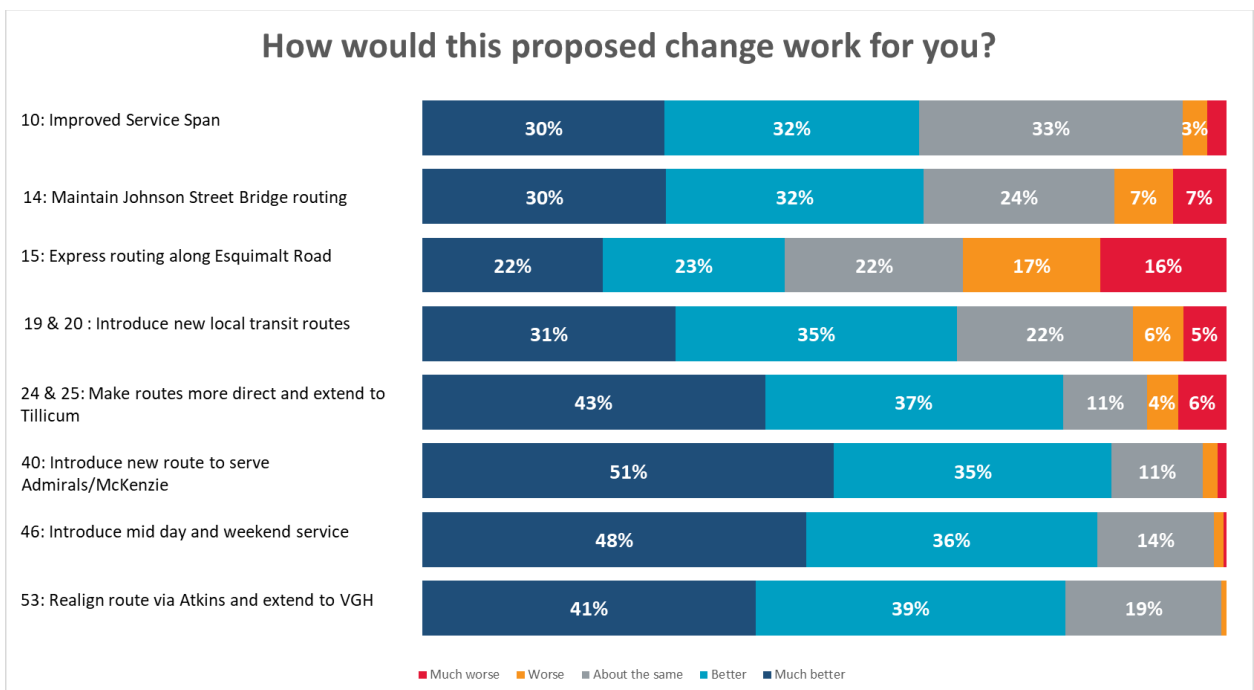


Figure 5: Impact of transit network and service changes indicated in online survey.

4. SERVICE PRIORITIES

The following section details a number of transit network changes that have been developed by BC Transit planning staff through engagement with the public, municipal staff and drivers as outlined in Section 2 of this plan. The network changes are detailed in the following pages according to an implementation schedule of short-term, medium term and long-term priorities. Each priority includes the proposed routing, service levels and associated service hour and vehicle requirements.

4.1 Short Term Service Priorities

During the second phase of engagement, three service proposals were clearly identified as almost universal wins for the communities within the plan areas. These proposals effectively address gaps in service and enhance the integrity of the transit network serving the Esquimalt and View Royal area.

Proposal 1: New Route 40 UVic to Dockyard via Admirals-McKenzie

This proposed route services the entire length of the east-west Admirals and McKenzie corridor from CFB Esquimalt - Dockyard to the University of Victoria. This route is ultimately identified for development into a Frequent Transit Network route, but would initially be introduced with a basic level of service – perhaps only at peak commute times.

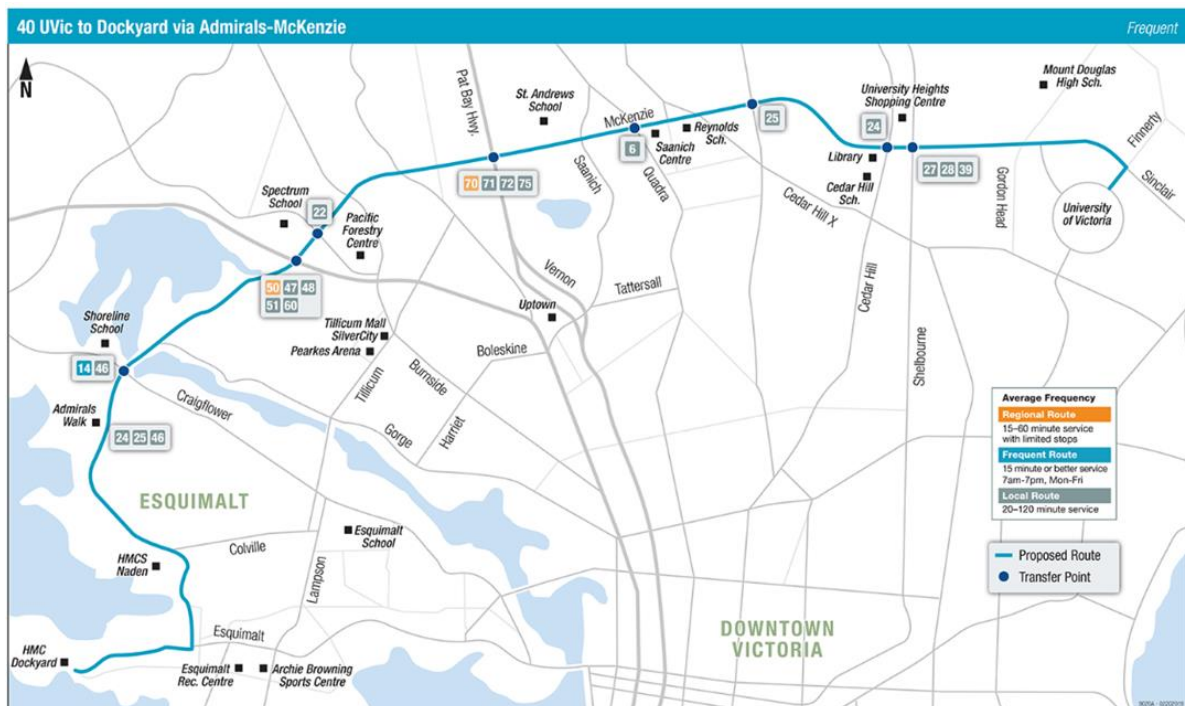


Figure 6: Proposed routing for new service along Admirals and McKenzie from Dockyard to UVic.

Target Service Frequency							
Service Day	Early AM	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening	Late Night	Service Span
	Before 7 am	6:00 am to 8:30 am	8:30 am to 3:00 pm	3:00 pm to 5:30 pm	5:30 pm to 9:00pm	After 9 pm	
Weekday	-	30	50	30	50	-	6 am - 9 pm
Saturday	-	45	50	45	50	-	7 am - 10 pm
Sunday	-	90	50	90	90	-	7 am - 10 pm

Benefits

- The route would provide direct access to UVic from Esquimalt and provide additional service on McKenzie – a high volume transit corridor.
- The route would provide more direct and convenient access along Admirals Road to popular destinations including CFB Esquimalt and Admirals Walk Shopping Centre.
- The route would provide more direct connections for passengers traveling from the West Shore to either UVic or CFB Esquimalt.

Considerations

- Congestion at Craigflower Road, Highway 1, Pay Bay Highway and Shelbourne Street may impact reliability and on-time performance.
- Investment is required to construct bus stops along the Saanich portion of Admirals Road from Craigflower Road to Burnside Road.
- This rerouting can coincide with terminating the route 25 Admirals Walk at Dockyard to reduce duplication of service along Admirals Road.

Estimated Resources

Introduce Route 40 at base service level		
Service Day	Service Hours	Additional Buses
Phase 1: Weekday only	11,500	5
Phase 2: Introduce weekend service	3,200	2
Terminate 25 Admirals Walk at Dockyard	0	0

Proposal 2: Route 24 Admirals Walk/Cedar Hill Realignment

Route 24 provides a basic level of local coverage service between Esquimalt and downtown and on to Cedar Hill to McKenzie. At present, the route services Old Esquimalt, Lampson, Colville to Admirals Walk Shopping Centre. This change would extend the route 24 to Tillicum Mall via Cowper Street and Obed Avenue.

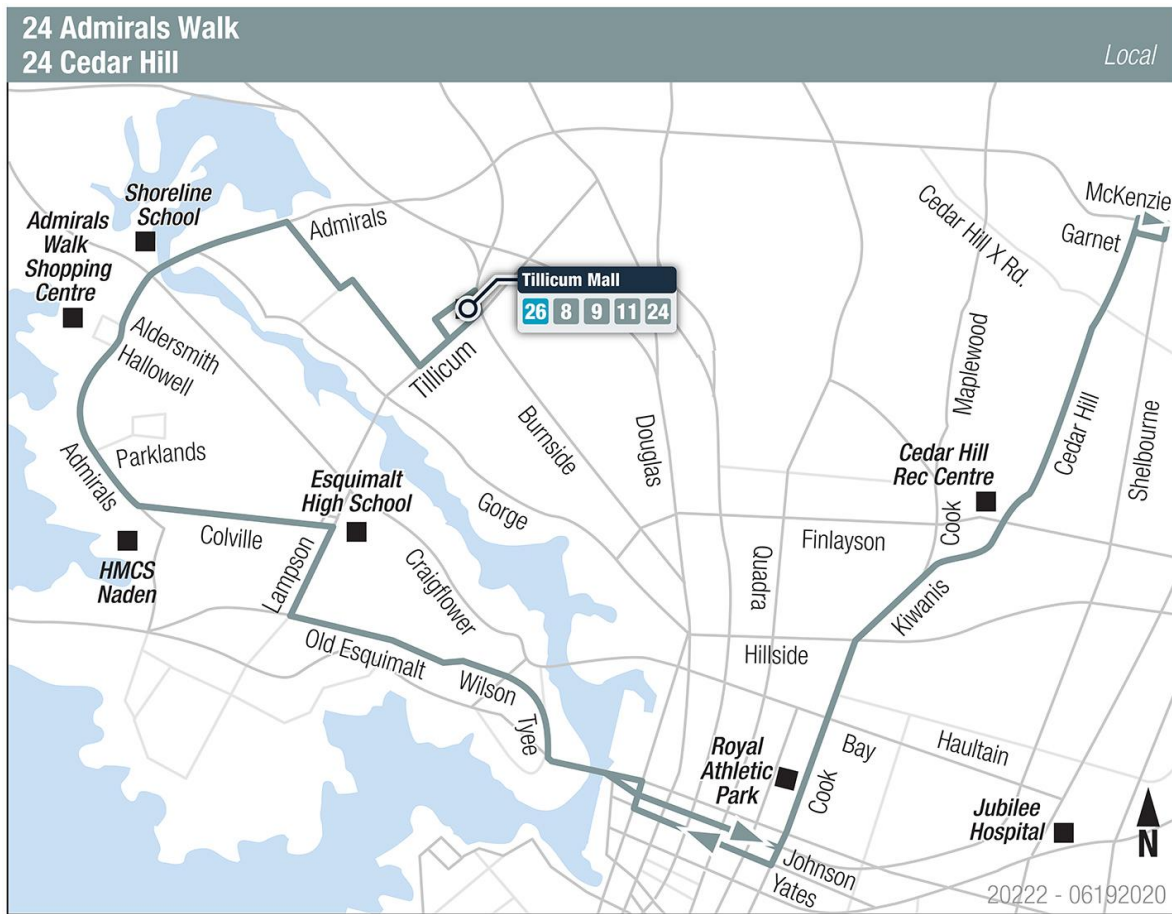


Figure 7: Proposed modification of route 24 to terminate at Tillicum Mall via Cowper and Obed.

Target Service Frequency							
Service Day	Early AM	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening	Late Night	Service Span
	Before 7 am	6:00 am to 8:30 am	8:30 am to 3:00 pm	3:00 pm to 5:30 pm	5:30 pm to 9:00pm	After 9 pm	
Weekday	-	30	40	30	55	55	6 am - 12 am
Saturday	-	40	30	30	60	-	7 am - 10 pm
Sunday	-	60	40	40	60	-	7 am - 10 pm

Benefits

- Provides access across Admirals Bridge, not currently served, and additional access to Tillicum Mall.
- Provides access from the Gorge-Tillicum area to employment and shopping destinations at Admirals Walk, CFB Esquimalt - Dockyard, Naden and Esquimalt High School.
- New access for View Royal residents living near Admirals Walk to local services and employment in the Tillicum Mall area, in addition to transfer opportunities to access

Spectrum High School, Victoria General Hospital, and the Camosun Interurban campus.

- Minor service level improvements.

Considerations

- Routing at Tillicum Mall may require additional realignment of other routes and wayfinding signage due to volume of routes and capacity.
- Implementation may need to be phased with changes to service on route 11.

Estimated Resources

Reroute 24 to terminate at Tillicum Mall		
Proposal	Service Hours	Additional Buses
Reroute 24 to Tillicum Mall	10,000	4

Proposal 3: Route 53 Colwood Exchange/Langford via Atkins

This network realignment proposes to realign the route 53 from turning south at Six Mile to travel on the Island Highway to terminate at Colwood Corners to instead travel north to Burnside to terminate at Victoria General Hospital.

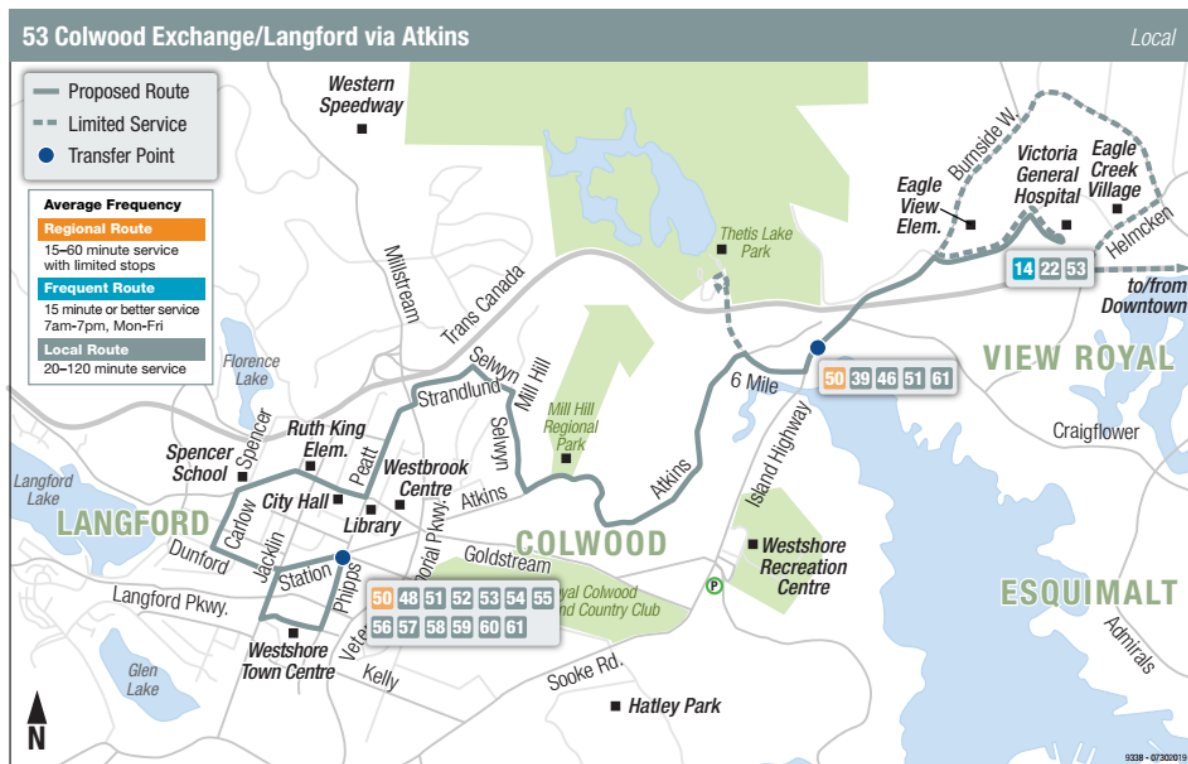


Figure 8: Proposed modifications of route 53.

Target Service Frequency							
Service Day	Early AM	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening	Late Night	Service Span
	Before 7 am	7 am - 9 am	9 am - 3 pm	3 pm - 6 pm	6 pm - 10 pm	After 10 pm	
Weekday	35	35	70	35	70	-	6 am - 9 pm
Saturday	-	70	70	70	70	-	7 am - 10 pm
Sunday	-	70	70	70	70	-	7 am - 7 pm

Benefits

- Residents of Atkins Road and area will have improved access to local services and employment at Eagle Creek.
- Langford residents will have improved access to Victoria General Hospital.
- Transfer options to routes along the Old Island Highway (46 Dockyard, 39 UVic, 50 Downtown, etc.) are maintained.

Considerations

- Service may need to be improved on weekends to facilitate better alignment with hospital shifts.
- A commuter trip providing direct service to/from downtown at peak travel times is also recommended.
- Service to the Chilco neighbourhood has been identified as a future priority.

Estimated Resources

Reroute 53 Colwood Exchange/Langford via Atikins		
Proposal	Service Hours	Additional Buses
Reroute 53 Colwood Exchange to terminate at Vic. Gen. Hospital	2,000	1
Develop commuter service to downtown Victoria at peak time in peak direction	750	1
Introduce year round service to Thetis Lake	800	1

4.2 Medium Term Service Priorities

The following three proposals received strong support from public engagement, but require continued ridership growth prior to making these investments.

Proposal 4: Route 10 James Bay/Royal Jubilee via Vic West Expansion

Route 10 provides a basic coverage level of service connecting Vic West with Royal Jubilee Hospital, downtown and James Bay. This proposal simply extends the span of service later into the evening from 7:30 pm to 10:00 pm on weekdays and 1 hour later on weekends.

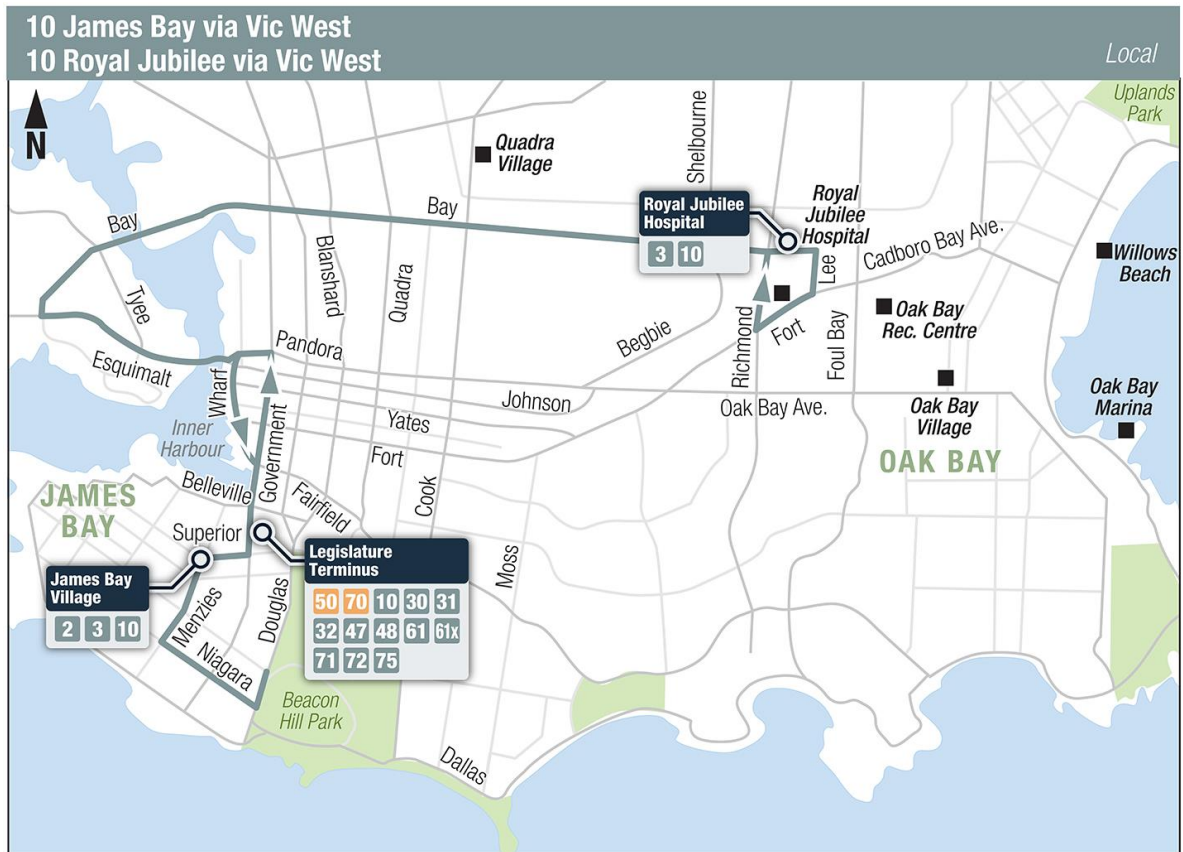


Figure 9: Map of existing service on route 10.

Target Service Frequency							
Service Day	Early AM	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening	Late Night	Service Span
	Before 7 am	7 am - 9 am	9 am - 3 pm	3 pm - 6 pm	6 pm - 10 pm	After 10 pm	
Weekday	20	20	35	30	35	-	6 am - 10 pm
Saturday	-	40	35	35	35	-	7 am - 9 pm
Sunday	-	70	35	35	70	-	7 am - 8 pm

Benefits

- Provides additional evening service between Vic West, James Bay and Jubilee.

Considerations

- Route is currently interlined with route 3 James Bay/Royal Jubilee via Cook Street Village; service level increase would either require expansion on both routes or the elimination of the interlining.

Estimated Resources

Route 10 Service Extension		
Service Day	Service Hours	Additional Buses
Extend span of service later into evening	2,200	1

Proposal 5: Route 46 Dockyard/Westhills Expansion

Route 46 connects Langford’s Westhills Exchange to CFB Esquimalt - Dockyard. The plan proposes to introduce midday service and weekend service to the existing weekday peak-only service.

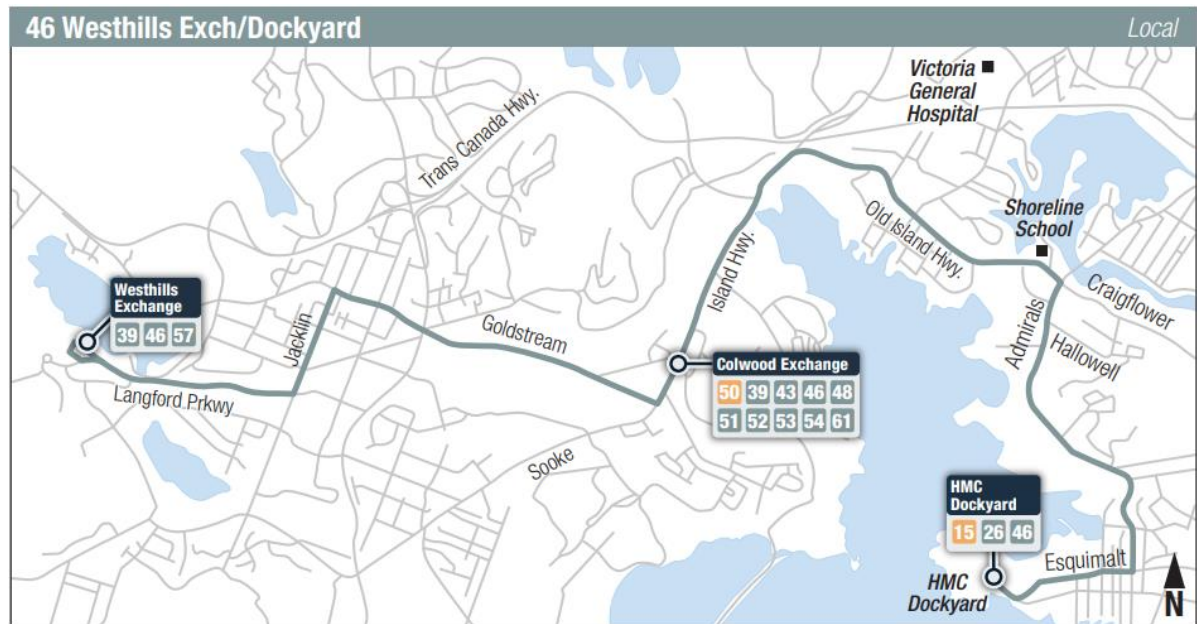


Figure 10: Map of existing service on route 46.

Target Service Frequency							
Service Day	Early AM	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening	Late Night	Service Span
	Before 7 am	7 am - 9 am	9 am - 3 pm	3 pm - 6 pm	6 pm - 10 pm	After 10 pm	
Weekday	-	35	60	30	60	-	6 am - 7 pm
Saturday	-	45	45	45	45	-	7 am - 7 pm
Sunday	-	60	60	60	60	-	7 am - 7 pm

Benefits

- Provides additional service along Goldstream Avenue.
- Fills midday and weekend service gap along Old Island Highway.

Considerations

- With more service along the Old Island Highway, there may be a need for Transit Signal Priority to maintain on-time performance and reliability.

Estimated Resources

Extend route 46 Service		
Service Day	Service Hours	Additional Buses
Extend span of service later into evening	4,500	2
Introduce weekend service	2,100	1

Proposal 6: Route 40 UVic to Dockyard via Admirals-McKenzie Expansion

This proposed route services the entire length of the east-west Admirals and McKenzie corridor from CFB Esquimalt - Dockyard to the University of Victoria. Once this route develops a stable ridership, additional hours can be invested to develop the route into a Frequent Transit route. Since significant investment is required to develop this route to Frequent Transit service levels, it will likely be phased over time.

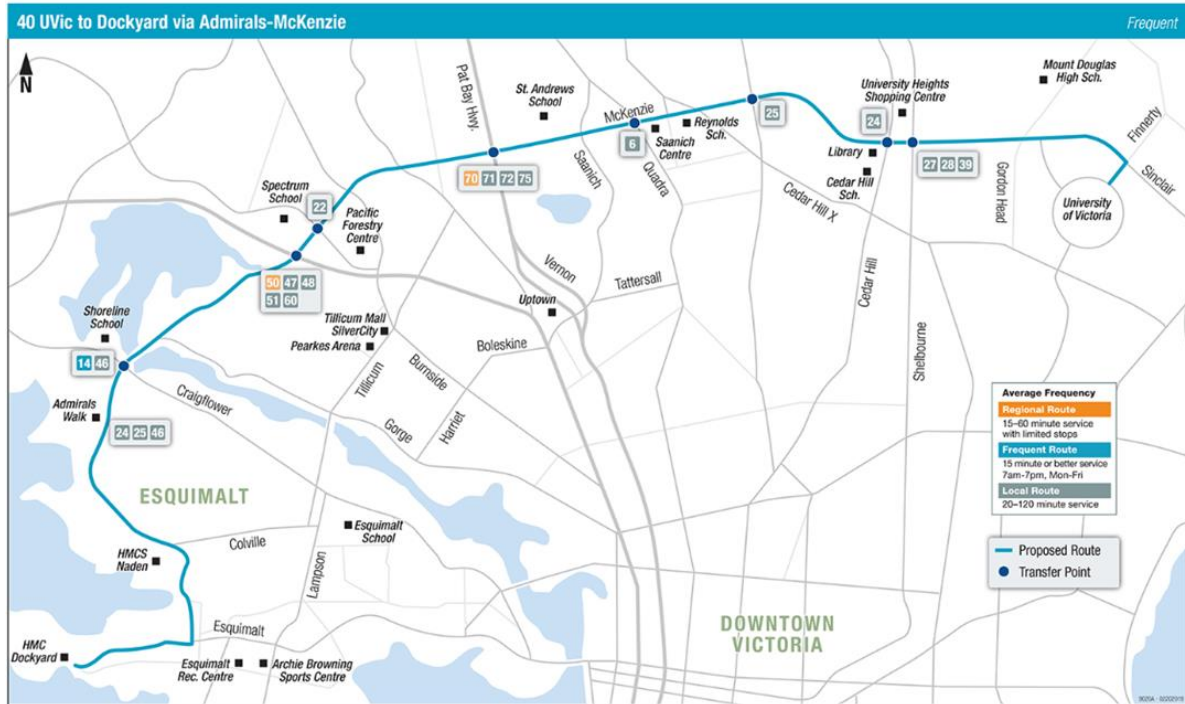


Figure 11: Proposed routing for new service along Admirals and McKenzie from Dockyard to UVic.

Target Service Frequency							
Service Day	Early AM	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening	Late Night	Service Span
	Before 7 am	7 am - 9 am	9 am - 3 pm	3 pm - 6 pm	6 pm - 10 pm	After 10 pm	
Weekday	30	15	15	15	15	-	6 am - 10 pm
Saturday	-	15	15	15	15	-	7 am - 10 pm
Sunday	-	15	15	15	15	-	7 am - 10 pm

Benefits

- The route would provide direct access to UVic from Esquimalt and provide additional service on McKenzie – a high volume transit corridor.
- The route would provide more direct and convenient access along Admirals Road to popular destinations including CFB Esquimalt and Admirals Walk Shopping Centre.

- The route would provide connections that are more direct for passengers traveling from the West Shore to either UVic or CFB Esquimalt.

Considerations

- Congestion at Craigflower Road, Highway 1, Pay Bay Highway and Shelbourne Street may limit reliability and on-time performance.
- Since significant investment is required to develop this route to Frequent Transit service levels, it will likely be phased over time as ridership grows.

Estimated Resources

Route 40 Service Level Improvement		
Service Day	Service Hours	Additional Buses
Increase to frequent transit service levels	30,000	12

4.3 Long Term Service Priorities

The following two proposals provide long-term options for development of the core transit structure serving Esquimalt.

Proposal 7: Route 15 Esquimalt/UVic RapidBus

Route 15 connects the CFB Esquimalt - Dockyard to UVic through Esquimalt along Esquimalt Road. The 2011 Transit Future Plan identifies the Route 15 Esquimalt/UVIC corridor as a priority Rapid Transit Network corridor, and the 2020 RapidBus Implementation Strategy identifies the corridor as a potential future RapidBus corridor. One critical element of RapidBus includes transitioning to a limited stop service, which decreases dwell time and increases the speed and reliability of service along a corridor.

The plan initially proposed to dramatically reduce the number of stops within Esquimalt from 16 in each direction to five. This proposal received an unfavourable reception from Esquimalt residents through both online and in-person engagement. To address this concern, three additional stop pairs have been added to reduce the distance between stops and to ensure that the stops with the highest ridership continue to be served.

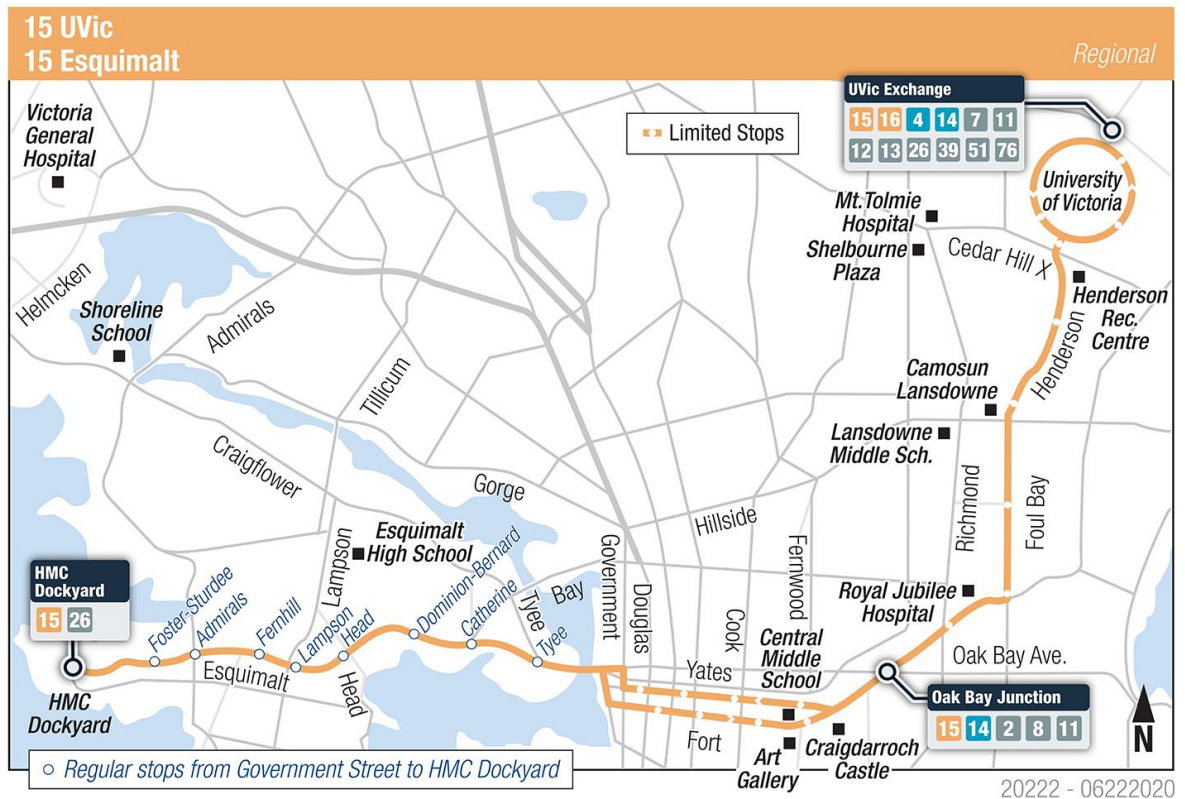


Figure 12: Proposed limited stop service for route 15

Benefits

- Provides limited stop express service to downtown and UVic – providing a fast and comfortable single-seat ride.
- To further improve the speed and reliability of this service, there may be the potential to explore transit signal priority opportunities along the corridor in alignment with the introduction of limited-stop service.

Considerations

- Will require maintenance of frequent transit service levels on other routes on Esquimalt Road (15 minutes or better; 7 am – 10 pm, 7 days a week), which can be provided by service proposal 8.
- Additional planning and engagement is required to finalize the service levels, stop locations, transit priority opportunities, station improvements, and broader associated network changes.

Proposal 8: New Routes 19/20 Esquimalt

Two new Local Transit routes to provide coverage between north and south Esquimalt to the Esquimalt core. These routes would replace a portion of the area currently serviced by the routes 24 and 25.

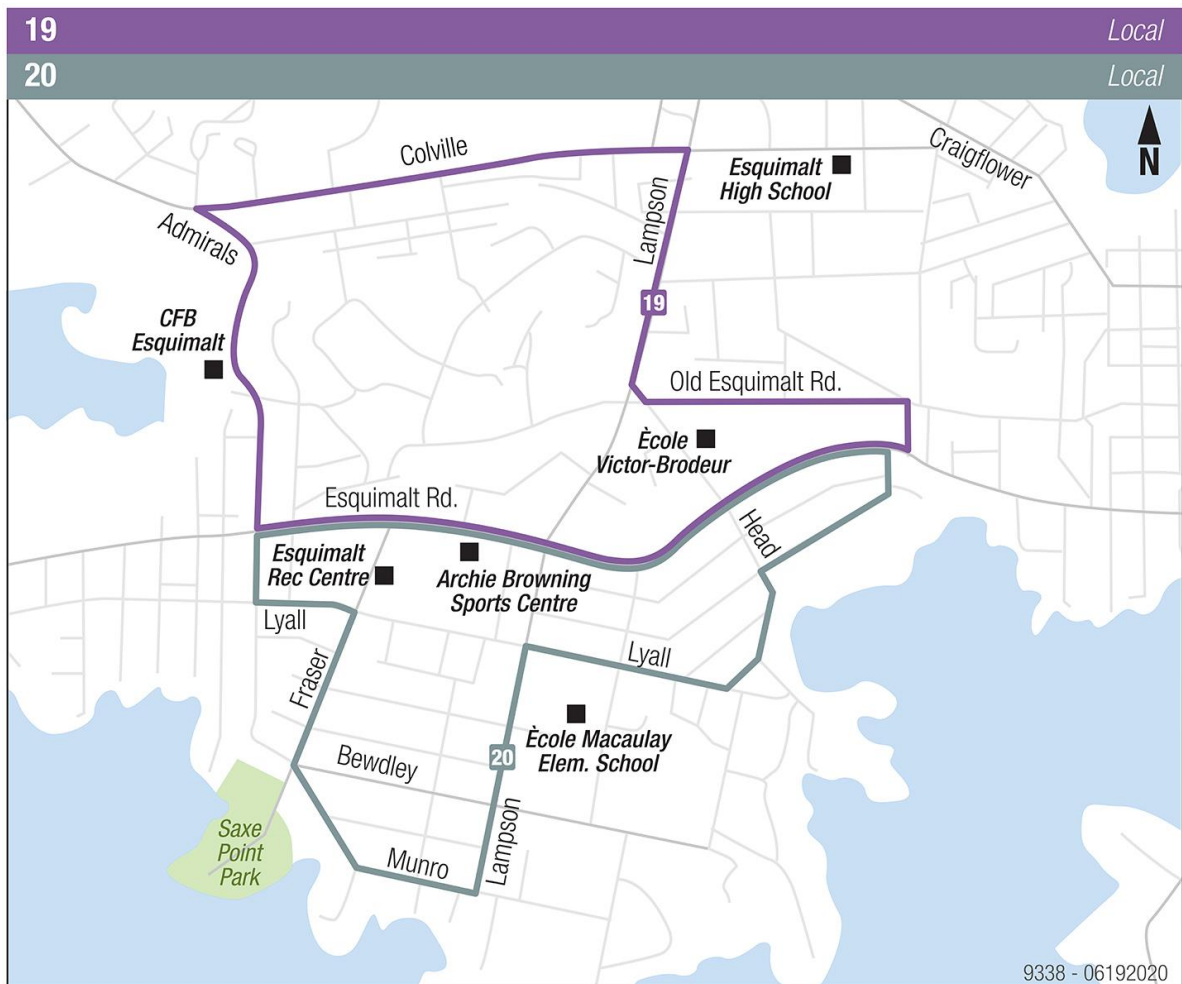


Figure 13: Proposed routing for two new local coverage routes in Esquimalt.

Target Service Frequency							
Service Day	Early AM	AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Evening	Late Night	Service Span
	Before 7 am	7 am - 9 am	9 am - 3 pm	3 pm - 6 pm	6 pm - 10 pm	After 10 pm	
Weekday	-	60	60	60	60	-	7 am - 8 pm
Saturday	-	60	60	60	60	-	7 am - 8 pm
Sunday	-	-	90	90	90	-	9 am - 7 pm

Benefits

- Provides coverage service between north and south Esquimalt to the Esquimalt Town Centre with transfer opportunities to regional transit routes.
- Provides opportunity to streamline routes 24 and 25 to service Esquimalt Road to provide more frequent local service connections to Downtown Victoria, Tillicum Mall, Admirals Walk and the Esquimalt core.

Considerations

- Requires additional bus stop and layover space at Esquimalt Town Centre.
- Additional planning and engagement is required to confirm the broader associated network changes.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

5.1 Additional Layover Capacity

Some key high ridership routes service the Esquimalt-View Royal area. Currently, Dockyard and Victoria General Hospital provide operational recovery (bus layover) capacity for existing routes. As the transit system grows, additional operational recovery capacity will be required at Dockyard and within the Esquimalt core.

5.2 RapidBus Stations and Transit Priority Measures

The Route 15 presently operates as a frequent transit network through Esquimalt and functions as a rapid, limited-stop service on the east side of downtown to the University of Victoria. This plan includes a long-term priority for eventually converting the entirety of the Route 15 to a RapidBus service.

The Victoria Regional Transit Commission is developing a RapidBus Implementation Strategy to identify a network, toolkit, and implementation roadmap for the establishment of RapidBus within the Victoria Region. While the details associated with Route 15 have not been included within the scope of this initial strategy, the plan includes a RapidBus toolkit, which includes considerations for branding, service design, street treatments, stations, vehicles, and fare collection.

A corridor plan exploring potential design concepts and evaluating associated costs should be conducted by BC Transit and the Township of Esquimalt to further advance the development of the RapidBus corridor along Esquimalt Road.

5.3 Six Mile Park and Ride

BC Transit has identified the development of a Park and Ride in vicinity of the Island Highway and Six Mile Road as a priority to increase ridership from View Royal into Downtown Victoria. BC Transit will work with the Town of View Royal and the Province of BC to advance this objective as opportunities arise.

5.4 Island Highway Transit Priority

BC Transit is actively working on option evaluation and design drawing for development of transit priority measures along the Island Highway from Goldstream Avenue to Burnside Road. BC Transit will work with the Town of View Royal and the Province to support transit priority upgrades to this stretch of the road network to enhance transit service reliability and to reduce travel times from the Westshore into downtown Victoria.

6. IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

The service changes detailed in this plan provide a restructuring of the transit network serving the Esquimalt-View Royal area. The proposed changes advance the goals of the Transit Future Plan, support ridership growth and provide development of the transit network along key development corridors – to better align land use with transit.

The success of this plan requires sustained investments through the Victoria Regional Transit Commission and the Province. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on ridership and government budgets. In light of this, transit network expansions are likely to be delayed until ridership levels have recovered to a level that can support expansion. This plan, nonetheless, provides a number of proposals that have received positive feedback from public consultation and can support the development of the transit network.

The service changes identified in the preceding sections will be evaluated through a Transit Expansion Prioritization process (TEPs). The TEPs process will assess service expansion proposals identified in all Local Area Transit Plans according to an evaluation matrix developed by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission. Service change proposals will then be evaluated for incorporation into Three Year Service and Financial Plan, which will inform the development of the BC Transit Annual Service Plan.

Upon implementation, service changes will be monitored to ensure that schedules and routes are meeting the needs of passengers. If any changes are required, they will be made as part of subsequent seasonal service changes.

Route ridership performance will be assessed using the Route Level Performance Guidelines identified in the Victoria Regional Transit System Service Review. Route ridership performance is reported in the Planning Reports to the Commission and supports development of changes to network structure to enhance the performance of the overall transit network.

SUBJECT: INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

PURPOSE

This report on transit-related infrastructure projects in the Victoria Region is provided to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **INFORMATION**.

DISCUSSION

ACTIVE PROJECTS:

handyDART Centre

The new handyDART centre at 2401 Burnside Road in View Royal supports increasing demands for handyDART services in the region and enables the BC Transit Low Carbon Fleet Strategy. This federal ICIP funded project will meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold requirements and is planned to open in 2023.

Recent engagement with community stakeholders includes meetings with the Neighbourhood Working Group and the Gorge Waterway initiative. Project updates have been provided to First Nations with a meeting scheduled mid-February with the Esquimalt Nation. The project team is preparing public engagement materials for broad community engagement in March that will include a survey, initiation of a regular e-newsletter, a social media campaign, and a series of short videos.

A final conceptual site layout is achieved allowing determination of site grading and elevations. Final soil settlement analysis recommends the installation of wick drains and surcharge loading to accelerate consolidation of subsoil materials. The design team is progressing the Architectural construction drawings towards the 50% level.

Steady progress has been achieved toward finalizing the designs and planning for the realignment of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, relocation of Capital Regional District (CRD) water main corrosion protection infrastructure and the relocation of the BC Hydro transmission tower.

The design work on the realignment of the watercourse that was recently reclassified as a stream, is complete and ready to submit with the required provincial and federal permit application. Consultation with the Nations is focused on fulsome engagement on these permits.

The multiple and significant design challenges have pressed the initiation of site preparation works to the fall of 2021, with full construction mobilization late fall 2021 or early spring 2022.

CNG Fueling and Facility Modifications

As part of the Low Carbon Fleet program and the introduction of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses in Victoria, CNG fueling infrastructure and facility upgrades are in regular service at the Langford Transit Centre (LTC). Minor outstanding scope will be completed in March.

BC Transit Bus Shelter Program

The shelter program receives 40 per cent funding towards eligible costs through the Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). A summary of shelters accommodated within the 20/21 program is provided in the table below.

Region	Number of Shelters Requested	First Round Shelters Approved	Second Round Shelters Approved	Total 2020/21 Shelters	Shelters Installed to Date
Saanich	14	4	4	8	3
Sooke	5	0	0	0	0
Oak Bay	1	1	0	1	1
Colwood	2	2	0	2	2
Central Saanich	3	1	2	3	3
Sidney	1	0	1	1	0
Langford	3	1	2	3	1
TOTAL	29	9	9	18	10

PROJECTS IN PLANNING OR DEVELOPMENT

Operations and Maintenance Facilities Master Plan

BC Transit is in the process of developing an update to the 25-Year Operations and Maintenance Facilities Master Plan. The final report will be complete in March 2021 and will provide inputs for future project business case(s) to support provincial and federal funding application(s). The plan will support the implementation of battery electric bus, provide recommendations to advance additional operations centres and a number of improvements to modernize the existing operations centres.

Westshore Transit Priority Plan

In December the Commission approved the transit priority concepts in principle for Goldstream Ave and Sooke Rd for further design work and advancement for implementation. Funding in the amount of \$150,000 in 2021/22 and 2022/23 has been budgeted to further develop the project design and complete community engagement activities. BC Transit is scheduled to present to Colwood Council on March 1st to obtain an approval in principle of the recommended transit priority treatments. A plan will be developed to complete detailed design process that includes retaining an engineering consultant and working with local government staff to further develop a design that is agreeable to all stakeholders, and is ready for tendering and construction. As there are a number of competing transit investments planned in the next few years, projects will be programmed in future budgets at a later date to ensure they align with other priorities.

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Transit Related Projects

There are a number of transit infrastructure initiatives that MOTI is advancing that supports the development of the Victoria Regional Transit System including:

Projects

- **McKenzie Interchange** - Highway 1 bus lanes and transit stations are now complete and in service.
- **Highway 14 Connie Rd to Glinz Lake Rd Realignment and Park & Ride** – The highway 14 realignment includes a new park & ride near Connie Rd and new transit stops with bus pullouts to improve safety and passenger amenities. It is anticipated construction will start in this fiscal year.

Planning Studies

- **Uptown Mobility Hub Study** – MOTI is advancing planning work to develop transit and active transportation priorities and improvements to serve the near-term goals that will align with the future development of the Uptown site and not preclude the long-term plan. The plan includes a proposal for bus only lanes on Ravine Rd, RapidBus stations on Highway 1 and expanded bus zone capacity on Carey Rd. This plan will support BC Transit advancing long-term plans for the Uptown Transit Hub and Transit Oriented Development opportunities.
- **Highway 1 Bus Priority Planning** – MOTI is advancing planning work along the Douglas Street/Hwy 1 Corridor to support existing BC Transit initiatives. This work includes exploring transit priority treatments that align with the BC Transit priorities identified through the Victoria Transit Future Plan and RapidBus Implementation Strategy.
- **Highway 17 Transit Facilities** - MOTI is advancing planning work along the Highway 17 corridor to explore transit priority treatments to support BC Transit Initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission receives this report for **INFORMATION**.

Respectfully,

Levi Timmermans
Director, Infrastructure Management

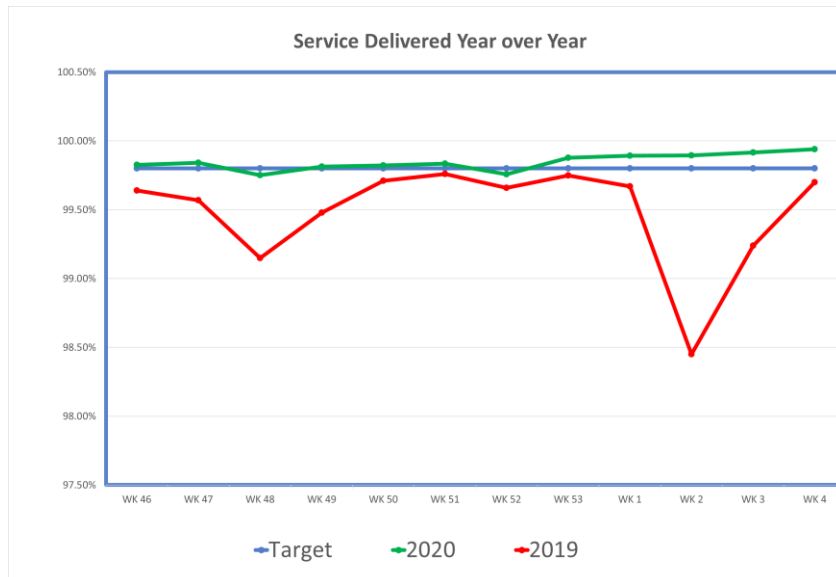
SUBJECT: OPERATIONS UPDATE

PURPOSE

This update on the operating activities in the Victoria Region is provided to the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the “Commission”) for **INFORMATION**.

SUMMARY

The delivery of scheduled service remains very high at an average rate of 99.85% throughout September to December. While we remain committed to sustaining this very high level of service reliability, our focus has shifted towards schedule reliability. The industry standard for “on time” is the actual time of departure within -1 to +3 minutes of the scheduled time. During the fall and December schedules, an average of 57.8% of all stops were departed within these parameters.

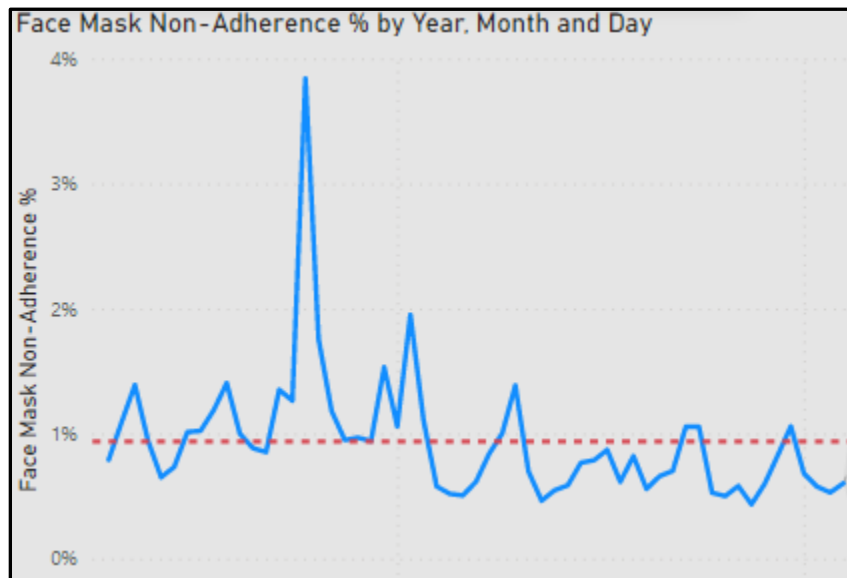


NOTE: Last 12 weeks with WK 4 representing the week ending January 31, 2021

Sustaining and improving schedule performance is reliant upon several variables not least being the scheduled running time for each route. Reduced traffic during peak periods, combined with less congestion following the completion of the McKenzie overpass, shortened running times. While this reduced the number of buses running late, inversely, it also caused some others to run early. Running time adjustments were made to the winter schedule in support of this. Since the start of the new winter schedule, we have experienced four of our best weeks for on-time performance for the fiscal year with three weeks exceeding 60% for the first time.

During the fall and December schedules, an average compliance to our mandatory face covering policy was observed through random audits to be 97%. Since the week of November 23rd, compliance has remained consistently at 99%. To support a much broader observation of compliance throughout the system at all times, we implemented a process in the middle of December whereby Transit Operators could easily record a passenger boarding

without wearing a face covering. Since the implementation of this program, passengers recorded as not wearing a face covering represented less than 1% of passenger boardings with the outlier of 4% occurring on Christmas Day.



NOTE: Daily recording of passengers without face coverings as a % of total boardings

Customer complaints have overall seen a reduction since the beginning of October. A more significant reduction in complaints reflective of lower ridership is somewhat offset by COVID-19 related complaints. While significant year over year decreases are evident in schedule adherence complaints and the availability of service, pass-up complaints are slightly up from the same period last year.

We continue to maintain a capacity aboard our buses at the equivalent of a seating load to a maximum of 66% of normal capacity. Despite this reduction in capacity, a little over 4% of trips reach this threshold and the number of pass-ups remains relatively low. An average of just under 5 pass-up events occur per day impacting an estimated 42 passengers on average per day. In many cases, we have been able to deploy overload service to mitigate the impact to our customers at known times and locations of systemic pass-up occurrences.

CONVENTIONAL TRANSIT SERVICE

FALL SERVICE – September 7 to December 6

- 99.85% of scheduled service delivered
- 21.11% of cancellations due to Operator Availability
- 0.21% of cancellations due to Bus Availability
- 57.79% of cancellations due to Mechanical (ie. On road/in yard Change offs, on road/in yard repairs)
- 20.89% of cancellations due to Short Turns (ie. Congestion, weather, sick)

DECEMBER SERVICE –December 7 to January 6

- 99.82% of scheduled service delivered
- 26.33% of cancellations due to Operator Availability
- 1.34% of cancellations due to Bus Availability
- 57.73% of cancellations due to Mechanical (ie. On road/in yard Change offs, on road/in yard repairs)
- 14.59% of cancellations due to Short Turns (ie. Congestion, weather, sick)

CUSTOM TRANSIT SERVICES

October 2020 – December 2020

- 11,701 average monthly trips vs 25,220 from same period last year
- 1.21 average monthly rides per service hour vs 2.39 from the same period last year

Other Statistics	July	August	September
Same Day Requests met	99.2%	99.2%	99.4%
Unmet Trips	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Trip by Taxi	0.0%	0.0%	0.01%

CUSTOMER SERVICE INFO

- October 2020 – December 2020
 - 1,078 complaints vs 1,150 last year
 - Oct 382 vs 391 for the same period last year
 - Nov 367 vs 378 for same period last year
 - Dec 329 vs 381 for the same period last year
 - 186 during this period were related to COVID-19
 - 126 schedule adherence complaints
 - Average 42 /month vs 104 /month for the same period last year
 - 43 Lack of Service complaints vs 107 for the same period last year
 - 166 customer pass up complaints
 - Average 55 /month vs 49 /month for the same period last year
 - 17 overcrowding vs 33 for the same period last year

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission receive this report for **INFORMATION.**

Respectfully,

Kevin Schubert
 General Manager, Victoria Operations

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Video/Conference Call (Teams), 520 Gorge Road East

MINUTES

For December 11, 2020, 10:30am – 12noon

1	Call to Order at 10:32am		Chair
2	Confirmation of Quorum <u>4 voting members:</u> Don Monsour, Suzan Jennings, Jan Robertson, Isabel Sommerville, <u>Staff and Advisors:</u> Susan Sowden, , David Guthrie, , Mohan Kang, Councilor Sharmake Dubkow, Danielle Harricot Kelli-Ann Armstrong, Kevin Schubert		Chair
3	Approval of the Agenda Motion: Isabel Sommerville; 2 nd : Suzan Jennings - Carried	Approval	Chair
4	Approval of Minutes from August 14, 2020 - With 1 change - correct of spelling of Susan Sowden's name Motion: Jan Robertson; 2 nd : Suzan Jennings - Carried	Approval	Chair
5	Chair's Remarks Nothing to report		Chair
6	Business Arising from Previous Meeting Two items from last meeting are included in new business N/A		
7	Standing Items handyDART Statistics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported statistics for info to committee for second quarter July - September 2020 Reported that ridership is down approximately 12,000 riders compared to 2019 Suzan complimented efforts of handyDART, particularly appreciated availability of service at this time. Isabel shared similar appreciation and the availability of the seniors bus pass 	For Info	Dave Guthrie - handyDART
8	New Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Powerpoint Presentation on Mobility Guide Video Series</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested feedback on what elements to include in the video series Isabel – can't hear the next stop is being announced and has trouble seeing PID 3 videos being considered – 1. walk thru of bus, 2. using a motorized mobility aid, 3. planning a trip Susan suggested adding: How to use Busline and to reference community travel training 	For Info and Feedback	Danielle Harriott – Regional Transit Manager (Operations)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Suzan asked who will be used in the video, people with disabilities or actors? Danielle: It hasn't been decided, current challenges under COVID pose other considerations ○ Susan noted older videos exist from BCT on these subjects; suggested attention needs to be paid to language/terminology used (ie. bus, fixed route, schedule, handyDART) not all would understand this. Sensitivity to words such as "impaired" are apparently used in some material. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Presentation – Custom Transit Registration Update</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Danielle provided overview of why a new registration process is being implemented - recognizes significant enhancements in the accessibility of conventional services, which will maximize availability for those requiring specialized transit service. RFP for January 2021 to conduct assessments ○ Currently this process is in 12 communities in BC ○ Susan noted BC Transit used to do a full interview ○ Suzan asked if the handyDART guides will be updated?; Danielle: Yes. ○ Suzan asked how this would impact Taxi Saver Program? Danielle: No change to program, based on eligibility. ● <i>Councillor Dubow left meeting at 11:00am</i> 	For Info	Danielle Harriott – Regional Transit Manager (Operations)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>ATAC Charter Feedback</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adding the following items to the Charter were suggested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meetings may be scheduled and conducted virtually ▪ An annual review of the Charter will be conducted ▪ Allow sharing of committee member contact information 	For Input	BCT Staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Confirmation of Committee Member Terms</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Linda will not be joining next year ○ Promotion for new committee members will follow this meeting; seats for 4-6 committee members will be available ○ Committee members who term is ending December 31, 2020 have already been notified ○ Representation from a variety of diverse organizations should be considered ○ Regular attendance at meetings should be an expectation of committee members ○ ACTION: Kelli-Ann will review the charter and prior minutes related to the attendance of committee members and bring this information back to the committee ○ Susan suggested that contact information for committee members and what organization they represent should be included on the nomination form, and that the ATAC chair and vice-chair could participate in nomination committee, or 	For Info	Chair/BCT Staff

	<p>a second member who is going into their second term if the Chair/Vice Chair is up for re-nomination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isabel requested an agenda item for an upcoming meeting - bus stop location / accessibility standards and cleanliness (concerns related syringes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kevin provided the following information: Bus stops are maintained by each municipality and a goal for BCT in 2021 is to work more closely with municipalities to improve curbs and stops • Don noted timing of our meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ACTION: Kelli-Ann will send a survey with the next meeting invite asking about committee members' best day and time of day to attend an ATAC meeting • Next meeting will be scheduled February or March 2021, after VRTS Board has approved the new committee members 		
9	<p>Review of New Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kelli-Ann will review the charter and prior minutes related to the attendance of committee members and bring this information back to the committee ○ ACTION: Kelli-Ann will send a survey with the next meeting invite to come with survey asking about committee members best day and time of day to attend an ATAC meeting 	For Info	Chair
10	<p>Adjournment Motion: Suzan Jennings; 2nd: Isabel Sommerville Meeting adjourned 12:02pm</p>		