

Victoria Regional Transit Commission

Chair and Members

June 13, 2023

#9

PREPARED FOR: Victoria Regional Transit Commission

PURPOSE

To provide the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (“the Commission”) with a summary report regarding the delivery of service and key activities since the last Commission meeting. This report is presented to the Commission for INFORMATION.

INTRODUCTION

As transit ridership continues to return at an encouraging rate, the Victoria Regional Transit System remains focused on delivering transit service that is safe, reliable and easy to use. Progress also continues on transformational projects including the implementation of the electronic fare collection system (Umo) and the introduction of Battery Electric Buses into regular service.

Since the last report to the Commission in March, Victoria Transit has continued to meet scheduled service targets with few exceptions. Scheduled service delivered for April and May was above the target of 99.5%.

The additional notable updates in this document are categorized by the Objectives in BC Transit’s [Strategic Plan](#).

NOTABLE UPDATES

Always Safe

- **Ambassador Program:** BC Transit’s Ambassador Program (dedicated BC Transit staff who are regularly stationed at major transit activity centres with the primary purpose of supporting a positive and safe customer experience) continues to generate positive feedback from both customers and Transit Operators.
- **Inclement Weather:** In mid-May the Victoria Region experienced its first significant heat wave. The Victoria Operations team initiated heat wave protocols to ensure Operators and customers were safe throughout the duration of the weather period.
- **Incident Management:** The BC Transit security/safety teams continues to collaborate with local law enforcement and community partners on strategies to address high incident areas.

Engaged People

- Collective Agreements with Unifor Local 333 and MoveUP Local 378 were ratified to be consistent with BC Government’s Shared Recovery Mandate.
- BC Transit hosted a Career Fair on Saturday, May 6th. There was strong community support for the event with dozens of interested attendees. BC Transit remains focused on hiring and retention strategies, especially for the role of Transit Operators and Mechanics.



BC Transit Career Fair – May 6, 2023

Satisfied Customers

- **Service Delivered:** Since the last report to the Commission in March, Victoria Transit has continued to meet scheduled service targets with few exceptions. Scheduled service delivered was above 99.5% in both April and May (Figure 1). Note that the drop in service delivery in December was related to the inclement weather.

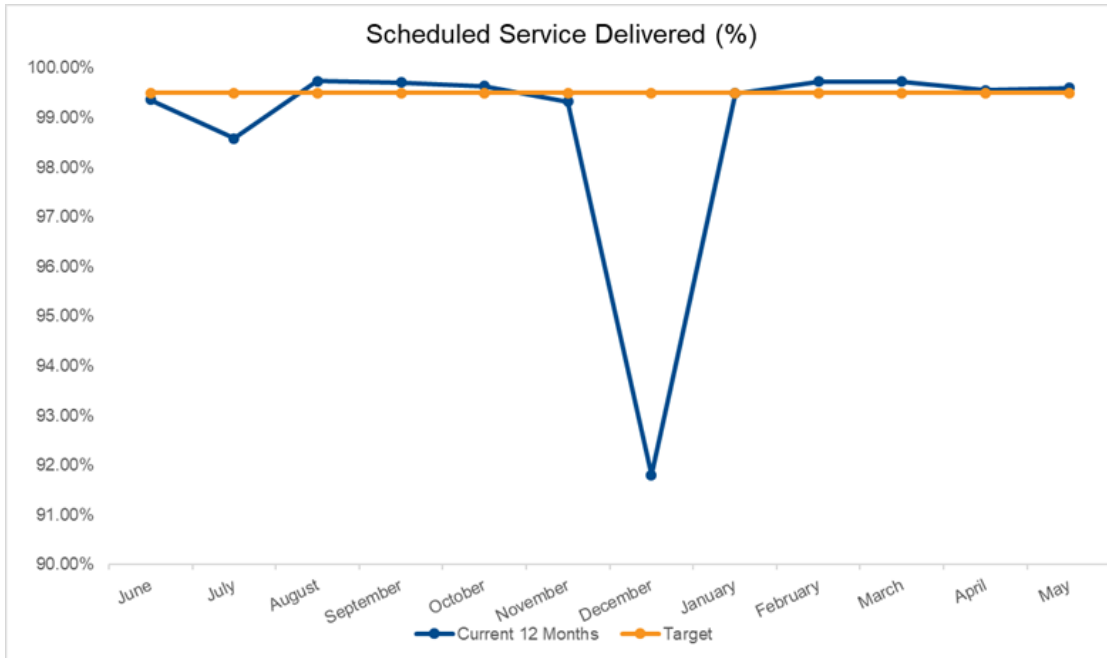


Figure 1: Scheduled Service Delivered

- Pass-Ups:** The estimated amount of people who have been unable to board a trip because the bus is at capacity is higher than in 2022. This is related to ridership levels returning to pre-pandemic levels. To address these pass-ups, the planning team is collaborating with Operations to identify opportunities to address them through schedule enhancements or vehicle changes. The table below provides a summary of the estimated number of people who were unable to board a bus because it was at capacity.

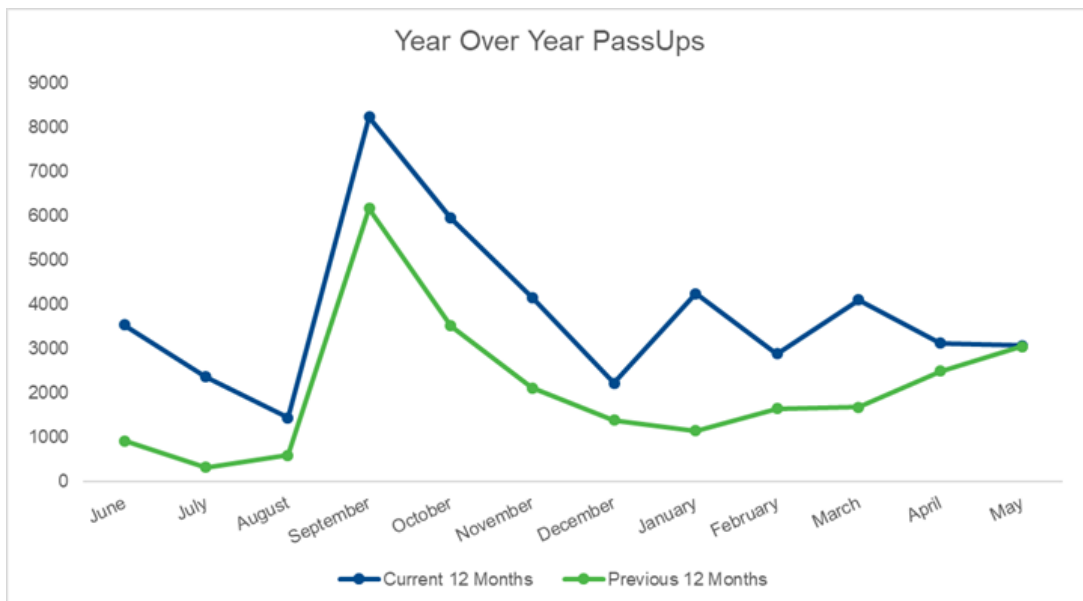


Figure 2: Year Over Year Pass-Ups

- On April 10, the Victoria Region’s first RapidBus, 95 Blink, was launched. This service replaces the Route 50 and connects the West Shore to Downtown. The launch included improved service levels, reduced bus stops and a dedicated brand. In the coming years, additional improvements to the service will include:
 - More frequency
 - Enhanced Transit Priority
 - Better customer amenities such as shelters



RapidBus Launch Event (April 11, 2023) – Chris Coleman, Marianne Alto, Rob Fleming, Kevin Murdoch, Grace Lore, Christy Ridout, Dean Murdock

- **Umo:** BC Transit continues to prepare for the exciting launch of the Umo electronic fare system in summer 2023. BC Transit employees started piloting the project in April. The official launch of the service is set for this summer, with the official date to be confirmed once testing is complete.



Umo Validators

Thriving Communities

- On May 22, BC Transit participated in the 123rd Annual Victoria Day Parade. BC Transit showcased its demonstration Battery Electric Bus.



2023 Victoria Day Parade

- For handyDART service, the rides per hour in 2022/23 increased by 9.97% from the previous year with a total of 727,408 trips. The goal for 2023-24 is to continue to maximize service delivery and ridership and a more comprehensive summary of handyDART performance will be shared at an upcoming Commission meeting.

Responsible Stewardship

- **Battery Electric Bus:** Construction continues at the Victoria Transit Centre for the installation of the Battery Electric Bus charging stations. The Safety and Training team continue to test the first Battery Electric Bus.



BC Transit Battery Electric Bus

LOOKING AHEAD

Heading into the summer months, Victoria Operations will be focusing on the following key initiatives:

- Continuing to focus on the safety of our Operators and customers
- The launch of the Umo electronic fare system
- Preparing for and adapting to any inclement weather, especially related to heat waves
- The delivery of service on July 1st (Canada Day), where we traditionally experience some of the highest volumes of customers who are attending events across the Victoria Region
- The implementation of the following service changes:
 - July 2023 service changes: Seasonal adjustments.
 - September 2023 service changes: September is typically BC Transit's highest ridership month, as students begin their school year and many people are adjusting to new travel habits
- Adapting to summer road construction projects
- Participating in Victoria's annual Pride parade (July 9)
- Hosting and attending Career Fairs to promote BC Transit opportunities (specifically Transit Operator and Mechanic positions)

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission receive the Victoria Transit update for INFORMATION.

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Date prepared: May 24, 2023