

SUBJECT: PLANNING UPDATE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Victoria Regional Transit Commission an update of transit planning activities for **INFORMATION**.

New Operational Service Issues

- **Service to DND** – A private company will be providing user-pay ferry service starting May 1st to transport military staff from Colwood to CFB Esquimalt. Efforts by a private bus operator to run a “Blue Bus” service between Colwood and CFB Esquimalt have been canceled due to the announcement of the new ferry service. BC Transit will continue to monitor ridership on the existing Route 25 (Western Exchange/Maplewood) service. Route 25 provides peak service between Juan de Fuca and DND with eight weekday trips in each direction. The existing service is underutilized and can accommodate additional passengers.

Craigflower Bridge Replacement – The Craigflower Bridge Replacement project has been delayed until 2013. The bridge closure as well as another public works project in Saanich will require closure of portions of Gorge Rd and Admirals Rd. This closure will impact service on the Route 11 through the Gorge-Tillicum neighborhood. BC Transit and Saanich staff will review the detour routing when the project start date is rescheduled.

New Planning Initiatives

- **Transit Priority Studies** – BC Transit has completed a preliminary assessment of the region’s road network to identify locations that could benefit from transit priority. A separate report has been prepared to request approval from the Commission of the work plan and budget.
- **Service Review** –A proposed work plan for a service review is being developed that includes the development of transit service performance standards based on the Transit Future service hierarchy to measure, monitor, and prioritize transit resource allocation. The plan will recommend cost-neutral transit service changes that align with the Transit Future Plan, improve service to customers and improve the effectiveness of the transit system. The service review will also outline future service expansion options. The service review work plan will be presented to the next Victoria Regional Transit Commission meeting.

Upcoming Planning Activities

- **Service Planning**

- **June 2012** (conventional summer schedule) has been developed and will be implemented effective June 25th. The schedule includes seasonal reductions in service levels to better match service to demand. Service changes will impact the majority of bus routes in the region and include the seasonal cancellation of express and school special trips oriented to secondary schools, UVic and Camosun.
- **September 2012** (conventional fall schedule) is in development and will be implemented September 3rd. Changes to the fall schedule are highlighted in the table below.

Summary of proposed fall service changes

Cancelled Trips	# Trips	New Trips	# Trips
1 Richardson	-14	4 Hillside/UVic	6
10 Royal Jubilee/Dockyard	-2	11 UVic Tillicum	1
22 Hillside/Vic General	-2	14 UVic/Vic General	9
24 Cedar Hill/Admirals Walk	-1	21 Interurban	1
50 Langford	-1	25 Maplewood/Admirals Walk	1
52 Colwood	-1	26 UVic/Dockyard	4

As with most schedule reviews, service levels on trips with low ridership have been reduced and the service has been re-allocated to bus routes with higher ridership demand. The majority of new trips have been added in the morning peak shoulder period to UVIC. The route 1 Richardson was specifically targeted for corrective action, reducing service from a one hour frequency to a two hour frequency, due to low ridership on the route experienced for a number of years. This route will likely be converted to community buses when low floor accessible community buses are available for operation in Victoria next year.

A contingency of 5,000 unscheduled service hours has also been established to provide Operations the ability to assign “overload buses” to help address passenger pass-ups that occur in the fall and winter time period. One additional bus will be added to the fleet to ensure some of these hours can be utilized at peak times.

A handyDART expansion of 2,000 hours will be implemented to help address the long wait times associated with booking non-subscription trips. The hours will be allocated to midday and evening weekdays, and throughout the day on

weekends. This expansion does not require an additional handyDART vehicle.

On-going Operational Service Issues

- **handyDART** – Existing handyDART service is oversubscribed during peak travel times and many passenger must wait up to two weeks to book a non-subscription trip during these times of the day.

On-going Service Planning Initiatives

- **CRD Regional Transportation Plan** – BC Transit is participating as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee.
- **Spencer Interchange** – The Spencer Interchange Project is underway and is expected to be completed within the year. The project will include closing access across Hwy 1 at the existing Spencer Road intersection. Analysis is being conducted to determine the impact (i.e. increase in service hours) to accommodate the rerouting of the 56/57 Spencer/Millstream service and the “dead heading” of out-of-service buses from around the region to the Langford Transit Centre.

On-going Infrastructure Planning

- **Douglas Street Transit Signal Priority** – A full system-wide test was performed March 20th to March 27th at 18 intersections along Douglas Street. The testing was undertaken to confirm that the controllers were properly receiving TSP requests from approaching buses, to assess signal timing/sequencing and to make modifications where required. Overall, the testing was considered a success and all parties have agreed that the project is now operational. The reliability of transit is anticipated to improve on this corridor and on-going monitoring will be undertaken to assess the benefits realized as a result of this initiative.
- **BC Transit Shelter Program** - BC Transit has received over 75 requests for bus shelters and has approved 55 locations to proceed to implementation. Due to number of requests, some of the implementation may be deferred to 2013/14. In addition, design changes have been implemented for the Tara Precision shelters to increase durability to vandalism.
- **UVIC Campus Transit Plan** - The UVic Transit Exchange is at operational capacity during peak service hours and additional capacity is required to accommodate future growth in service to UVic. BC Transit is working with UVic to identify a long-term location for a future transit exchange, as well as interim facility options. Four options have been identified for evaluation.
- **Hwy 17 Corridor Planning Study** – BC Transit is participating as a member of the Technical Working Group. The plan includes incorporating elements of the Transit Future Plan which include future Park & Rides, transit exchanges and transit priority measures to support a future Rapid Transit service along Highway 17.

- **Saanich Shelbourne Corridor Study** - BC Transit is working with Saanich to identify opportunities for transit signal priority and improvements to transit stops on Shelbourne as a part of their corridor study.
 - **Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Project** – BC Transit is participating on a Local Funding Task Force (chaired by the CRD). The purpose of this joint taskforce is to evaluate and recommend funding and incentive options to raise the local share of costs for the Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Project and other transit infrastructure priorities identified in the Transit Future Plan. <http://www.lrtlocalfunding.ca/>
 - **Operations & Maintenance Facilities** - The handyDART operations and maintenance facility is at capacity and BC Transit is working to identify short and long term options to store and maintain the handyDART fleet.
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RECOMMENDATION

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

Respectfully,



Manuel Achadinha
President and Chief Executive Officer