

Hope Transit Implementation Public Engagement Report



December 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public engagement has been conducted on the development of transit service to Hope. The connection will fulfill some of the key recommendations of the Fraser Valley Regional District's (FVRD) Strategic Review of Transit and the Chilliwack Transit Future Plan, endorsed by the FVRD Board on March 26, 2013 and the City of Chilliwack Council in 2012.

The public engagement included four open house events, a dedicated transit future webpage, a key stakeholder distribution email, posters at key bus stops and onboard the buses, online surveys, print surveys, on-board surveys, a media release and associated paper, radio and social media advertising. Approximately 130 people attended the open houses and 431 responses were received to the online/hard copy survey.

The general feedback suggested support for transit service to Hope with just over half of respondents indicating that the routing and schedule options outlined met their need. However, there was significant feedback relating to a desire to serve Silver Creek, Kawkawa Lake and more direct service all the way to Chilliwack via Highway 1 with mid-morning and mid-afternoon trips. Additional feedback related to desire to see bus stops that serve the First Nations on Highway 7, local routing around Hope to serve the recreation centre/library complex, Hospital and Save on Foods and then a desire to connect to an early FVX service to travel onwards to Vancouver as well as providing evening service.

The engagement responses, along with specific route timing information and ridership analysis will be analyzed and used by the Hope Steering Committee to develop the final routing and schedules for the Hope transit service.

INTRODUCTION

The District of Hope Council resolved in early 2016 to support the establishment of a Sub-Regional Transit Service to connect the District of Hope to the Town of Agassiz in the District of Kent. The connection will fulfill some of the key recommendations of the Fraser Valley Regional District's (FVRD) Strategic Review of Transit and the Chilliwack Transit Future Plan, endorsed by the FVRD Board on March 26, 2013 and the City of Chilliwack Council in 2012.

In order to guide the implementation of this new service, the Hope Transit Service Steering Committee was established. This committee included funding partner members (BC Transit, FVRD, District of Hope) and advisory members (District of Kent, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure [MOTI] and First Canada ULC) to guide the project through the various stages required prior to implementation as outlined in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Hope Transit Implementation Timeline



The steering committee informed the development of draft route and schedule options for public engagement. The public engagement process was a collaborative effort led by BC Transit and supported by the FVRD, District of Hope and First Canada staff. This report provides a summary of the engagement process and results.

PURPOSE

The engagement strategy was designed to achieve the following goals:

- Identify and solicit targeted feedback from businesses, organizations, key community groups and community members primarily within Hope, Agassiz, Harrison Hot Springs and Chilliwack.

- Employ a variety of methods and means to stimulate participants and ensure a wide range of citizens are reached.
- Ensure the final result reflects the public’s needs and desires by incorporating feedback into the proposed service changes as appropriate.

METHOD

The public engagement included four open house events, a dedicated transit future webpage, a key stakeholder distribution email, posters at key bus stops and onboard the buses, online surveys, print surveys, on-board surveys, a media release and associated paper, radio and social media advertising.

Website

The Chilliwack and Agassiz-Harrison Transit Future web pages were updated to provide information about the future service expansion to Hope and ways to get involved. This provided background information to the proposed new service, a link to the Chilliwack Transit Future Plan, a link to the online survey as well as updates on engagement events and ways to provide feedback during the engagement process. The website can be found here: <https://bctransit.com/chilliwack/transit-future>.

Mail Drop, Advertising & Media

A variety of methods were used to advertise the opportunities to provide input, including:

- Press release and advertisements in local papers and radio
- Posters at key bus shelters and community locations (Hope District Hall, Hope Library, Hope Recreation Centre)
- Interior bus cards on the transit buses
- Facebook and Instagram advertisements and website updates and notices

TRANSIT future
actionplan

OPEN HOUSES

Proposed Transit Connection to Hope

BC Transit, the FVRD and the District of Hope are planning transit service from Agassiz to Hope, with connections to Chilliwack, in the fall 2017.

Information about the proposed route and schedule and the online survey is at www.bctransit.com/chilliwack ➔ Transit Future

Survey is open until December 2.

VISIT US

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24	5 pm – 7 pm	District of Hope, District Hall
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25	8:30 am – 10:30 am 12:00 noon – 3 pm	Hope & District Recreation Centre Save on Foods, Hope

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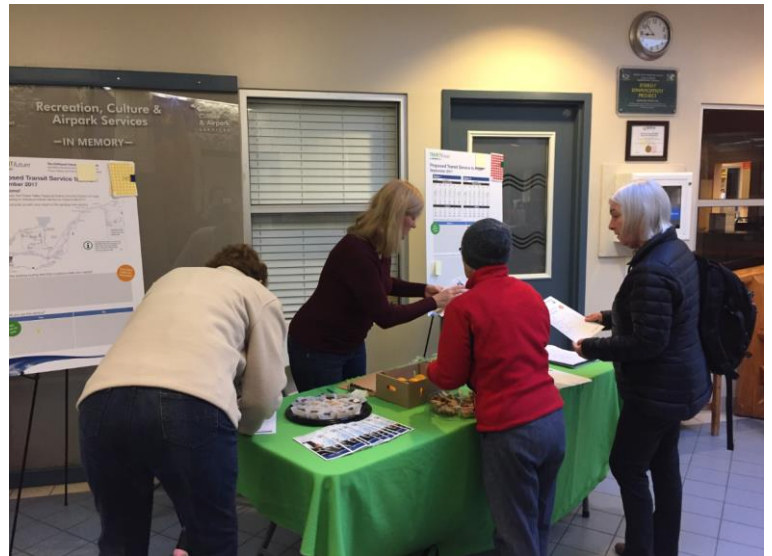
Surveys

Local residents, workers, transit riders and community members were encouraged to complete the Hope survey (Appendix A). This survey was available from Monday 21 November until Saturday 3 December, 2016 online, onboard the Route 11: Agassiz-Harrison as well as in hard copy during the community engagement events.

There were several key drop off locations should respondents wish to complete these at home, including any Chilliwack / Agassiz-Harrison bus driver, Hope District Hall and Hope Recreation Centre.

Open Houses

Three open house events were planned and publicised for late November including a drop-in evening event at the District of Hope Council Chambers, and two daytime events on a transit bus at Hope recreation centre and Save on Foods. These engagement events were intended to share information about the proposed Hope transit service and hear community feedback, primarily on the route and schedule options. An additional event was included at Hope Secondary school during the lunch break; this event was unpublicized.



VISIT US		
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24	5 pm – 7 pm	District of Hope, District Hall
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25	8:30 am – 10:30 am	Hope & District Recreation Centre
	12:00 noon – 3 pm	Save on Foods, Hope



At the engagement meetings participants were able to access information on the proposed service changes via open house boards, speak to BC Transit and local municipal and FVRD staff and provide feedback via a hard copy survey.



Driver Engagement

In addition, a series of driver meetings were held at the First Canada operations and maintenance facility at shift start and end times. These enabled drivers to ask questions and provide feedback and suggestions on the proposals.

RESULTS

Response Rate

Table 1 provides a summary of the response rates to the various engagement events and surveys.

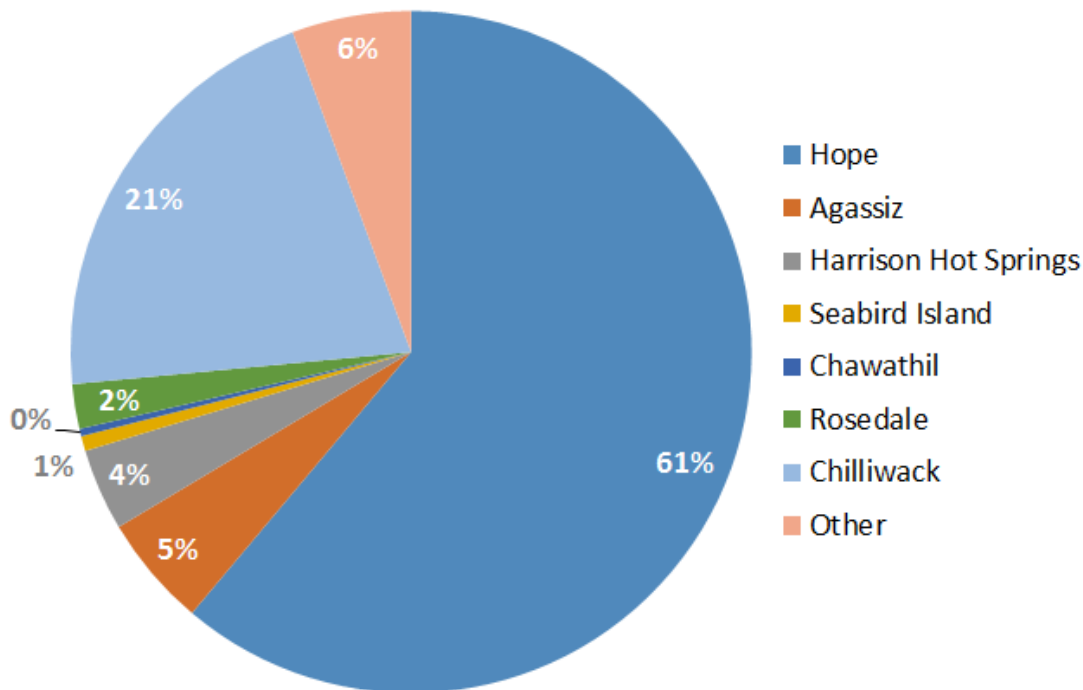
Table 1: Engagement Response Summary

Engagement: Quick Facts	
# Open House Events	4
# Open House Attendees (approx.)	130
Survey Responses (online and hard copy)	360 online 71 hard copy

Respondents

There were a total of 431 responses to the online/hard copy survey of which 283 were fully completed. Most respondents were from Hope (61%) with a considerable number from Chilliwack (21%) and only a limited number from Agassiz (5%) (Figure1). Most 'other' respondents were from Metro Vancouver. Over half of the respondents (53%) were adults between the ages of 25 and 54 years, followed by adults aged 55 years and older (33%) with only 14% younger than 25.

Figure 1: Respondent Location

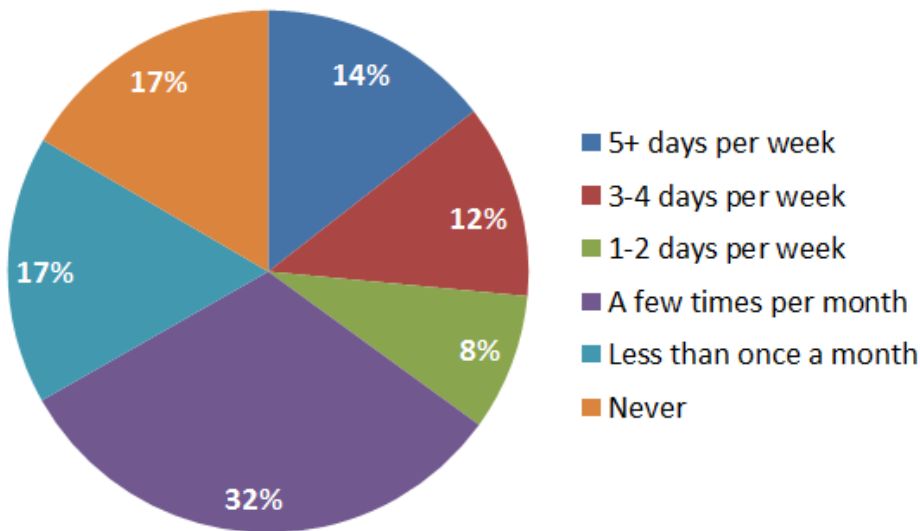


Most respondents (41%) never ride transit, the main reason relating to the fact that there is no service in Hope, which is where majority of respondents were from, followed by respondents owning a car or finding transit inconvenient. However, approximately 37% of respondents were regular transit riders (1-2 times per week or more) using primarily Route 11: Agassiz-Harrison, Route 1: Vedder, Route 66: FVX and Route 3: Chilliwack.

Level of Support

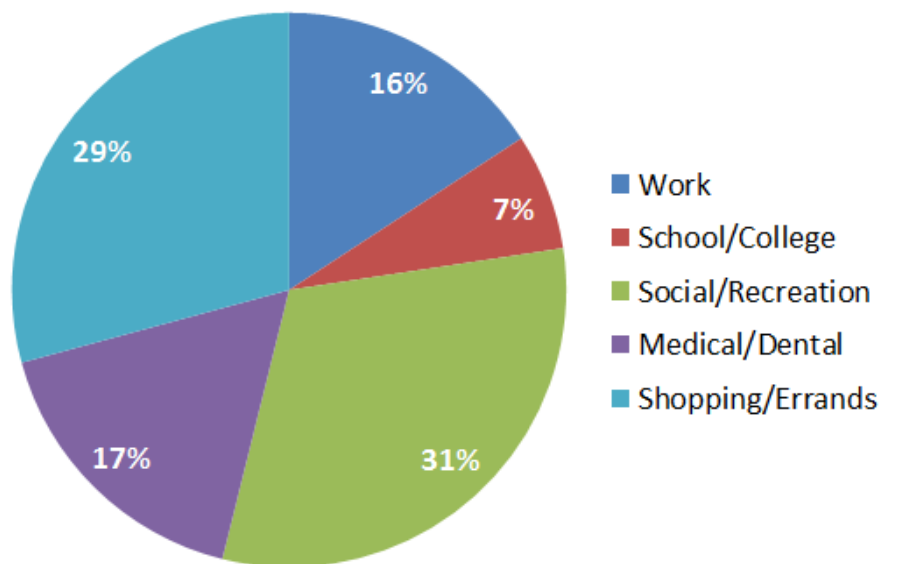
35% of respondents indicated that they would use the Hope transit service regularly (1-2 times per week or more) if it was introduced at a time that worked for them (Figure 2). Majority of respondents (56%) indicated that they would use the service to go to Chilliwack, with a small number wishing to use the service to travel to Agassiz (11%) or in the opposite direction to Hope (18%).

Figure 2: Potential Future Use of the Hope Transit Service



Respondents indicated that they would use the service for a mix of purposes, primarily for social and recreation or shopping and errands, followed by medical/dental and work with a limited number intending to use it for school/college (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Trip Purpose



Routing & Stop Locations

Respondents were asked to provide their feedback on the proposed routing, outlined in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Schedule Options

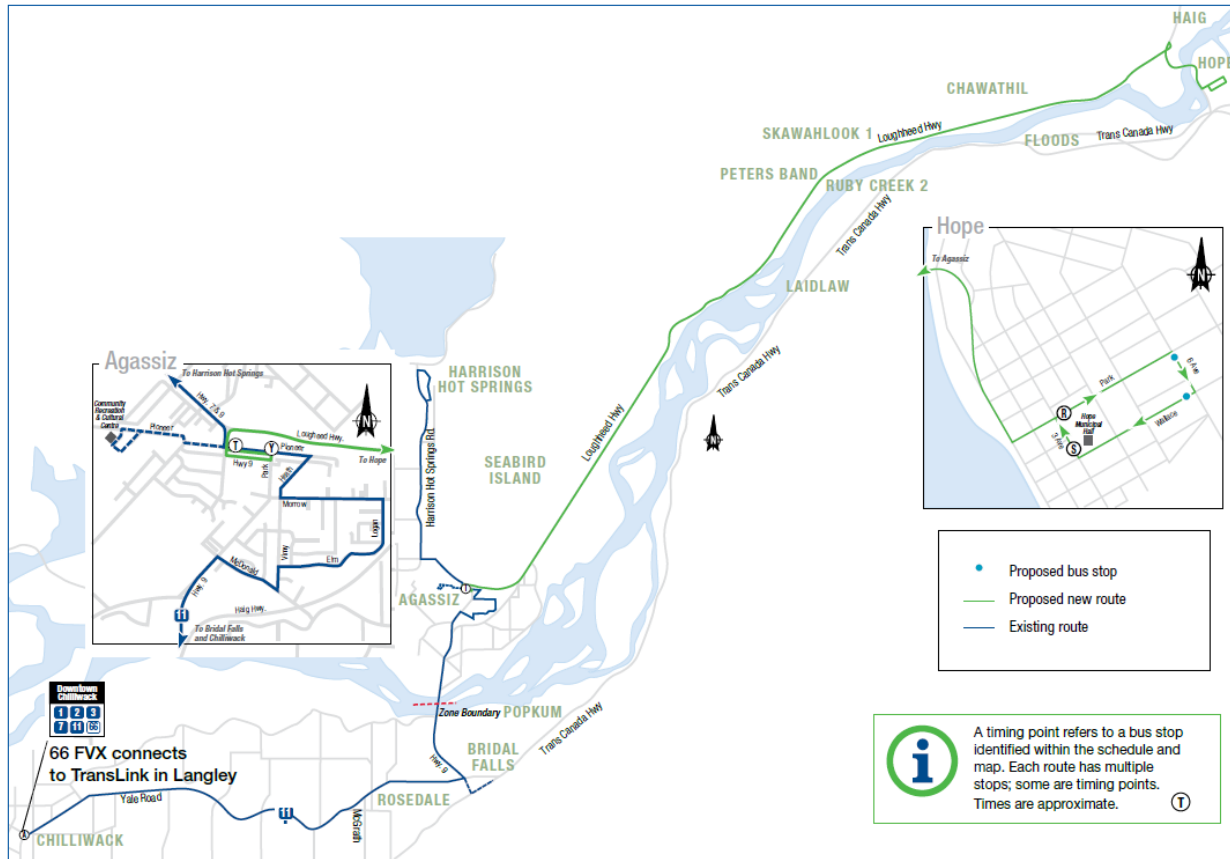
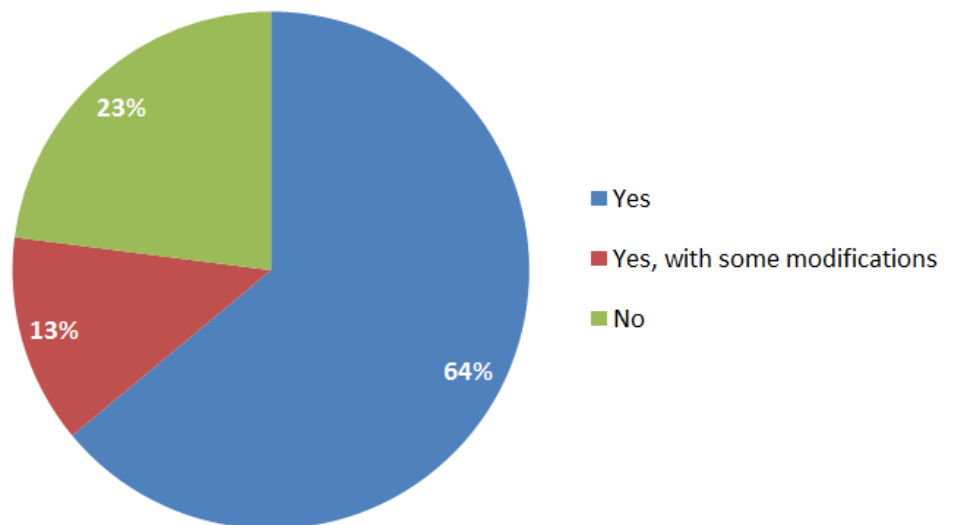


Figure 5: Does the Proposed Routing meet Respondent Needs

64% of respondents indicated that the current routing met their needs. However, over 36% of respondents indicated that either the current routing did not meet their needs or would require modifications (Figure 5).

Further, 35% of respondents indicated that additional stops would be required.



The key route changes and additional stop locations identified are outlined in Table 2. Table 2 also includes feedback provided at the open house events relating to routing and stop locations. There were a considerable number of responses related to the desire to have direct service from Hope to Chilliwack on Highway 1 and to serve Silver Creek and Kawkawa Lake.

Table 2: Suggested Changes to the Hope Routing & Stop Locations

Theme	Key Suggested Changes
Routing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct service to Chilliwack on Hwy 1 • Local routing around Hope to cover the Recreation Centre, Hospital and Save On Foods
Key Destinations (including stops)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silver Creek/Flood Hope Road • Kawkawa Lake • First Nations on Hwy 7 • Rosedale / Bridal Falls • Link to West Coast Express or Evergreen Lines
Other Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety – desire for seat belts on the highway • Do not want the service

Schedule

Respondents were asked to choose their preference between two schedule options (Figure 6).

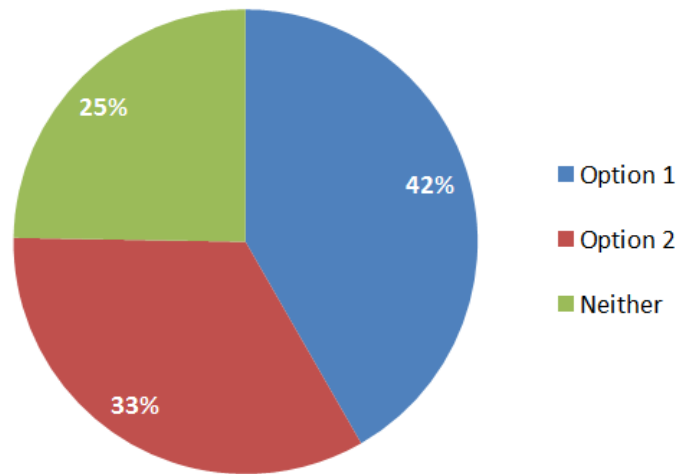
Figure 6: Schedule Options

Option 1					
To Hope			To Agassiz		
Monday to Friday					
T	R	R	S	S	T
Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9	Ar: Hope: Park and 3rd	Lv: Hope: Park and 3rd	Ar: Hope: Municipal Hall	Lv: Hope: Municipal Hall	Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9
5:28	5:55	6:00	6:05	6:05	6:30
6:35	7:02	7:07	7:12	7:12	7:37
4:58	5:25	5:25	5:30	5:35	6:00
6:05	6:32	6:32	6:37	6:42	7:07
Saturday					
6:29	6:56	7:01	7:06	7:06	7:31
7:36	8:03	8:08	8:13	8:13	8:38
3:58	4:25	4:25	4:30	4:35	5:00
5:05	5:32	5:32	5:37	5:42	6:07

Option 2					
To Hope			To Agassiz		
Monday to Friday					
T	R	R	S	S	T
Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9	Ar: Hope: Park and 3rd	Lv: Hope: Park and 3rd	Ar: Hope: Municipal Hall	Lv: Hope: Municipal Hall	Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9
6:29	6:56	7:01	7:06	7:06	7:31
7:36	8:03	8:08	8:13	8:13	8:38
3:58	4:25	4:25	4:30	4:35	5:00
5:05	5:32	5:32	5:37	5:42	6:07
Saturday					
6:29	6:56	7:01	7:06	7:06	7:31
7:36	8:03	8:08	8:13	8:13	8:38
3:58	4:25	4:25	4:30	4:35	5:00
5:05	5:32	5:32	5:37	5:42	6:07

Preference for schedule options was generally evenly split with 42% preferring Option 1 and 33% preferring Option 2. However, 25% of respondents indicated that neither schedule option worked for them (Figure 7). The primary reasons related to a need for different trip times, which was confirmed by 27% of respondents indicating that they would prefer additional trip times in the following question (Figure 8). When asked to identify those additional trip times, respondents indicated a preference for mid-morning, mid-afternoon and noon trips. There were also several requests for evening and Sunday service.

Figure 7: Schedule Option Preference



Additional comments related to the service are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Additional Hope Transit Comments

Theme	Additional Comments
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple respondents without or family/friends without car • Identified that this service is long overdue • Identified this service as a benefit to seniors, youth, those without a vehicle or who don't drive (multiple identified) • This would support local employment and business
Opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about the cost and impact to taxes • Interest in seeing the tax cost per household for the service • Concern it may increase Hope crime rates • Opposition to the service on Hwy 7 versus a more direct route on Hwy 1
Suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequency • Sunday service • Evening service • Direct service to Chilliwack via Hwy 1 • Desire to connect on to Metro Vancouver via Route 66: FVX • Desire that it accommodates bikes so that people can get to the stop given the distance • Desire to see how much a cash fare or monthly pass would be • Desire to see bike lockers and parking at the Agassiz stop location

SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

The general feedback suggested support for transit service to Hope with just over half of respondents indicating that the routing and schedule options outlined met their need. However, there was significant feedback relating to a desire to serve Silver Creek, Kawkawa Lake and more direct service all the way to Chilliwack via Highway 1 with mid-morning and mid-afternoon trips. Additional feedback related to desire to see bus stops that serve the First Nations on Highway 7, local routing around Hope to serve the recreation centre/library complex, Hospital and Save on Foods and then a desire to connect to an early FVX service to travel onwards to Vancouver as well as providing evening service.

The engagement responses, along with specific route timing information and ridership analysis will be analyzed and used by the Hope Steering Committee to develop the final routing and schedules for the Hope transit service.

APPENDIX A: HOPE TRANSIT SURVEY

Proposed Transit Service to Hope: Survey



BC Transit, the Fraser Valley Regional District and the District of Hope are planning to introduce transit service to Hope in fall 2017. We want to understand your transit needs to help us plan for this exciting new service.

Survey is open until Friday December 2, 2016. Information collected is confidential*. The survey is also available online at www.bctransit.com/chilliwack ➔ Transit Future



Q1. 1. Please indicate where you live:

- Hope
- Agassiz
- Harrison Hot Springs
- Chilliwack
- Other (please state) _____
- Seabird Island
- Chawathil
- Rosedale

What is your postal code? _____
(this information will only be used to help us understand your transit travel needs)

Q2. How often do you use transit? (check one only)

- 5+ days a week
- 3 – 4 days a week
- 1 – 2 days a week
- A few times a month
- A few times a year
- Never

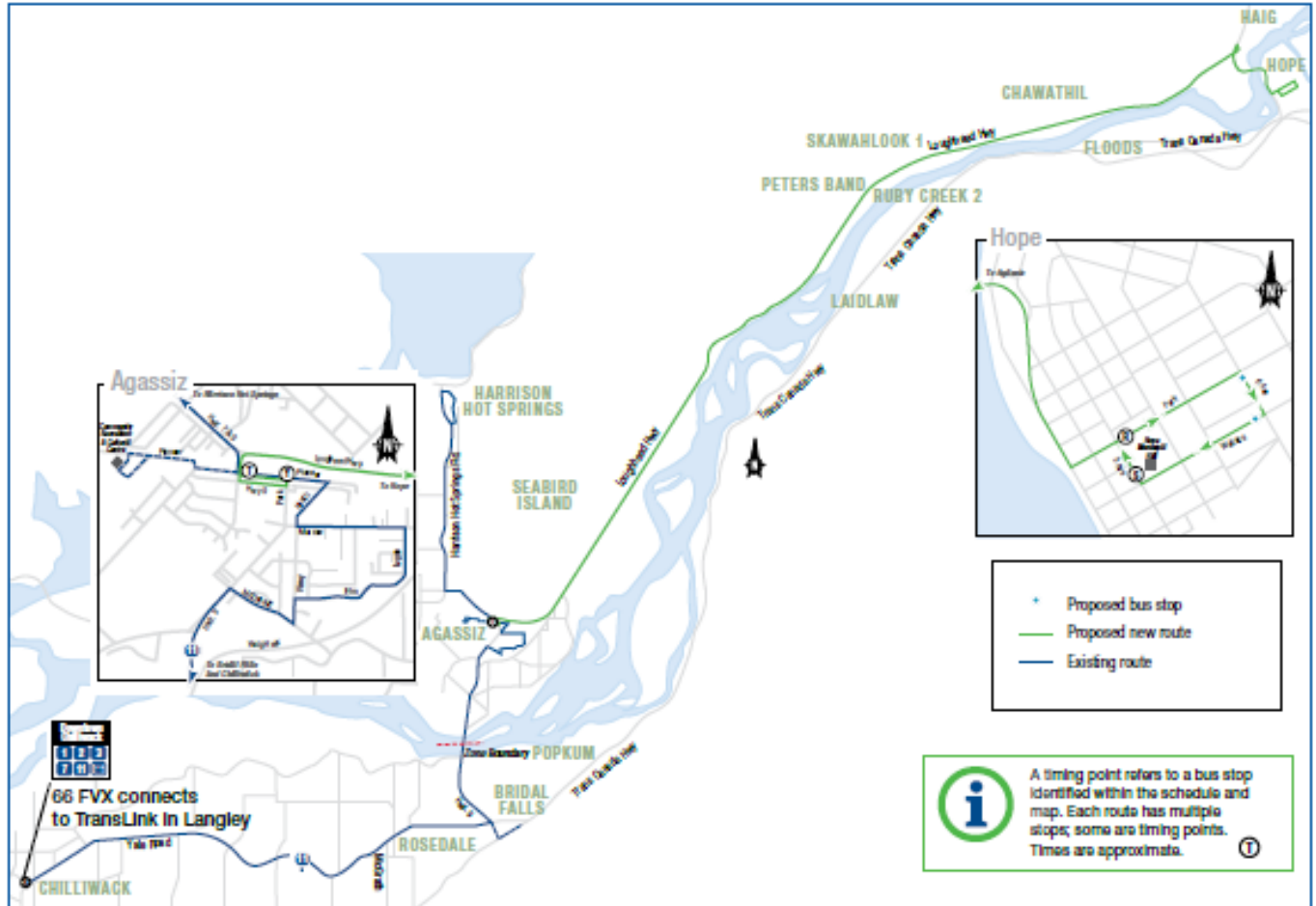
Q3. 3. If you currently use transit, which bus route(s) do you use? (check all that apply)

- 1 Vedder
- 2 Evans
- 3 Chilliwack
- 4 Promontory
- 5 Yarrow-Greendale
- 6 Cultus Lake
- 7 Broadway
- 8 Tyson
- 11 Agassiz/Harrison
- 66 FVX (Fraser Valley Express)

Q4. If you currently do not use transit, why not?

Route

The following map shows the proposed bus route and stop locations between Hope and Agassiz. There is a connection in Agassiz for route 11 to travel to either Chilliwack or Harrison Hot Springs.



Q5. Does the proposed routing meet your needs?

- Yes
- Yes, with modifications (please explain)
- No (please explain)

Please explain:

Q6. Are there additional bus stop locations needed?

- No
- Yes, please identify the additional locations:

Schedule

Funding has been approved to allow for four round trips between Hope and Agassiz from Monday to Saturday. There are two proposed options for transit service based upon this (see below). The schedules have been designed to connect to route 11 trips travelling to Chilliwack.

Schedules have not been designed to connect onwards to Harrison Hot Springs. This connection would require a wait time in Agassiz (potentially one hour or greater).

Schedule Options

Option 1						Option 2					
To Hope			To Agassiz			To Hope			To Agassiz		
Monday to Friday						Monday to Friday					
(T)	(R)	(R)	(S)	(S)	(T)	(T)	(R)	(R)	(S)	(S)	(T)
Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9	Ac Hope: Park and 3rd	Lv: Hope: Park and 3rd	Ac Hope: Municipal Hall	Lv: Hope: Municipal Hall	Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9	Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9	Ac Hope: Park and 3rd	Lv: Hope: Park and 3rd	Ac Hope: Municipal Hall	Lv: Hope: Municipal Hall	Agassiz: Pioneer and Hwy 9
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6:05	6:32	6:32	6:37	6:42	7:07	6:05	6:32	6:32	6:37	6:42	6:07
Saturday						Saturday					
6:29	6:56	7:01	7:06	7:06	7:31	6:29	6:56	7:01	7:06	7:06	7:31
7:36	8:03	8:08	8:13	8:13	8:38	7:36	8:03	8:08	8:13	8:13	8:38
3:58	4:25	4:25	4:30	4:35	5:00	3:58	4:25	4:25	4:30	4:35	5:00
6:05	6:32	6:32	6:37	6:42	6:07	6:05	6:32	6:32	6:37	6:42	6:07

Q7. Which schedule option do you prefer?

- Option 1
 Option 2
 Neither, please explain:

Q8. Are there other trip times that you would prefer?

- No
 Yes, please identify the additional trip times:

Q9. If service was introduced between Hope and Agassiz at a time that worked for you, how often would you use this service?

- 5+ days a week A few times a month
 3 – 4 days a week A few times a year
 1 – 2 days a week Never

Q10. What destination(s) would you go to and for what purpose?

(Identify your top two trip destinations and the main purpose of travel)

Destination	Purpose					
	Work	School/ College	Social/ Recreation	Medical/ Dental	Shopping/ Errands	Other (please state)
E.g. Chilliwack					X	
1.						
2.						

Q11. Which of the following age categories applies to you?

- Under 15 15 – 17 18 – 24
- 25 – 34 35 – 44 45 – 54
- 55 – 64 65 – 74 75+ Prefer not to answer

Any other comments?

*The personal information requested for this survey will be used solely for the purpose of enhancing BC Transit services in your area. BC Transit will not share your personal information. BC Transit will protect your information (its collection, use, retention and destruction) in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If you have questions about the protection of your personal information, please contact BC Transit's Privacy Officer by emailing FOI_Request@BCTransit.com or phone 250-995-5679 (in Victoria) or 1-844-482-6161 or visit BC Transit at 520 Gorge Road East, Victoria, BC.

Thank you for your participation!

Complete and return this survey to one of the following locations by Friday December 2:

- Bus driver on Route 11: Agassiz/Harrison
- District of Hope City Hall,
325 Wallace Street, Hope
- Fraser Valley Regional District Office,
45950 Cheam Avenue, Chilliwack