

# TRANSIT *future*

▶ *service plan*

Kitimat

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2023



# Territorial Acknowledgement

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

Here in Kitimat we are on the lands of the Haisla Nation.

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

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

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# 01 Transit Vision

The Kitimat Transit System provides quality transit services that is affordable, reliable, and safe to all residents of Kitimat. The Kitimat Transit system connects residents to jobs, education, and other essential services they rely on, both locally and regionally through connections with the Skeena Regional Transit Service. Transit has a key role in the shift towards more sustainable transportation modes that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help address climate change.



Provide a quality transit service that is affordable, reliable, and safe



Support the shift towards transit and active transportation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions



Connect residents to jobs, education, and the essential services they rely on



# Transit Supportive Plans

## **Kitimat Official Community Plan (2008)**

- Provide a variety of transit services appropriate to local needs
- Connect local neighbourhoods, businesses, and employment areas
- Provide regional transit connections through partnerships
- Ensure that transit is accessible
- Consider transit in planning new developments

## **Community Energy & Emissions Plan (2021)**

- Shift mode share towards active transportation, transit, and ride-sharing
- Collaborate with BC Transit to promote transit ridership
- Transition to a zero emission transit network
- Promote transit use for commuting

# 02 Shaping Your Transit Future

The role of the Transit Future Service Plan is to:

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

**Review** what has changed for the community

**Inform** both the planning and operational activities

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

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

**Engage** with the community



# 03 BC Transit Corporate Initiatives

Over the next five years, Kitimat and BC Transit will continue to evolve the transit system by introducing new programs and technologies to improve customer experience and reduce impact on the environment.

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

For more information, please visit:

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

## Low Carbon Fleet Program

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

## Digital On Demand

## Electronic Fare Strategy – Umo

<https://www.bctransit.com/umo>

## NextRide

<https://www.bctransit.com/nextride-faq>

## BC Transit Development Referral Program

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

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

# BC Transit Corporate Initiatives

## Low Carbon Fleet Program

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

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

## Digital On-Demand

This is an exciting initiative that uses technology to dynamically dispatch a bus or fleet of vehicles to locations dictated by customers using an app or phone-in service. BC Transit has completed a feasibility study on digital on-demand transit and plans to roll out this service type to one or two communities starting in 2023, with a view to add more communities in future years, based on the success of the initial phase.

## Electronic Fare Strategy - Umo

Smart ticketing providing new ways to pay. BC Transit is working to not only improve rider convenience, but also enable mobility partnerships and create new data collection opportunities.

Systems will also accommodate a mix of fare products, including cash fares. The system will also be able to operate in areas with low-cell phone coverage/service.



# BC Transit Corporate Initiatives

## NextRide

NextRide was launched in 2022 in Kitimat and offers door to door journey planning. It provides bus location information to customers via transit apps, enhances operations control and route information for the operator.

## Development Referral Program

Local governments or developers can send any referrals and supporting information to BC Transit to review.

BC Transit will provide comments to the submitter about how the proposal may affect current or future transit service and infrastructure, and how the application or plan could be changed to better support current or future transit service and infrastructure.

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

BC Transit is committed to building an inclusive environment that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve – this means listening to and meeting the transportation needs of British Columbians. Future plans include furthering engagement with Indigenous Communities and using Gender-Based Analysis+ (GBA+) to integrate multiple perspectives in transit planning, and guide decisions that provide the best experience for all riders.

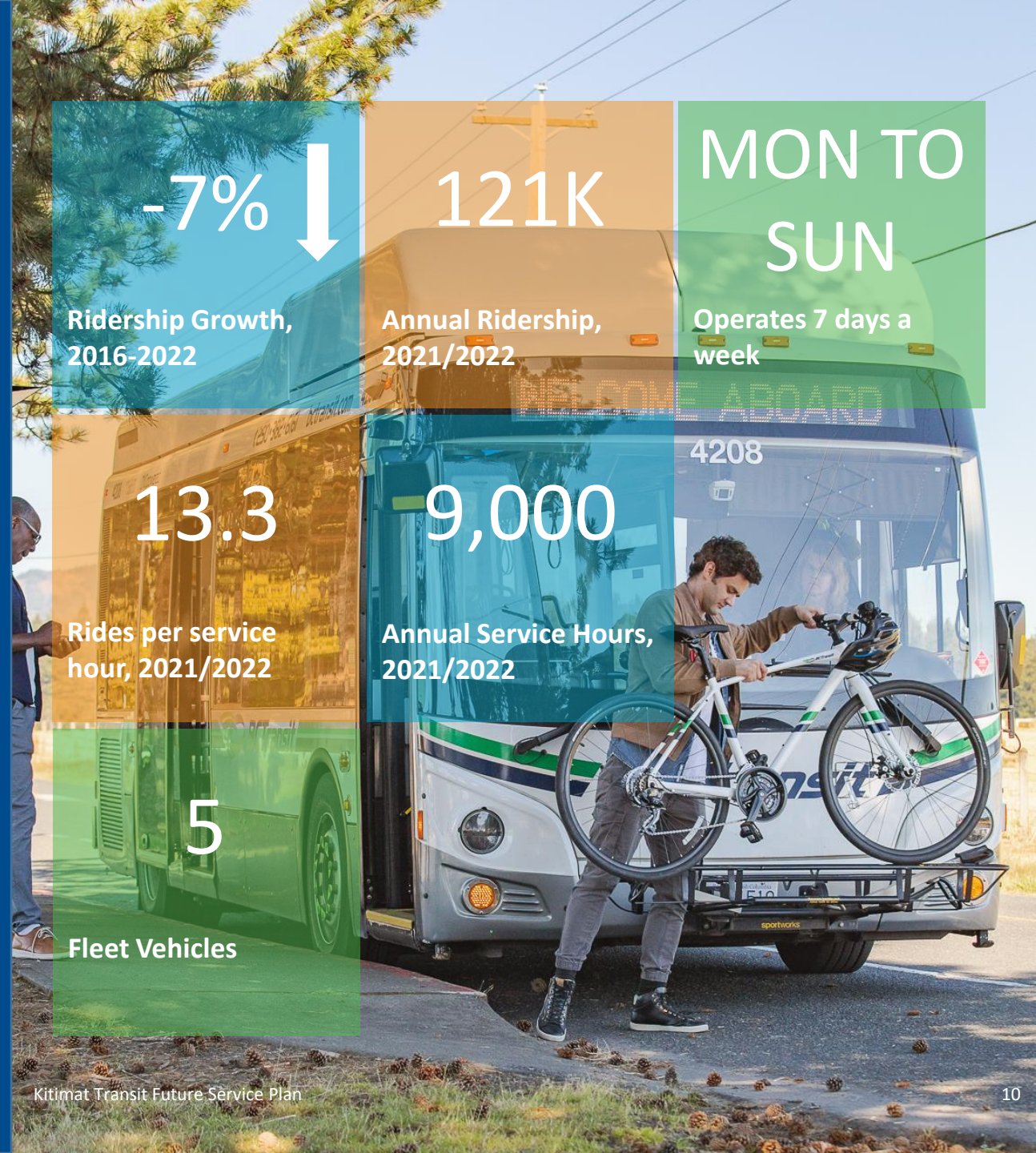
# 04 Transit Today

Kitimat Transit System consists of five routes:

- 1 Whitesail
- 2 Nechako
- 3 Kildala
- 4 Crosstown
- 99 Special

The graphic to the right shows some of the key information about the conventional transit system.

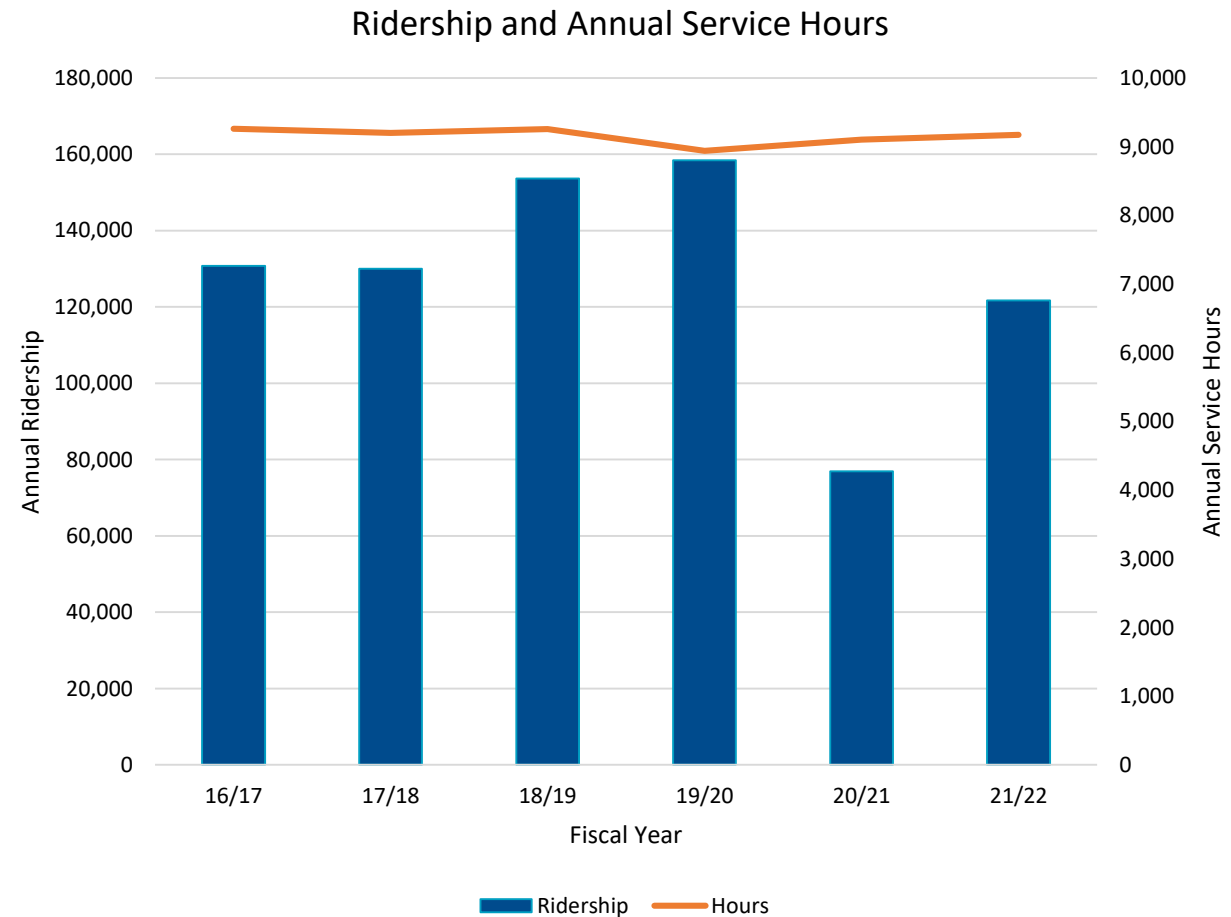
The Kitimat Transit System is well connected to the Skeena Regional Transit System, which provides regional connections. Of significance to this plan are the routes 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector and 12 Kitimaat Village as they provide direct connections to communities outside of Kitimat.



# 05 System Performance

Ridership has varied over time, increasing from 2016 through to the start of 2020, before declining in 2020 due to COVID-19.

COVID-19 impacted ridership, as the need for travel and services changed. Ridership began to recover in 2020 after the initial decline, but still hasn't achieved the same volumes as before the pandemic. Over the same period annual service hours have remained consistent, with over 9,000 hours annually.



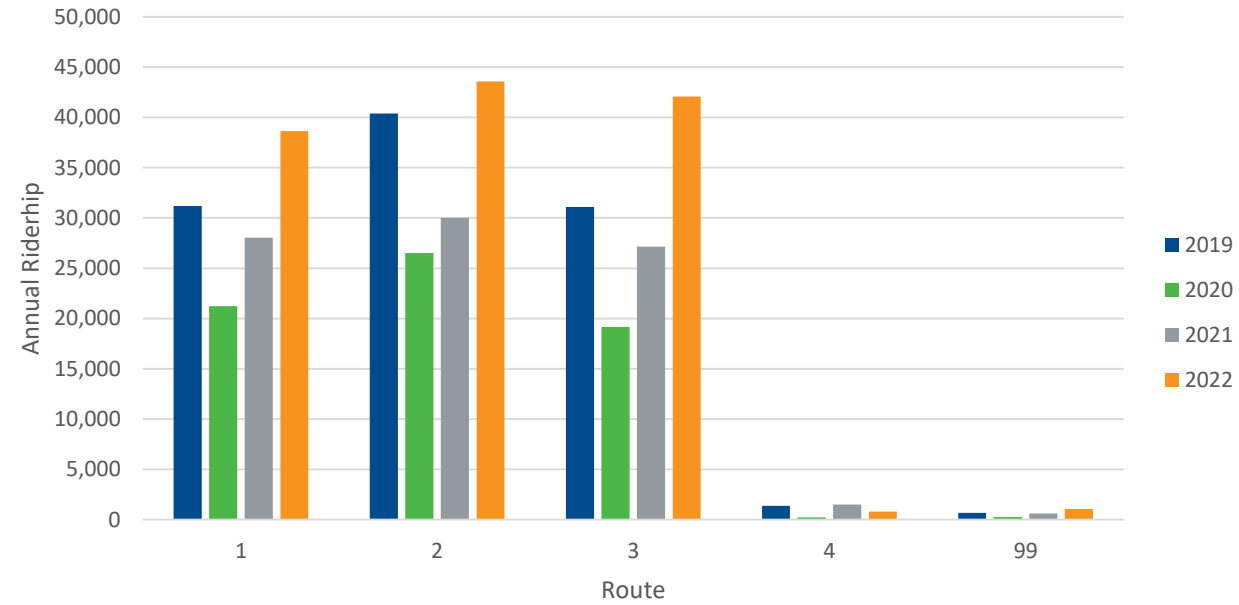
# 06 Route Performance

## Key Takeaways

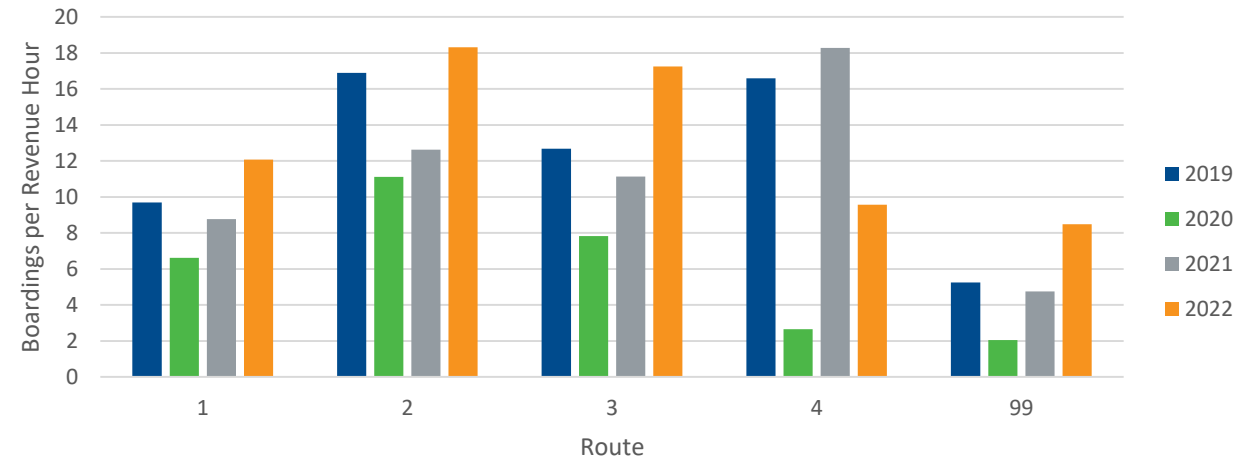
- The majority of ridership is carried on the routes 1, 2, and 3, with the route 2 having the highest ridership.
- While the route 4 carries a lower total volume of passengers, in terms of boarding per service hour, it performs very well. This means that it is performing well given the resources dedicated to it; this is expected for targeted transit service with limited trips.
- For local route performance, the route 2 is the highest performing route, followed by the route 3, and then the route 1.
- Routes 1, 2, 3, and 99 were impacted by COVID-19, with ridership dropping in 2020, starting to recover in 2021, and then exceeding pre-COVID-19 ridership in 2022.

Based on current performance and trends, additional service optimization is not required for the Kitimat routes. Additional targeted service could be warranted on the route 4.

Annual Ridership by Route



Boardings per Revenue Hour





# 07 Transit Need

Between 2016 and 2021, the population of Kitimat grew by 105 people.

Compared to the rest of British Columbia, Kitimat's population is younger, with a higher percentage of youths, a lower percentage of seniors, and a lower average age.

Compared to provincial average, residents are more affluent with a lower proportion of low income residents across all age groups.

With a relatively younger population, there is an opportunity to appeal to young people to create lifetime transit users. Kitimat already provides free transit for students 18 and under in Kitimat, which goes above and beyond the Children under 12 program that is in place across BC.

+1%



Population growth,  
2016-2021

16%

Proportion of youths  
(0-14 years), Kitimat  
2021

14%

Proportion of youths  
(0-14 years), BC 2021

8,236

Population, Kitimat  
2021

17%

Proportion of seniors  
(65 years and over),  
Kitimat 2021

20%

Proportion of seniors  
(65 years and over),  
BC 2021

41.7

Average Age, Kitimat  
2021

5%

Low-income  
Residents, Kitimat  
2021

11%

Low-income  
Residents, BC 2021

# 08 Engagement

## What is Public Engagement

Public engagement, also commonly referred to as public participation, is any process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision-making. It is premised on the belief that residents should have meaningful opportunities to engage in the decisions that affect their communities. It moves past one-way communication and welcomes residents into the decision-making process by ensuring timely information and awareness of opportunities to provide input before decisions are made.

Not all topics require the same level of public engagement. Based on the impact of the decision or change, and the input that is needed to inform the decision, different tools and techniques are considered in each instance.

## Why do we Engage

We engage because, although we have skilled technical experts working across our organization, no one knows the community and its nuances better than the people living there or taking transit each and every day. When we engage, their input becomes part of the decision-making process, helping our leaders, employees and communities deliver services that are responsive to what the community has indicated as important to them.

When public engagement is meaningful, everyone gains something valuable. We benefit from hearing diverse perspectives and gains an understanding of the public's interests, concerns, and priorities. The public gains a greater understanding of our roles responsibilities and requirements. With stronger relationships and two-way communications, our accountability to our communities is enhanced. With timely access to quality information, there is less misinformation, and residents feel heard.

# 08 How we engaged

As part of BC Transit’s commitment to public engagement, outreach was carried out to identify draft service and infrastructure priorities. Engagement occurred in three main phases:

**Pre-engagement:** Meetings with District of Kitimat and Haisla Nation staff to learn about how they’ve engaged their communities in the past and what works well.

**Stakeholder Workshops:** An invite only workshop with key community stakeholders to get their feedback on what is working and what can be improved. These workshops were held on November 2 and 24, 2022. The feedback gathered during the phase informed the development of the priorities presented to the public.

**Project Website and Survey:** Launch of the project website which acts as a central hub for information on the project as well as a public survey to solicit feedback from the wider public. The survey was available from January 16 to 30, 2023

The detailed results of the public engagement can be found in the engagement summary available [here](#).



### Project Website

Hub for project information and survey  
[engage.bctransit.com/kitimat2022](https://engage.bctransit.com/kitimat2022)



**Stakeholder Workshop**  
Small group stakeholder workshop to identify high level priorities



**Social Media**  
Facebook and Twitter posts were used to raise awareness of the project



**Digital Advertisements**  
Ads on digital platforms promoting the project and ways to participate



**Internal Bus Ads**  
Ads displayed in the buses advertising the project and ways to participate

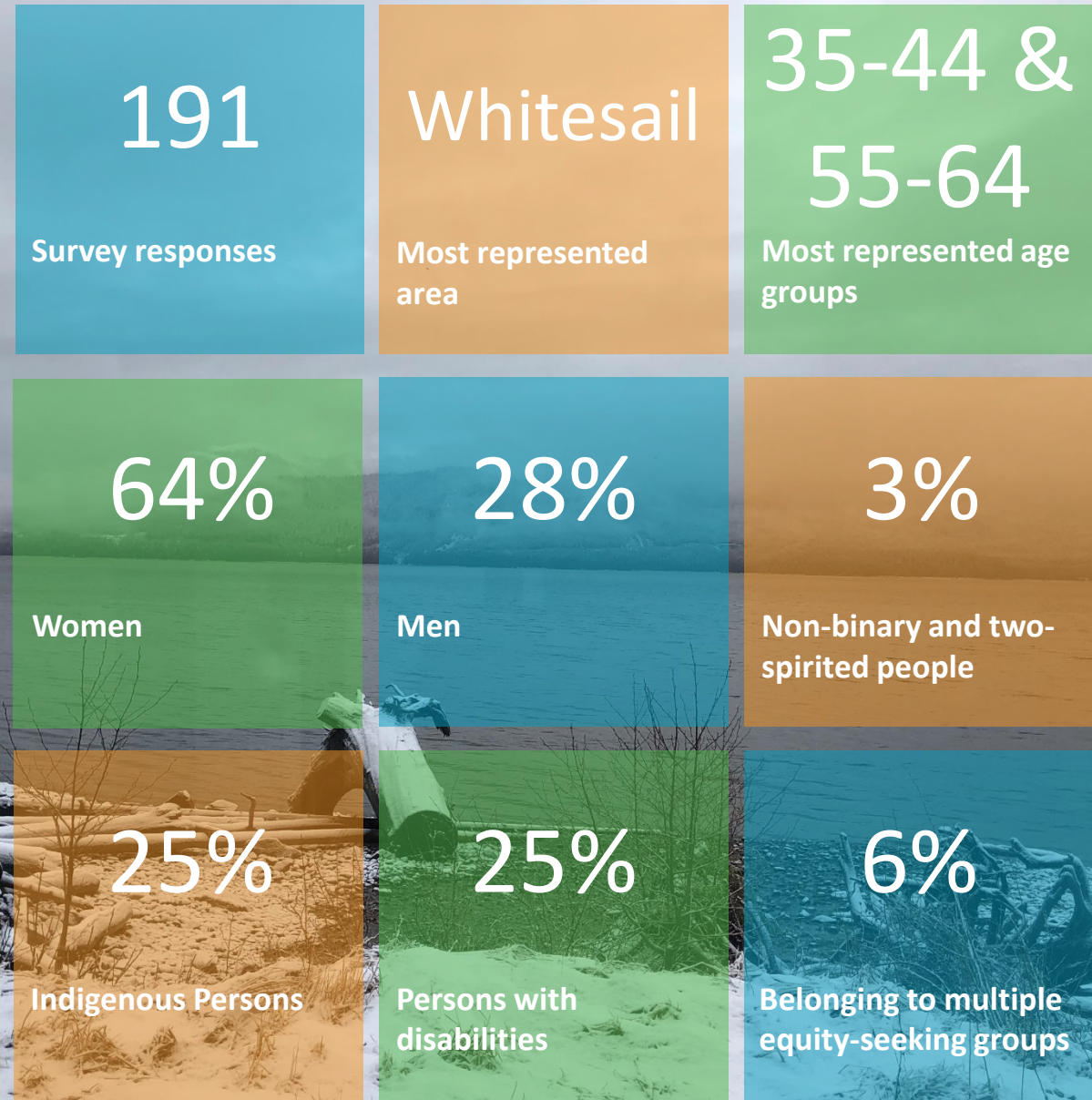
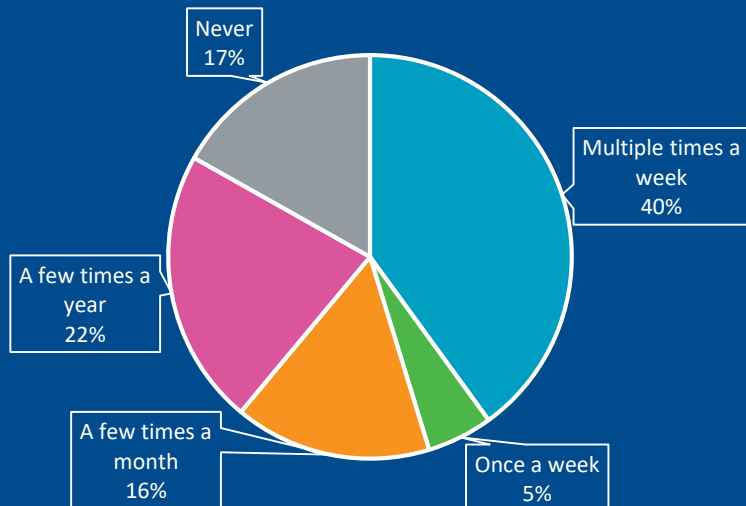


# 08 Who we heard from

Participants lived in the following neighbourhoods or community:

- Whitesail (31 per cent)
- Kildala (23 per cent)
- Nechako (21 per cent)
- Kitamaat Village (14 per cent)
- Cable Car (6 per cent)
- Strawberry Meadows (3 per cent)
- Terrace (1 per cent)
- Other (1 per cent)

A large portion of participants are regular users of transit as shown on the pie chart below:





## 08 What we heard

- Majority of customers are satisfied or very satisfied with the transit service (69 per cent)
- Majority of customers find the service reliable or very reliable (84 per cent)
- Majority of customers feel safe or very safe while using transit (94 per cent)
- Strong support for additional 6:00 a.m. trip on the 4 Crosstown
- Medium support for new industrial route
- Medium support for later weekend service
- Weak support for new transit service to Strawberry Meadows
- Strong support for improvements to the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector, particularly more trips to the airport
- Strong support for improvements to the 12 Kitimaat Village, including more frequency and Sunday service
- Improvements to bus stops, particularly lighting, shelters, and benches



# 08 Ongoing Engagement

## Voice of the Rider

BC Transit believes that in order to understand our riders and prospective riders better, we need to make the community a part of important business decisions. Voice of the Rider is an effort to drive community engagement on every project we undertake, understand the satisfaction levels, and take suggestions to improve the overall transit experience.

## Engaging with Indigenous Communities

BC Transit is developing a strategy for increasing engagement with First Nations and supporting meaningful reconciliation. We recognize the need to engage with communities in ways that are appropriate for each culture. BC Transit will continue to work with the Haisla Nation to understand how we can best serve their community.

## Do you have something to say about transit in your community?

**VOICE**  
of the Rider



Learn more at [engage.bctransit.com/frequently-asked-questions](https://engage.bctransit.com/frequently-asked-questions)

# 09 Local Service Priorities 2023-2028

Priority	Description	Expansion Resources
Additional trip for 4 Crosstown	One additional morning trip on the 4 Crosstown on weekdays.	100 annual service hours
New industrial route	Introduce a new service to the industrial areas west of the Kitimat River. This would include regular service to the businesses around Enterprise Avenue and targeted service to large industrial employers such as Rio Tinto and LNG Canada.	<p>Phase One: 1,375 annual service hours, 1 additional vehicle</p> <hr/> <p>Phase Two: 475 annual service hours</p> <hr/> <p>Phase Three: 325 annual service hours</p>

# 1. Additional Trip on 4 Crosstown

Based on feedback from stakeholders and ridership trends, earlier service on the 4 Crosstown was identified as a priority. This expansion would add one additional trip on the 4 Crosstown at approximately 6:00 a.m.

This expansion of service would increase the early morning service span and provide more transportation options for people traveling early in the day for work or other activities.

100

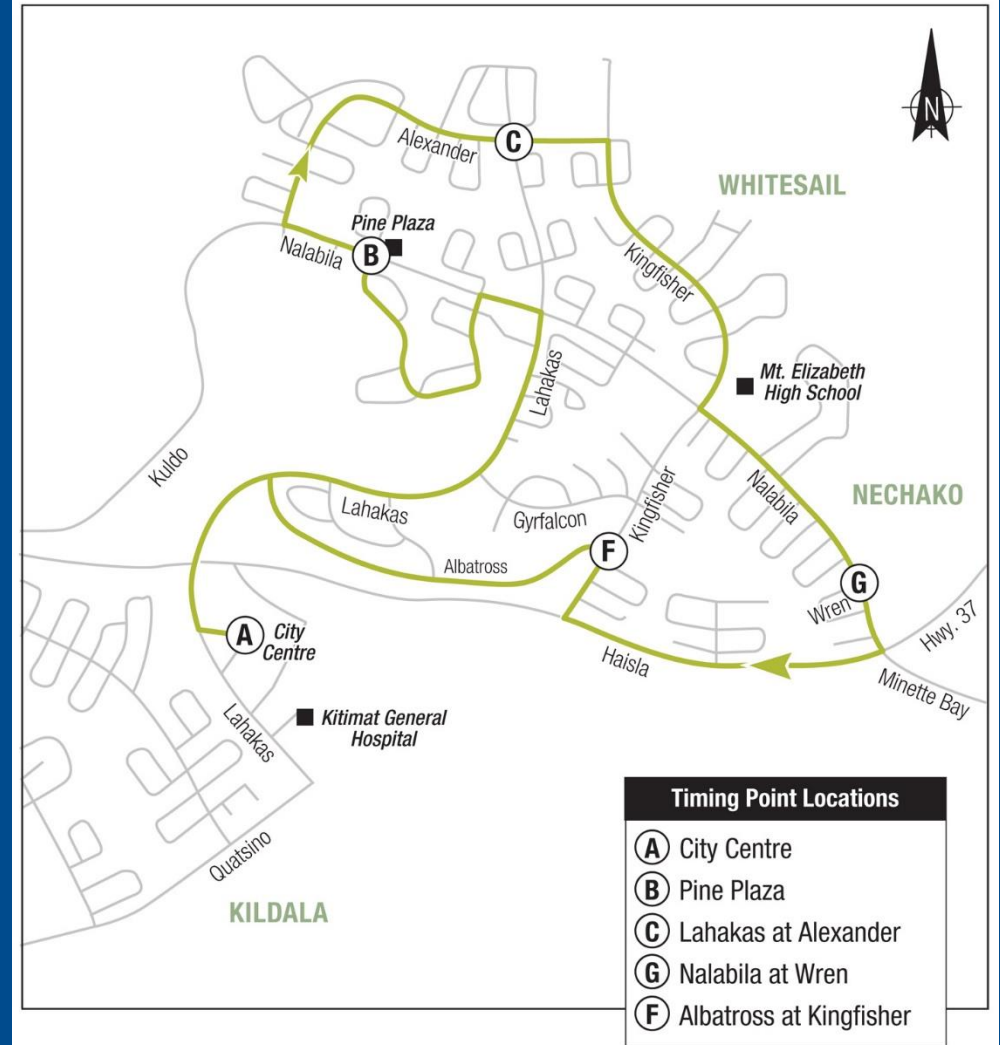
Annual service hours

0\*

Additional Vehicles

\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process

## 4 Crosstown

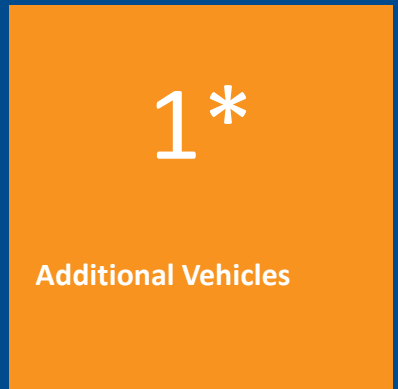
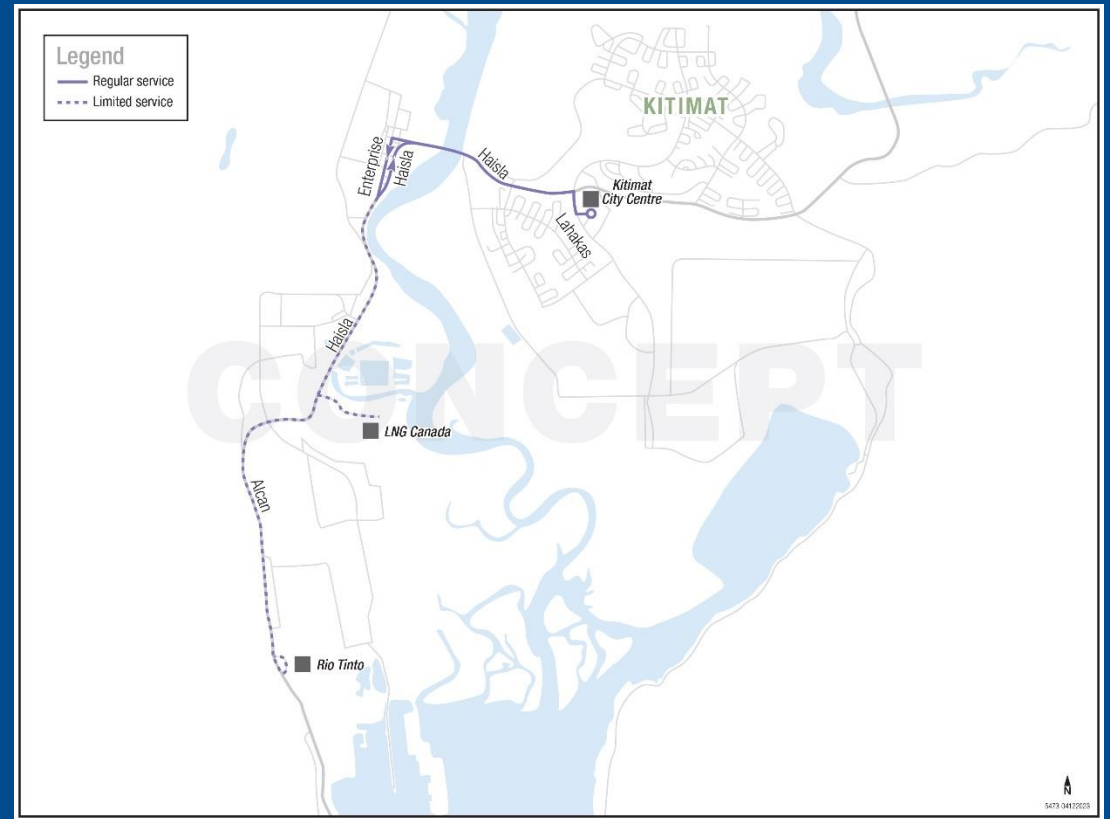




# 2. New Industrial Route

This priority would introduce transit service to the industrial areas to the west of the Kitimat River in three phases. This service would provide regular service from the Kitimat City Centre to the service centre with targeted service to the major employers at shift times.

Phase	Frequency (Minutes)	Service Span	Service Day	Annual Hours	Additional Vehicles
1	120	6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Mon-Fri + targeted Sat & Sun	1,375	1*
2	60	6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Mon-Fri + targeted Sat & Sun	475	0*
3	60	6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Mon-Sun	325	0*



\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process

# 10 Regional Service Priorities 2023-2028

Priority	Description	Expansion Resources
Improve the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector	Improving weekday service frequency to approximately 90 minutes throughout the day.	2,900 annual service hours, 2 additional vehicles
	Adding two additional trips in both directions on Saturdays.	300 annual service hours
	Introducing Sunday service with four trips in both directions.	600 annual service hours
Improve the 12 Kitamaat Village	Improving weekday service frequency to approximately 120 minutes throughout the day.	1,050 annual service hours, 1 additional vehicle
	Introducing Sunday service based on the current Saturday schedule.	175 annual service hours

# 3a. Improved Weekday Frequency on the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector

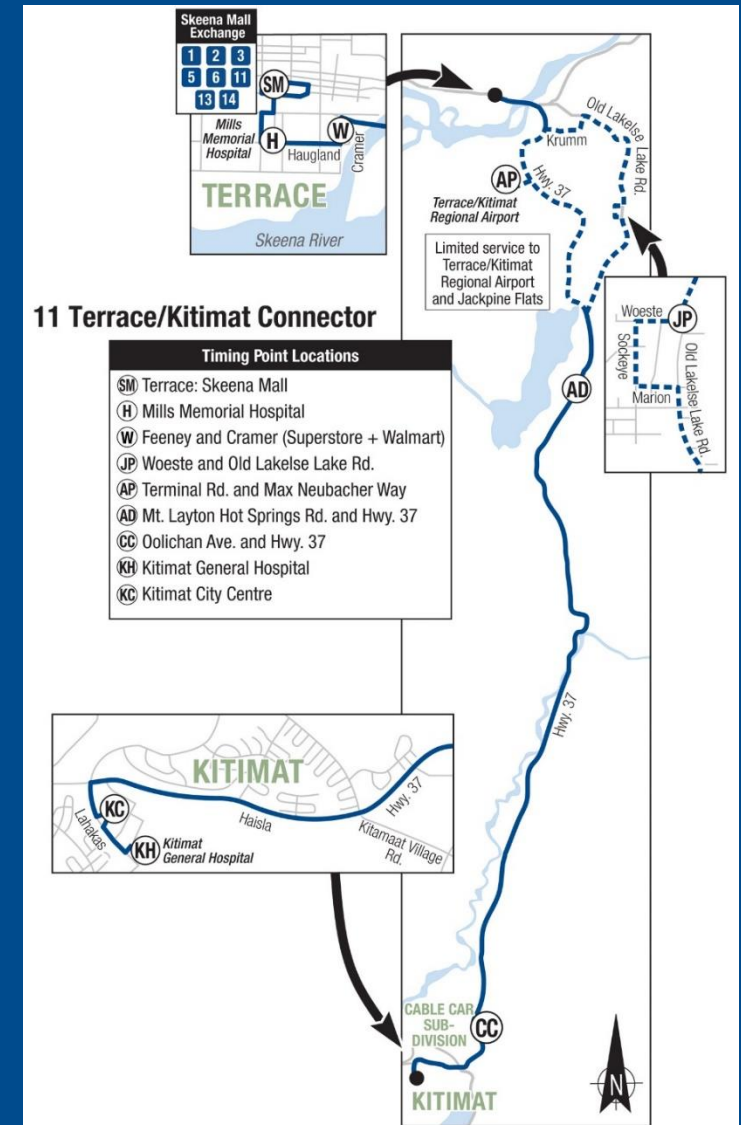
This priority would improve the service frequency of the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector. Implementing this priority would require coordination with the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine and City of Terrace.

This priority adds four additional trips in both directions on weekdays. All of the new trips would utilize the airport routing. These trip times would be aligned with flight times, but we cannot guarantee it will work for every traveler due to variabilities in flight schedules.

There is also an opportunity to reallocate one of the existing trips that use the Jackpine Flats routing to use the airport routing instead.



\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process

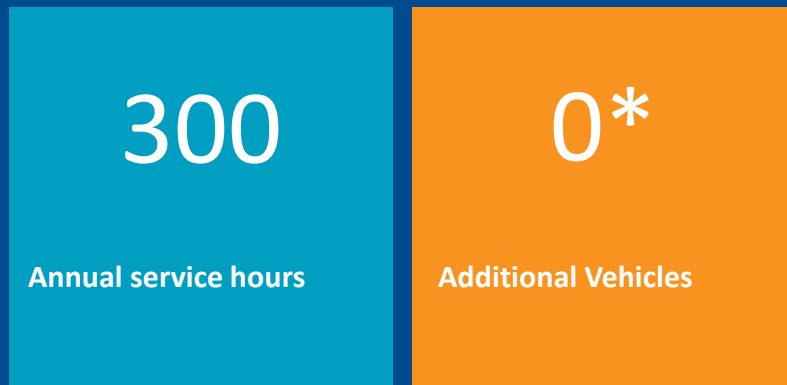


# 3b. Improved Saturday Service on the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector

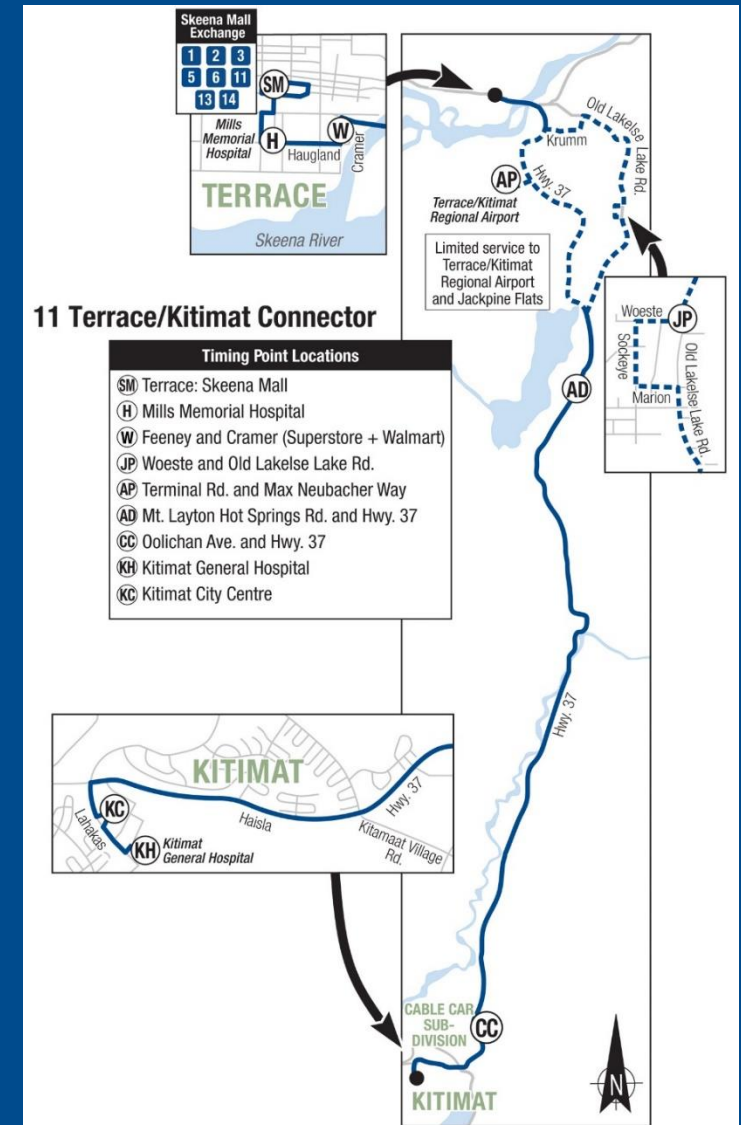
This priority would improve the Saturday service on the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector. Implementing this priority would require coordination with the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine and City of Terrace.

This improvement would add two additional trips to the existing Saturday service in both directions. These trip times would be aligned with flight times, but we cannot guarantee it will work for every traveler.

All of the new trips would utilize the airport routing.



\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process



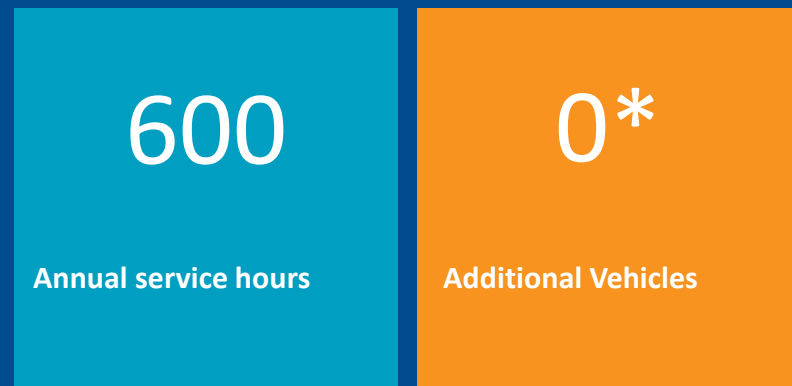


# 3c. Introduce Sunday Service on the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector

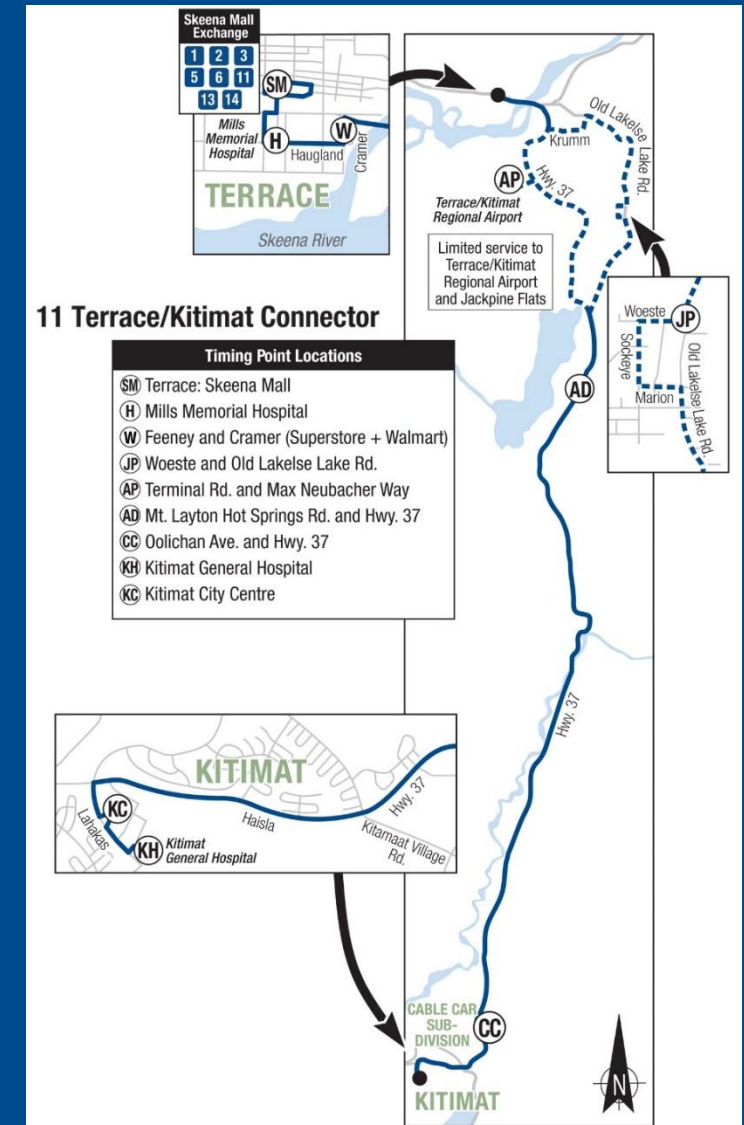
This priority would introduce Sunday service on the 11 Terrace/Kitimat Connector. Implementing this priority would require coordination with the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine and City of Terrace.

There would be four trips in both directions per day; matching the improved Saturday service. These trip times would be aligned with flight times, but we cannot guarantee it will work for every traveler.

All of the new trips would utilize the airport routing.



\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process



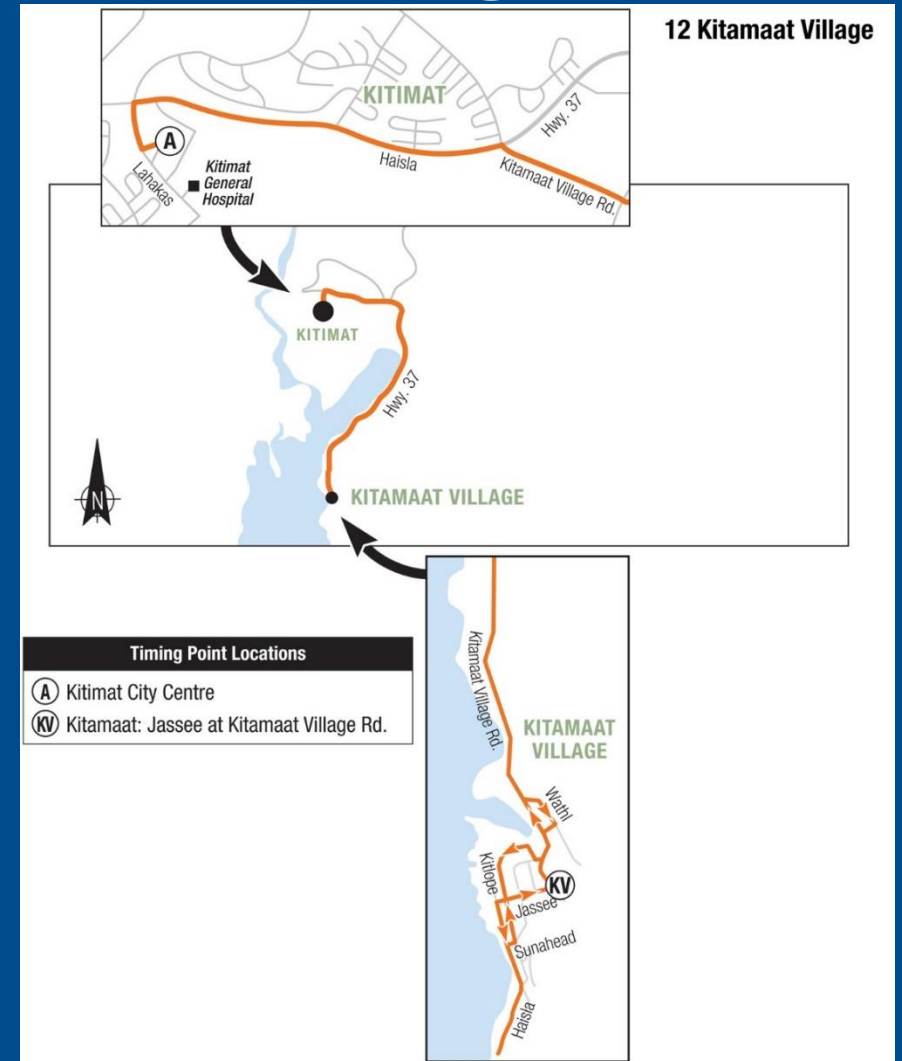
# 4a. Improved frequency on the 12 Kitamaat Village

This priority would improve the service frequency of the 12 Kitamaat Village on weekdays. Implementing this priority would require coordination with the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine.

This priority would improve the service frequency to approximately 120 minutes between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday to Friday.



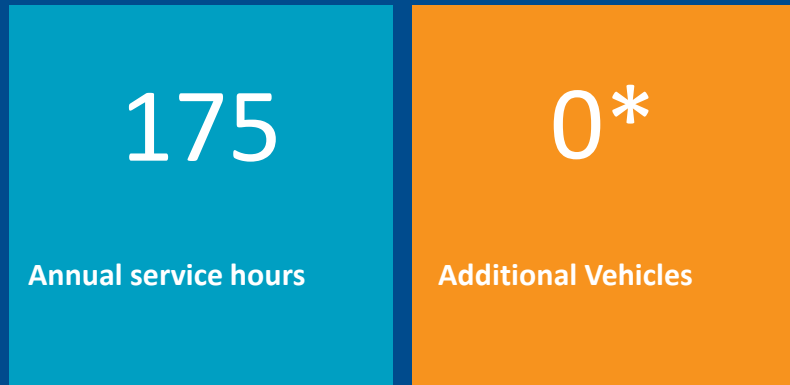
\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process



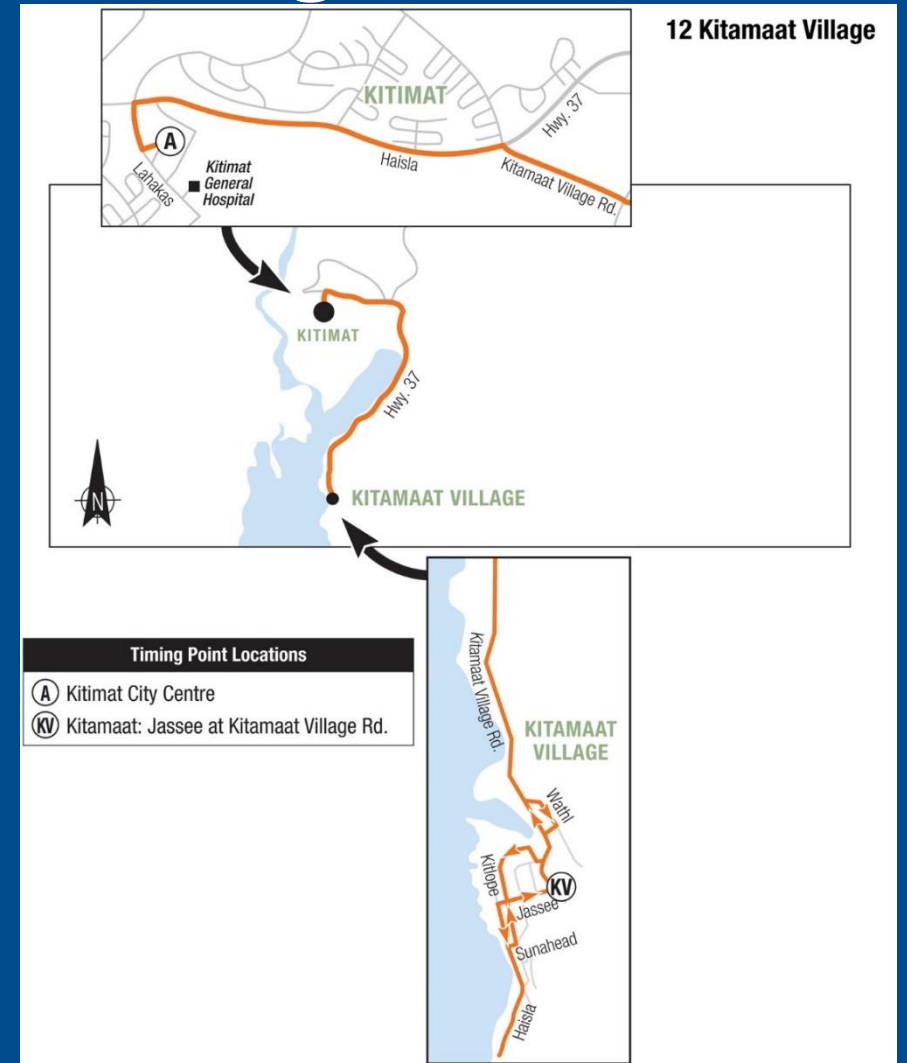
# 4b. Sunday service on the 12 Kitamaat Village

This priority would introduce Sunday service for the 12 Kitamaat Village. Implementing this priority would require coordination with the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine.

Sunday service would be introduced at the current Saturday level of service, which includes three trips from Kitamaat Village to Kitimat City Centre and three trips from Kitimat City Centre to Kitamaat Village.



\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process



# 11 Beyond 2028 Service Priorities

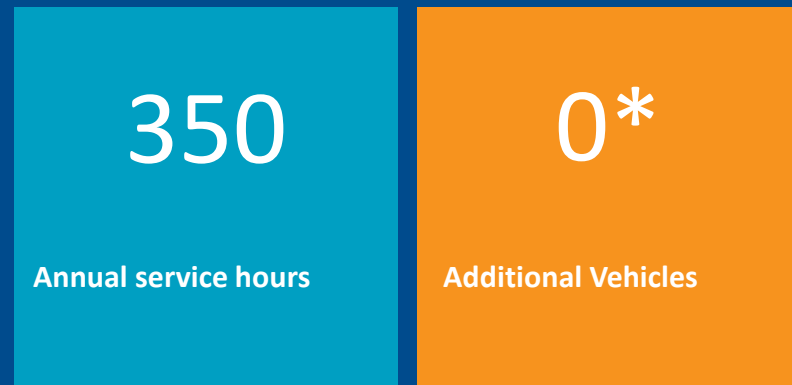
Priority	Description	Estimated Resources
Later weekend service	Extending the evening service span on local routes on weekends to approximately midnight.	350 annual service hours
Later weekday service	Extending the evening service span on local routes on weekdays to approximately midnight.	775 annual service hours
On-demand service to Strawberry Meadows	Introduce transit service to Strawberry Meadows through On-demand service.	To be determined



# 5. Later Weekend Service

This priority would expand the service span on Saturdays and Sundays to approximately midnight on routes 1A Whitesail, 2 Nechako, and 3 Kildala.

During this extended service span, these routes would operate at approximately 60 minute frequency.



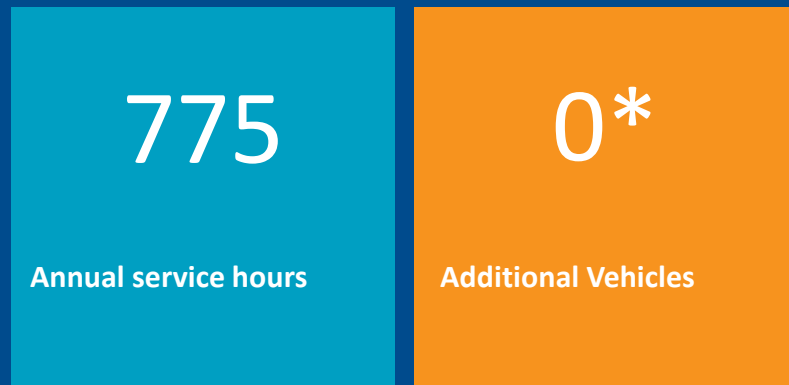
Route	Annual Hours	Additional Vehicles
1A Whitesail	150	0
2 Nechako	125	0
3 Kildala	75	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>0</b>

\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process

# 6. Later Weekday Service

This priority would expand the service span on weekdays to approximately midnight on routes 1A Whitesail, 2 Nechako, and 3 Kildala.

During this extended service span, these routes would operate at approximately 60 minute frequency.



Route	Annual Hours	Additional Vehicles
1A Whitesail	350	0
2 Nechako	250	0
3 Kildala	175	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>0</b>

\*To be confirmed during the three-year improvement process

# 7. On-demand Service to Strawberry Meadows

On-demand transit service may be an option to provide service in low-density areas, such as Strawberry Meadows.

BC Transit is currently exploring on-demand solutions in the Kelowna Regional Transit system. Following that pilot, BC Transit will have a better understanding of the resources required to operate an on-demand solution in other communities.

Prior to implementation of on-demand transit service, additional planning and engagement is required to identify the appropriate level of service and type of on-demand service to that community's needs.



## Curb-to-Curb Service

- Useful for providing large coverage of low-demand and widely distributed trip generators
- Zones are typically less than 15-20 square kilometres
- Demand in zone is generally too low and inconsistent over the service period to warrant attractive fixed-route transit
- Trips are localized within the zone
- Useful when expanding service into new areas on the urban fringe

# 12 Infrastructure Priorities 2023-2028

Priority	Description
Kitimat Exchange	<p>The current exchange at Kitimat City Centre could be improved. The exchange is in a parking lot and bus movement out of the parking lot can be difficult to complete which can cause delays and additional time needed for the bus service. Customer amenities and linkages to active transportation networks could also be improved.</p> <p>This priority includes completing a study of potential exchange locations and the necessary infrastructure requirements to support existing and planned transit service. The new exchange should have a minimum capacity for five concurrent buses.</p>
Investment in bus stop infrastructure	<p>Improving accessibility, safety and providing additional amenities at bus stops. Priority for improvements will be based on bus stop activity and customer feedback. Seek investment through capital planning and funding opportunities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Transit Shelter Program</a></li><li>• Transit Minor Betterments Funding</li></ul>



# 13 Investment Strategy

To achieve the goals of this plan, capital and operating investments in the transit system will be required over the next five years and beyond. Annual operating costs are based on service hours that are projected to increase by over 2,275 annual hours for local Kitimat services and 5,150 annual hours for regional services.

The plan also calls for capital investments which include:

- One additional bus for local Kitimat service and three additional buses for regional service
- A new transit exchange
- Improvements to customer amenities at transit stops





# 14 Moving Forward

## Monitoring and Implementation

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

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



# 15 Acknowledgements

Thank you,

The development of this Transit Future Service Plan provides the planning overview for the development of the Kitimat Transit System. 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:

- District of Kitimat
- Haisla Nation
- Pacific Western Transportation
- Kitimat Chamber of Commerce
- Kitimat Senior Citizens Association
- Rio Tinto

