

Student comment on proposed budget for Victoria Regional Transit Commission

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BC Transit Budget Proposal

Recommendation 1: 7000 service hours minimum

- Students are happy to see the return of previously cut service hours.
- But this budget only brings service up to 2010/11 service levels.
- Service levels need more improvement:
 - Maintain existing ridership
 - Attract new ridership

BC Transit Budget Proposal

Recommendation 2: maintain business ratio.

- Unfair to be increasing passenger revenue (change in transfer policy, increase to monthly bus pass and U-Pass fees) while decreasing taxes on businesses.
- By reducing the business assessment ratio, the fiscal capacity of the commission would be permanently reduced. We think this is not in the long-term interests of transit.

BC Transit Budget Proposal

Recommendation 3: increase fiscal capacity

- For the funding of 'new' service hours, we recommend the 1.3% property tax increase.
- This is well below the 4% increase endorsed by the previous commission in Nov 2011.
- It is critical for the commission to lobby the provincial government to increase the regional gas tax to increase fiscal capacity.
- Vancouver (\$0.17/litre) Victoria (\$0.035/litre)

More funding = better transit = less congestion

Key Opportunities

We believe that the commission and BC Transit have key opportunities that can be pursued to expand fiscal capacity and service to users.

- Encourage increased business use of transit (ex: new incentive programs, expanding the ProPass program).
- Collaborate with UVic and Camosun for better class time scheduling (already successful at UBC/Translink)
- and the big one: transit priority measures...

Transit Priority Measures

Collaboration is Key:

- Transit priority requires deep collaboration between municipal planners, politicians and BC Transit - this is not a passive process.
- Municipalities need to quickly identify priority transit corridors, and begin the planning and consultation to minimize opposition.
- We would like to see HOV lanes on key corridors as early as the Fall 2012 (friendly competition between municipalities?)

Questions?