



TRANSIT COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2012

2:00 P.M.

CVRD BOARD ROOM, 175 INGRAM STREET

AGENDA

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1.	<u>APPROVAL OF AGENDA:</u>	1 - 2
2.	<u>ADOPTION OF MINUTES:</u>	
	M1 Minutes of the of the Transit Committee meeting held February 8, 2012.	3 – 6
	M2 Minutes of the of the special Transit Committee meeting held March 14, 2012.	7 - 8
3.	<u>BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:</u>	
	BA1 Report from BC Transit providing responses to Committee questions regarding Future Transit Plan.	9 – 21
4	<u>CORRESPONDENCE:</u>	
	C1 From: CVRD Chair to Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure Re: Commuter Transit Service	22 – 23
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	R1 Changes to handyDART "No show and Cancellation" Policy Jim Wakeham, Manager, Facilities, Transit & Fleet	26 - 29
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5.	<u>NEW BUSINESS:</u>	
6.	<u>CLOSED SESSION:</u> .	
7.	<u>QUESTION PERIOD:</u>	

8. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The next meeting of the Transit Committee will be held: June 13, 2012.

DISTRIBUTION:

Transit Committee

Director Morrison, Chair
Director Kent, Vice-Chair
Director Duncan
Director Fraser
Director Giles
Director L. Iannidinardo

Director Lefebure
Director Lines
Director McGonigle
Director Walker
Director Weaver

CVRD

Rob Hutchins, CVRD Chair
Warren Jones, CAO
Jim Wakeham, Manager, Facility Management, Fleet and Transit
Mark Kueber, General Manager, Corporate Services
Brian Dennison, General Manager, Engineering and Environment
Rob Williams, Transit Analyst

Agenda Cover Only

Directors Dorey, Hartmann and Marcotte
Tom Anderson, Manager, Planning & Development

Transit Representatives (via e-mail)

Myrna Moore, Regional Transit Manager, BC Transit
James Wadsworth, Planner, BC Transit
Bob Allen, FirstCanada ULC
Colin Oakes, FirstCanada ULC
Georg Stratemeyer, Volunteer Cowichan
Carol Blatchford, Cowichan Lake Commuter Service

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Transit Committee held in the CVRD Boardroom, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, on February 8, 2012 at 3:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Director Morrison, Chair
Director Kent, Vice-Chair
Directors, Duncan, Fraser, Giles, Hutchins, McGonigle,
Walker, Weaver

ABSENT: Directors Iannidinardo, Lefebure, Lines

ALSO

PRESENT: Jim Wakeham, Manager, Facilities, Transit & Fleet
Brian Dennison, GM, Engineering & Environment
Warren Jones, CAO, CVRD
Mark Kueber, Manager, Corporate Services
James Wadsworth, Senior planner, BC Transit
Joanne Bath, Recording Secretary

**APPROVAL
OF AGENDA**

The following item was added under New Business:
NB1 – Electoral Area B Service petition

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

**ADOPTION
OF MINUTES**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the October 12, 2011 regular Transit Committee meeting be adopted.

MOTION CARRIED

**BUSINESS ARISING
OUT OF MINUTES**

No business arising

REPORTS

R1

The February 6, 2012 edition of Cowichan Valley Regional Transit Rider's Guide was distributed for information.

Staff were requested to provide future publications to the Transit Committee for review prior to going to print.

It was moved and seconded that the staff report and rider's guide be received and filed.

MOTION CARRIED

R2

A staff report was considered in regard to a revision to the Cowichan Valley Commuter On Board Pet Policy.

It was moved and seconded that, as recommended by BC Transit, the CVRD Board agree to revise the Cowichan Valley Commuter "On-board Pet Policy", to read:

"Other than Assistance Animals, pets are not permitted on board the Cowichan Valley Commuter Service. The service is not deemed appropriate for pets to travel on due to the longer duration trips and the large distances the vehicle travels between stops. This policy applies to all pets regardless of whether they are contained in secure cages or not. Assistance animals are allowed on public transit at all times. Passengers may be asked to produce their Guide Animal Certificate."

MOTION CARRIED

R3

A staff report, including a draft map, was considered regarding a custom Transit (handyDART) Service Area proposal.

It was moved and seconded that the Transit Committee provide feedback to staff regarding the Custom Transit Service Area proposal from BC Transit, prior to March 23, 2012 in order for staff to develop a formal response to BC Transit by March 31, 2012.

MOTION CARRIED

Staff will send the Committee members a revised map showing more details.

R4

A staff report was considered regarding the Conventional Transit Service Expansion for the period 2012 – 2014.

Staff were asked to revise the staff recommendation to include Electoral Area G in the notification of opportunity to receive expansion hours.

Director Giles asked if staff had received a response from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure following the meeting she and Director Kent had with them regarding addition of a commuter bus?

Mr. Jones responded that, as there has been no response, a letter is being sent as follow up.

It was moved and seconded:

- 1. That staff advise the Town of Ladysmith and Electoral Area G of the opportunity to receive expansion hours to integrate Ladysmith and Saltair into the Regional Transit Service, to commence March 2013; and further that the Town and Electoral Area Director be advised that, if interested in joining the CVRD transit service, formal notification must be received in time for the CVRD to provide confirmation to BC Transit before May 31, 2012.**

2. That it be recommended that staff notify BC Transit that the CVRD is interested in receiving the proposed additional expansion hours outlined in their letter of January 26, 2012, as well as other additional hours should they be made available.

MOTION CARRIED

R5

A staff report was considered regarding installation of transit benches in 2012.

It was moved and seconded that staff include \$50,000 in the 2012 Transit Budget 107 - minor capital account for the installation of approximately twenty-five stand-alone transit benches at identified priority transit stops within the CVRD.

MOTION CARRIED

R6

A staff report was considered regarding expanding CVRD Transit Marketing initiatives for the Conventional Service System.

It was moved and seconded that an increase be included in the 2012 Transit budget 107 - advertising account from \$1,000 to \$4,000; and the promotions account from \$1,500 to \$10,500, for a total increase of \$12,000 in order to implement additional CVRD transit marketing initiatives.

MOTION CARRIED

R7

2012 Budget discussion for Functions 106 and 107.

It was moved and seconded that the Committee approve Budget 106 as presented and Budget 107 as amended to include the three supplemental items; CVRD marketing initiatives for \$12,000, transit benches for \$50,000, and handyDART's 1,600 expansion hours for Sept 2012 for \$16,667, all of which impact the 2012 tax requisition by an increase of \$31,000 or 2%.

MOTION CARRIED

**INFORMATION
IN1**

The CVRD Future Transit Plan Draft Executive Summary was distributed.

It was moved and seconded that the CVRD Future Transit Plan Draft Executive Summary be received for information.

MOTION CARRIED

Staff advised that BC Transit will be giving a presentation on the CVRD Future Transit Plan at a special meeting of the Transit Committee to be held on March 14, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

NB1 "Director Fraser provided a petition entitled, "Bring the Bus back to Shawnigan Lake" with 53 names supporting the request that transit be provided on the west and south side of the lake area.

NB2 Director Kent asked for feedback from BC Transit on the fleet and the infrastructure to allow wheelchair accessibility at bus stops within the City of Duncan.

ADJOURNMENT It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Chair

Recording Secretary

Dated: _____

Minutes of the special meeting of the Transit Committee held in the CVRD Boardroom, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, on March 14, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Director Morrison, Chair
Director Kent, Vice-Chair
Directors Duncan, Fraser, Giles, Hutchins, Iannidinardo,
Lines, Lefebure, McGonigle, Walker, Weaver

ALSO

PRESENT: Warren Jones, CAO, CVRD
Brian Dennison, GM, Engineering & Environment
Rob Williams, Transit Analyst, CVRD
Myrna Moore, BC Transit
James Wadsworth, BC Transit
Joanne Bath, Recording Secretary

**APPROVAL
OF AGENDA**

- 1) Items R1 and R2 were interchanged.
- 2) Bus service for the Halalt First Nations was added under New Business.

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION CARRIED

REPORTS

R1

BC Transit provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the CVRD Transit Future Plan.

Electoral Area Directors brought concerns forward regarding current service gaps in portions of Electoral Areas B, C and E that pay for transit, but do not receive adequate service for their contribution to the system.

R2

It was moved and seconded that it be recommended that the CVRD Board endorse the Cowichan Valley Transit Future Plan, as prepared by BC Transit.

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved and seconded that that the issues concerning gaps in service, as outlined by Electoral Area Directors, be brought forward for discussion at the next Transit Committee meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

NB1

Director Lefebure advised that residents of the Halalt First Nations have requested consideration of transit service to their area in future expansion plans.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Chair

Recording Secretary

Dated: _____

Response to March 14, 2012 Transit Committee Service Questions

BC Transit was requested to provide a report for the April 11, 2012 Transit Committee meeting agenda under New Business for discussion. The intent of the report is to respond to the Director's queries from the March 14th Transit Committee meeting. The report summarizes the history and rationale for service changes in South Cowichan, as well as further clarifies the current transit service area for both fixed route and handyDART service. The report also highlights the Transit Future Network in the South Cowichan area, as well more information about paratransit options. There is also information in regards to Park & Rides in Area C (Cobble Hill) and Area B (Shawnigan Lake).

Main Queries

1. South Cowichan

- 1.1 Existing Services
- 1.2 Cancelled Service
- 1.3 BC Transit 2009 CVC Network Changes
- 1.4 Transit Future Network
- 1.5 Shawnigan Lake Park & Rides
- 1.6 Paratransit Studies

2. Transit Future Area H North Oyster

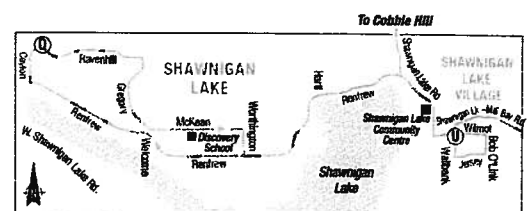
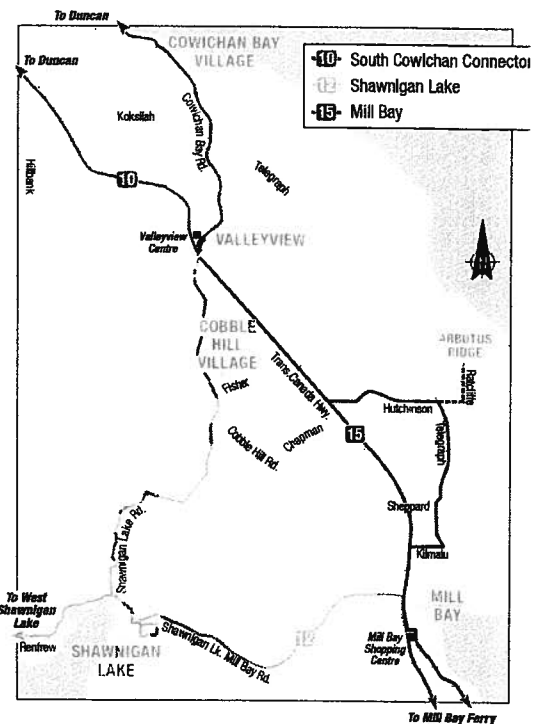
3. HandyDART service area boundary proposal.

4. HandyDART service in Youbou & Honeymoon Bay

1. South Cowichan Transit Services

1.1 Existing Services

In South Cowichan, transit serves Cowichan Bay, Cobble Hill, Shawnigan Lake, Arbutus Ridge and Mill Bay with services connecting at the Valleyview and Mill Bay Shopping Centres with three routes 10 South Cowichan Connector, 12 Shawnigan Lake and the 15 Mill Bay. The service operates 16 weekday trips from approximately 6:20am to 8:00pm with 2 additional evening trips on Friday. Weekend service operates from approximately 8:00am to 5:00pm with a less frequent schedule than weekdays with four to five trips. The 12 Shawnigan Lake serves the Shawnigan Lake Beach Estates and Shawnigan Lake Village with connections to Mill Bay Shopping Centre and Valleyview Centre where transfers can be made to downtown Duncan.

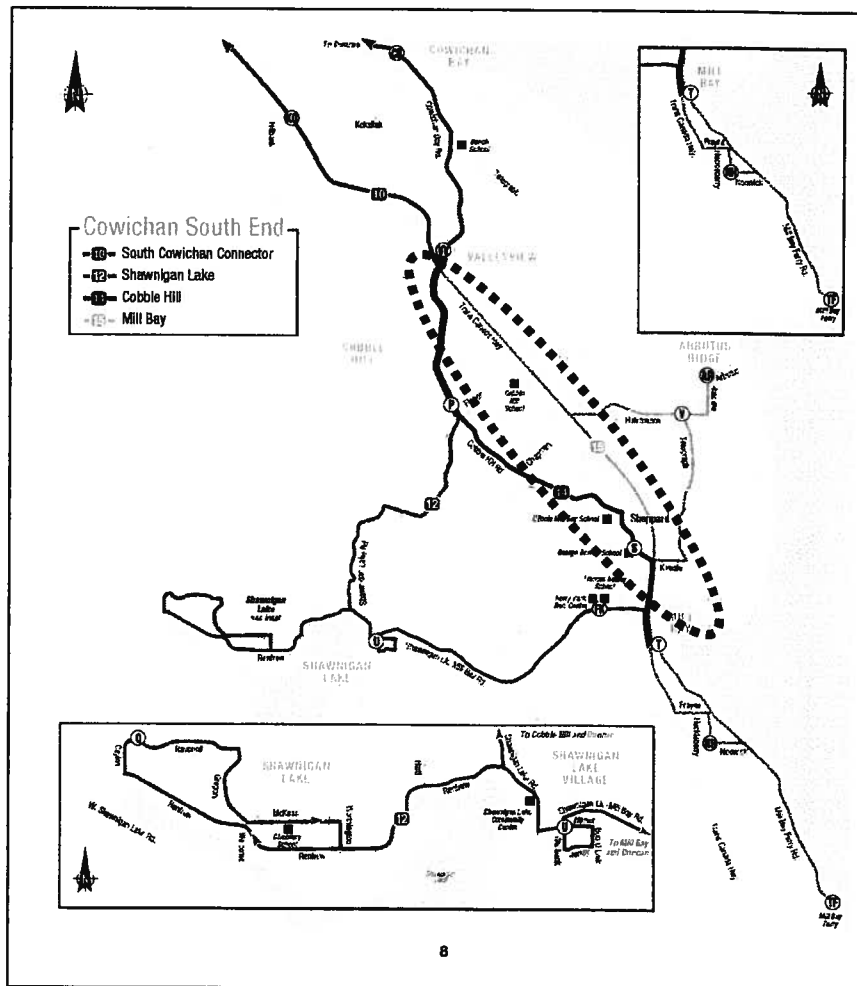


Service Route 15 Mill Bay

The route 15 Mill Bay provides four weekday trips to Arbutus Ridge and two trips on weekend days. Arbutus Ridge is a gated community and the bus must check in at the gate to pick passengers up. The operator reported that two to three passengers use this service on a daily basis. The operator has also received a number of complaints from residents that do not want the bus servicing Arbutus Ridge, due to the perceived negative impacts of transit, such as noise, pollution and large vehicle onsite.

1.2 Cancelled Service Route 14 Cobble Hill/Mill Bay

Service was cancelled on route 14 Cobble Hill/Mill Bay because of very low ridership. The 14 Cobble Hill/Mill Bay route operated on Cobble Hill Rd between Vallyview Centre and Mill Bay Shopping Centre. These destinations are still linked with transit service via the routes 12 Shawnigan Lake and 15 Mill Bay, a portion of the route 14 duplicated services on the route 12. The service operated five one-way trips per day, two in the morning and three in the early afternoon and evening. The route has performed poorly over an extended time period. For example a two week passenger count conducted in October 2010 concluded approximately ten passengers per weekday used the service. In speaking with the operator the majority of these passengers were picked up at the Mill Bay and Valleyview Shopping centres and Cobble Hill Village, the majority of riders were not impacted. During the same time period other transit routes in the Cowichan Valley carried 60 – 250 passengers a day.

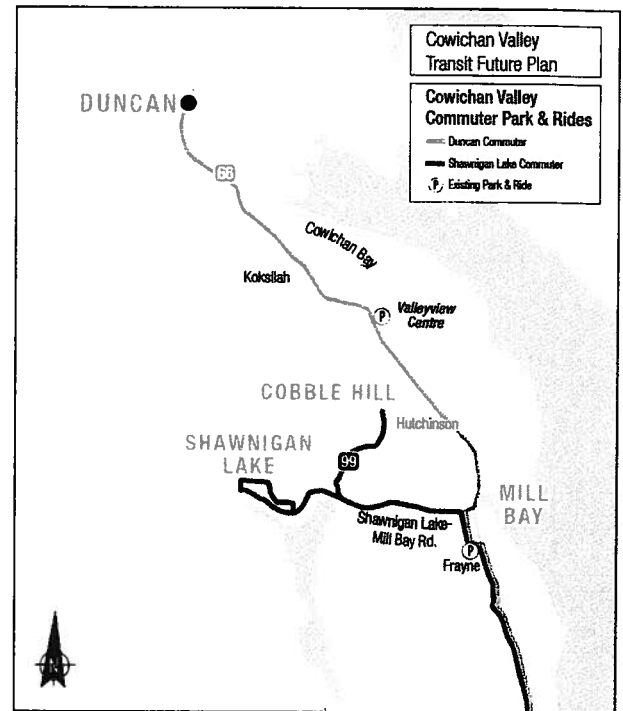


1.3 BC Transit 2009 CVC Service Review Route Recommendations

Changes to the CVC Bus routes were recommended in the BC Transit 2009 CVC Service Review based on ridership statistics, bus stop activity and park and ride utilization, and feedback from the on-board and on-line surveys

Existing Cowichan Valley Commuter

The Cowichan Valley Commuter (CVC) provides peak morning and afternoon service for people travelling from the Cowichan Valley to Victoria. The service consists of two routes, the 66 Duncan Commuter and the 99 Shawnigan Lake Commuter. The service operates on Highway 1 for the most part with limited stops to keep trips as direct and fast as possible to be competitive with trips by automobile. The 66 follows Highway 1 from Village Green Mall in Duncan to Victoria, while the 99 follows local roads in Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill before turning onto Highway 1 at Mill Bay. Both routes share common stops within Greater Victoria and terminate in Downtown Victoria at Government at Superior. The service is available Monday through Friday except statutory holidays with four trips on the 66 Duncan and two trips on the 99 Shawnigan Lake. Morning service depart at 5:32 a.m. with the last trip leaving the Cowichan Valley to Victoria at 6:25 a.m. and the first return trip from Victoria to the Cowichan Valley departs at 3:45 p.m. with the last trip leaving at 5:15 p.m.



Implemented Routing Changes from the 2009 CVC Service Review

66-Duncan

"It is proposed that service through Maple Bay be eliminated. The first stop with significant activity is at Trunk Road and Campbell in Duncan, so it is proposed that the route begin at this location, then stop at on Central Road beside Village Green Mall/Duncan Mall in Duncan which is the most heavily used stop.

The route would then follow Highway 1 from Duncan to Victoria. Cobble Hill Station and Mill Bay Shopping Centre will no longer be serviced by this route to ensure the fastest and most direct route possible. Both of these stops have relatively low usage, and passengers can easily be served using stops at Valleyview and Frayne Road respectively. The trip time for this new routing is approximately 90 minutes.

More park and ride facilities and capacity are required to accommodate the anticipated higher ridership this route may experience by adding a bus and providing a more direct route with some stops eliminated."

Route 99-Shawnigan Lake:

"It is proposed that the portion of the route on the west side of Shawnigan Lake be eliminated. The purpose for the new realignment is to have a more direct service that still provides opportunity for Shawnigan Lake customers to use the bus. Passengers who currently find they must stand on the 66-Duncan route may be able to use the 99-Shawnigan Lake route to Frayne Road Park & Ride and be able to sit for the duration of the trip. Service would start in Cobble Hill and follow the same loop through Shawnigan Lake Beach Estates as it does now, allowing the bus to turn around to travel east to Highway 1. Stop activity shows ridership on this route is highest north of the lake. According to the operator 3-10 passengers boarding on the west side of the lake were impacted by this change, several of the customers began utilizing the park & ride at Frayne Rd where they had access to additional 66 Duncan trips.

The proposed route will travel east along Renfrew Road, Shawnigan Lake/Mill Bay Road past Shawnigan Lake Village, and meet Highway 1 at Mill Bay. Since the Mill Bay stop should be removed, this new routing will service Frayne Road park and ride. The route will then travel south along Highway 1, following the 66 alignment. The running time for this route is approximately 80 minutes.

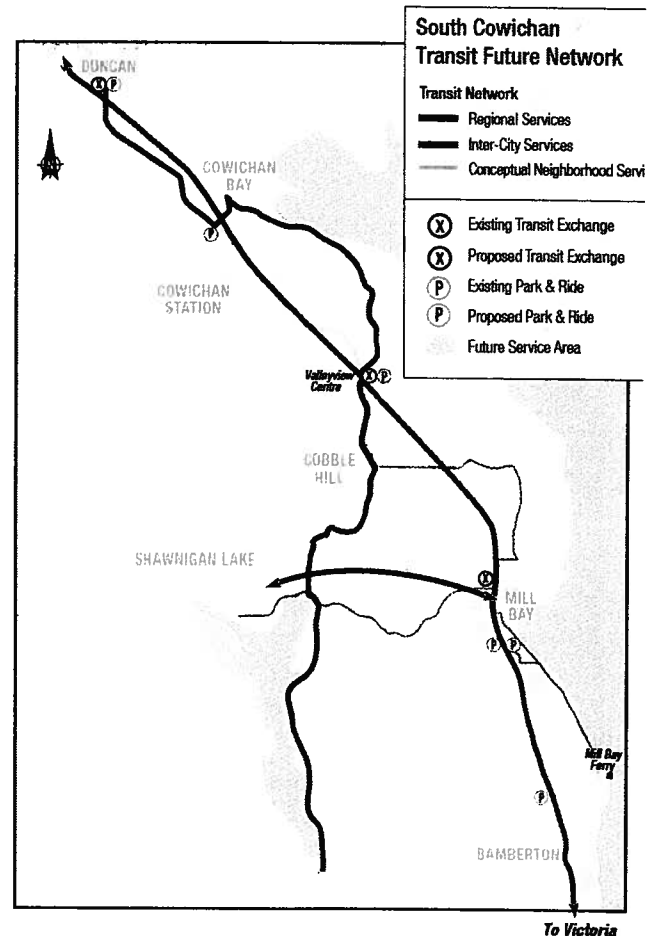
A route along the east side of the lake was not considered because the road is not as well maintained as Shawnigan Lake/Mill Bay Road and finding safe and appropriate bus stop locations is difficult."

1.4 Park & Rides for CVC 99 Shawnigan Lake Service

A formal Park & Ride for CVC service is located on Hwy 1 at Frayne Rd. There are two informal Park & Ride locations at Shawnigan Lake Rd at Knappett Rd and on Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd across the street from the Legion Hall.

1.5 Transit Future South Cowichan

The Transit Future Plan Network is identified in the adjacent map which includes fixed routes and future service areas. The Transit Future Plan identifies a number of short, medium and long term service improvements to transit services in South Cowichan over the life of the plan which include Shawnigan Lake. These improvements include CVC service, local fixed routes and paratransit.



1.6 Paratransit Services and Study

Paratransit is a range of services designed to effectively serve rural and low-density areas (e.g. flex routes, demand-responsive service, dial-a-bus). The appendix attached to this report explains paratransit options in further detail. Paratransit offers the potential to reduce costs and/or improve quality of service. These benefits can only be achieved, however, if paratransit is used in conditions for which it is suited. Implementing a paratransit service in the wrong conditions would not only fail to achieve these benefits, it might actually result in higher costs and a poorer quality of service. Before implementing any paratransit services and particularly before replacing conventional service with paratransit service detailed planning and market analysis should be undertaken to determine potential ridership, costs and other aspects of the service, to ensure that paratransit service is appropriate. **A paratransit study for South Cowichan is scheduled in 5 plus years in the medium-term section of Transit Future Implementation Plan.** If the Transit Committee were to provide direction to the CVRD and BC Transit staff a paratransit study could be initiated as short-term initiative of the Transit Future Plan but implementation of the study's recommendations would be subject to available resources.

2. Area H North Oyster

North Oyster is an area that is not currently serviced by transit and is identified as a potential area for future expansion of service in the Transit Future Plan. Further study is required to determine the feasibility of transit services in North Oyster. The North Oyster areas could be incorporated and scheduled into other paratransit studies in the region. BC Transit and CVRD staff did not receive any requests that transit service be extended to this area during the Transit Future Planning Process.

3. Custom/HandyDART Service Area

To date, Custom Transit or handyDART service has been available to all those qualified under BC Transit (BCT) guidelines within the CVRD transit service area. While qualified residents in the service area can register for the service, it is extremely difficult to service the entire region due to limited resources and the large geographic area serviced. Servicing remote areas can require large amounts of service hours resulting in lower ridership figures and higher trip costs.

BC Transit formalized approach to the handyDART service and improve the system. BC Transit is examining the way in which handyDART eligibility is determined to standardize criteria across the province. BC Transit is also proposing the implementation of a service area boundary. This process is expected to be completed at the end of 2012.

BC Transit has requested your perspective and feedback regarding this proposal. If you are in agreement, we would propose to include the new service area definition as an amendment to schedule "A" of the 2012/13 Annual Operating Agreement for the purposes of custom transit service only. If key locations or areas have not been included, we will be pleased to work with you to define a service area that will meet the needs of your community and provide cost effective and efficient service.

The proposed boundary is 1.5 km around the existing conventional transit route system, which draws from the Americans with Disability Act. This approach will better align with

the handyDART conventional system, while continuing to provide door-to-door custom service. Those registered riders currently outside the proposed 1.5 km boundary would be grandfathered under the proposed policy and would not have their service terminated. This is estimated to be approximately 11-15 riders or 2.3% of the current registered rider base.

It is understood that there are some sensitivities around this subject, considering the needs of the clientele served, and that some residents outside the proposed service boundary could have an issue with taxes paid towards that segment of their overall transit service. In reviewing this possible concern, it is, however, similar to the current conventional service model whereby a current transit taxpaying resident may reside several kilometers outside the conventional fixed route system, and in order to use the system would be required to travel to the nearest bus stop. While this may not be feasible for some handyDART clients due to mobility challenges, staff and BCT will be looking for ways to provide access to new potential riders outside the proposed boundary. Conventional flex routing, taxi vouchers, and new partnerships to deliver service will be explored.

There is no intention to discontinue service to existing riders. Riders who currently live outside the service area would be 'grandfathered' and their service would continue. This proposal is to provide a clear definition to the area served by the custom transit portion of the transit system in order to preserve current service levels, provide service to the maximum number of individuals who are physically or cognitively unable to use conventional transit independently, and solidify the parallel relationship between fixed-route and door-to-door service areas. In future, the custom transit service area would expand along with conventional transit routes as funding allowed.

4. Custom Service in Youbou & Honeymoon Bay

The CVRD Transit System has expanded handyDART service the last two years and as identified in the Transit Future Plan intends to continue to expand service to improve service levels throughout the region. The existing handyDART service in the Lake Cowichan area is very limited, as is the case with most rural areas, with an average of 2-3 trips per month serving the Town of Lake Cowichan and Area F Cowichan Lake South/Skutz Falls with no trips to area I Youbou/Meade Creek.

The Transit Future Plan identifies improving handyDART service in the Lake Cowichan area as a short-term priority in the plan. The Transit Future Plan also recommends a paratransit study for the Lake Cowichan Area. **A paratransit study for Lake Cowichan is scheduled in 5 plus years in the medium-term section of Transit Future Implementation Plan.** If the Transit Committee were to provide direction to the CVRD and BC Transit staff a paratransit study could be initiated as short-term initiative of the Transit Future Plan but implementation of the study's recommendations would be subject to available resources.

Appendix

Paratransit and Rural Transit Services Options

There is a wide range of transit services operating in rural and low-density areas across North America. These range from conventional transit services using larger buses on fixed routes and schedules to flexible, demand-responsive services using smaller vehicles which operate within defined areas rather than on specific routes. This section provides a description of each type of service, including a discussion of the conditions which best suit each.

Five types of rural transit services are described in this section:

- Conventional transit with buses operating on fixed routes and fixed schedules
- Flex-route transit where buses deviate from fixed routes on request
- Dial-a-bus, where routes are variable but schedules are fixed
- Demand-responsive transit, where routes and schedules are variable
- Vanpools, where one of the passengers is also the operator of the service.

Table 1 indicates how the first four types of service differ based on fixed and variable routes and schedules.

Route		Schedule
Fixed	Variable	
Conventional	Flex-Route, Dial-A-Bus	Fixed
-	Demand-Responsive	Variable

Paratransit offers the potential to reduce costs and/or improve quality of service. These benefits can only be achieved, however, if paratransit is used in conditions for which it is suited. Implementing a paratransit service in the wrong conditions would not only fail to achieve these benefits, it might actually result in higher costs and a poorer quality of service.

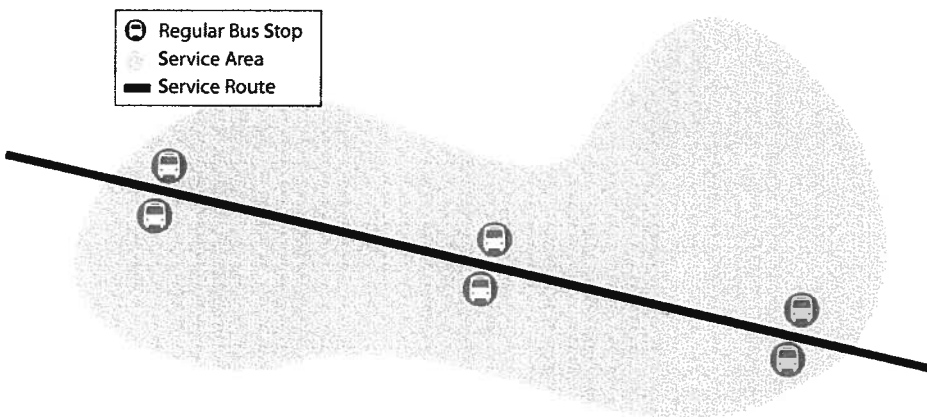
Before implementing any paratransit services and particularly before replacing conventional service with paratransit service detailed planning and market analysis should be undertaken to determine potential ridership, costs and other aspects of the service, to ensure that paratransit service is appropriate.

Conventional Transit

As the name implies, conventional transit is the conventional and most common form of transit service. Buses operate on established routes at scheduled times, stopping at designated bus stops. Figure 4 illustrates an idealized conventional service.

The Lake Cowichan route 7 service is an example of a conventional service. The “non-conventional” feature of this service is that passengers may flag down buses at points along the route where the bus can safely pull off the road.

Figure 4 — Conventional Transit



Conventional transit services are best suited to higher-density areas with popular origins and destinations concentrated along main arteries. In these conditions, conventional service can attract sufficient ridership to support reasonably frequent service throughout the day, in evenings and on weekends. On the other hand, in many rural and lower-density areas, conventional service cannot attract sufficient ridership to be financially viable.

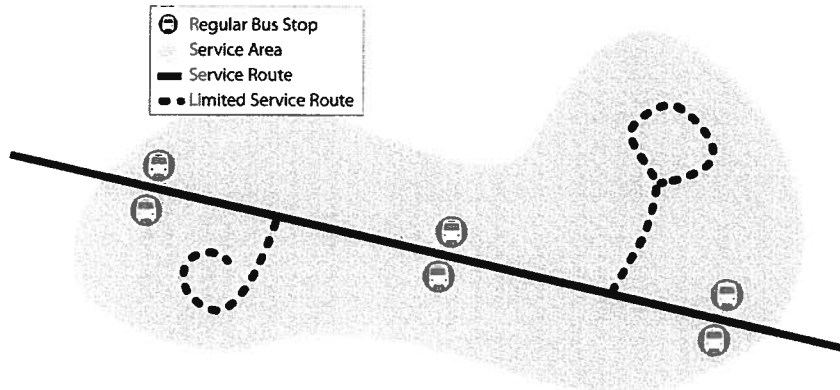
Where conventional transit services do operate in rural and low-density areas, they are characterized by the following limitations:

- **Infrequent service.** A limited number of trips per day and the lengthy time between trips means that in many cases, passengers must travel earlier or later than their desired times. This might mean arriving at work 45 minutes early, for example, or waiting two hours after a medical appointment for the trip home.
- **Limited hours of service** mean that passengers cannot return home in the evening, for example, and cannot make trips on the weekend. A teenager using the service to travel to a job after school would not be able to use transit to return home in the evening, and service would not be available on Sunday to take people to church.
- **Limited coverage.** A conventional transit service on a fixed route can only cover a small part of a large rural or low-density area. Many residents will be beyond a reasonable walking distance to a bus stop, which for most people is 400 m or about a 5-minute walk.

Flex-Route Transit

Like conventional services, flex-route buses follow a fixed route and fixed schedule. The difference is that buses can deviate from the route to pick up or drop off passengers at nearby locations, such as a house, child care center or employment site, for example. After completing the pickup or drop off, the bus returns to the bus route at the location where it deviated. Figure 5 illustrates an idealized flex-route service.

Figure 5 — Flex-Route Transit



For the majority of users who do not require a deviation from the route, a flex-route service is no different than conventional transit. They board and alight at designated bus stops along the route, at scheduled times. For those who do require a route deviation, the only disadvantage of flex-route service is the need to call in advance to request a trip. Typically, customers are required to call at least one hour in advance.

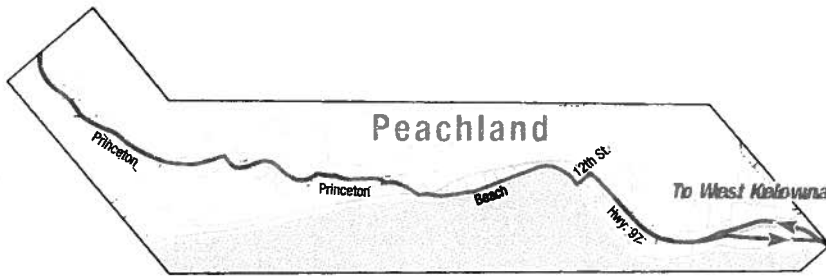
A flex-route service is scheduled with extra time in the schedule to accommodate route deviations. To ensure that buses remain on schedule, transit operators may:

- Limit the distance from the route or the area within which the bus will deviate. Typical limits are 1 km to 2 km.
- Limit the number of deviations on any given trip.
- Limit short deviations (up to 400 m) to persons with physical disabilities.

For the transit operator, the option of deviating from the route introduces the need for a dispatcher to respond to trip requests, and the need to manage trip requests to avoid impacting schedule reliability. However, because the number of deviations is small, this is usually not an onerous requirement.

An example of a flex-route service is route 22 between Peachland and Westbank in the Central Okanagan. The route follows Highway 97 and parallel roads along the waterfront, where the downtown commercial area and much of the population are located. The flex-route bus will deviate anywhere within the municipal boundaries, as illustrated in Figure 6, which can mean a deviation of more than a kilometre from the designated route. The schedule incorporates an additional 15 minutes for each round trip or run to allow sufficient time for route deviations. In practice, if someone has scheduled a pick-up or drop-off requiring a large deviation, and someone else requests another large deviation on the same run, the second person will be asked to travel on an earlier or a later run, to avoid two large deviations on the same run.

Figure 6 — Peachland Route 22 Service Area



Flex-route applicable conditions:

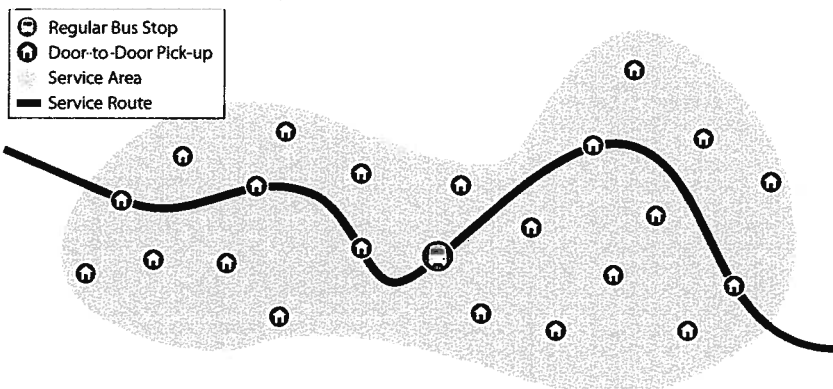
- Moderate ridership in a corridor linking major destinations and conventional transit
- Low ridership in areas beyond a reasonable walking distance of the corridor that cannot be economically served with conventional transit
- 90% or more trips to/from bus stops — at most 1 to 2 route deviations per hour

Dial-A-Bus

Dial-a-bus services also follow a fixed schedule, but buses do not follow a fixed route. Instead, drivers determine their own route as needed to pick up and drop off passengers who have requested service in advance. Buses may also stop at specific designated bus stops at scheduled times without the need for any advance requests for service. These bus stops are typically located at popular destinations such as shopping centres, community centres and downtown locations. Figure 7 illustrates an idealized dial-a-bus service.

Some dial-a-bus services provide “door-to-door” service, while others pick up and drop off passengers at “request stops.” Door-to-door service means passengers are picked up and dropped off at the curb in front of their home or destination. Drivers may assist passengers with physical disabilities to or from the bus. Request stops are designated bus stops located throughout an area. When a passenger requests a pick up, he or she walks to the nearest request stop to meet the bus. Returning passengers are dropped off at the request stop nearest their destination.

Figure 7 — Dial-A-Bus



- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Participation
- Setting the Scene
- Visions and Goals
- The Network
- Resources
- Implementation Plan
- Moving Forward

- **Advance booking.** Typically, customers are asked to call at least one hour or one day in advance to request a trip. Last-minute requests can often be accommodated if the driver does not have too many other trip requests to serve. Persons who make regular trips to the same destination at the same time can pre-book “subscription trips,” and only need to call when they wish to cancel a trip.
- **Flexible routes.** Vehicles providing demand-response service do not follow a fixed route. Instead, drivers are free to choose the best route between requested pickup and drop off locations. This means that after a passenger boards the bus, the driver might stop one or more times to pick up and drop off other passengers before dropping off the first passenger.
- **Door-to-door service.** Demand-responsive services are typically “door-to-door,” which means passengers are picked up and dropped off at the curb in front of their home or destination. Drivers may assist passengers with physical disabilities to or from the bus.
- **Small vehicles.** Depending on ridership levels, demand-response services can be provided with small buses, vans, taxis or other automobiles. Vehicles are generally accessible for persons who use wheelchairs and with other physical disabilities.

The most common type of demand-responsive service is the specialized services provided for persons with disabilities known as handyDART. In urban areas, eligibility to use demand-responsive services is typically limited to persons with a documented physical or cognitive disability that prevents them from using conventional transit services. In rural areas, on the other hand, all persons are eligible to use demand-responsive services.

An example of a demand-responsive service is the local service in Princeton, in the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen. This service operates on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. within the Town of Princeton. Service is provided door-to-door. Most trips are booked in advance, but last-minute requests can often be accommodated as the dispatcher and driver are in radio contact. Passengers are asked to complete a form providing their contact information so that they can be contacted in case of service disruptions or other issues.

The primary users of the Princeton service are elderly and low income persons, and the primary trip purposes are shopping and medical appointments. The service carries approximately two dozen trips per day. Although some passengers occasionally request service in evenings and on other days of the week, most users have adjusted their travel patterns to match the hours of service.

Demand-Responsive transit applicable conditions:

- Areas with low ridership throughout the day
- Areas served by conventional transit during peak times
- Evenings, weekends and holidays only, or all day
- Up to 7 trips/hour in one area

Vanpools

A vanpool is a group of up to 15 commuters who travel to the same destination at the same time each day. The group travels in a van provided by a transit agency or other organization, and each person in the group (sometimes with the exception of the driver) pays a monthly fare calculated based on the distance travelled and the costs of operating the van. A vanpool rider continues to pay the monthly fare when on vacation, although some vanpools maintain a list of occasional riders who will fill and pay for the empty seat.

Vanpools applicable conditions:

- Longer-distance trips of at least 25 km and 30 minutes travel time each way.
- Regular commute trips such as work and post-secondary school.
- Trips that are made at the same time each day.
- Trips to destinations with a large number of persons, such as downtowns, hospitals, post-secondary institutions and business parks

An example of a vanpool program is Jack Bell Rideshare, which operates vanpools in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island between the Cowichan Valley and Victoria. Vanpools use eight-passenger minivans purchased by Jack Bell Rideshare and operated by a designated vanpool driver. All passengers except the driver pay a monthly fare calculated to recover capital and operating costs. Seven persons is the minimum number required to start a vanpool, although a vanpool can be started with only six persons if the group is prepared to pay for the empty seat until a seventh person can be found. The Jack Bell Rideshare program is offered province-wide. Administrative costs of the vanpool program are partially funded by BC Transit (and by TransLink in the Lower Mainland).



C1

March 14, 2012

File No.: 8520-CVC

Mr. Doug Caul
Assistant Deputy Minister, Partnerships
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
PO Box 9850, STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA BC V8W 9T5

Dear Mr. Caul,

Re: Cowichan Valley Malahat Commuter Transit Service

Thank you for your letter of January 26, 2012 regarding the Cowichan Valley Malahat Commuter Transit Service. The Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) appreciates the Province's continuing support of this important service.

The purpose of this letter is to seek clarification regarding the future development of park and ride locations used by the service. Currently the two park and ride locations at Valley View Centre (in Cobble Hill) and Frayne Road (in Mill Bay) are operating at capacity and expansion is required to meet the growing demand.

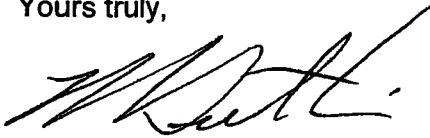
As you may be aware the average monthly ridership on the Cowichan Valley Malahat Commuter Transit Service to Victoria has greatly increased from 2,727 in October 2008 to over 6,400 in January 2012. The success of the service is resulting in the need for additional buses and park and ride capacity. The CVRD and BC Transit hosted a public meeting on December 3, 2011 to discuss the Cowichan Valley Malahat Commuter service and the main topic of public interest was the challenges the service faces to meet the growing demand. Additional trips were requested and discussed, but without increasing park and ride capacities the ridership improvements would be challenged. The public in attendance encouraged the CVRD and BC Transit to work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to explore options and timelines for new or enlarged park and rides.

On behalf of the residents of the Cowichan Valley I would like to thank the Province for its visionary thinking regarding the Commuter Service that continues to reduce vehicles travelling over the Malahat, benefiting the environment and connecting the Cowichan Valley and Victoria. In an effort to help meet the needs of this growing service, we would like to meet with Ministry representatives and BC Transit to further discuss possible infrastructure improvements.

.../2

Thank you very much for your consideration. Ms. Allison Nelson, Executive Assistant, will be in contact with your office to enquire about meeting opportunities.

Yours truly,

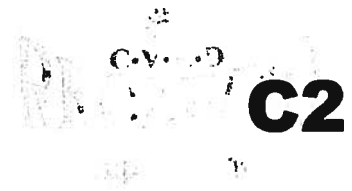


Rob Hutchins
Chairperson

JW:rj

pc: The Honourable, Blair Lekstrom, Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure
Jim Hestor, Director, Transit, Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure
Peter Rantucci, Director of Regional Transit Systems, BC Transit
Myrna Moore, Senior Regional Transit Manager, BC Transit
Jim Wakeham, Manager, Facilities, Fleet & Transit, CVRD

rosa/Chair/Doug Caul DepMin CVC follow up March 14 2012



January 26, 2012

Cliff #: 200886

Gerry Giles, Director
Cowichan Valley Regional District
175 Ingram Street
Duncan, BC V9L 1N8

Dear Gerry:

I am writing to follow up on our November 21, 2011 meeting regarding Cowichan Valley Commuter Transit Service. As we discussed the service is a very successful partnership between the Province, Capital Regional District and the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

As you are aware, the provincial government has made a sustained, long-term commitment to this service by providing the capital grant to BC Transit for eight new coach-style buses. In addition to this \$4 million capital grant, the Province continues to contribute \$401,000 annually to the operating expenses. It is important to note that this is a significant contribution over and above our standard funding formula with BC Transit. Unfortunately, I must advise you that we are not able to provide yet more funding to this service.

Should the Cowichan Valley Regional District want to explore the option of paying for the service expansion, I suggest you approach BC Transit. They will be able to advise you on what is required to evaluate the expansion you desire including costs and timing. I have taken the liberty of copying Manuel Achadinha, President and CEO of BC Transit so he is aware of your request.

Sincerely,

Doug Caul, Assistant Deputy Minister, Partnerships
Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure

Original: <i>EEES</i>	to: <i>Chair</i>
Bu: <i>Chair</i>	<i>Manuel Achadinha</i>
Committee(s): <i>Chair</i>	<i>D. G. C.</i>
Date: <i>Jan 26 2012</i>	<i>Feb 14 12</i>
File #	

**cc: Manuel Achadinha, President and CEO
BC Transit
520 Gorge Road East
Victoria BC V8W 2P3**

**Rob Hutchins, Chair, CVRD
175 Ingram Street
Duncan BC V9L 1N8**

**Jim Hester, Director, Transit
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**



R1

STAFF REPORT

**TRANSIT COMMITTEE MEETING
OF APRIL 11, 2012**

DATE: March 30, 2012 **FILE NO:** Transit

FROM: Jim Wakeham, Manager, Facilities, Fleet and Transit Management

SUBJECT: Change on handyDART No – Show and Cancellation Policy

Recommendation/Action:

That the CVRD Transit Committee support the changes to handyDART's "No Show and Late Cancellation" policy, to help improve the performance of the service, as recommended by BC Transit and Volunteer Cowichan.

Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:

This initiative fits within the Establish Sustainable Communities objective in the Healthy Environment section of the Corporate Strategic Plan, as it improves service and supports cost effective services.

Financial Impact: *(Reviewed by Finance Division: Not Required)*

Background:

For the past few years there has been a significant increase in the number of no shows and late cancellations of booked handyDART trips in the Cowichan Valley, which has negatively impacted the service and created inefficiencies resulting in a large increase in the number of unmet trips as well as complaints. This service is in high demand and with the existing operating procedures, the ability for new clients to book trips is very limited. BC Transit is in the process of reviewing all handyDART systems in the Province in an effort to standardize the operating and booking policies. They have, therefore, recently been working with Volunteer Cowichan to modify their policies relating to no shows, late cancellation and service restrictions in an attempt to reduce the inefficient trips.

The recommended changes include; modifying the advance pre-booking timeframe for subscription trips from no limit to 3 months, reducing the time frame for late cancellation notices from 24 hours to a minimum of 2 hours before a scheduled trip, and also implementing a service restriction penalty whereby if clients incur two unexplained no-shows or late cancellations (less than 2 hours before the scheduled trips) within 30 days, they will risk having a 4 week service restriction imposed. With regards to the service restriction, clients will not be assessed the penalty if no shows or late cancellations are deemed to be beyond the rider's control. All eligible handyDART clients will be informed about the new policies commencing in 30 days after receipt of their individual letter.

Attached is the March 29, 2012 BC Transit letter – "Change to handyDART No-show and late cancellation policy" and the accompanying draft letter that would be sent to the registered clients.

Submitted by,

**Jim Wakeham, Manager
Facility, Fleet, and Transit Management**

Reviewed by:
Division Manager:

Approved by:
General Manager:

March 29, 2012

Jim Wakeham
Manager Facility, Fleet and Transit Management
Engineering and Environmental Services Department
Cowichan Valley Regional District
175 Ingram Street
Duncan, B.C.
V9L 1N8

Dear Mr. Wakeham:

Subject: Change to handyDART No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy

I am writing to inform you of the recent collaborative work between BC Transit and Volunteer Cowichan aimed at improving the performance of the handyDART service in the Cowichan Valley through the introduction of a new no-show and late cancellation policy.

Danielle Harriott, BC Transit's Custom Transit Project Manager, has been involved throughout the process of updating the policies. Danielle is currently responsible for implementing a larger-scale project which aims to standardize the handyDART service on a province-wide basis.

As you may be aware, since 2010 there has been a substantial increase in the number of no-shows and late cancellations of booked handyDART trips in the Cowichan Valley which has negatively impacted the service and created inefficiencies due to the number of unmet trips increasing significantly. Based on the current operational procedures, the ability for new eligible or non-subscription handyDART users to book trips is very limited.

The new policy focuses on (1) modifying the advance pre-booking timeframe for subscription trip bookings from the previous no-limit to 3 months (2) modifying the timeframe for late cancellation notice from 24 hours to 2 hours and (3) implementation of a new service restriction penalty.

All eligible handyDART clients will be informed about the new policies by letter (see attached letter). We are seeking support for making this change from the Cowichan Valley Regional District Transit Committee prior to its distribution to registered handyDART clients in the Cowichan Valley.



Myrna Moore
Senior Regional Transit Manager,
Vancouver Island Coastal
Municipal Systems
Phone: (250) 995-5612
Myrna.Moore@bctransit.com

ENTER DATE, 2012

Dear Cowichan Valley Registered handyDART client

Re: Change to handyDART No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of changes being made to the no-show and late cancellation policy. The policy applies to all registered handyDART clients across the Cowichan Valley Regional Transit System. The changes will come into affect on the **ENTER DATE**

Comment (d1): (policy "start date" to be one month (minimum) from the registered user's estimated date of receipt of the letter (allow for one week in mail.)

The introduction of the policy has been prompted by the substantial increase in the number of handyDART clients over the past two years failing to show up (no-show) at their agreed pickup locations and failing to provide a cancellation notice less than 2 hours before their pre-booked trip (late cancellation). It appears that numerous handyDART clients are not aware of the current policies therefore we are implementing a new set of regulations that aim to clarify the responsibility of all users.

Whenever a client does not show up for a trip or cancels without giving the appropriate notification, it causes the bus to run empty. The service has a full schedule most days; however, due to the increase in no-shows and late cancellations, an increasing number of clients are being turned away unnecessarily.

These instances have led to an increase in complaints received from handyDART clients by Volunteer Cowichan (the Operation Company), BC Transit and the Cowichan Valley Regional District office.

In order to improve the service and reduce the number of no-shows and late cancellations, handyDART clients will be required to follow the new set of policies listed below:

Subscription Bookings

Registered handyDART users and/or their caregivers are permitted to pre-book subscription bookings for three (3) months at a time which replaces the previous no-limit policy. Clients and/or their caregivers are responsible for renewing their subscription trips. Subscription bookings will not automatically be renewed.

One-off trip bookings

For one-off trip bookings users and/or their caregivers are permitted to pre-book one (1) month in advance.

Cancellations

All cancellations must be made a **minimum of two (2) hours before** the scheduled trip which replaces the previous 24 hours cancellation policy. Any cancellations less than 2 hours before the scheduled trip will be considered a late cancellation.

Please call **250 748 1230** for all subscription bookings or cancellations.

New Service Restriction Penalty

handyDART clients who incur two (2) unexplained no-shows or late cancellations (less than 2 hours before the scheduled trip), within 30 days will risk having a four (4) week service restriction Imposed on them.

handyDART clients will be notified after 24 hours via telephone and/or mail each time a late cancellation or no-show occurs.

Policy Exceptions

Any no-shows or late cancellations deemed "beyond the rider's control" will not be counted as an offence if the client or caregiver calls the Dispatcher's office to give a reason within 24 hours of that instance. If a client or caregiver does not contact the handyDART Dispatch office within the 24 hour timeframe, the occurrence will be counted as a no-show or late cancellation.

Reasons that are deemed beyond the riders control include but are not limited to:

- Illness precluding rider from calling to cancel
- Personal attendant did not arrive on time to assist rider
- Mobility aid failed
- Sudden turn for the worse in someone with variable condition

The policy is intended to be in the best interests of all handyDART clients and will help ensure the continued and effective delivery of the Cowichan handyDART service.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

Mike Davis
Vice President and Chief Operating Officer