

**CHAIR & MEMBERS
NANAIMO TRANSIT SELECT COMMITTEE
September 27, 2018**

SUBJECT: PLANNING UPDATE

PURPOSE

This update on transit planning activities in the Regional District of Nanaimo is provided to the Transit Select Committee ("TSC") for **INFORMATION**.

SERVICE PLANNING SUMMARY

Winter 2019 Service

Upon direction from the Regional District of Nanaimo Board, Route 40 improvements are being developed for implementation in January 2019.

Key changes include:

- Additional peak morning and afternoon trips
- Additional Sunday trips

PLANNING INITIATIVES

Work undertaken or proposed since the last Transit Select Committee meeting includes:

- **South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plans** – BC Transit staff and RDN reviewed the input collected from Phase 1 of public consultation. A summary of the comments received from public engagement sessions and workshops is attached as *Appendix B and C*. Based on the feedback from Phase 1, staff are pursuing phase II of public engagement to receive feedback on potential route changes. Public engagement will be held in late November and the final Plan will be completed in Winter 2019.
- **Nanaimo Transit Service Improvements Priorities** - BC Transit and the Regional District of Nanaimo have developed a living document that prioritizes transit improvements based on the strategic direction of the South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan, land use and demographic changes, and public input. It will provide a list of initiatives for future service expansions. *See Appendix A*.
- **Area F Feasibility Study**: BC Transit completed Phase I of the Feasibility Study for Electoral Area F. Service options include proposed routing and high-level cost estimates. Upon Transit Select Committee Direction, Phase II will commence.

INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVES

- **Bus Pullouts on Highway 19A at Rutherford Road / Mostar Road** – In Collaboration with the Ministry of Transportation, new bus pullouts on Highway 19A at Rutherford Road and Mostar Road will be constructed.

- **Woodgrove and Country Club Transit Exchanges** – The RDN and BC Transit contracted Watt Consulting LTD to evaluate transit exchange options, produce concept developments and Class D cost estimates to submit to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- **Downtown Transit Exchange** - The RDN and BC Transit contracted Watt Consulting LTD to evaluate transit exchange options, produce concept developments and Class D cost estimates to submit to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.
- **Smart Bus / NextRide** – The Smart Bus program, which equips the fleet with security cameras (CCTV) and automatic passenger counters (APCs), as well as provides real-time technology (AVL) to the entire fleet has been completed as of May 2018. This will improve schedule reliability and provide stop level activity data.

Related Local Initiatives

The Regional District of Nanaimo participated in a number of local initiatives on behalf of the Transit Select Committee over the last few months, including the following:

- Transit training with locals groups: Seniors Connect & VIU International Students
- Event booths: Parksville KidsFest, Nanaimo Silly Boat Regatta, and Touch-A-Truck events
- Float (Bus) entry: Heritage Day, Canada Day, and Bathtub parades

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Transit Select Committee receive this report for **INFORMATION**.

Respectfully,

Kailey Laidlaw
Transit Planner
BC Transit

Erica Beauchamp
Superintendent Transit Planning & Scheduling
Transportation & Emergency Services
Regional District of Nanaimo

Attachments:

- A: Regional District of Nanaimo Transit Expansion Priorities
- B: South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan Public Engagement Results
- C: South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan Stakeholder Meeting Overview

Appendix A

Service Expansion Priorities

This working list of priorities is developed in alignment with the goals and vision of the Transit Future Plan (2014). It provides a service description and an associated high level hour estimate and vehicle estimate. The scoring system below acts as an assessment tool for ranking priorities to help guide decision making. The highest score indicates the highest priority. The metrics were applied to the service improvement in order to identify priorities.

Scoring Matrix

Metric	Weight
Population and Employment Access ¹	15%
Route Productivity ²	15%
Route Directness and Legibility ³	15%
On-Time Performance ⁴	50%
Coverage to Unserved Areas ⁵	5%

Service Type	Service Improvement	Additional Buses	Additional Hour Estimates	Scoring /50
Frequent Transit Network	Route 40: Route modification to provide more residents with access to frequent transit.	2 (heavy-duty)	5000	45
Local Transit Network	Routes 5,6, and 7: Simplify routes	2 (heavy-duty)	4500	35
	Route 30: Simplify route	2 (heavy-duty)	3500	35
	Route 20 Realignment: Connects Woodgrove, Linley Valley/Rutherford, and Country Club Centre.	3 (heavy-duty)	6500	30
	Route 1: Realignment: Connects Country Club, Prideaux Exchange, and Vancouver Island University.	4 (heavy-duty)	10000	30
	Parksville and Qualicum: General service increases	2 (light-duty)	3000	25
	Cassidy Paratransit Service	2 (light-duty)	2500	10
	Service to Area F	2 (light duty)	3000	10
Regional Connection	Service to Ladysmith: peak hour weekday service that connects the downtown core, VIU, airport, and Ladysmith	2 (heavy-duty)	2500	10
HandyDART	Increased service based on Transit Future Plan	1 (light-duty)	2000	-

¹ Population and employment density within a 400m walk distance

² Rides per revenue hour

³ Direct and consistent to improve travel times

⁴ The degree to which the bus meets scheduled times

⁵ Coverage to areas currently not serviced by transit

Public Engagement Report

South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan Phase I

March 2018



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1. Introduction

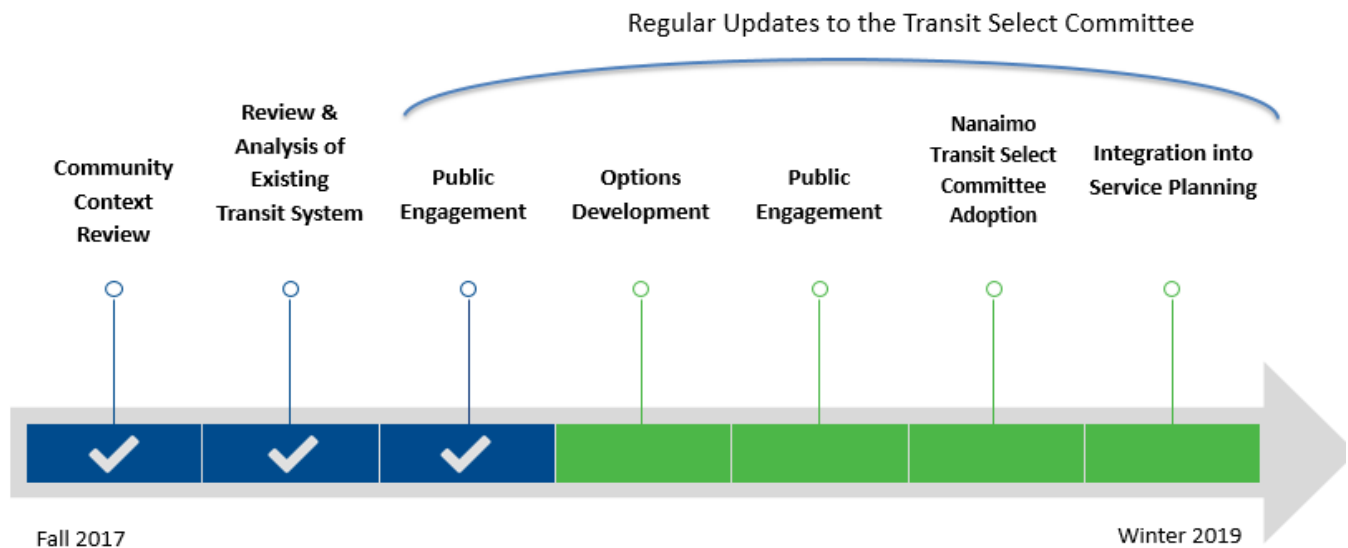
The Regional District of Nanaimo and BC Transit are developing the South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan. The plan builds from priorities identified in the Transit Future Plan (2014). The plan’s primary goals include:

- A. Define interim improvements for transit service and infrastructure over the next seven years.
- B. Simplify Route 5,6,7, and 30 to provide more convenient service between neighborhoods and key destinations.
- C. Continue to support the Regional District of Nanaimo’s Transit Future Plan goal to increase the transit mode share to 5 per cent.

Background

The development of the Local Area Transit Plan began in fall 2017. The first step included discussions to ensure transit priorities still aligned with the Official Community Plan, Transportation Master Plan, and neighborhood plans. Next, a detailed review and analysis of the existing transit service, including ridership statistics and demographics was conducted. Using this information, in February and March 2018, BC Transit and the Regional District of Nanaimo collaborated on an engagement process to assist in developing short and medium service options for the area. The engagement process included five open houses and an online survey. The remainder of this document presents the results of this engagement process and the next steps in the process.

Project Timeline



2. Engagement Methods

In February and March of 2018 an online survey was administrated and five open houses were hosted to provide space to gather information on customer priorities and travel behavior to specific destinations within South Nanaimo. In total, approximately 500 people participated in the engagement process. This information is further summarized on the following page. An extensive media awareness initiative was conducted to promote the open houses. Media included: Website Customer Alerts, Fare Page Alerts, Facebook, Twitter, Rack Cards, Interior Bus Cards, and radio advertisements.


The engagement boards and survey instrument are included in Appendix A and B.



Five Open Houses



**Over 400
Total Comments** 

Online Survey
February 8th – March 19th
185 respondents 

**300 Open House
Attendees** 

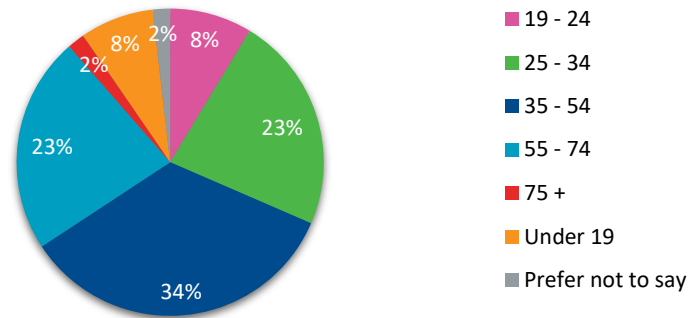
3. Findings

The online survey introduced participants to the Local Area Transit Plan study area, which includes Routes 5 Fairview,6 Harewood,7 Cinnabar/Cedar and 30 NRGH (See Appendix B).

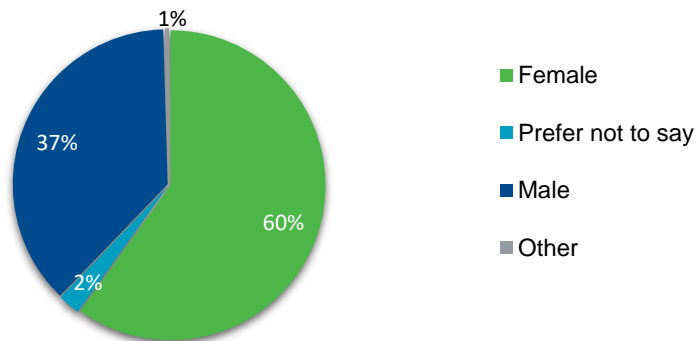
3.1 Demographics

The online survey asked detailed demographic and travel patterns to help inform service design by building a picture of how and which residents use transit.

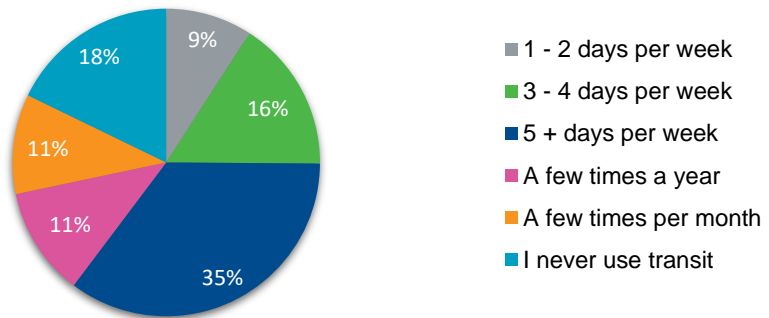
Which age category best describes you?



Which gender do you identify with?



In the past 6 months, how often have you used transit?



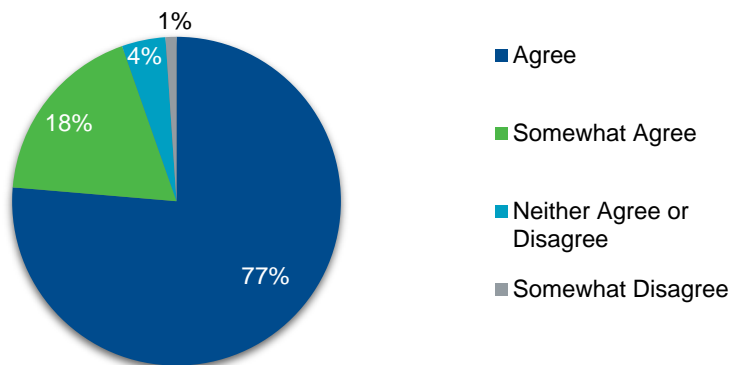
3.2 Transit Priorities

Nanaimo’s Transit Future Plan (2014) identified priorities for the South Nanaimo area. Respondents were asked how agreeable they are to the following priorities:

- Realign routes to provide more direct service between key destinations and neighborhood centers
- Provide more frequent service and longer service hours on the Local Transit Network
- Improve service information e.g. real-time, online schedules and information
- Improve bus stop amenities e.g. benches, shelters, and bike racks
- Introduce Transit Priority Measures e.g. transit signal priority or queue jumper lanes.

95 per cent of respondents either agreed or somewhat agreed with these priorities.

Do you agree with these priorities?



3.3 Transit Improvements

The online survey asked respondents to rank seven specified transit improvements from most to least important. These improvements included:

- Transit service to the Duke Point area
- More direct service between key destinations and neighborhood centers
- Improved transfer opportunities
- Improved service frequency at peak travel times (7-9 a.m., 4-6 p.m.)
- Improved service frequency during the midday (9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
- Improved service frequency on weekends
- Improved service frequency during the evenings (starting at 7 p.m.).

More direct service between key destinations and neighborhood centers was identified as the highest priority for 27 per cent of respondents. 28 per cent of respondents identified Duke Point service as the lowest priority.

Please rank the following transit improvements from most to least important

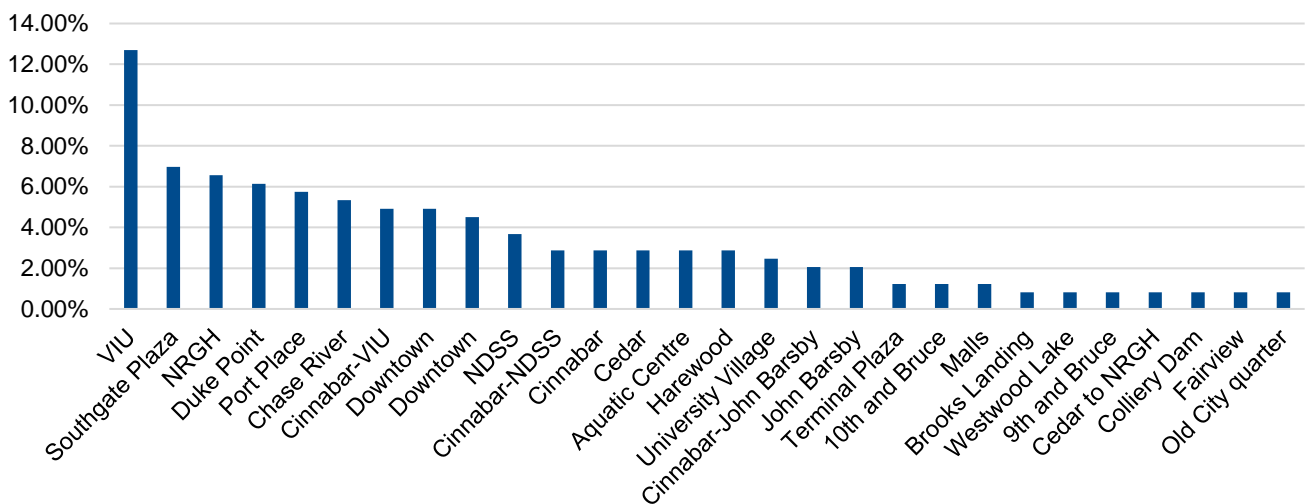
Rank	Duke Point Service	More direct service	Transfer opportunities	Improved frequency at peak times	Improved midday frequency	Improved weekend frequency	Improved evening frequency
First	20%	16%	7%	18%	8%	14%	11%
Second	10%	10%	13%	11%	7%	14%	14%
Third	10%	11%	14%	12%	16%	8%	11%
Fourth	8%	4%	10%	14%	17%	15%	14%
Fifth	5%	9%	14%	8%	15%	15%	9%
Sixth	5%	5%	11%	10%	11%	13%	17%
Seventh	28%	5%	7%	4%	10%	5%	19%

*Ranking percentages may not add up to 100%, it was not mandatory to rank all seven items.

3.4 Destinations Within South Nanaimo

Open house and survey respondents were provided opportunities to identify key destinations within the South Nanaimo area. Participants often identified multiple destinations; VIU was identified as the most important, confirming that a significant portion of ridership is generated from students.

Which specific destinations in the South Nanaimo area are more important to you?

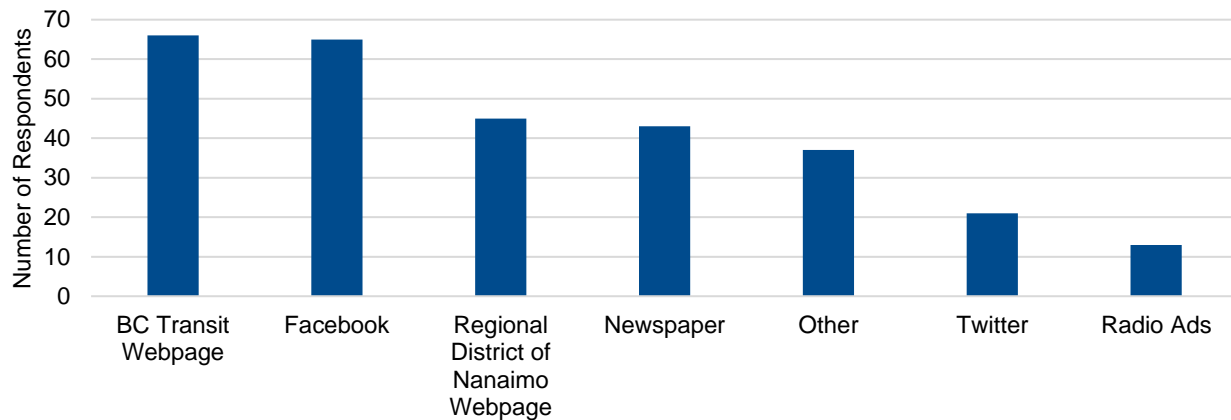


Other responses were specific address locations which are not included in the graph.

3.5 Transit Media Awareness

As part of the engagement, visitors were also asked about their source of information for transit updates. This will help both BC Transit and the Nanaimo staff more effectively communicate information.

On which media platforms do you usually hear about transit updates?



3.6 Open-ended Feedback: Comments & Suggestions

Both the online survey and open houses provided opportunities for respondents to provide open-ended comments and general feedback. Overall, participants were supportive of service improvements to the south Nanaimo area. Key themes that emerged through these comments included:

- **Duke Point Service:** Participants requested service expansion to the Duke Point area, an area currently unserved by transit.
- **Route 7 frequency and routing:** Respondents identified Route 7 as needing increased frequency to provide better service to Cedar and Cinnabar, as well as improved routing and increased transfer opportunities.
- **Ladysmith service:** Inter-regional service to Ladysmith was identified as a desired connection.
- **Airport/Cassidy service:** Respondents indicated that expanding service to the Nanaimo Airport and the surrounding Cassidy area is a priority.
- **Route 30 frequency and routing:** Respondents indicated they would like a more legible route and more frequent service.
- **Route 6 routing:** Respondents desired increased frequency and more direct routing to key destination, such as Vancouver Island University. Service on 10th street was also identified by respondents.

- **Route 6 frequency:** Respondents identified a desire for increased frequency on Route 6.

3.7 Key Findings

Among the online survey and the open houses, the following key themes emerged:

- **Duke Point service:** Participants consistently requested service to Duke Point through the online survey and at open houses.
- **More direct service:** Participants identified more direct service between key destinations, such as Vancouver Island University and Southgate Plaza and neighborhood centers as a high priority.
- **Improved service frequency at peak times:** Service during peak hours (7-9 a.m, 4-6 p.m.) was identified as needing improved frequency on Route 5,6, and 7.
- **Improved weekend and evening frequency:** Improvements to service frequency on weekends and evenings was identified as a priority by respondents, especially by those who rely on transit to travel to and from work.
- **Ladysmith service:** Respondents identified interregional service to Ladysmith as a desirable connection.
- **Route 7 frequency and routing:** Route 7 was identified as needing improvements to both service and frequency to increase service to Cedar and Cinnabar.

4. Next Steps

The engagement process for the South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan has been a collaborative process between the Regional District of Nanaimo and BC Transit.

The responses for the engagement process have been tabulated and analyzed to support the future development of the South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan. The next step in the process is to use this information to assist in the development of draft short and medium term transit service changes to continue to support transit ridership in the area. These proposals will then be shared during Public Engagement II in fall 2018.

For more information on this project, please contact NanaimoPlanning@BCtransit.com

Appendix A Open House Boards



The Regional District of Nanaimo Transit Future Plan envisions the transit network long-term and describes the services, infrastructure and investments that are needed to get there.

South Nanaimo Area Transit Plan

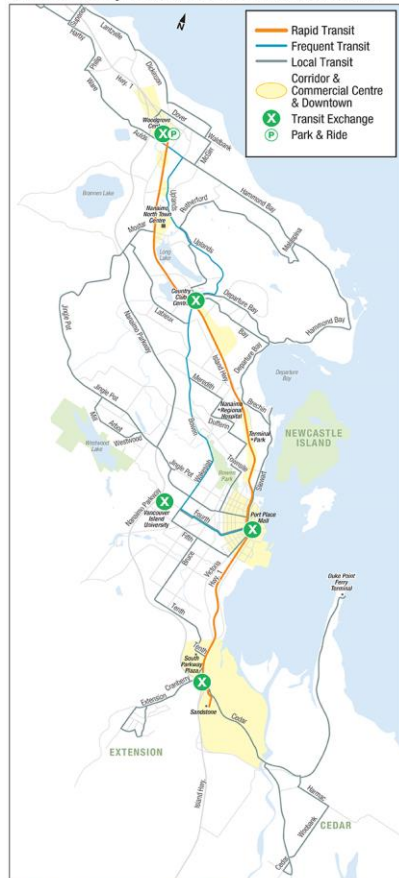
Your input will shape the Local Area Transit Plan for South Nanaimo. This plan will:

- Determine transit service and infrastructure priorities
- Support the Regional District of Nanaimo’s Transit Future Plan goal to increase the transit mode share to 5%

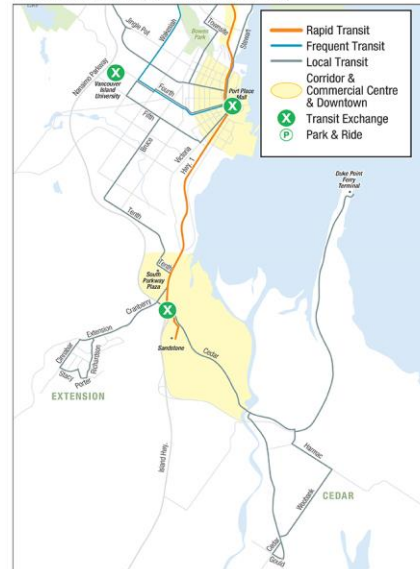


Transit Future Plan Conceptual Maps

Lantzville & City of Nanaimo Transit Future Network



South Nanaimo Transit Future Network



Rapid Transit: 15 minutes service frequency along key corridors and more direct service

Frequent Transit: 15 minutes service frequency along medium to high density mixed land use corridors

Local Transit: connects neighborhoods to local destinations, the Rapid Transit Network and the Frequent Transit Network



South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan

Where are your key destinations?	
Within South Nanaimo (e.g. University, recreation centres, shopping malls or health care facilities)	
Outside South Nanaimo	

Use sticky notes for comments

Comments

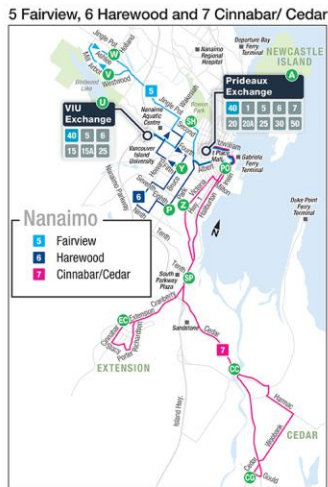
Use sticky notes for comments





South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan

The study area encompasses 5 Fairview, 6 Harewood, 7 Cinnabar/Cedar and 30 NRGH.



What are your priorities? Select up to three options.

Realign routes to provide more direct service between key destinations and neighborhood centres	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide more frequent service and longer service hours on the Local Transit Network	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve service information e.g. real-time, online schedules and information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve bus stop amenities e.g. benches, shelters and bike racks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Introduce Transit Priority measures such as transit signal priority or queue jumper lanes	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Thank you!



Appendix B Online Survey



Regional District of Nanaimo Transit System - South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan

The South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan is currently being developed and we need your input to help improve existing transit routes and identify future service needs. The study area encompasses **Routes 5 Fairview, 6 Harewood, 7 Cinnabar/Cedar, and 30 NRGH.**



Individuals who are under the age of 19 must have permission from their parents or guardians to complete this survey. Collection and use of the information requested for this survey is for the sole purposes of enhancing transit services and is compliant with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. For more information, please contact BC Transit's Privacy Officer at FOI_Request@BCTransit.com or phone 1-844-482-6161.

Regional District of Nanaimo Transit System - South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan

About You!

***1. Which age category best describes you?**

- under 19
- 19 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 54
- 55 - 74
- 75 +
- Prefer not to say

2. Which gender do you identify with?

- Female
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to say

***3. In the past 6 months, how often have you used transit?**

- 5 + days per week
- 3 - 4 days per week
- 1 - 2 days per week
- A few times per month
- A few times a year
- I never use transit

Regional District of Nanaimo Transit System - South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan

Transit Priorities

4. Previously identified priorities for transit improvements in the south Nanaimo area include:

- Realign routes to provide more direct service between key destinations and neighbourhood centres
- Provide more frequent service and longer service hours on the Local Transit Network
- Improve service information e.g. real-time, online schedules and information
- Improve bus stop amenities e.g. benches, shelters, and bike racks
- Introduce Transit Priority Measures e.g. transit signal priority or queue jumper lanes

Do you agree with these priorities?

- Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Disagree

5. Please rank the following transit improvements from 1-7 with 1 being your highest priority and 7 being your lowest priority

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Transit service to the Duke Point area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More direct service between key destinations and neighbourhood centres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved transfer opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved service frequency at peak travel times (7 - 9 am, 4 - 6 pm)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved service frequency during the midday (9 am to 4 pm)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved service frequency on weekends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved service frequency during the evenings (starting at 7 pm)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please explain below)

6. Which specific destinations in the south Nanaimo area are most important to you? Please provide a specific name, location or nearest intersection. Think of places you go to multiple times per week or most often - shopping, employment, healthcare, recreation, education.

Regional District of Nanaimo Transit System - South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan

Additional Information

7. Do you have any additional comments or ideas to improve transit in the south Nanaimo area?

8. On which media platforms do you usually hear about transit updates? (select up to three)

- Newspaper
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Radio Ads
- BC Transit Webpage
- Regional District of Nanaimo webpage
- Other

BC Transit and the Regional District of Nanaimo thank you for your input. Your comments from the survey will be used to shape transit service in the area. Watch for next steps: <https://bctransit.com/nanaimo/transit-future/nanaimo-transit-future-plan>. We are also looking for regular transit riders to participate in a workshop in the Spring, please contact us via email: NanaimoPlanning@BCtransit.com

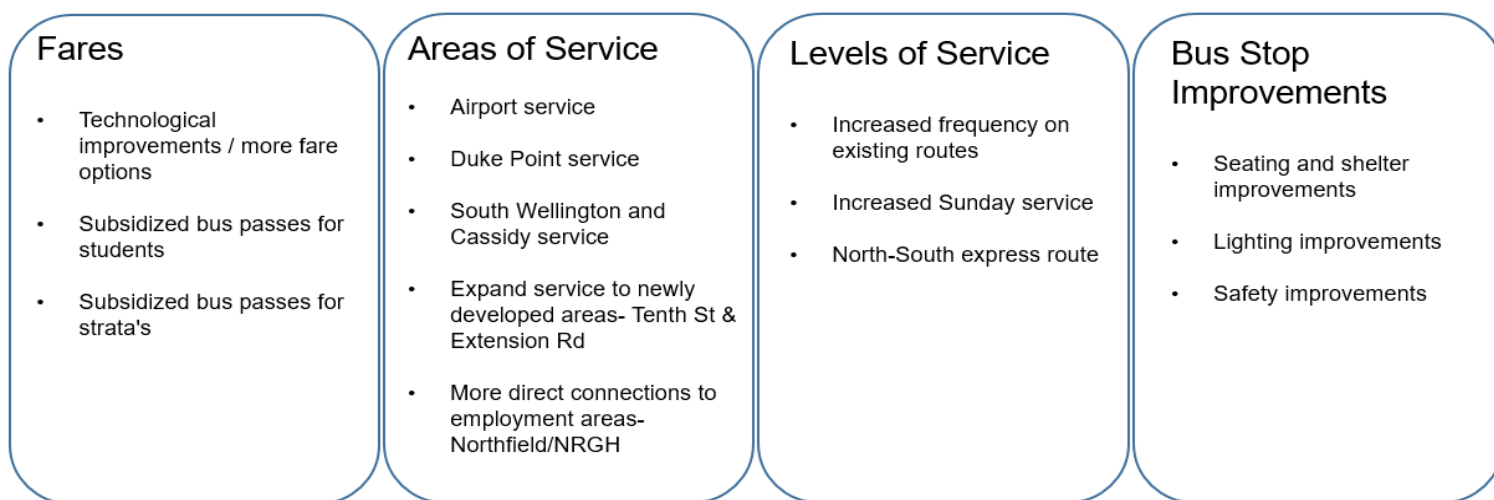
South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan Workshop I Summary

Background

As part of the development of the South Nanaimo Local Area Transit Plan, multiple public engagement sessions have and will be conducted to help shape priorities. To ensure we heard residents correctly in Phase I of public engagement (public booths and surveys) and to test-drive ideas, a workshop with key stakeholders was held. Stakeholders included City of Nanaimo staff, South End Community Association representatives, Nanaimo Youth Council representatives, Cassidy residents, and regular transit users. An overview of priorities and key comments identified in the workshop are detailed below.

Priorities

Priorities identified during the stakeholder workshop are detailed in the graphic below.



Other key comments from the workshop included:

- More direct connections to employment nodes
- Route 40 Realignment: route modification to improve travel times and operational efficiency

Next Steps

The input collected will help inform service planning priorities and route alignments. Public engagement will be held in the fall of 2018 once options have been developed. Stay up to date by following <https://bctransit.com/nanaimo/transit-future/local-area-transit-plans/project-updates>