

To: CAO for the Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2019-03-12

From: Melissa Geddert, Planning Technician

File No: 8330-02-28111

Subject: Chilliwack Area Transit Future Plan Update and Public Engagement Schedule

INTENT

This report is intended to advise the Regional and Corporate Services Committee of information pertaining to updates to the Chilliwack Area Transit Future Plan and scheduled public engagement events. Staff is not looking for a recommendation and has forwarded this information should members want more clarification to discuss the item further.

STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

Support Healthy & Sustainable Community

Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

PRIORITIES

Priority #2 Air & Water Quality

BACKGROUND

The Chilliwack Area Transit Future Plan was approved in 2012. The Plan envisions the area's transit network for the next 25 years and sets a planning framework for Chilliwack, Kent, Harrison Hot Springs and Hope. The Plan describes the services, infrastructure and investments required to achieve the goals set out in the plan.

The 2012 Transit Future Plan identified a number of priorities for Chilliwack and the surrounding region. The City of Chilliwack transit service area and the FVRD transit service area operate with separate agreements, yet work together to streamline and integrate the services as much as possible. The Fraser Valley Regional District coordinates three sub-regional services Fraser Valley: Fraser Valley Express (FVX #66), Agassiz-Harrison (AGH #11), and Hope (#22). BC Transit is now in the process of updating the Transit Future Plan with a Transit Future *Action* Plan in recognition of the fact that a majority of the FVRD's short and medium term priorities have been met.

Fraser Valley Express (FVX) Route #66

Highway express service was one of the short term priorities identified in the 2012 Plan. In 2015 FVX transit service was introduced, offering passengers bus service between Chilliwack and Abbotsford to the Carvolth Exchange in Langley where passengers are able to connect to TranLink's transit network serving Metro Vancouver. The impressive FVX ridership numbers have generated enough revenue to finance an expansion of service hours without requiring additional tax requisition. Service expansions have included higher frequency trips, including hourly service during peak travel times, introducing Sunday and holiday service and doubling the number of trips on weekends and holidays.

Agassiz-Harrison (AGH) Route #11

The Agassiz-Harrison transit service offers bus service between Chilliwack and Harrison Hot Springs via Agassiz. In 2013 the capacity of this service was expanded with the introduction of two larger Vicinity buses. In 2018 additional service hours were added at no additional cost to offer Sunday and holiday service during the months of July and August.

Hope Route #22

Transit service in Hope was one of the medium to long term priorities identified in the 2012 Transit Future Plan. In 2017 the transit service was introduced to Hope. The route offers service between Agassiz and Hope via Highway 7, connects to the AGH Route #11, and provides limited internal service to Hope. In 2018 the service was expanded to include a stop at Chawathil First Nation.

DISCUSSION

In the approximately 5 years since the Transit Future Plan was approved, many of the short and medium term priorities outlined in the current plan have been achieved. As such, BC Transit is conducting an update to the plan, called the "Transit Future Action Plan", building on the goals and priorities identified in the 2012 Plan and identifying future transit needs for a growing region. Upcoming public engagement events will help identify the public's vision of the transit's future in the FVRD.

The Transit Future Action Plan will uphold community goals and objectives to strengthen the link between transportation and land-use in support of sustainable growth. The Plan will also serve to inform any future local or regional transportation plans. These goals are consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.

Public Engagement

The planning process seeks to reflect community desires, and public engagement is critical to ensure service and infrastructure priorities of the Plan will align with the public interest. A series of public engagement events are planned during the first week of April to gain feedback on the future needs of the transit service in Chilliwack, Hope, Agassiz and HHS. Input from the engagement will be reflected in the new Transit Future Action Plan. BC Transit is facilitating all of the engagement sessions. A coordinated plan for advertising and development of the public engagement display boards is

underway. FVRD Board members are invited to attend any of the open houses. The public engagement schedule is as follows:

Chilliwack / FVRD Engagement Schedule		
Date	Location	Time
April 1, 2019 (Mon)	Chilliwack Senior Secondary	8:30 am - 12:30 pm
April 1, 2019 (Mon)	Sardis Public Library	3:30 pm - 8:30 pm
April 2, 2019 (Tues)	District of Kent Council Chambers	9:00 am - 12:00 pm
April 2, 2019 (Tues)	Hope Recreation Centre	3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

COST

No costs incurred at this time.

CONCLUSION

The majority of the priorities set out in the 2012 Transit Future Plan have been met. Stakeholder and public engagement will inform new priorities to address the transit needs of the growing region. Once the engagement period is complete, BC Transit staff will collect all of the feedback and draft a final report. The final report, with a draft of the new Chilliwack Area Transit Future Action Plan, will be presented for review and approval. Once the plan has been approved a final version will be distributed and service change priorities will inform the development of future Service and Financial Strategies and Annual Service Plans.

COMMENTS BY:

Alison Stewart, Manager of Strategic Planning:	Reviewed and supported
Barclay Pitkethly, Director of Regional Programs:	Reviewed and supported.
Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services:	No further financial comments.
Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer:	Not available for comment.