

**KOOTENAY BOUNDARY (TRAIL) TRANSIT SYSTEM
CONVENTIONAL AND CUSTOM TRANSIT SERVICES**

TRANSIT STRATEGY

March 20, 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	OBJECTIVES.....	1
3.	CURRENT & FUTURE MARKETS.....	2
4.	EXISTING SERVICES & PERFORMANCE	3
5.	IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES	6
6.	SUPPORTING STRATEGIES	7
7.	RECOMMENDATION.....	7

1. INTRODUCTION

Public transit is delivered in BC, outside Greater Vancouver, under a partnership between BC Transit, local government and, in most cases, a private sector operating company. The operating authority, assignment of responsibilities between the parties and cost-sharing between BC Transit and local government partners are established under the British Columbia Transit Act and Regulation. Within Kootenay Boundary, Trail Transit Service Inc. operates all transit services.

This Transit Strategy is developed to support Kootenay Boundary's plans for growth and development over the next five years in the area of Trail, Rossland and the smaller communities in the area. The Strategy outlines the key objectives for the delivery of transit services within the Kootenay Boundary area and examines the current and future markets of transit customers. The review of existing transit services, including an assessment of key performance indicators, provides the necessary system level information in which to identify service improvements to occur over the next three to five years. Key support initiatives that are necessary to enhance the effectiveness of transit within the Kootenay Boundary area are also included in the strategy.

2. OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the Kootenay Boundary Transit Strategy is to provide transportation alternatives to key customer markets and increase overall mobility within the community. In this regard, the primary objectives of the Transit Strategy are briefly summarized as follows:

- **Provide service to all major activity centres and key residential areas in Trail, Rossland, and smaller communities in the area.** In this regard, transit service will focus primarily on the established areas of the community, with services directed toward connecting residential, mixed-use and other key trip generators within the Kootenay Boundary. This would also include the Trail town centre and Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital.
- **Focus on the service needs of commuters for school and work.** Existing and new transit services will continue to focus on the primary markets – schools, and employment centres. Particular emphasis will be put on attracting youth to use transit and to continue to provide regional connection between communities and Trail.

- **Provide services to support mobility for seniors, and persons with disabilities.** Approximately 19% of the population in Kootenay Boundary is 65 or older, with the number of people set to become seniors in the next 5 years being approximately 6% of the population. Continued operation of handyDART service will help to serve this population.
- **Integrate transit considerations with land use planning decisions.** The Official Community Plans for the various communities outlines the expectations for growth and development. The Transit Strategy will support the growth patterns of the community and should be integrated with future land use decisions ranging from area structure plans through to subdivision applications. This could also be used to influence the relationship between transit and where key land uses are located such as medical facilities and shopping. Community planning exercises could also define the densities required to support better transit service as communities develop.
- **Define supporting strategies needed to encourage greater transit ridership among key customer markets.** In order to make transit more attractive, supporting strategies that encourage and facilitate access to transit will be examined. These initiatives may range from making transit facilities more accessible through to support programs provided directly to target transit customers.
- **Make efficient use of transit resources using key performance indicators to maximize customer service and community benefits.** Monitoring key performance indicators and making comparisons with similar transit systems will be used to identify guide the development of improvement opportunities with the available transit resources.

3. CURRENT & FUTURE MARKETS

The assessment of current and future transit customer markets is a key step in the development of a transit plan. Key factors include population characteristics, the profile of transit riders as well as other key observations about the community.

The population of the Kootenay Boundary area is expected to slightly decline over the next 25 years. Currently, there are approximately 12,900 people in the Kootenay Boundary service area which is expected to decrease to 12,300 by 2031.

The service area for the Kootenay Boundary custom/paratransit service is approximately 20,500 with this expected to decrease to 19,600.

The area has approximately 19% of its population that is 65 years or older. This is expected to grow as the population ages and more people look to the Kootenay Boundary area as a place to retire. Conversely, approximately 13% of the population is less than 15 years old.

4. EXISTING SERVICES & PERFORMANCE

BC Transit monitors key performance indicators related to transit systems on a quarterly basis and sets targets annually. These indicators provide BC Transit with the data required to assess how well the system is performing and provides guidance for future investment.

The Kootenay Boundary conventional transit service is comprised of 9 routes. These serve the Trail urban area as well as connecting surrounding communities to Trail. All routes operate Monday to Friday while some routes operate on Saturday. Currently, no evening service is provided.

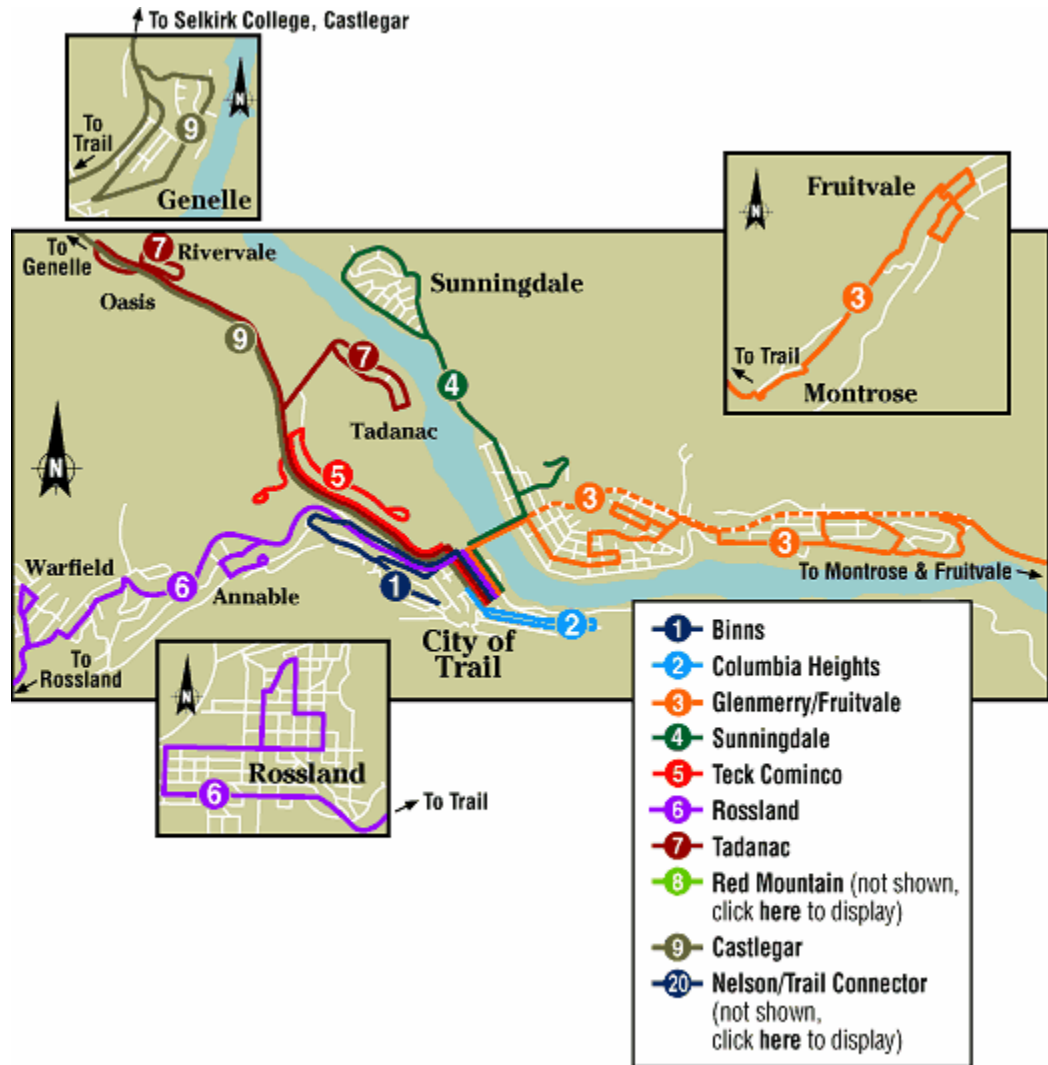
Custom transit service (handyDART) are available on weekdays between 8:00am and 4:00pm.

Table 1 summarizes route service frequencies while Figure 1 illustrates the routes.

Table 1 – Route Service Frequencies

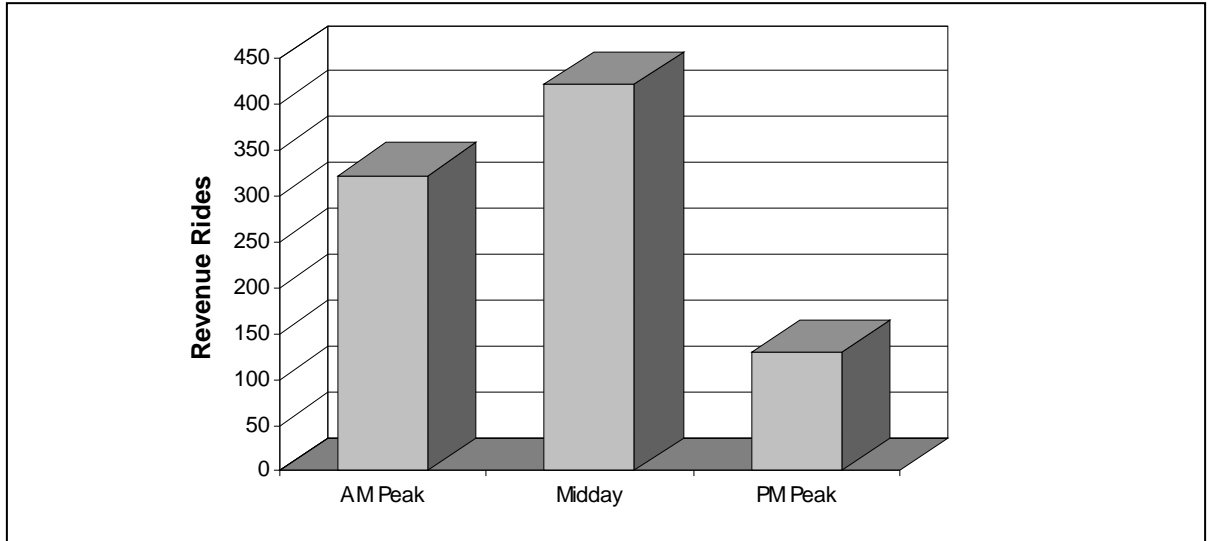
Route	Service Day	AM Peak (min)	Midday (min)	PM Peak (min)
1 – Binns	7:30 – 17:50	90	120-180	1 trip only
2 – Columbia	8:25 – 17:00	1 trip only	240	1 trip only
3 – Glenmerry	6:30 – 17:10	30	50-60	15 – 40
4 - Sunningdale	7:00 – 17:00	45 – 60	120	50-70
5 – Teck Cominco	6:01 – 15:18	30-60	-	1 trip only
6 – Rossland	6:00 – 17:10	45-90	120-180	30
7 - Tadanac	7:30 & 14:30	1 trip only	-	1 trip only
8 – Red Mountain	7:40 & 15:45	1 trip only	-	1 trip only
9 - Castlegar	7:00 – 14:20	1 trip only	1 trip only	1 trip only

Figure 1 – Kootenay Boundary Transit Map



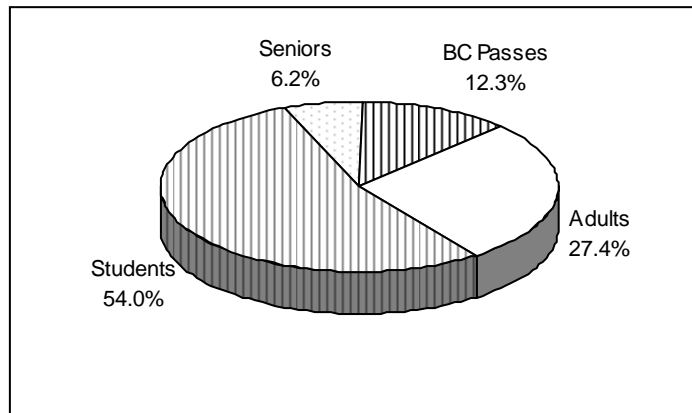
Based on two week counts in October 2007, the Kootenay Boundary transit system handles approximately 871 revenue passengers per day. Ridership is highest during the midday hours though the AM peak also has significant ridership. Figure 2 summarizes this information.

Figure 2 – Weekday Ridership



The majority of riders in Kootenay Boundary are students, comprising 54% of overall ridership followed by the adult population. Figure 3 summarizes the weekday revenue ridership by passenger group.

Figure 3 – Weekday Revenue Ridership by Passenger Group



Relative to other communities of similar type service, Kootenay Boundary has a fairly expensive system in terms of cost per hour of service but achieves a relatively low cost per passenger. In 2006/07, the conventional system handled almost 342,000 passengers and had a total cost of \$1.55 million. Table 2 key performance indicators for the Kootenay Boundary's conventional and custom/paratransit service.

Table 2 – Key Performance Indicators, 2006/07

INDICATOR	CONVENTIONAL SERVICE	CUSTOM/ PARATRANSIT SERVICE
Financial Summary (\$000)		
Total Cost	\$1,551	\$172
Total Revenue	\$322	\$10
BC Transit Share	\$547	\$114
Municipal Share	\$659	\$44
Level of Service		
Population Served	12,900	20,500
Vehicles in Service	8	2
Revenue Hours	12,450	2,297
Performance Summary		
Annual Passengers	342,762	4,431
Passengers/hour service	27.5	1.8
Total Cost per Passenger	\$4.52	\$38.70
Cost Recovery	20.8%	6.1%
Cost per Hour Service	\$101.98	\$72.80

5. IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

This section outlines improvements to the Kootenay Boundary transit system over the next 3 – 5 years. These improvements will evolve with community planning as well as changes in community development. They are also subject to local and provincial budget approvals and are conditional on local and provincial resources.

In Kootenay Boundary, improvements to conventional service could include:

- expansion to include Sunday service;
- addition of a late afternoon/evening trip to Castlegar to accommodate commuters to and from Nelson; and
- expanding service to Red Mountain if there is further expansion of the resort.

Improvements to the custom/paratransit service could include:

- expand bus fleet from 1.5 buses to 2 buses over the next few years to provide enhanced service;
- potentially expand service to Christina Lake and Grand Forks; and
- implement Taxi Saver programs to support handyDART service.

6. SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

In addition to providing transit services directed toward the target customer markets, supporting strategies can be used to encourage and accommodate greater ridership and improve transit service performance. Improvement strategies could include, in general, the following:

- Review vehicle suitability due to severe terrain challenges in some areas
- Fare strategies that may be directed toward expanding existing target markets
- TDM measures that support the integration of transit with attractive bicycle and pedestrian facilities in terms of creating enhanced access
- On-street facilities at high demand locations to enhance the quality of waiting areas
- Marketing strategies to identify and target key transit markets, including the provision of accessible transit information such as riders' guides, information signage, and the website.

The main strategy to support transit in Kootenay Boundary will be the installation of new bus shelters at key locations.

7. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary and BC Transit approve this transit strategy as a guide for transit planning and delivery in the Kootenay Boundary region.