

DATE: February 27, 2018

FILE: 8500-20

TO: Chair and Directors
Committee of the Whole

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Service Changes for the Comox Valley Transit System

Purpose

To seek direction on service changes for the Comox Valley Transit System.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the 4,000 annual service hour expansion of the conventional transit system scheduled for September 2018 be implemented as described in the BC Transit Service Change Plan attached to this staff report dated February 27, 2018.

Executive Summary

In July 2017 the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) board approved a 4,000 hour expansion of the conventional transit system for September 2018. Subject to approval of the currently proposed Comox Valley Transit Service financial plan and the BC Transit service change plan in Appendix A, the implementation of this expansion includes:

- A significant next phase of the frequent transit network (FTN) which would see 20 minute frequency between downtown Comox, North Island College, downtown Courtenay and the Driftwood Mall/Anfield Centre areas.
- A significant restructuring and improvement of other local routes to integrate with the FTN and to address system needs identified by BC Transit, the Dantec analysis and customers.

This expansion is estimated to result in significant ridership increases (up to 100,000/year) by improving frequency, directness and convenience of the system in the highest density areas of the Comox Valley.

- Additional improvements include simplifying the schedule (e.g. clockface headways) and providing better access to key destinations such as the the d'Esterre House and Library in Comox.
- The expansion would cost the CVRD \$93,000 in 2018 (due to partial year implementation) and \$280,000 in 2019 and beyond.
- As a result of additional ridership expected from this expansion, bus fare revenue is estimated to increase by \$12,000 in 2018 and \$45,000 per year afterwards.
- A revised fare structure is also targeted to be implemented in September 2018 and is expected to result in increased revenues of approximately \$25,000 annually.
- Should the CVRD determine that this expansion is no longer desired, we would be required to pay \$65,737 for the lease fees for the two additional buses that were ordered upon the CVRD's commitment to expanded service in July 2017.

BC Transit will be in attendance at the March 6, 2018 Committee of the Whole (COW) to present the service change plan.

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Stakeholder Distribution (Upon Agenda Publication)

Transit Management Advisory Committee	✓
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Background/Current Situation

As transit service expansions are cost shared between the CVRD and the province, in June 2017 BC Transit requested confirmation from the CVRD on our intentions with respect to expansion. A service discussion document prepared by BC Transit was provided and presented to the board in July 2017 including details on a proposed 4,000 hour expansion identified as the preferred option B1.

This expansion included a significant next phase of the FTN which is the primary improvement identified in the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan (TFP). The FTN would see 15-20 minute frequency between downtown Comox, North Island College, downtown Courtenay and the Driftwood Mall/Anfield Centre areas. This improvement would carry the majority of the transit system’s total ridership and result in significant ridership increases (estimated to be up to 100,000/year). At the same time, the FTN expansion would trigger a significant restructuring and improvement of other local routes to integrate with the FTN and to address system needs identified by BC Transit, the Dantec analysis and customers.

In July 2017 the board approved implementation of this expansion for September 2018. Subsequently, BC Transit has undertaken more detailed service planning and public consultation and have prepared a service change plan (attached in Appendix A) for board consideration. This plan provides more details on the proposed changes and includes an implementation timeline and results of public consultation. The most significant change since the 2017 service discussion document includes the recommendation to maintain existing service in West Courtenay, including the routes 7 Arden and 8 Willemar. BC Transit will be in attendance at the March 6 COW to present the service change plan.

The Comox Valley TFP has a mode share target of three per cent by 2038 (currently approximately one per cent) and the transit service will need to attract new riders to the system in order to achieve this. Direct, higher frequency service is the number one request from both existing and potential transit riders. The 4,000 hour expansion is a key step toward increasing ridership as further implementation of the FTN will provide much more direct and frequent service to the highest density areas of the Comox Valley. In addition to increasing ridership the FTN will also improve accessibility, encourage active transportation, improve air quality as well as reduce traffic congestion and associated capital road work costs. Improved public transit is a key component in local government transportation plans throughout the Comox Valley.

Policy Analysis

At the November 13, 2014 meeting of the CVRD board the following motion was carried:

THAT the Comox Valley 25-year transit future plan, 2014 as attached to the staff report dated October 29, 2014 be approved.

At the July 25, 2017 meeting of the CVRD board, the following motion was carried:

THAT the conventional transit service be expanded by 4,000 hours per year, as described as option B1 in the BC Transit service discussion document, to be implemented in September 2018.

Options

The board has the following options:

1. Reaffirm its commitment to the 4,000 hour expansion to be implemented in September 2018 as described in the attached service change plan.
2. Direct staff to work to identify alternative service improvement options.
3. Continue to provide transit service at existing status-quo levels.

Comox Valley TFP has a mode share target of three per cent by 2038 and the transit service will need to attract new riders to the system in order to achieve this. Direct, higher frequency service is the number one request from both existing and potential transit riders and the 4,000 hour expansion per option 1 is a key step toward this.

Reviewing alternative service improvement options will delay the implementation of service expansion, potentially into mid-2019.

Staff are recommending that CVRD pursue option 1 at this time.

Financial Factors

The 4,000 hour expansion would cost approximately \$455,289 in total with CVRD's share estimated at \$93,000 in 2018 (due to partial year implementation) and \$280,000 in 2019 and beyond. As a result of additional ridership expected from this expansion, bus fare revenue is estimated to increase by \$12,000 in 2018 and \$45,000 per year afterwards. These costs and revenues have been included in the 2018 proposed budget.

A revised fare structure is also targeted to be implemented in September 2018 in conjunction with the service expansion. The new fare structure is expected to result in increased revenues of approximately \$25,000 annually.

Should the CVRD determine that this expansion is no longer desired, we would be required to pay for the lease fees for the two additional buses that were ordered upon the CVRD's commitment to expanded service in July 2017. The CVRD's share of the annual lease fees for this expansion is \$65,737 and the CVRD would be required to pay the fee for at least one year or until BC Transit can find another system where they could deploy the unused busses.

Legal Factors

The annual operating agreement between BC Transit and the CVRD stipulates responsibilities of each partner. The CVRD is solely responsible for decisions on service levels and fares.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The provision of effective public transit within the Comox Valley has been identified in the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) as key to reducing the environmental impact of new and existing development, providing a reliable alternative to the use of private automobiles, and providing measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

The RGS includes policies and targets aimed at densifying growth, jobs and schools in core settlement areas around transit corridors, increasing transit mode share and increasing transit service frequency.

Intergovernmental Factors

The service change plan has been reviewed by the Transit Management Advisory Committee who are supportive of the expansion. CVRD and BC Transit staff will continue to work closely with municipal staff on infrastructure impacts such as bus stop changes and new/expanded exchanges.

CVRD staff have worked extensively with Town of Comox staff on a number of significant changes within the Town boundaries that will be brought in with this expansion. This includes new routes, a new exchange and associated infrastructure (i.e. bus stops).

CVRD will also be consulting with K'ómoks First Nation as these changes will result in reduced frequency of service along Comox Rd.

Interdepartmental Involvement

The service improvements and fare structure updates will be led by staff from the Community Services Branch with assistance from other departments including Financial Services and Corporate Services.

Citizen/Public Relations

Through the TFP consultation, the public voiced a strong interest in enhanced transit service and assisted in prioritizing these enhancements over the short, medium and long term. Over 2,000 people attended these consultation events throughout the community and the highest priority improvement they identified was implementation of higher frequency transit on main corridors (FTN).

Public consultation was also undertaken as part of the planned implementation of the 4,000 hour expansion. This consultation supported the introduction of the FTN and provided staff with feedback on schedule and routing details.

Public transit is an important mode of transportation for residents that do not drive due to factors such as age, health and economic reasons. Ridership statistics show that the majority of riders are adults followed by students, persons with disabilities and then seniors. Statistics also show that ridership has essentially levelled off at around 570,000 per year, partly due to the fact that there has been no significant transit improvements or increases in the past several years. The 4,000 hour expansion and associated improvements planned for September 2018 is expected to increase ridership by approximately 100,000.

Attachments: Appendix A – “BC Transit Service Change Plan

Service Change Plan

Comox Valley Transit System

September 2018 Implementation



March 2018



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to continue delivering on the goals and objectives of the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan (2014) and to support the continued success of the Comox Valley Transit system, the Comox Valley Regional District Board has approved a transit service expansion of 4,000 hours and two buses for September 2018.

The proposed service changes primarily include implementing the Frequent Transit Network (FTN) and altering the local routes in Comox, South Courtenay, and Downtown Courtenay to better integrate with the new FTN. This plan outlines the routes, service levels, and infrastructure requirements required for a successful service change implementation. This service change plan includes a summary of data analysis and engagement results, new routes, route changes, and service changes, infrastructure requirements, and an implementation timeline. This plan also provides an update to the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan by prioritizing future transit expansion options for the Comox Valley.

Public Engagement

In support of these changes, BC Transit and the Comox Valley Regional District undertook a public engagement process in December 2017 with four consultation events and an online survey. In total, approximately 280 residents provided feedback through the engagement process. The engagement sought feedback on the proposed Frequent Transit Network and on changes to local routes to better integrate with the FTN.

In general, there was strong support for both the FTN and the South Courtenay local route proposals. Although there was substantial support for the Comox local routes as well, there were a number of valuable suggestions including increases to frequency, service span, and effective connections between the proposed local routes and the FTN. Based on the results from public engagement and additional analysis, it is recommended that no changes be made to the West Courtenay local routes for the September 2018 service change, with the exception of some minor routing changes within Downtown Courtenay.

Infrastructure Requirements

There are multiple infrastructure requirements to accommodate the routing and service levels changes associated with this service change plan. The existing Downtown Courtenay Transit Exchange is at capacity, and an additional bus bay is required to implement the Frequent Transit Network in September 2018 without causing negative traffic impacts. Additionally, a new transit exchange is required in Comox to allow for the new routing and higher service levels associated with the Frequent Transit Network. Multiple other bus stop changes are also required. BC Transit will continue working collaboratively with the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD), the City of Courtenay, and the Town of Comox to ensure these infrastructure changes are in place before the service change date.

Marketing and Communication Plan

A comprehensive marketing and outreach strategy will be developed to communicate these proposed changes effectively to the public. This strategy will include traditional marketing and customer information processes as well as a coordinated, on-street outreach process to communicate the changes directly to riders once the changes are implemented.

Future Service Considerations

After the proposed September 2018 service change is implemented, there are still other short-term priorities within the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan that have yet to be implemented. Further, the engagement conducted as part of this planning process gathered feedback on future transit expansion priorities for the Comox Valley. This feedback can be considered within the context of the Transit Future Plan priorities moving forward.

Recommendations and Next Steps

BC Transit recommends that the Comox Valley Regional District:

- Reaffirm support for the proposed September 2018 service changes
- Direct local staff to work with BC Transit to implement the proposed September 2018 service changes

If the September 2018 service changes are approved, BC Transit will develop the final schedules, and work towards service implementation in collaboration with the local partners.

Table 3: Comox Valley Transit Expansion Implementation Timeline

Date	Deliverable	Owner/Lead
March 2018	Service Change Plan presented to the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board	BCT
April 2018	Implementation MOU issued to the CVRD for review and signature	BCT, CVRD
April - May 2018	Schedule development	BCT
June – August 2018	Riders Guide completion	BCT
August 2018	Bus stop installation, Riders Guide released, website updated and marketing/media/public outreach	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation
August 31, 2018	Service Implementation	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation
Fall 2018	Monitor transit service changes and make adjustments where necessary	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In order to continue delivering on the goals and objectives of the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan (2014) and to support the continued success of the Comox Valley Transit system, the Comox Valley Regional District Board has approved a transit service expansion of 4,000 hours and two buses for September 2018. The details of these expansions scheduled to start on Friday, August 31, 2018 are described below.

This plan outlines the routes, service levels, and infrastructure requirements required for a successful implementation of the service items identified in Table 2. This service change plan includes the following:

1. A summary of data analysis and engagement results
2. New routes, route changes, and service changes
3. Infrastructure requirements
4. Marketing and communication plan
5. Implementation timeline

This plan also provides an update to the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan by prioritizing future transit expansion options for the Comox Valley.

Table 2: Comox Valley Transit System Expansion for September 2018

Start Date	Service Description	Annual Hours	Vehicles
Sept. 2018	Implement Phase 2 of the Frequent Transit Network (FTN) ¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure of local routes to integrate with the FTN 	4,000	2

These expansion initiatives were identified as priorities within the 2014 Comox Valley Transit Future Plan, the Dantec Transit Service Analysis Report, and through the Transit Management Advisory Committee (TMAC). Further, the proposed routing for the Frequent Transit Network was established through the comprehensive and collaborative process for the Comox Valley Frequent Transit Corridor Study.

¹ Phase 1 of the Frequent Transit Network was the implementation of the 34 C2C Express

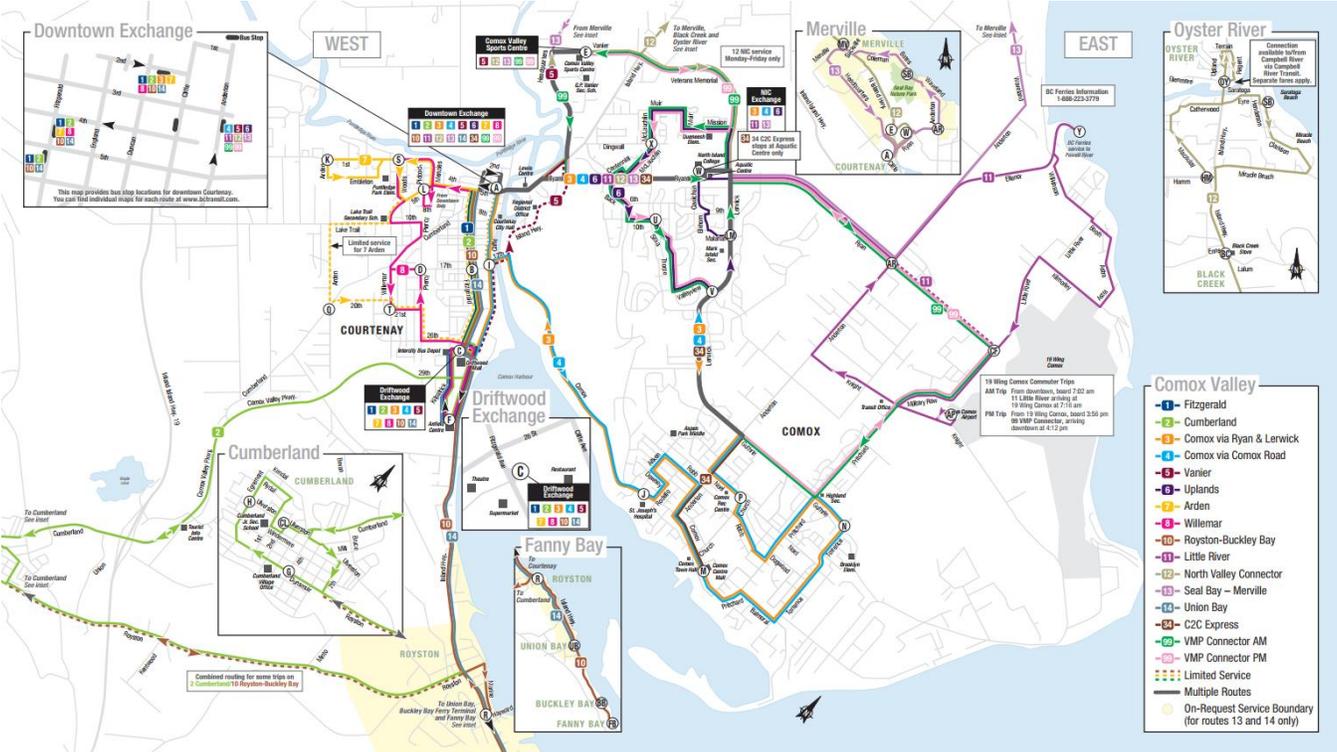
Project Timeline

Date	Deliverable	Owner/Lead
July 2017	2018 Expansion Memorandum of Understanding drafted and signed.	BCT, CVRD
Sept. – Oct. 2017	Draft routes and schedule options finalized for public engagement	BCT
November 2017	Marketing and engagement material developed	BCT
December 2017	Public Engagement on route proposals	BCT, CVRD
Jan. – Feb. 2018	Service Change Plan developed	BCT
March 2018	Service Change Plan presented to the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board	BCT
April 2018	Implementation MOU issued to the CVRD for review and signature	BCT, CVRD
April - May 2018	Schedule development	BCT
June – August 2018	Riders Guide completion	BCT
August 2018	Bus stop installation, Riders Guide released, website updated and marketing/media/public outreach	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation
August 31, 2018	Service Implementation	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation
Fall 2018	Monitor transit service changes and make adjustments where necessary	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation

1.1 Transit System

The Comox Valley Transit System was inaugurated in 1990, with ridership growing from 271,500 in 2003 to 585,800 in 2016. The Comox Valley Transit System is a regional system comprised of 13 routes (Figure 1), and operates seven days a week with the exception of handyDART service which operates from Monday to Friday. Figure 1 shows the existing Comox Valley Transit Network, and Figure 2 shows the Transit Future Network, which identifies the 25-year vision for the transit network.

Figure 1: Existing Comox Valley Transit System



2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Building upon previous engagement completed as part of the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan, BC Transit and the Comox Valley Regional District undertook a robust public engagement process in the fall of 2017.



Open House Event at Driftwood Mall

2.1 Engagement Methods

BC Transit and regional district staff hosted four consultation events within the Comox Valley area on December 1st and 2nd, 2017. These events took place at North Island College, Driftwood Mall, Comox Centre Mall, and the Courtenay Regional Library. An online survey was also promoted and publicly available from November 23rd to December 15th, 2017.

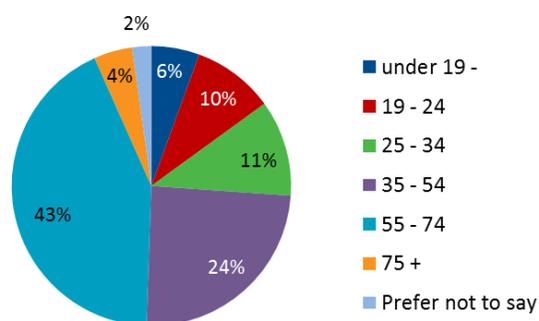
Table 4: Participation in public engagement process

Method	Number of Participants
Open Houses	98 ²
Survey	181
Total	279

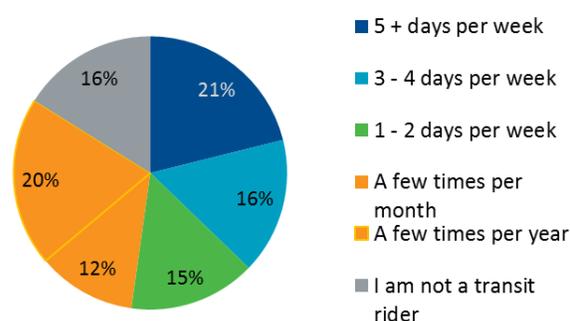
2.2 Engagement Participants

The goal of engagement is to consult a representative sample of a community's population. Participation information sourced from online-survey participants shows that age groups consulted were reflective of the broader Comox Valley population, and that 84 per cent of participants are transit users, with over half using transit at least once a week, and 21 per cent using transit daily.

Proportion of Survey Participants by age group
(n= 180)



Survey Participants' Frequency of Transit Use



² The North Island College event had 15 attendees, the Driftwood Mall event had 49 attendees, the Comox Centre Mall event had 20 attendees, and the Courtenay Regional Library had 14 attendees.

One aspect of ensuring that an engagement process is representative involves reviewing the response rate for each of the service proposals in relation to the proportion of population served by the proposal. Relevant responses matched or exceeded expectations for the FTN, 3 Driftwood, 4 Comox, 2 Cumberland, and 10 Royston, however for changes proposed to Routes 7, 8 and 9 within the City of Courtenay the responses fell short.

Further engagement with transit riders in West Courtenay is required to achieve more confidence when planning future routes changes.

Table 2: Relevant Response Rate

Route		Response Rate (%)	Proportion of CVRD population Impacted (%)	Response Rate Expectation	
Board 1	Frequent Transit Network (connecting key destinations in Comox and Courtney)	92	84	As expected the proportion of responses is high.	✓
Board 2	3 Driftwood, 4 Comox	84	30	The proportion of responses is higher than expected	✓
Board 3	2 Cumberland	35	8	The proportion of responses is higher than expected	✓
	10 Royston	41	3	The proportion of responses is higher than expected	✓
Board 4	7 Puntledge	25	54	The proportion of responses is lower than expected	✗
	8 Willemar	38			
	9 Lake Trail	30			

2.3 Engagement Results

As part of this engagement, there were four key topics that were presented to the public for feedback:

- Frequent Transit Network
- Comox Local Routes
- West Courtenay Local Routes
- South Courtenay Routes

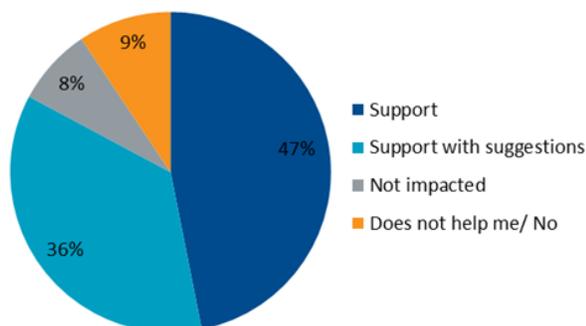
The remainder of this section provides a summary of the results for each of these topics. Additionally, a fifth section considers future expansion priorities based on additional feedback from members of the community.

Frequent Transit Network

There was broad and strong support for the FTN from both online survey participants and open house participants, with 83 per cent of participants indicating support, or support with suggestions. Of the service options presented there was a very high relevant response rate. This coupled with the high levels of support indicates that implementation of the FTN will be well received by transit users. The most common suggestions for this proposal included ensuring that the FTN can make effective connections with other routes and meet key trip times. Additional suggestions included increased service span and improved frequency. These suggestions will be taken into account through the scheduling process.

What are your thoughts about the new proposed Frequent Transit Network ?

Quantified Comments; n = 64

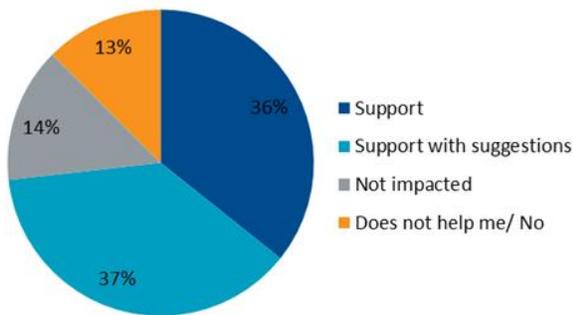


Comox Local Routes

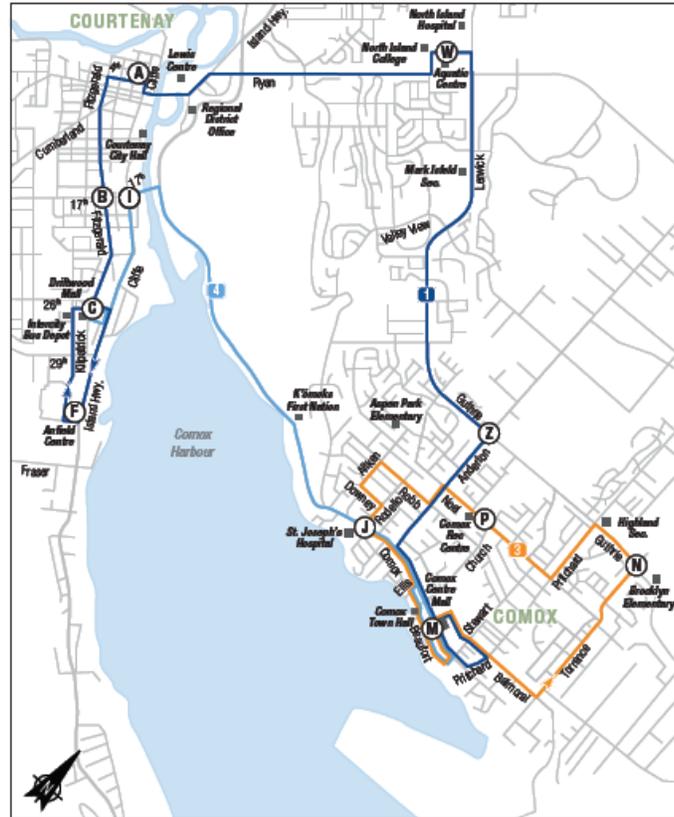
Response to proposed 3 Comox and 4 Driftwood was also generally positive, with 73 per cent of respondents supportive of the proposal. Some of the key suggestions included improving service span, frequency, service coverage, and ensuring convenient connections between the local routes and the FTN. Due to recent road and transit infrastructure improvements, the 3 Comox Local will continue along Robb Avenue between Church and Pritchard Streets. The other engagement suggestions will be taken into account through the scheduling process.

What are your thoughts about the new proposed 3 Comox and 4 Driftwood?

Quantified Comments; n = 57



1 Courtenay/Comox
 3 Comox Local
 4 Driftwood

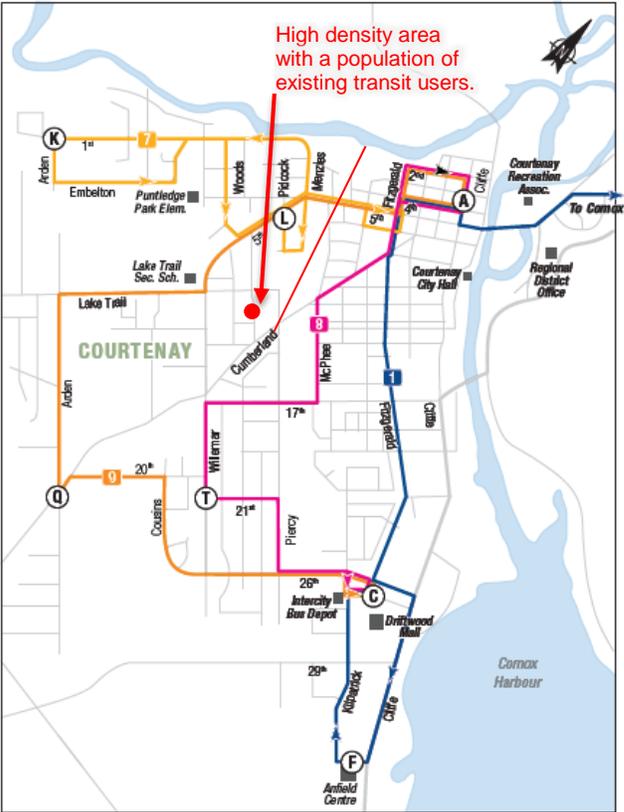


West Courtenay Routes

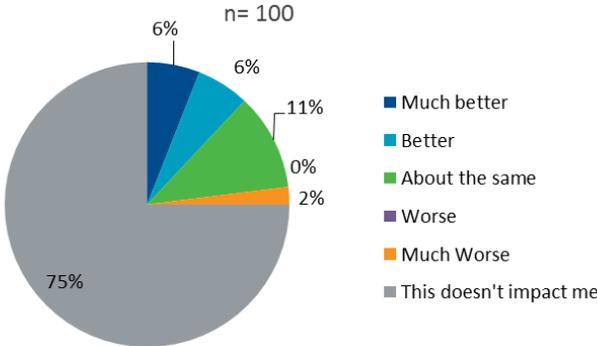
The response to the proposals for west Courtenay was mixed. No comments were made in specific reference to Route 7, but the loss of transit service within the higher-density Piercy Avenue and 10th Street area was specifically identified as a concern. Conversely there was support for closer transit service to Tin Town, but disappointment with the low level of proposed service frequency.

Unlike the other proposed routings, the relevant response for this board was lower than anticipated among engagement participants. The City of Courtenay forms over half the residents served by the transit system, so it would be expected that up to half of the engagement participants would express some feedback on these proposals.

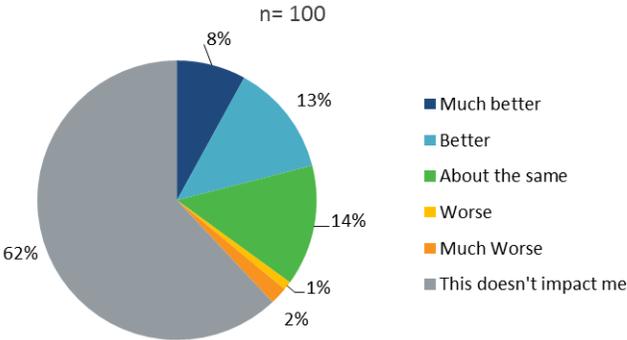
- 1 Courtenay/Comox
- 7 Puntledge
- 8 Willemar
- 9 Lake Trail



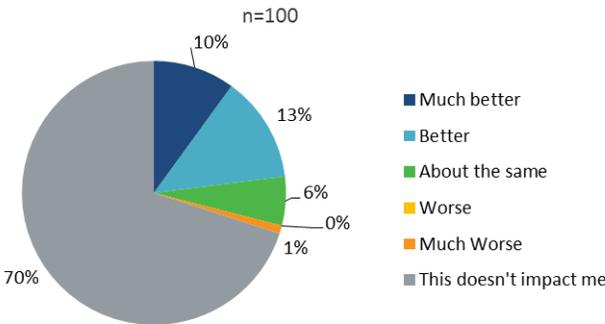
7 Puntledge: Compared to the current service, how would the proposed routes work for you?



8 Willemar: Compared to the current service, how would the proposed routes work for you?



9 Lake Trail: Compared to the current service, how would the proposed routes work for you?

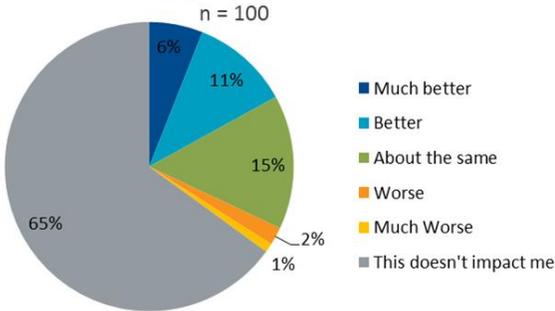


South Courtenay Routes

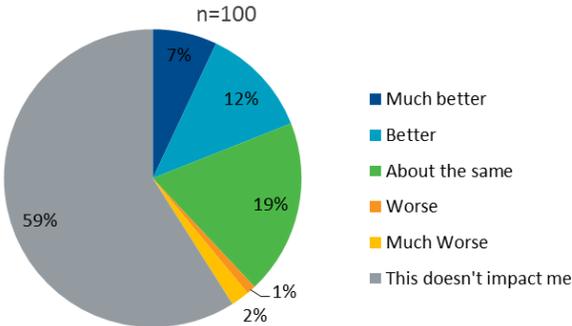
- 1 Courtenay/Comox
- 2 Cumberland
- 10 Royston-Buckley Bay



2 Cumberland: Compared to the current service, how would the proposed routes work for you?



10 Royston: Compared to the current service, how would the proposed routes work for you?



The proposed 2 Cumberland and 10 Royston were well received with about half of the people impacted indicating that the proposed routes would be much better or better for them. As with the routes above, there was a high relevant response indicating solid representation from transit users using these routes among survey respondents.

Other Comments and Future Expansion Priorities

Beyond responses to the proposals many engagement participants expressed requests for improvements to other aspects of the Comox Valley Transit System including the following:

- Requests for improving the on-time performance of the transit system
- Requests for improved service frequency and service span
- Requests for improved Sunday service
- Better connections to and integration with Ferry schedules
- Interregional connections south beyond Fanny Bay
- Improve access to transit information and fare products across the system
- Multiple transit-related comments regarding Hornby and Denman Islands

2.4 Changes Made in Response to Feedback

In response to public concern and additional analysis, BC Transit and CVRD staff made several adjustments to the original service proposals to address community and key stakeholder concerns.

Revisions include:

- Altering Downtown Courtenay routing to remove existing service from 2nd Street in the Old Orchard area
- Maintaining existing service on Routes 7 and 8³
- Creation of a new route to improve the clarity of the existing route 10 / 2 combined trips
- Routing on Robb Avenue between Church and Pritchard Streets maintained
- In Comox, the 1 FTN will route along Stewart Street rather than Pritchard Road

³ There is the potential to revisit the West Courtenay service over the following year.

3.0 SEPTEMBER 2018 PROPOSED SERVICE CHANGES

Based on previous planning work⁴, the findings from public engagement, and ongoing discussions with key stakeholders including the Transit Management Advisory Committee (TMAC), this section summarizes the proposed service changes for September 2018.

The proposed service changes primarily include implementing the Frequent Transit Network (FTN) and altering the local routes in Comox and South Courtenay to better integrate with the new FTN.

3.1 Frequent Transit Network

1 Courtenay/Comox

The 1 Courtenay/Comox is proposed as the Frequent Transit Network (FTN), providing the medium-to-high-density mixed land use corridors within the Comox Valley with a convenient, reliable, and frequent transit service. Some of the key destinations served by this route include the Anfield Centre, Driftwood Mall, Downtown Courtenay, the North Island College and Hospital, and Downtown Comox.

The goal of the FTN is to allow customers to spontaneously travel without having to consult a transit schedule. The FTN will carry the majority of the transit system's total ridership, and for this reason it justifies capital investments such as a high level of transit stop amenities, service branding and transit priority measures.

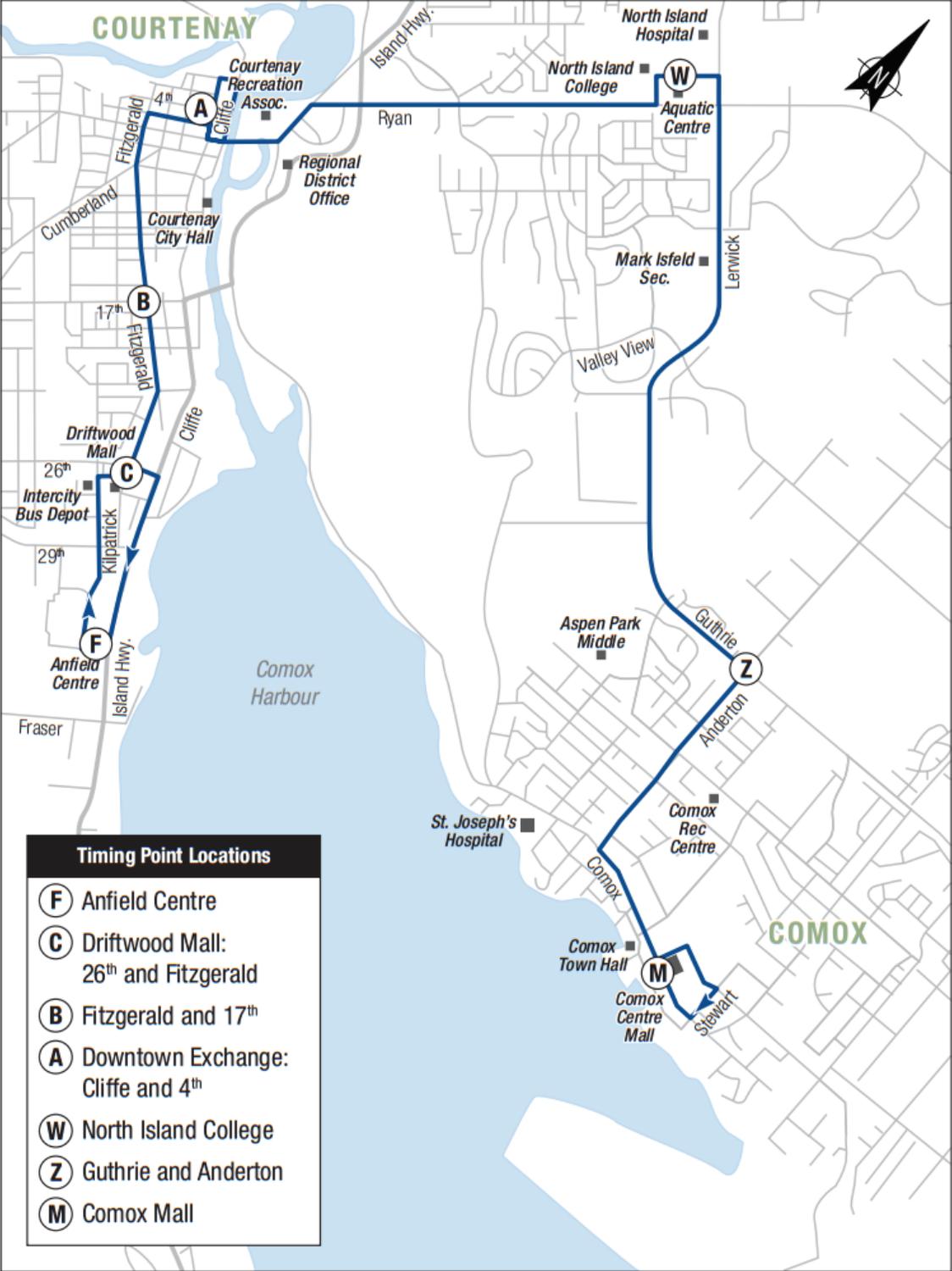
Schedule outline

Day Type	Span	Peak Frequency	Off Peak Frequency	Daily Round Trips
Weekday	6am-10pm	20min	30-60min	30
Saturday	8am-10pm	30min	30-60min	26
Sunday	9am-6pm	60min	60min	9

⁴ This work includes the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan (2014), the Frequent Transit Corridor Study Report (2017), and the Dantec Report (2016).

Route description

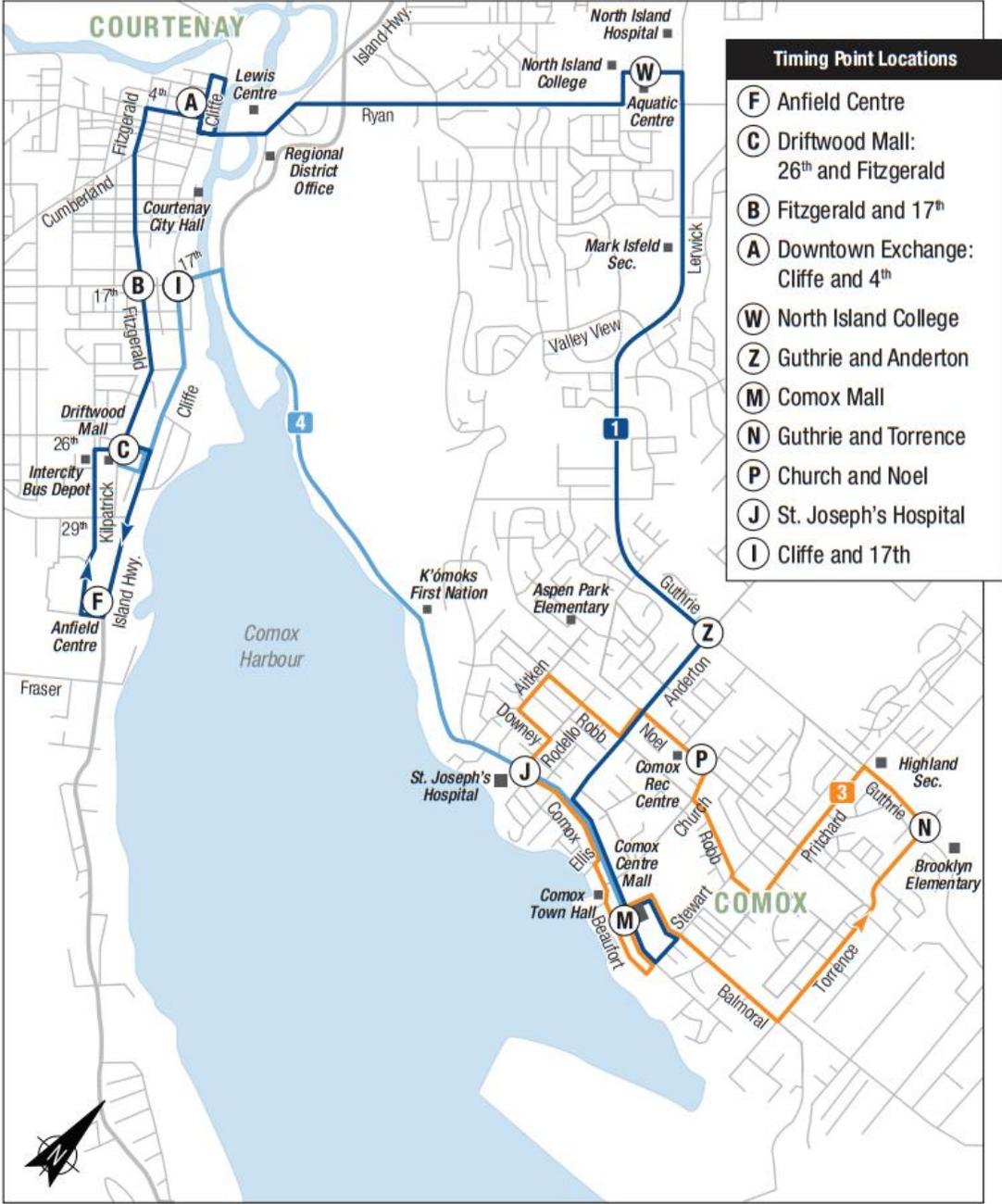
1 Comox/1 Courtenay



3.2 Comox

The changes within Comox include two new local routes, the 3 Comox Local and the 4 Comox/Driftwood Mall to serve the central portions of Comox and connect directly with Driftwood Mall. Both of these routes are designed to integrate with the new Frequent Transit Network. The 3 Comox Local will provide service along Beaufort Ave.

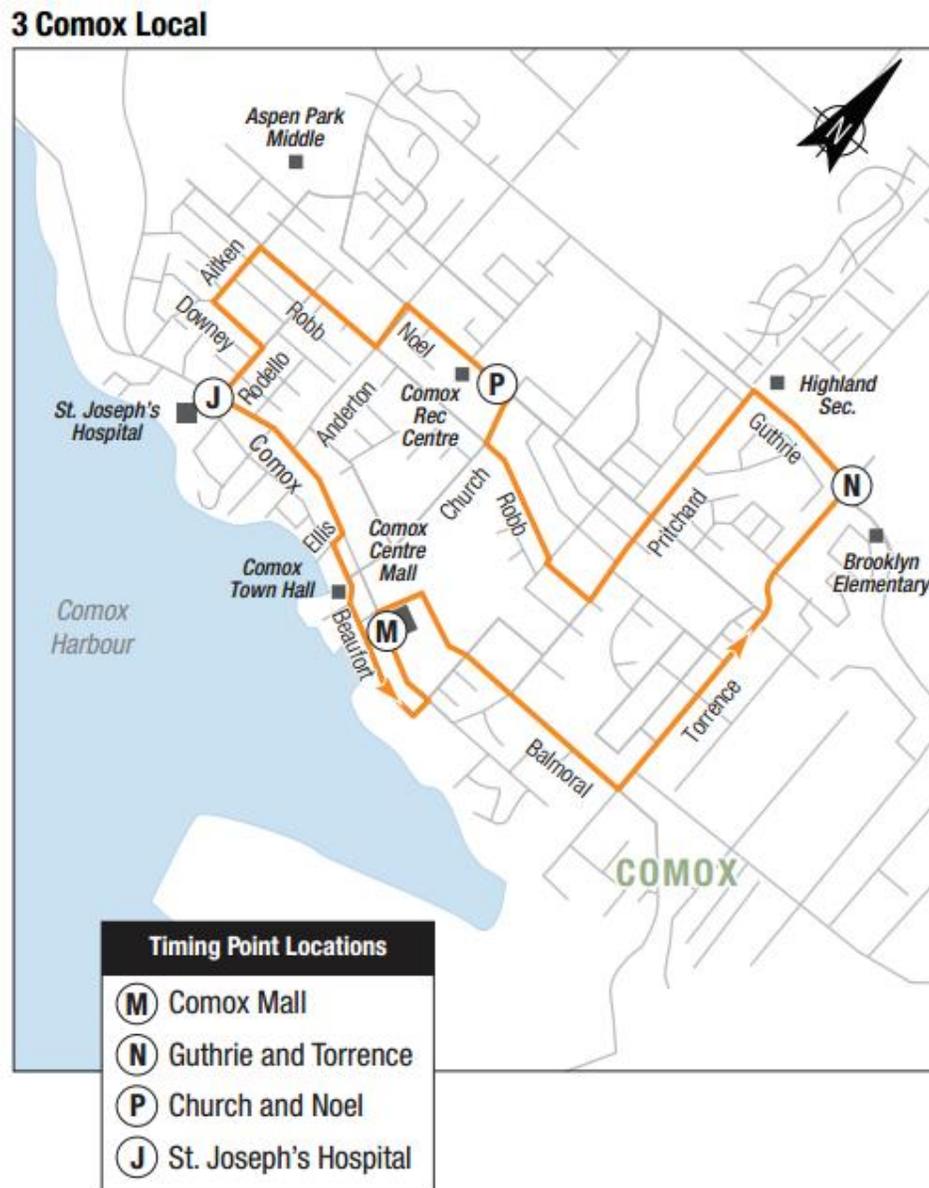
- 1 Courtenay/Comox**
- 3 Comox Local**
- 4 Driftwood**



3 Comox Local

This route is designed to provide coverage service to the central areas within Comox that are served currently by the existing Routes 3 and 4⁵. Based on community feedback, this routing proposal includes Beaufort Avenue, which extends service to a number of key Comox destinations including the Comox Regional Library and d’Esterre Seniors Centre. This route also provides service to a few other key destinations including Highland Secondary School and the Comox Recreation Centre.

Route description



⁵ The existing routes 3 and 4 will be discontinued with the implementation of the Frequent Transit Network.

Schedule outline

Day Type	Span	Peak Frequency	Off Peak Frequency	Daily Round Trips
Weekday	8am-6pm	60min	60min	10
Saturday	8am-6pm	60min	60min	10
Sunday	9am-5pm	120min	120min	4

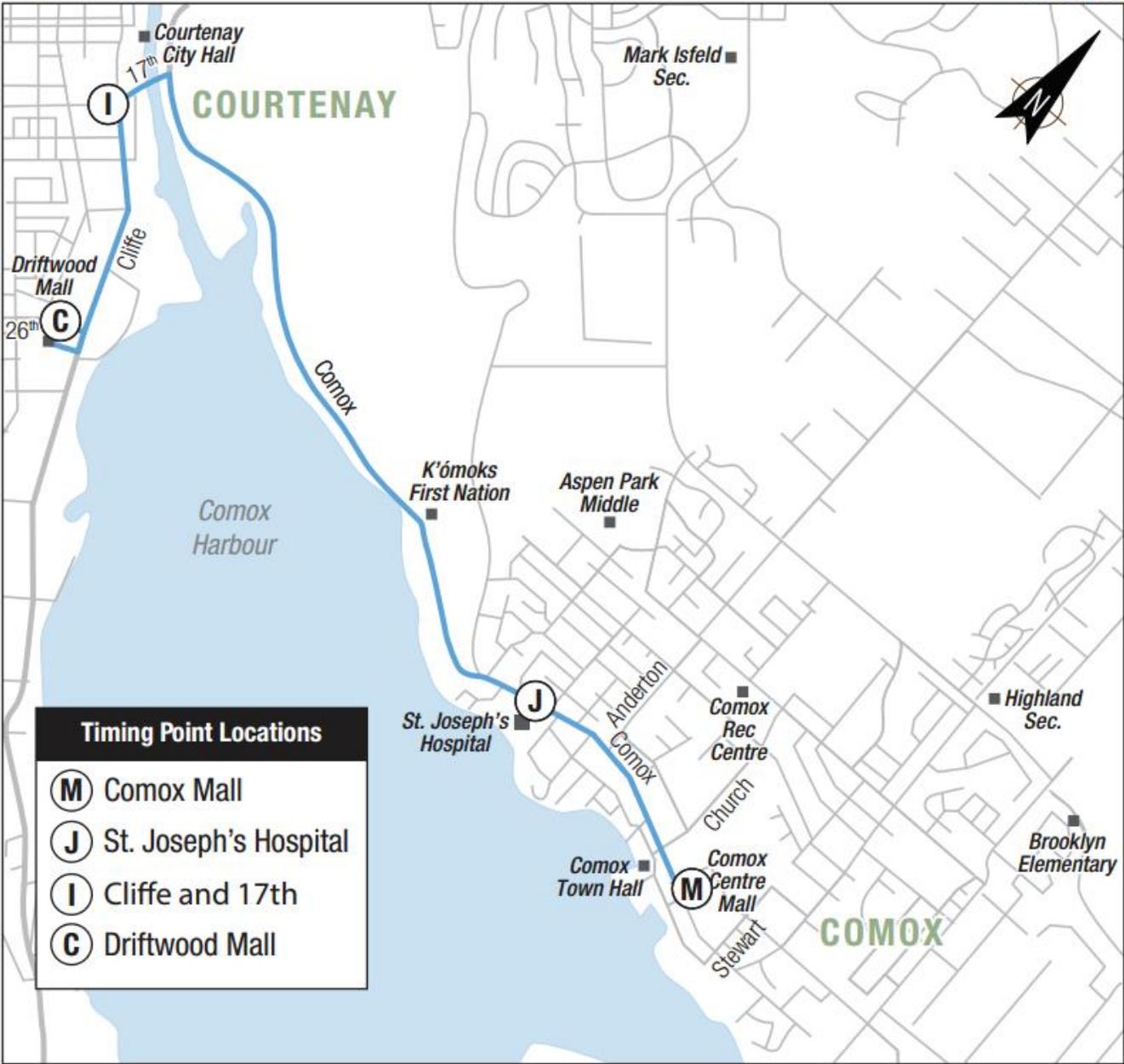
4 Driftwood/Comox

This route is designed to provide more direct service to Driftwood Mall from Comox, and is designed to integrate with the proposed 3 Comox Local route and the Frequent Transit Network.

Route description

4 Driftwood

4 Comox

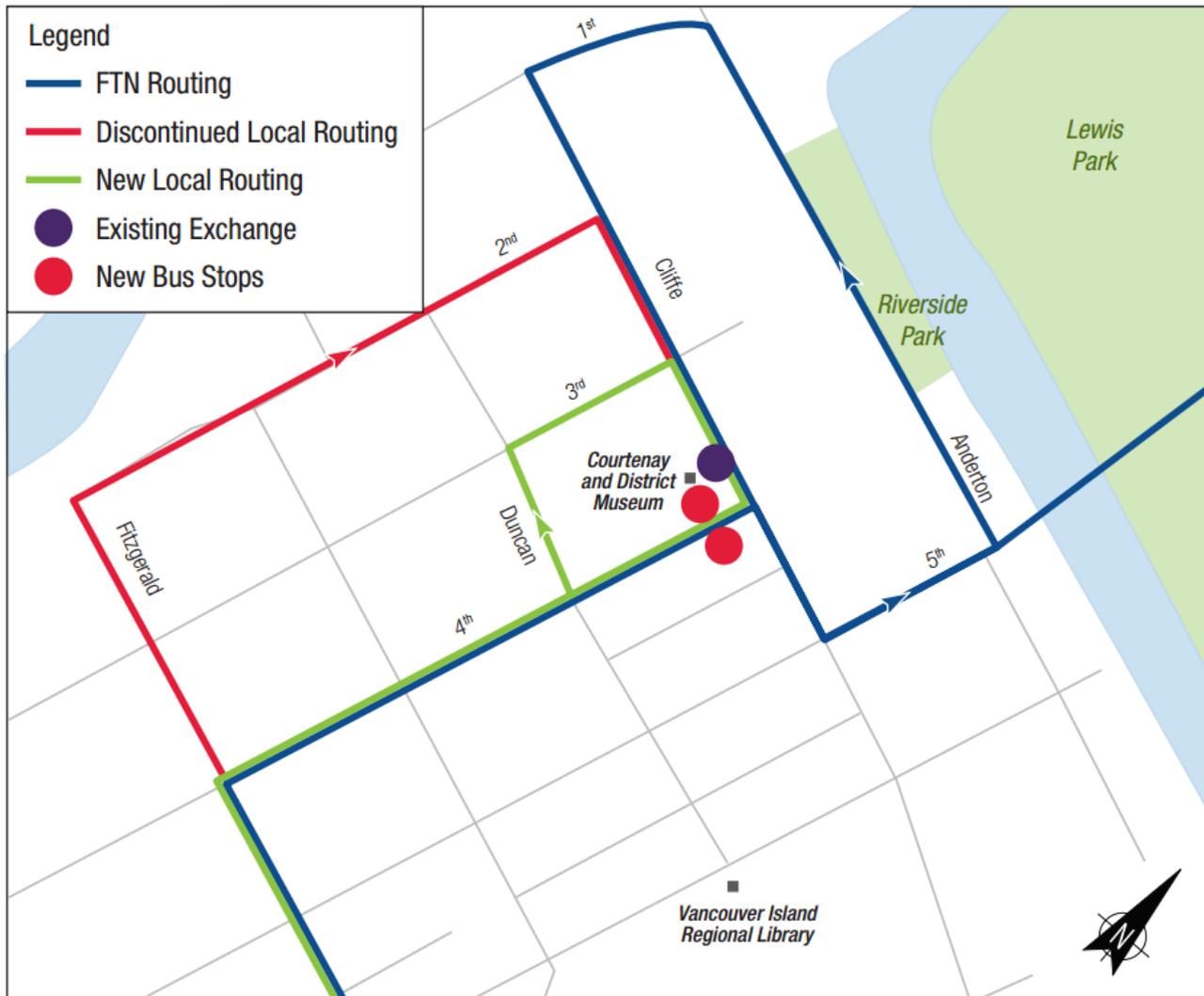


Schedule outline

Day Type	Span	Peak Frequency	Off Peak Frequency	Daily Round Trips
Weekday	8am-6pm	60min	60min	10
Saturday	8am-6pm	60min	60min	10
Sunday	9am-5pm	120min	120min	4

3.3 Downtown Courtenay

There are some minor proposed routing changes within Downtown Courtenay to integrate with the Frequent Transit Network and to respond to previous concerns from residents of the Old Orchard area. Existing local Routes 7, 8, 10, and 14 are proposed to route along 4th, Duncan, and 3rd rather than the existing routing on 2nd through the Old Orchard Area.



3.4 West Courtenay

Based on the results from public engagement and additional analysis, it is recommended that no changes be made to Routes 7 and 8 for the September 2018 service change other than altering the downtown routing to remove service from the Old Orchard area. Since the original proposal was cost neutral, it is recommended that additional analysis and public engagement be conducted in 2018, and changes to these routes be considered for a September 2019 implementation instead.

3.5 South Courtenay

The changes within South Courtenay include minor changes to the existing 10 Royston – Buckley Bay and 2 Cumberland routes to better integrate with the Frequent Transit Network. Further it is recommended that the Route 20 Royston/Cumberland be created to provide additional clarity on the service currently provided by the Route 10/2 combined trips.

- 1 Courtenay/Comox
- 2 Cumberland
- 10 Royston-Buckley Bay
- 20 Royston/Cumberland



2 Cumberland

The 2 Cumberland proposal is to terminate at the Anfield Centre, where the bus can either continue as a trip on the Frequent Transit Network, or where riders are able to transfer onto the Frequent Transit Network to get them to the major destinations within Courtenay or Comox.

10 Royston / Fanny Bay

With the FTN operating on Fitzgerald Avenue, the existing 10 Royston / Fanny Bay will be modified to operate on Cliffe Avenue between Driftwood Mall and Downtown Courtenay.

20 Royston / Cumberland

This new proposed route will provide the service currently provided by the Route 10 / 2 combined trips. The current service design is confusing for customers, and providing a separate route should improve clarity. As with the route 10, the proposed route 20 will provide service along Cliffe Avenue between Driftwood Mall and Downtown Courtenay.

Schedule outline

The targeted service levels for Cumberland, Royston, Union Bay, Buckley Bay, and Fanny Bay will be the same as the existing service levels. Between the Routes 2, 10, and 20, the following service levels will be targeted for Cumberland, Royston, Union Bay, Buckley Bay, and Fanny Bay:

Cumberland

Day Type	Span	Peak Frequency	Off Peak Frequency	Daily Round Trips
Weekday	6:30am-10:30pm	30min	60min	14
Saturday	9:00am-10:30pm	60min	60-180min	11
Sunday	11:30am-5:30pm	N/A	120min	4

Royston

Day Type	Span	Peak Frequency	Off Peak Frequency	Daily Round Trips
Weekday	8:00am-9:30pm	30-60min	90-120min	10
Saturday	9:00am-9:30pm	30-60min	90-120min	10
Sunday	10:30am-5:30pm	N/A	120min	4

Union Bay, Buckley Bay, and Fanny Bay

Day Type	Span	Peak Frequency	Off Peak Frequency	Daily Round Trips
Weekday	8:00am-9:30pm	N/A	90-240min	5
Saturday	9:30am-9:30pm	N/A	240min	4
Sunday	10:30am-6:00pm	N/A	420min	2

3.6 Infrastructure Changes

There are exchange and bus stop infrastructure requirements associated with the September 2018 Frequent Transit Network implementation. These requirements are to accommodate the changes to both the routing and service levels.

BC Transit is working with CVRD, Courtenay, and Comox staff to ensure that these infrastructure changes are implemented before the September 2018 service change.

Exchange Requirements

The existing Downtown Courtenay Transit Exchange on Cliffe Avenue at 4th Street is at capacity, and two additional bus stops are required operationally to implement the Frequent Transit Network in September 2018 without causing negative traffic impacts in the downtown area. A context map showing these required bus stop changes can be found in section 3.3 Downtown Courtenay. Additionally, a new transit exchange is required in Comox on Port Augusta Street at Comox Avenue to allow for the new routing and higher service levels associated with the Frequent Transit Network.

Bus Stop Changes

A number bus stop changes are required to implement the proposed September 2018 service changes. These suggested changes will be confirmed in collaboration with CVRD, Courtenay, and Comox staff. In summary, there are approximately 45 bus stop changes required. Details on the required bus stop changes are included within Appendix A.

3.7 Summary of Comox Valley Transit Service Level Changes

	Current M-Fri Rd. Trips	Proposed M-Fri Rd. Trips	Current Sat. Rd. Trips	Proposed Sat. Rd. Trips	Current Sun. Rd. Trips	Proposed Sun. Rd. Trips
1 Fitzgerald	13	0	8	0	6	0
1 Courtenay/Comox	0	31	0	26	0	9
2 Cumberland	7	7	6	6	0	0
3 Comox	15	0	12	0	0	0
3 Comox Local	0	10	0	10	0	4
4 Comox	18	0	14	0	8	0
4 Comox/Driftwood Mall	0	10	0	10	0	4
5 Vanier	5	5	1	1	0	0
6 Uplands	15	15	13	13	4	4
7 Arden	11	11	6	6	0	0
8 Willemar	14	14	9	9	5	5
10 Royston – Buckley Bay	5	5	5	5	0	0
10 / 2 Royston / Cumb.	7	0	5	0	4	0
11 Little River	8	8	5	5	0	0
12 North Valley Connector	10	10	4	4	0	0
13 Seal Bay/Merville	3*	3*	0	0	0	0
14 Union Bay	3*	3*	0	0	0	0
20 Royston / Cumberland	0	7	0	4	0	4
34 C2C Express	9	0	5	0	0	0
99 VMP Connector	2	2	0	0	0	0
Total	145	141	93	99	27	30

*These trips operate only on Tuesdays and Thursdays

3.8 Marketing & Communication Plan

A comprehensive marketing and communication plan will be developed to communicate these proposed changes effectively to the public. This plan has the following objectives:

- To make the public aware of the new transit service and other transit services in the region
- To obtain user feedback
- To ease implementation
- To promote ridership and community support for transit

The marketing and communication plan will include the following components:

- On-street outreach (BC Transit and CVRD staff at key stops)
- Additional marketing and customer information will be provided
 - » Advertising (print, radio, and online/social media)
 - » On-board bus information
 - » Distribution of new Rider's Guides
 - » BC Transit website & Customer Information Line
 - » Posters at bus stops.
 - » Service preview on the BC Transit website and Google Transit
 - » Media Briefing
 - » Potential launch event / public information session

4.0 FUTURE SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Transit Improvement Process (TIP)

The annual Transit Improvement Process (TIPs) and the associated Expansion Memorandum of Understanding formalize a community's commitments to transit improvements. Based on existing plans (such as the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan), BC Transit works with communities to establish transit improvement priorities for the upcoming three years.

4.2 Future Expansion Priorities

Several of the short-term transit expansion options for the conventional transit system within the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan (2014) have already been implemented, or are scheduled for imminent implementation. These expansions include the following:

- Phase 1 of the Frequent Transit Network (January 2015)
 - Implemented the 34 C2C Express
 - Altered routing for the 2 Cumberland and the 12 North Valley Connector
- 13 Seal Bay / Merville and 14 Union Bay (September 2017)
- Phase 2 of the Frequent Transit Network (September 2018)
 - Realignment of existing local routing in Comox

There are multiple other short-term priorities for the conventional transit system within the Comox Valley Transit Future Plan that have not yet been implemented:

- Improve frequency on the 12 North Valley Connector
- Improve frequency and structure on the 7 Arden
- Expand service on the 6 Uplands
- Improve frequency on the 2 Cumberland

The engagement conducted as part of this planning process also gathered feedback on future transit expansion priorities for the Comox Valley that can continue to be considered within the context of the Transit Future Plan priorities. Some of these requests include the following:

- Improvements to the on-time performance of the transit system
- Improved service frequency and service span
- Increased Sunday service
- Better connections to and integration with Ferry schedules
- Improve access to transit information across the system

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

BC Transit recommends that the Comox Valley Regional District:

- Reaffirm support for the proposed September 2018 service changes
- Direct local staff to work with BC Transit to implement the proposed September 2018 service changes

6.0 NEXT STEPS

If the September 2018 service changes are approved, BC Transit will develop the final schedules, and work towards service implementation in collaboration with the local partners.

Proposed Timeline

Date	Deliverable	Owner / Lead
March 2018	Service Change Plan presented to the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board	BCT
April 2018	Implementation MOU issued to the CVRD for review and signature	BCT, CVRD
April – May 2018	Schedule development	BCT
June – August 2018	Riders Guide completion	BCT
August 2018	Bus stop installation, Riders Guide released, website updated and marketing/media/public outreach	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation
August 31, 2018	Service Implementation	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation
Fall 2018	Monitor transit service changes and make adjustments where necessary	BCT, CVRD, Watson Ash Transportation

Appendix A

Proposed stops to be closed:

Stop ID Number	Location	# of Routes Currently Served	Jurisdiction
111321	Westbound Balmoral at Donovan	2	Comox
111320	Southbound Torrence at Albatross	2	Comox
111319	Southbound Torrence at Casey	2	Comox
111318	Southbound Torrence at Noel	2	Comox
111317	Southbound Torrence at Hillside	2	Comox
111316	Southbound Torrence at Ridgemount	2	Comox
111315	Eastbound Guthrie at Skeena (relocate shelter)	2	Comox
111314	Northbound Pritchard at Maquinna	2	Comox
111313	Northbound Pritchard at Skeena	2	Comox
111312	Northbound Pritchard at Noel	2	Comox
111311	Northbound Pritchard at Dogwood	2	Comox
111310	Eastbound Robb at Stewart (relocate shelter)	2	Comox
111309	Eastbound 1690 block Robb	2	Comox
111308	Eastbound Robb at Megin	2	Comox
111307	Southbound Church at Hemlock	2	Comox
111346	Eastbound Robb at Thistle	2	Comox
111345	Northbound Aitken at McKenzie	2	Comox
111344	Westbound Downey at Aitken	2	Comox

111343	Westbound Downey at Rodello	2	Comox
111342	Northbound Rodello at Wallace	2	Comox
111341	Northbound Rodello at Fairbairn	2	Comox
111350	Eastbound Comox at Nordin (relocate shelter)	3	Comox
111472	Eastbound Comox at Stewart	2	Comox
111351	Eastbound Comox at Pritchard	2	Comox
111287	Eastbound 2 nd at Duncan	7	Courtenay

Proposed bus stop moves:

Bus Stop ID	Current Location	New Location	# of Routes Served	Jurisdiction
111326	Northbound Anderton at Mckenzie	Northbound Anderton at Robb (NS)	2	Comox
111347	Southbound Anderton at Mckenzie	Southbound Anderton at Cooke (NS)	1	Comox

Proposed new stops:

Location	Hardware Needed	# of Routes to be Served	Jurisdiction
Port Augusta at Comox (Exchange)	Shelter, Bench, Flag sign, Bus stop ID Number	2	Comox
Southbound Anderton at Robb (Nearside)	Strip sign, Bus stop ID Number	2	Comox
Southbound Rodello at Comox (Nearside)	Landing pad, Strip sign, Bus stop ID Number	1	Comox
Eastbound Comox at Anderton (Farside)	Landing pad ⁶ , Strip sign, Bus stop ID number	2	Comox

⁶ Eventually, the landing pad should connect via a sidewalk to the crosswalk across Comox Ave.

Eastbound Beaufort Ave at Church	Strip sign, Bus stop ID Number	2	Comox
Eastbound Beaufort at Wilcox (Farside)	Strip sign, Bus stop ID Number	2	Comox
Eastbound Beaufort at Comox Library	Landing Pad, Crosswalk, Strip sign, Bus stop ID Number	2	Comox
Eastbound Balmoral at Anderton Park ⁷	Strip sign, Bus stop ID Number	2	Comox
Eastbound Balmoral at Pritchard (Nearside)	Strip sign, Bus stop ID Number	2	Comox
Westbound 4 th at Cliffe (Nearside) ⁸	Parking Removal, Flag sign, Bus stop ID number	1	Courtenay
Eastbound 4 th at Cliffe (Farside)	Flag sign, Bus stop ID number	1	Courtenay
Westbound Fitzgerald at 19 th (Farside)	Strip sign, Bus stop ID number	2	Courtenay
Eastbound 29 th at Kilpatrick (Farside)	Landing Pad, Strip sign, Bus stop ID number	1	Courtenay

⁷ Before Anderton Park but far side of the crosswalk

⁸ Expansion of existing Downtown Courtenay Exchange