

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

TRANSIT SELECT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2015

12:00 PM

(RDN Committee Room)

A G E N D A

PAGES

CALL TO ORDER

MINUTES

3-10 Minutes of the regular Transit Select Committee meeting held May 21, 2015.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

BC TRANSIT UPDATES

BC Transit Annual Performance Report (Verbal).

REPORTS

11-18 Route 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) Service Review.

ADDENDUM

BUSINESS ARISING FROM DELEGATIONS OR COMMUNICATIONS

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

MINUTES OF THE TRANSIT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2015 AT 12:00 NOON IN THE RDN COMMITTEE ROOM

Present:

Director T. Westbroek	Chairperson
Director A. McPherson	Electoral Area 'A'
Director B. Rogers	Electoral Area 'E'
Director B. Veenhof	Electoral Area 'H'
Director M. Lefebvre	City of Parksville
Director Colin Haime	District of Lantzville
Director Bill McKay	City of Nanaimo
Director B. Bestwick	City of Nanaimo
Director J. Hong	City of Nanaimo
Director B. Yoachim	City of Nanaimo

Also in Attendance:

P. Thorkelsson	Chief Administrative Officer, RDN
D. Pearce	A/Gen. Mgr, Transportation & Solid Waste Services, RDN
D. Marshall	A/Manager, Fleet Operations, RDN
J. Logan	Supt, Transportation Planning & Scheduling, RDN
M. Moore	Senior Regional Transit Manager, BC Transit
M. Lockley	Senior Transit Planner, BC Transit
J. Marsh	Deputy Chief Administrator, Qualicum Beach
G. Foy	Traffic & Transportation Planning Engineer, CON
F. McFarlane	Recording Secretary, RDN

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by the Chair.

MINUTES

MOVED Director Lefebvre, SECONDED Director Haime that the minutes of the regular Transit Select Committee meeting held March 3, 2015 be adopted. CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE

Todd G. Stone, Minister of Transportation, re Funding Support for Transit Services within British Columbia.

Correspondence was received from Minister Todd Stone, regarding funding support for Transit services within British Columbia.

Transportation Minister Todd Stone, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, re the Media Release of May 21, 2015, re External Advertising on CNG Buses.

A copy of the press release, from Transportation Minister Todd Stone, regarding external advertising on the new CNG buses was received.

The costs and benefits of external advertising on buses were discussed. Director Bestwick suggested a more aggressive approach to interior advertising within the entire fleet. Director Lefebvre identified the possibility of pursuing other types of advertising that would not cause damage.

[12:13pm Director Yoachim joined the meeting.]

MOVED Director Lefebvre, SECONDED Director McKay that the Chair of the Transit Select Committee write a letter to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Todd Stone, in response to Minister Stone's letter, dated May 11, 2015, including his statement in the media on May 14, 2015, regarding external advertising on buses. CARRIED

BC TRANSIT UPDATES

BC Transit Funding

M. Moore provided a PowerPoint presentation (attached) outlining BC Transit's three year service hour and budget plan.

MOVED Director Veenhof, SECONDED Director Lefebvre that the report, from BC Transit regarding funding, be received. CARRIED

REPORTS

2015/2016 Conventional and Custom Annual Operating Agreement - Regional District of Nanaimo / BC Transit.

D. Pearce provided a synopsis of the Annual Operating Agreement.

MOVED Director Veenhof, SECONDED Director Lefebvre that the 2015/2016 Conventional and Custom Annual Operating Agreement (AOA) with BC Transit be approved. CARRIED

Route 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) Service Review.

D. Pearce provided a summary of the Route 15A VIU Connector service review.

[1:30pm Director Veenhof left the meeting.]

D. Pearce noted that before implementing routes, reviews are completed and route efficiencies are considered. This is done in conjunction with BC Transit.

[1:37pm Director Lefebvre left the meeting.]

Director Westbroek advised that further information is required before a decision can be made regarding service on Route 15A.

MOVED Director Yoachim, SECONDED Director Rogers that this report be deferred to the next meeting of the Transit Select Committee and that more information be provided as to what people think about this. CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED Director McKay that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Transit Select Committee is set tentatively for Thursday, July 16, 2015, in the RDN Committee Room.

CHAIRPERSON



Three Year Operating Budget

RDN Transit System



Overview: Three Year Budgeting Process

Three Year Service Hour & Budget Plan:

- Updated and approved on an annual basis
- Developed in consultation with local government partners
- Provincial Service Plan confirmed each year on Budget Day (Feb.)
- Under the BC Transit funding model both provincial and local funding move in “lock step” according to legislated cost sharing
- Funding levels ultimately determine service levels



Revenue / Funding Model

Regional Transit Systems Funding

- **Conventional Cost Sharing**
 - Province 45.69%
 - Local Gov't 53.31%
- **Custom Cost Sharing**
 - Province 66.69%
 - Local Gov't 33.31%
- **Local Government retains 100% of revenue to offset cost**
- **Board**
 - establishes service levels and fares
 - establishes the local property tax requirement



Funding Available for Operations

	AOA Budget 2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
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Funding for Operating Costs \$13,512,559 \$13,512,559 \$13,512,559

- Year 1 - able to accommodate inflationary lifts only -- no service expansions
- Year 2 and 3: "flat" operating budget -- no inflationary lifts or service expansions projected
- Capital budgets remain unaffected e.g. vehicle lease fees



Proposed Next Steps

2 stream approach:

1. Review operational and administrative efficiency opportunities to protect current service (e.g. fuel management strategy, operating structures)
2. Examination of higher cost services to look for efficiencies and identify opportunities to rationalize lower performing services

Report back on options and initiate further discussion - Summer 2015





RDN REPORT	
CAO APPROVAL	
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BOARD	

STAFF REPORT

TO: Dennis Trudeau
General Manager, Transportation and Solid Waste

FROM: Daniel Pearce
Manager, Transit Operations

DATE: July 9, 2015

MEETING: TSC, July 16, 2015

FILE: 8310-01

SUBJECT: Route 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) Service Review

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board direct staff to retain Route 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) in the Conventional transit system.

PURPOSE

To complete a review of the Route 15A VIU Connector, which operates along Jingle Pot Road.

BACKGROUND

At the June 23, 2015 Board meeting, the following motion was approved:

That staff look at eliminating Route 15A all together and that this matter be referred to the Transit Select Committee for a report.

The 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) transit route was implemented as part of the March 2013 Conventional transit expansion at the direction of the Board. The 'A' part of Route 15 operates 11 trips a day, using Jingle Pot Road instead of the regular routing for Route 15, i.e., along the Nanaimo Parkway (*Appendix A*). There are a total of 21 stops along Route 15A that are in the City of Nanaimo boundaries. Route 15A operates year round, Monday to Friday.

Further, at the June 23, 2015 Board meeting, a motion was passed to remove all Route 15A transit stops on Jingle Pot Road in Electoral Area 'C'. This will be implemented in September 2015 resulting in Route 15A having stops only in the City of Nanaimo.

The ridership on Route 15A has been steady since its implementation. As shown in the tables below, ridership was 26,617 in 2013 and 28,049 in 2014. Ridership for 2015 is currently at 13,733 rides (January to June).

ROUTE 15A

MARCH - DEC 2013	ANNUAL TRIPS	ANNUAL SERVICE HOURS	MON.-FRI. ANNUAL RIDERSHIP	AVERAGE RIDES PER TRIP	AVERAGE RIDES PER SERVICE HOUR
15A Woodgrove to VIU	1,250	625	13,092	10	21
15A VIU to Woodgrove	1,500	750	13,525	9	18

JAN - DEC 2014	ANNUAL TRIPS	ANNUAL SERVICE HOURS	MON.-FRI. ANNUAL RIDERSHIP	AVERAGE RIDES PER TRIP	AVERAGE RIDES PER SERVICE HOUR
15A Woodgrove to VIU	1,250	625	13,338	11	21
15A VIU to Woodgrove	1,500	750	14,711	10	20

Annual Change	2013	2014	% Growth
	26,617	28,049	5.38%

* 2013 and 2014 annual ridership taken from GFI fare box data. 2014 ridership was negatively affected from the 2014 teachers strike.

Staff have received communication from BC Transit and the Vancouver Island University Students' Union supporting Route 15A. Specifically, BC Transit stated (*Appendix B*):

"The steady ridership of Route 15A, the continued residential development and the recorded student residential data within proximity to the Jingle Pot Road area, are all good indicators that the service is well received and continued ridership growth could be expected. Conventional transit service along the entirety of Jingle Pot Road will continue to be an important component of the RDN Transit system."

Additionally, the communication from Vancouver Island University Students' Union (*Appendix C*) stated:

"I am writing on behalf of the students at Vancouver Island University to express our support for continued transit along Jingle Pot Road. As you probably know, many students live along this transit corridor and for them the continuation of this transit route may mean the difference between renting in the Jingle Pot area, or renting in another more central area of Nanaimo. There is little doubt that the rent paid by students is essential for many landholders and allows them to meet the financial requirements to maintain their homes and to properly support their families."

If the Board chooses to remove Route 15A from the RDN Transit System, the annual service hours would be moved to Route 15, which operates from Woodgrove to VIU via the Nanaimo Parkway (*Appendix A*). This would result in areas of Jingle Pot Road (City of Nanaimo) not receiving transit service.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the Board direct staff to retain Route 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) in the Conventional transit system.
2. That the Board direct staff to remove Route 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) from the Conventional transit service.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2015 Southern Transit Tax requisition for Nanaimo is \$7,893,054.

Under Alternatives 1 and 2:

There would be no changes to the City of Nanaimo tax requisition. Under these alternatives, Route 15A service hours would be reallocated to the regular Route 15, which travels along the Nanaimo Parkway within the City of Nanaimo.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The Board Vision expresses a desire to build a future where the air is clean and safe to breathe. Transit service throughout the RDN allows residents the option to leave their personal vehicles at home, helping to reduce emissions and particulate matter. Further, a transit service that operates in areas throughout the region allows a greater number of residents to access the transit service and further helps the local economy and helps reduce environmental emissions.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSIONS

At the direction of the Board, staff are bringing forward a report to look at removal of Route 15A from the RDN Transit System.

Route 15A VIU Connector (Jingle Pot) was implemented as part of the March 2013 Conventional transit expansion. The route operates 11 trips a day and uses Jingle Pot Road instead of the regular routing along the Nanaimo Parkway.

Staff have received correspondence from the Vancouver Island University Students' Union and BC Transit regarding Route 15A, recommending that the route not be removed.

Additionally, if Route 15A was removed, the service hours would be reallocated to the regular Route 15, which travels along the Nanaimo Parkway within the City of Nanaimo.

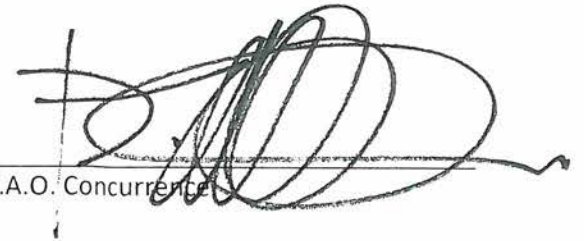
Based on ridership, communication from VIU and feedback from BC Transit staff are recommending that Route 15A not be removed.



Report Writer



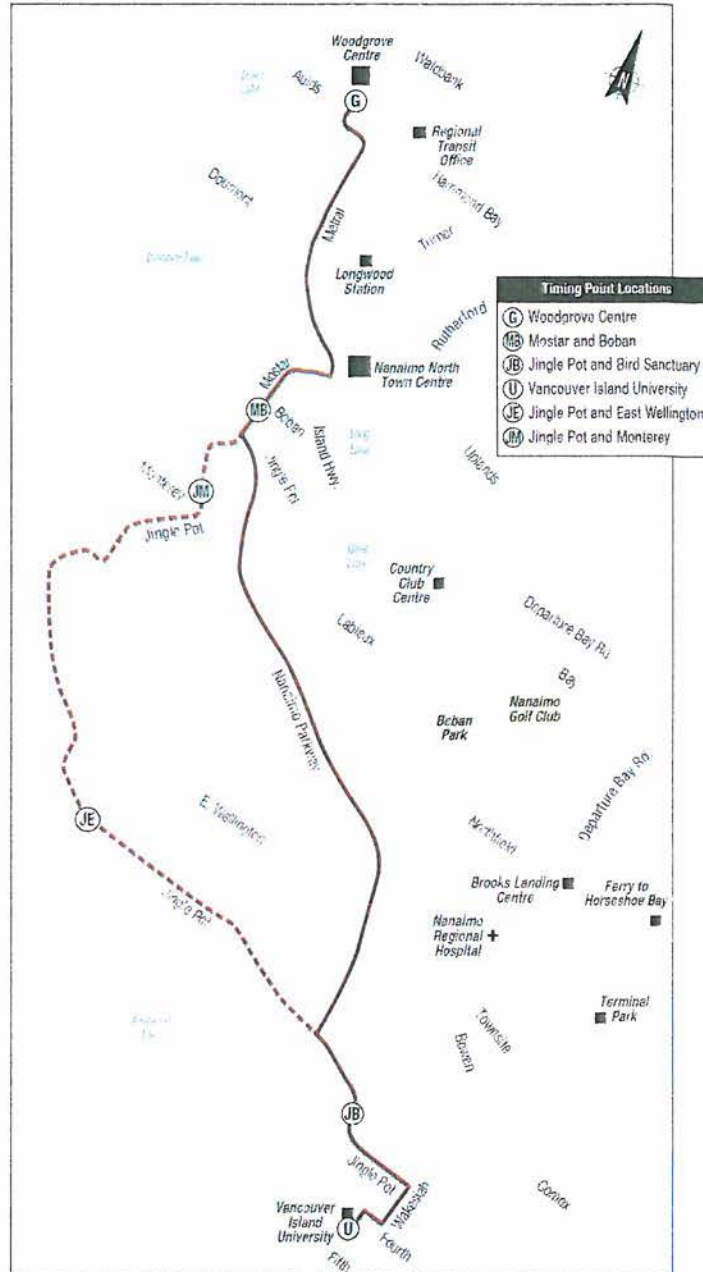
A/General Manager Concurrence



C.A.O. Concurrence

APPENDIX A

15 VIU Connector



16 February, 2015

Daniel Pearce
A/General Manager of Transportation and Solid Waste Services
Regional District of Nanaimo

Sent Via Email: DPearce@rdn.bc.ca

RE: Removal of Service from Route 15A Vancouver Island University Connector

Dear Daniel,

On 18 September, 2014 the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) staff were directed by the Transit Select Committee (TSC) to investigate the removal of the fixed route conventional service, Route 15A VIU Connector operating in Electoral Area 'C' while retaining Custom Transit operations within the locality. BC Transit provides the following information for your examination of this request.

Route 15 VIU operates service between the Vancouver Island University and the Woodgrove Centre, with the 15A VIU segment of this route operating at a lesser frequency Monday to Friday along the entire length of Jingle Pot Road, see attached figure 1. Jingle Pot Road is located in both the City of Nanaimo municipality and Electoral Area 'C' boundaries. Route 15A VIU transverses through a growing low density residential area within the City of Nanaimo jurisdiction with the Electoral Area 'C' segment of the route predominantly rural residential land use.

Residents within the Jingle Pot Road locality have the option of five trips per day to travel to Vancouver Island University (VIU) where easy transfers can occur to access downtown Nanaimo or other key destinations within the region. Alternatively 6 trips per day operate for return services from VIU to the Woodgrove Centre via Jingle Pot Road (one of these return trips only operates Fridays only when school is in full session September through to June).

VIU has indicated approximately 60 students from this area along Jingle Pot Road are enrolled in studies, with recent census data indicating and predicting a growing senior population across the entire Nanaimo Region. These statistics indicate somewhat that there is a good transit need which exists with potential for growth in the locality of Jingle Pot Road.

Recent route performance data manually collected by drivers¹ over a two week period indicates approximately 9% of the total rides for the 15A VIU (northbound VIU to Woodgrove Centre) is attributed to passenger boardings or alightings in the Area 'C' section of the route. Furthermore 12% of the total ridership was attributed to passenger activity directly in Area C for the southbound trips.

Year over year annual performance GFI¹ data indicates a 5% growth on route 15A VIU from 2013 to 2014. In general, the route performs consistently. This recent ridership analysis indicates that the Route 15A VIU Connector, traversing the length of Jingle Pot Road, provides important mobility

¹ Annual ridership information for this report is gathered through the GFI fare box framework. This framework depends on some manual key application by drivers. It is assessed the GFI ridership catch has an accuracy of 85%

opportunities for those residents living in Area 'C' that may be without means of transportation and/or for choice riders that are endeavoring to reduce dependence on their car for all of their daily trip needs.

Custom Transit (also referred to as 'handyDART') is a demand responsive transit service operated with specially equipped transit vehicles and is designed to carry eligible passengers, with physical or cognitive disabilities, who are unable to use conventional, public transit without assistance. Custom Transit provides an important door to door mobility option for eligible residents in the community who require affordable transport options to undertake their daily tasks including medical, educational, employment or recreational purposes.

BC Transit advocates across all BC Transit systems for the Custom Transit service areas to encompass residences and destinations within a 1.5km distance from the existing fixed route system. This service area definition draws from the American with Disability Act (ADA) legislation, which is commonly used as a technical source in Canada.

Custom Transit trips in general are substantially higher in cost per trip compared to conventional transit costs per trip. Efficiencies in the operation of Custom Transit services relies on educating and encouraging many residents with disabilities to use the fully accessible conventional services as their preferred first option for transit service.

Removal of the conventional transit services along Jingle Pot Road will add additional pressures and greater inefficiencies to the existing handyDART service, as those more ambulatory riders with disabilities who may be currently using the Route 15A service are forced to request use of the Custom Transit service instead.

The steady ridership of Route 15A, the continued residential development and the recorded student residential data within proximity to the Jingle Pot Road area, are all good indicators that the service is well received and continued ridership growth could be expected. Conventional transit service along the entirety of Jingle Pot Road will continue to be an important component of the RDN Transit system. Additionally, under the recommended ADA service standards that are applied across BC Transit systems, removing the Area 'C' Jingle Pot Road segment of the 15A Route would also assume the requirement for the removal of any Custom Transit services that are within 1.5km along the deleted route segment. Removal of the Route 15A conventional transit services within the Jingle Pot Road area would negatively impact the residents of Electoral Area 'C', consequently removing valued and important social services.

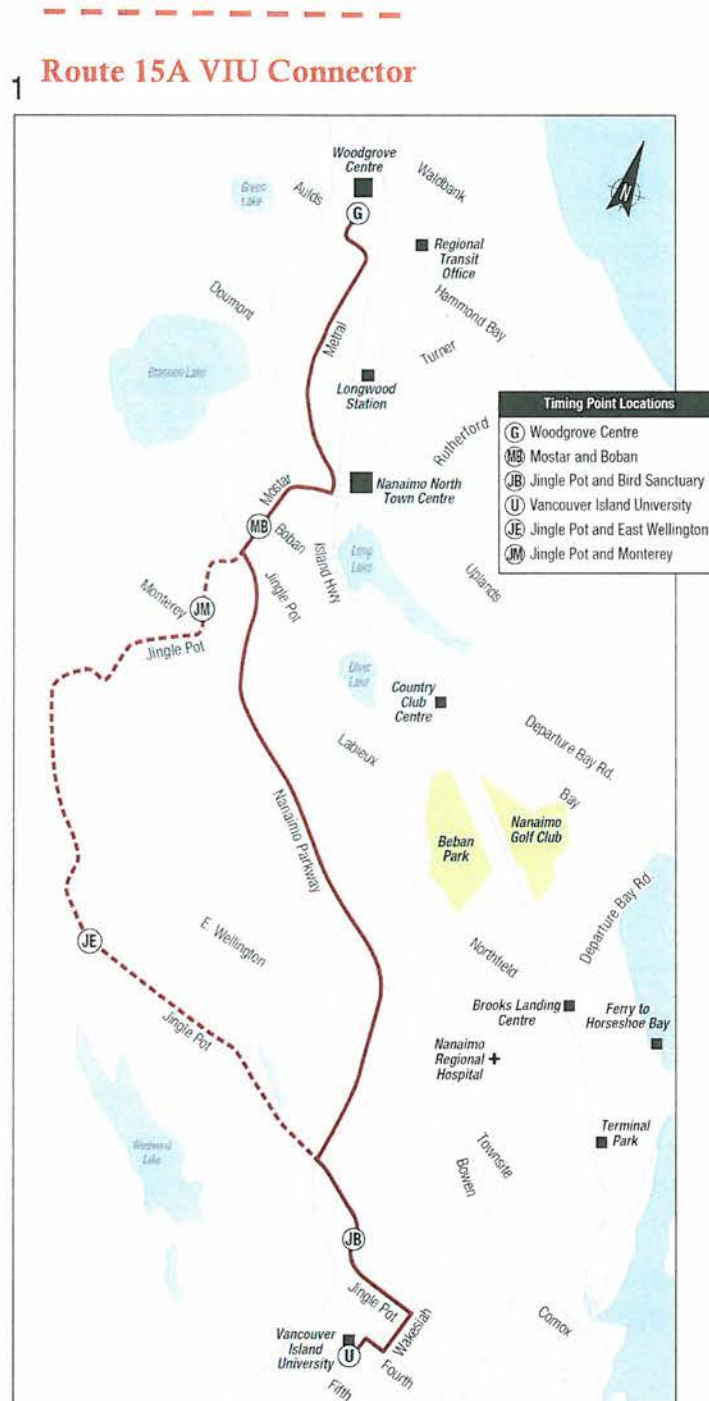
BC Transit recommends RDN receive this letter as information.

Kind Regards



Myrna Moore
Senior Regional Transit Manager
BC Transit

Figure 1: Route 15A VIU Connector



APPENDIX C

January 26, 2015

Regional District of Nanaimo
Transit Select Committee
6300 Hammond Bay Road
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6N2

Attention: Teunis Westbroek

Dear Committee Members,




I am writing on behalf of the students at Vancouver Island University to express our support for continued transit along Jingle Pot Road. As you probably know, many students live along this transit corridor and for them the continuation of this transit route may mean the difference between renting in the Jingle Pot area, or renting in another more central area of Nanaimo. There is little doubt that the rent paid by students is essential for many landholders and allows them to meet the financial requirements to maintain their homes and to properly support their families.

In addition to allowing a symbiotic relationship between students and property owners in the area, there is a growing amount of research that shows transit is a cornerstone for a successful modern community. The transit system in Nanaimo serves citizens from all walks of life and all age demographics. Proposed cuts to this system will affect many people along the Jingle Pot route who rely on this service for their transportation.

A final point we would like to raise for your consideration is the environment. There is overwhelming evidence to show that humans are causing significant damage to the planet. We all share in the responsibility to change how we live to reduce and ultimately reverse the damage. There is no doubt in the minds of students that legitimate public transit options that allow citizens to park their vehicles is part of the solution. We recognize that this change will not happen overnight but a decision to remove transit services from a large area of our community will not help us reach this goal. In fact, the current proposal will only move us further away from change required to stop the environmental degradation of our planet.

These are just a few items we wanted to raise in opposition to the proposed cut. Please consider all the factors when you deliberate the motion to cut transit services from the Jingle Pot area. We hope you will support maintained (or even increased) transit service levels in our community.

Sincerely,

Patrick Barbosa
Organizer - Advocacy
Vancouver Island University Students' Union
Local 61 Canadian Federation of Students