

TRANSIT*future*

► **actionplan**

Sunshine Coast

2022



Sunshine Coast
Regional District



Territorial Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect that BC Transit carries out its work on the traditional territories of indigenous nations throughout British Columbia.

Sunshine Coast lies within the ancestral and unceded traditional territory of the shíshálh and Skwxwú7mesh speaking peoples.

We are grateful to live, work, and play on their traditional lands.

Table of Contents

01	Transit Vision	07	Community Engagement	13	Future Fleet
02	Future Transit Initiatives	08	Future Network Service	14	Investment Strategy
03	Shaping Your Transit Future	09	Service Priorities 2022-2026	15	Moving Forward Monitoring and Implementation
04	Sunshine Coast Transit Today	10	Service Priorities beyond 2026	16	Acknowledgement
05	Transit Need	11	Future Network Infrastructure		
06	Transit System Performance	12	Infrastructure Strategies 2022 Onwards		

01 Transit Vision

Transit is a preferred choice for residents and visitors, attracting riders through comfortable, safe, accessible and convenient service.

This Sunshine Coast Transit Future Action Plan (TFAP) upholds community goals and objectives contained in the Sunshine Coast Transit Future Plan 2014*, the Sunshine Coast's We Envision Plan, Sunshine Coast Regional District Strategic Plan, regional sustainability and transportation plans, and other local land use and community plans. The TFAP works to strengthen the link between transportation and land-use in support of sustainable growth. The Plan also serves to inform any future local or regional transportation plans.

[*https://www.bctransit.com/sunshine-coast/transit-future/sunshine-coast-transit-future-plan](https://www.bctransit.com/sunshine-coast/transit-future/sunshine-coast-transit-future-plan)



Attracts and increases ridership



Supports and aligns with sustainable development



Integration with other transport modes



Efficient and Cost Effective



Safe and accessible



Collaborative and customer focused

02 Corporate Priorities

Over the next five years, the Sunshine Coast will continue to push for the electrification of their transit fleet, the better integration of their transit service with active modes of transportation and connections to their ferry services.

BC Transit's Strategic Plan provides the blue print for how we will facilitate the transformation and pursue our common vision of the future to create responsive and reliable services, improving integration with other mobility providers, introducing electronic fares, building more transit supportive infrastructure and transitioning to greener fleets.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.bctransit.com/transforming-your-journey>

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Low Carbon Fleet Program

<https://www.bctransit.com/low-carbon-fleet-program>

Digital On Demand – Feasibility

Electronic Fare Strategy

<https://www.bctransit.com/umo>

NextRide

<https://www.bctransit.com/nextride-faq>

BC Transit Development Referral Program

<https://www.bctransit.com/development-referral-program>

BC Transit Future Initiatives

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

BC Transit is committed to building an inclusive work environment that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. Every day, we aim to ensure our communities thrive by providing the safest, highest-quality, most accessible public transit – this means listening to and meeting the transportation needs of British Columbians. Future plans include furthering engagement with Indigenous communities and using Gender-Based Analysis+ (GBA+) to integrate multiple perspectives in transit planning, and guide decisions that provide the best experience for all riders.

Low Carbon Fleet Program

First deployment of electric buses is targeted to happen in the Victoria Regional Transit System in late 2022. BC Hydro will help determine the readiness of the electrical infrastructure to support electric fleets across the province. BC Transit will work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to refine the anticipated funding requirements for both buses and new operations and maintenance facilities.

Electronic Fare Strategy

Smart ticketing providing new ways to pay. BC Transit is working to improve rider convenience, enable mobility partnerships and create new data collection opportunities. Systems will also accommodate a mix of fare products including cash fares. The system will also be able to operate in areas with low-cell phone coverage/service. The Electronic Fare Collection System will be available in 2023.

Digital On Demand

This is an exciting initiative that uses technology to dynamically dispatch a bus or fleet of vehicles to locations dictated by customers using an app or phone-in service. BC Transit has completed a feasibility study on digital on-demand transit and plans to roll out this service type to one or two communities starting in 2023, with a view to add more communities in future years, based on the success of the initial phase.

Next Ride

Door to door journey planning. Provides bus location information to customers via transit apps, enhances operations control and route information for the operator. NextRide 2.0 will be available in Summer 2022.



Development Referral Program

Local governments or developers can send any referrals and supporting information to BC Transit to review and provide comments to the local government or developer about how the proposal may affect or better align with current or future transit service and infrastructure and how the application or plan could be changed to better support current or future transit service and infrastructure.

03 Shaping Your Transit Future

The role of the Transit Future Action Plan is to:

Build on existing planning and add service and infrastructure priorities for the community

Review what has changed for the community

Inform both the planning and operational activities

Drive a range of objectives and actions that will create a strong transit network for the community

Guide decision making to procure and deliver the desired network

Engage with the community.



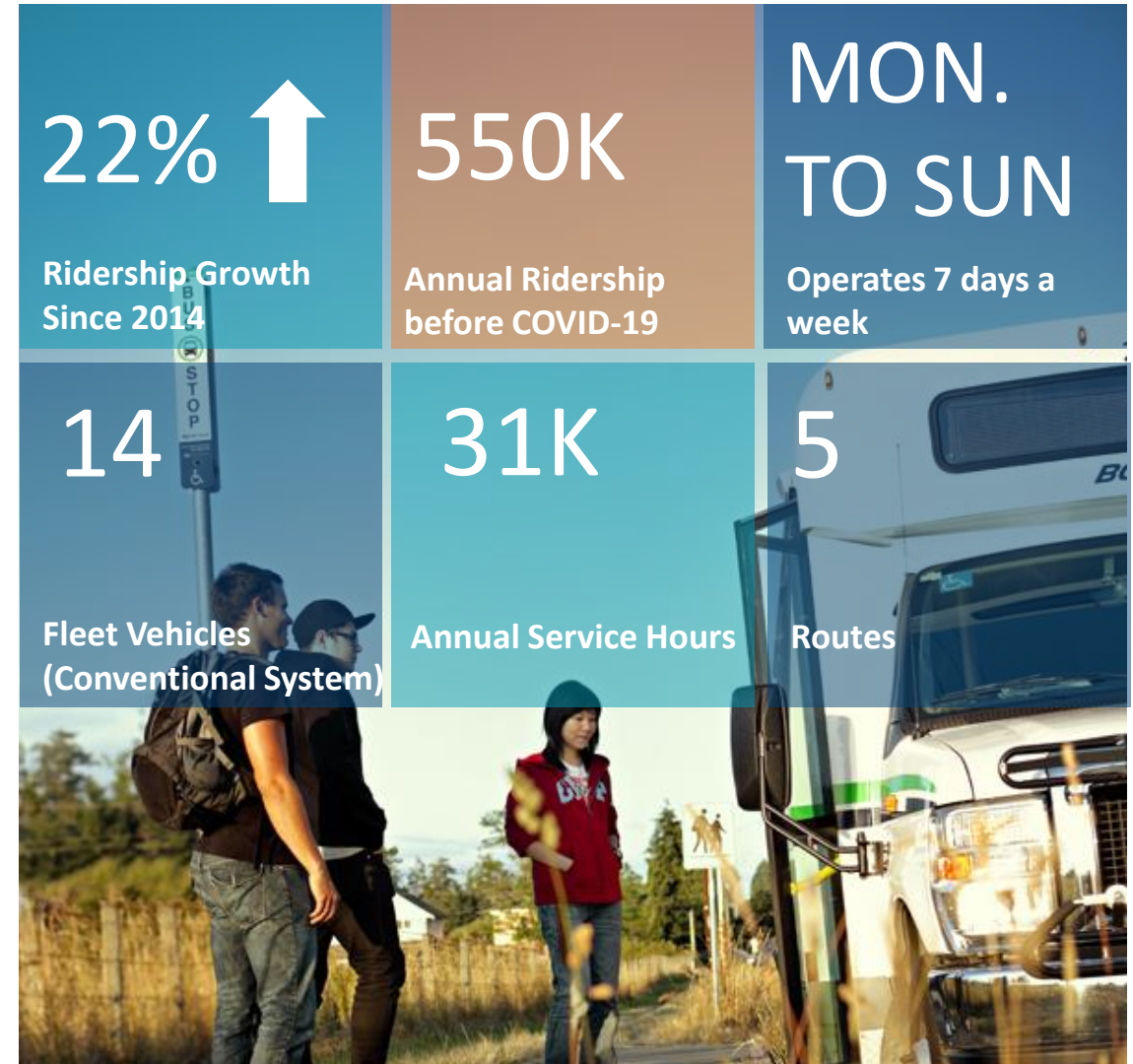
04 Transit Today

Sunshine Coast Transit Ridership is Growing

Inaugurated in 1992, the Sunshine Coast Transit System has seen ridership grow from 450,000 riders in 2014-15 to 550,000 riders in 2019-20. The system is delivered through BC Transit's innovative cost sharing model and in coordination with the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD). Final decisions on fares, routes, and service levels are made by the SCRD.

Recent Changes to the System include:

- In 2013, separated route 1 Sechelt-Langdale Ferry into two routes, route 1, and route 90 Sechelt-Langdale Ferry Express.
- In 2017, improved service to route 90 Sechelt-Langdale Ferry Express.
- In 2019, extended route 2 West Sechelt Service to the Chatelech School.



04 Transit Today

About the Transit Network

The Sunshine Coast Transit Network is made up of a commuter spine, including Frequent Transit Network (FTN) routes 1 Langdale Ferry/Sechelt and 90 Langdale Ferry/Sechelt Express. The Local Transit Network (LTN) is provided in Sechelt through route 2 West Sechelt, route 3 Sechelt Arena, and route 4 Halfmoon Bay.

About BC Ferries and Transit

- Langdale Ferry is the busiest stop in the entire system, followed by downtown Sechelt.
- Approximately 30 per cent of travel are ferry related and 70 per cent of transit rides are internal trips.
- Route 90 saw the highest average daily ridership through the entire system.

54.2%

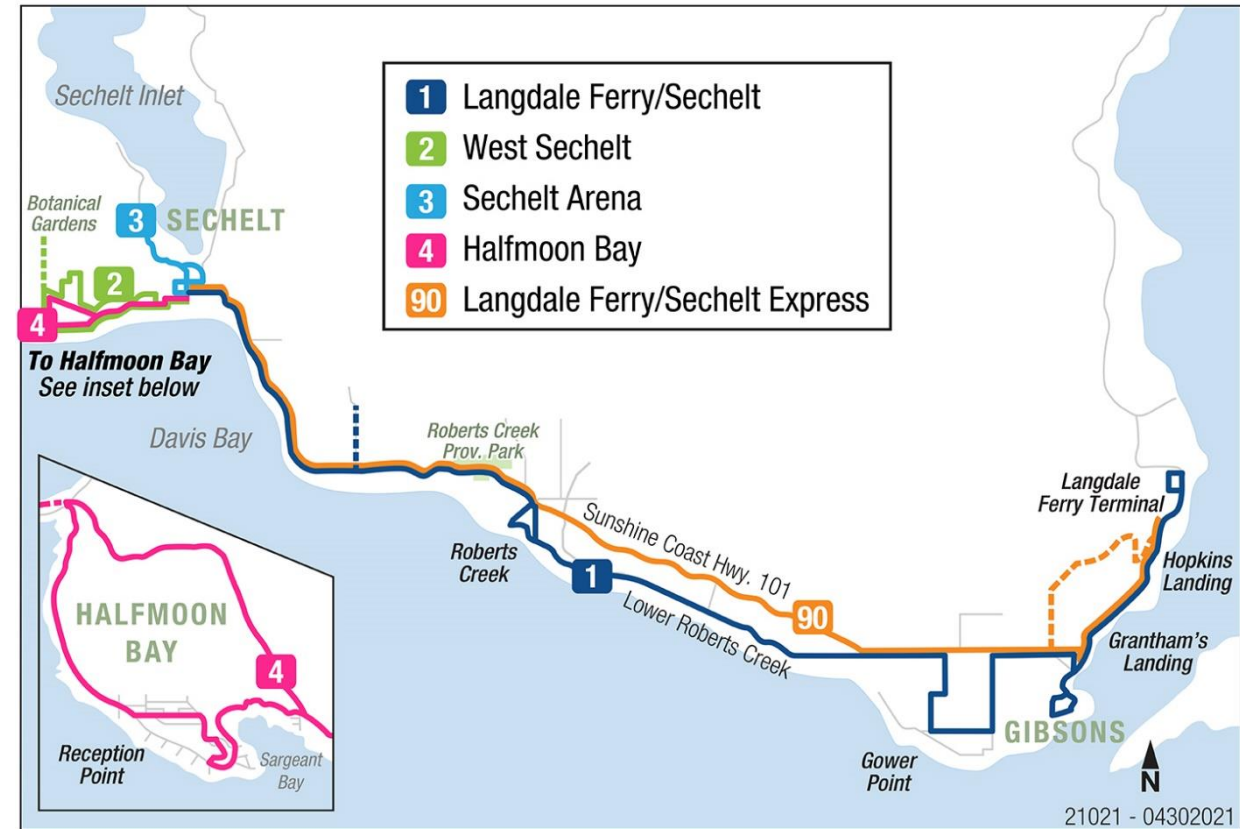
Of System ridership
is attributed to route
90

30.9%

Of System ridership
is attributed to route
1

14.9%

Of System ridership
is attributed to route
2, 3, and 4



05 Transit Need

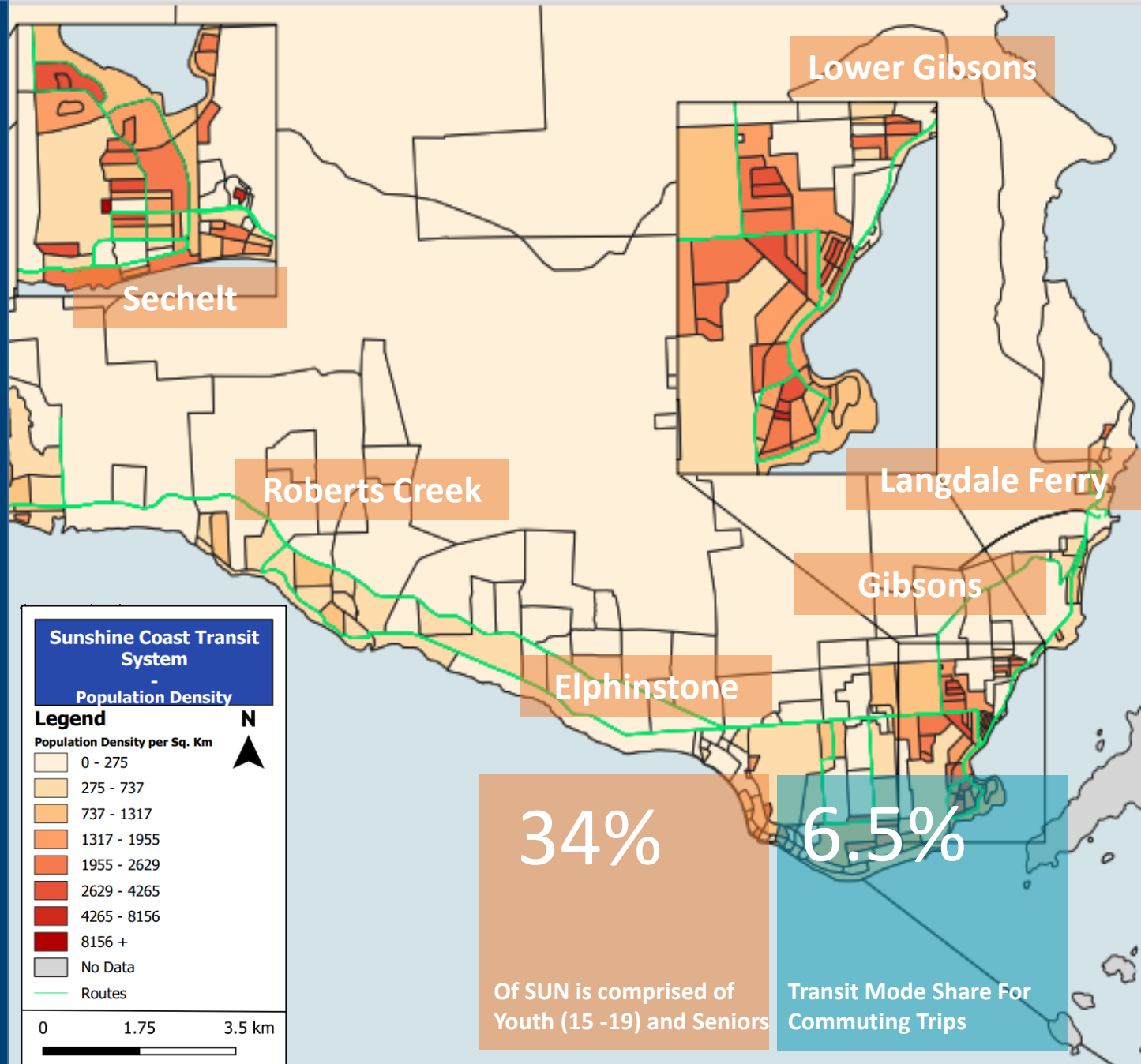
Who is the Sunshine Coast?

The population in Sunshine Coast grew by 7.3% between 2016 and 2021. The population of seniors grew while populations in the other age categories remained the same or decreased. The map to the right details the population density (where people reside) in Sunshine Coast Regional District.

About the Sunshine Coast

- Approximately 34% of residents are youth and seniors*.
- Sunshine Coast's population is concentrated Sechelt and Gibsons.
- Transit Mode Share of Commuting: 6.5% (Census 2016).

*Detailed information only available from Census 2016



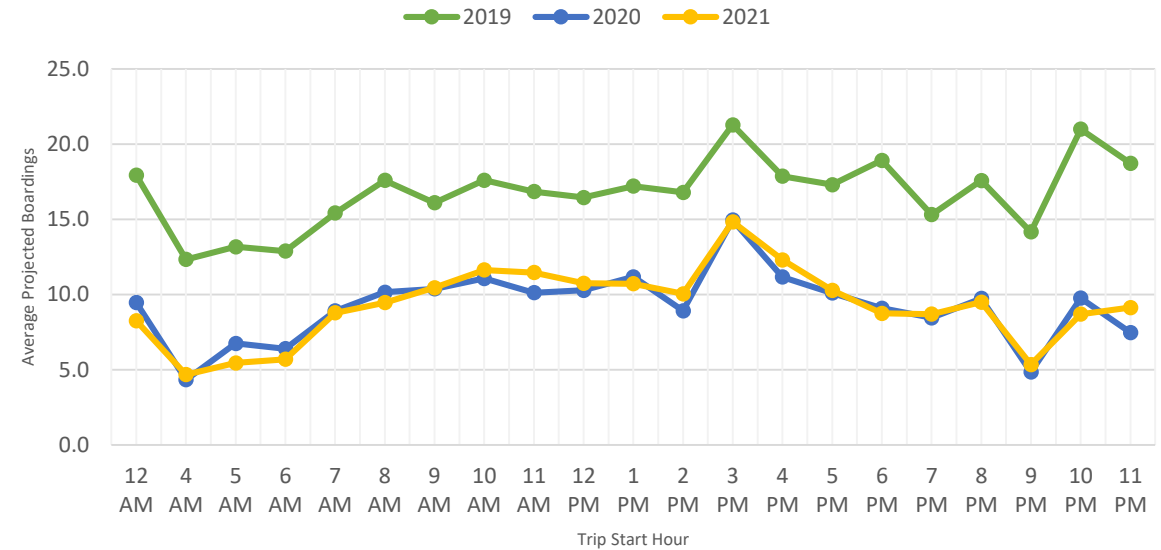
06 System Performance

Transit service is provided in Sunshine Coast seven days per week on all routes. Service operates from 5:00 a.m. to 1 a.m. on weekdays, Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m., and Sundays from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. with three to four seasonal service changes to match with BC Ferries schedule.

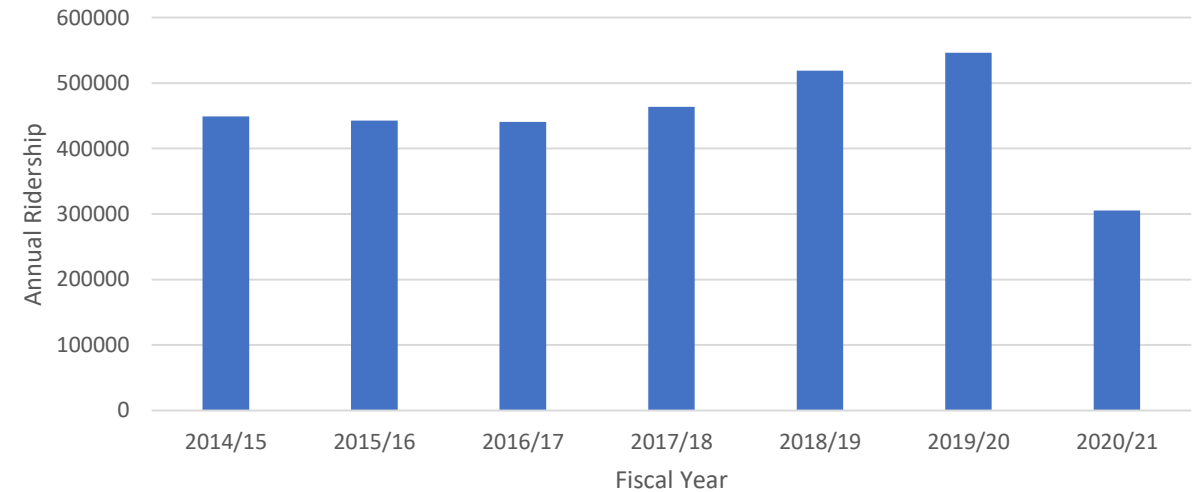
Key Takeaways

- Apart from AM/PM peaks, there is a later peak at 8 p.m. and again at 10 p.m.
- Sunshine Coast Transit System witnessed a gradual increase in ridership after the major expansion happened back in 2017/2018 when route 90 increased its peak hour frequency to 30 minutes.
- COVID-19 had a major impact on the whole system, with 2020/21 ridership dropping 41% in total.

Average Projected Boardings by Trips Start Hour



Total Annual Ridership



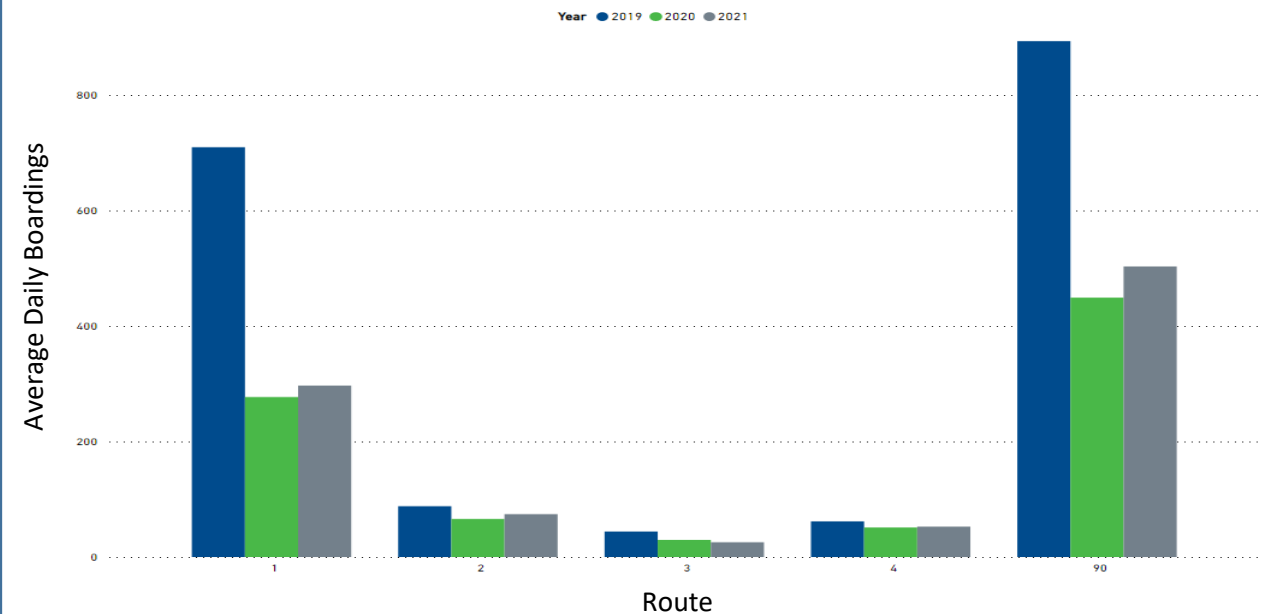
2019, 2020 and 2021 Avg. Projected Boardings by Trips Start Hour source: APC data (route 1-4, 90)
2014/15 to 2020/21 Fiscal Year Total Annual Ridership source: GFI (farebox) data

06 System Performance

Key Takeaways

- Route 1 performed significantly lower than route 90, route 90 attracts 70 per cent more ridership than route 1 in 2021 by operating on the same annual service hours.
- Route 90 connects between Sechelt and Langdale Ferry Terminal, and is the major ridership generator within the Transit System. Improving frequency to 30 minutes could largely benefit the whole system, and improve connections with BC Ferries' seasonal schedules.
- COVID-19 has a greater impact on Frequent Transit Network (FTN), which the Average Daily boardings for FTN dropped 44% in 2020. Local Transit Network (LTN) stays relatively stable during Covid, and the Average Daily Boardings recovered to 93 per cent of pre-COVID level in 2021.

Average Daily Boardings by Route



Source: APC Data (Route 1-4, 90)

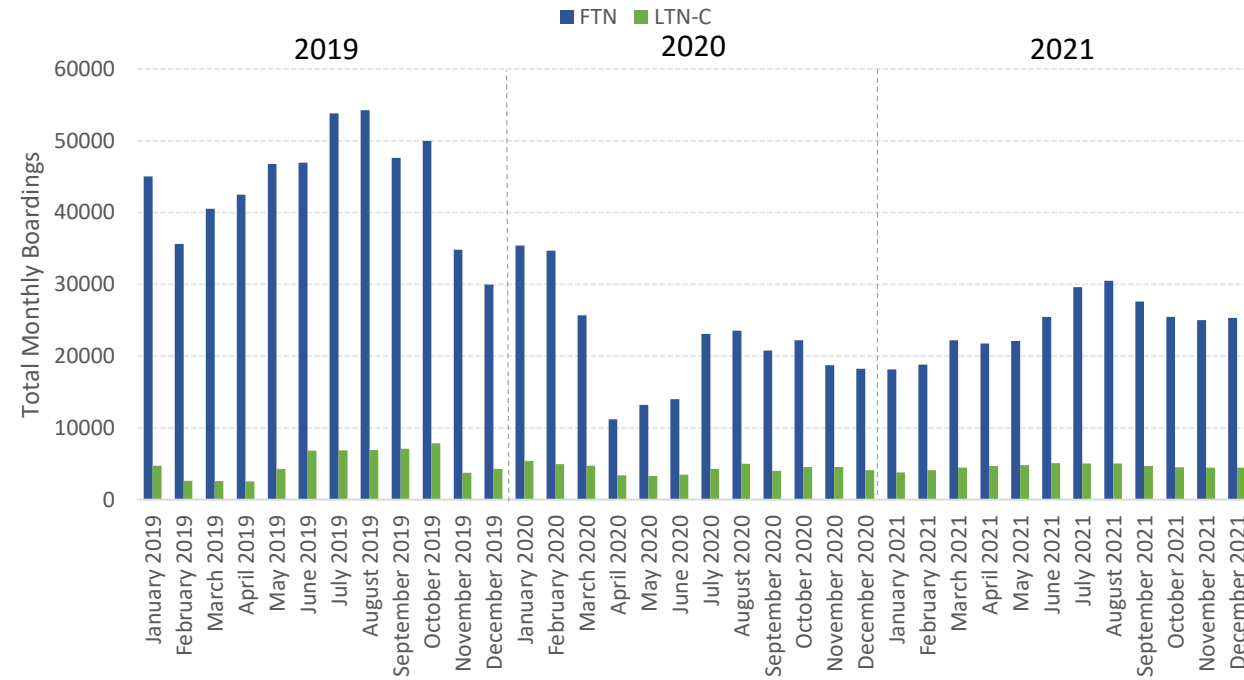
06 System Performance

Covid-19 Impacts

Given the guidance from British Columbia's Provincial Health Officer to limit non-essential travel, transit ridership in the Sunshine Coast dropped significantly starting March 2020.

- Due to COVID-19, ridership decreased from March 2020 to early June. In response to COVID-19, Sunshine Coast implemented Saturday schedules across the system.
- Ridership fell by up to 41 per cent compared to 2019 levels and has seen a gradual increase as services and some businesses reopened in mid-June.
- Annual Total Ridership recovered 8.8% in 2021 vs. 2020.

Total Monthly Boardings by Route Class



Source: APC Data (FTN, LTN-C)

4

Service changes in
Response to changes to
BC Ferries Schedules

41%



Decrease in ridership
Compared to 2019 levels

54%

Ridership is generated
by route 90

06 Covid-19 Response Plan

BC Transit's top priority is the safety of our passengers and operators

Following the guidance of the Provincial Health Office and WorkSafeBC, and drawing on the best practices of the transit industry worldwide, BC Transit has implemented measures on our buses to respond to COVID-19, and have put a plan together to align with BC's Restart Plan. The key measures are summarized in Figure 1, but the full strategy and details can be found at <https://bctransit.com/COVID19>.

To support ridership return, the Province of British Columbia has provided restart funding in 2020 to the Local Government sponsors to ensure the continued effective delivery of transit across your transit system.

The **Free Transit for Children 12 and Under Program** was introduced in September 2021 and will be instrumental in boosting ridership and rebuilding confidence in our post pandemic recovery. This program also aligns with BC Transit's commitment to delivering initiatives to drive new and effective measures to improve the transit experience. The program will help grow young ridership, create life-long transit users and further reduce congestion on our roads.

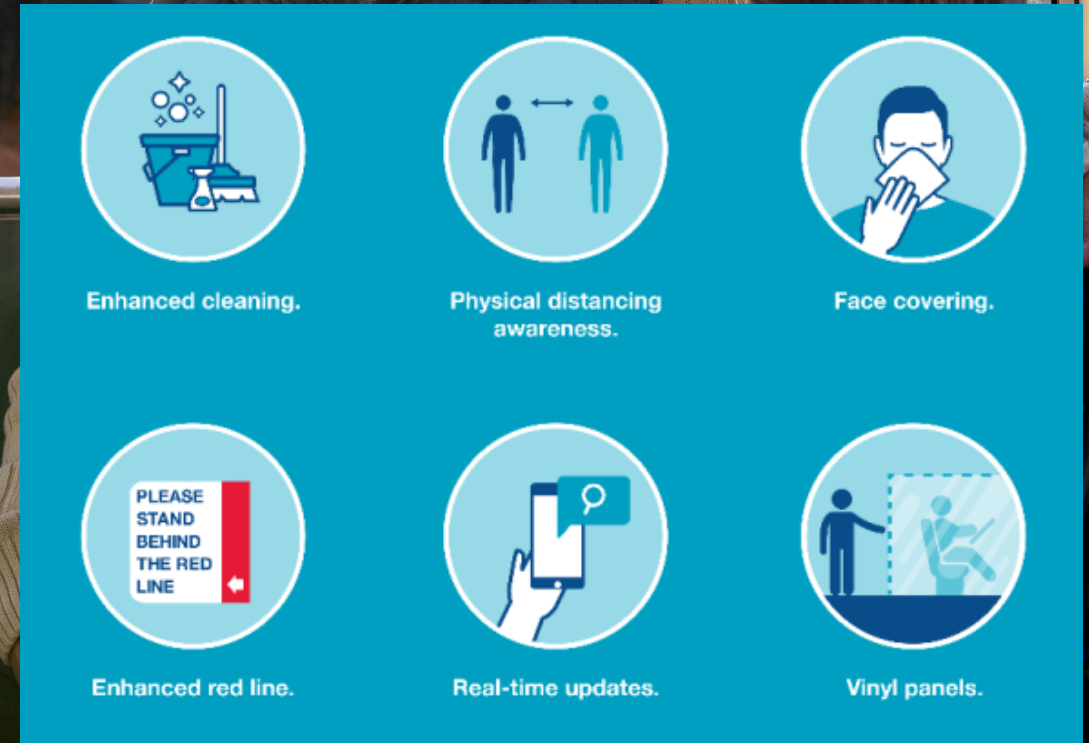
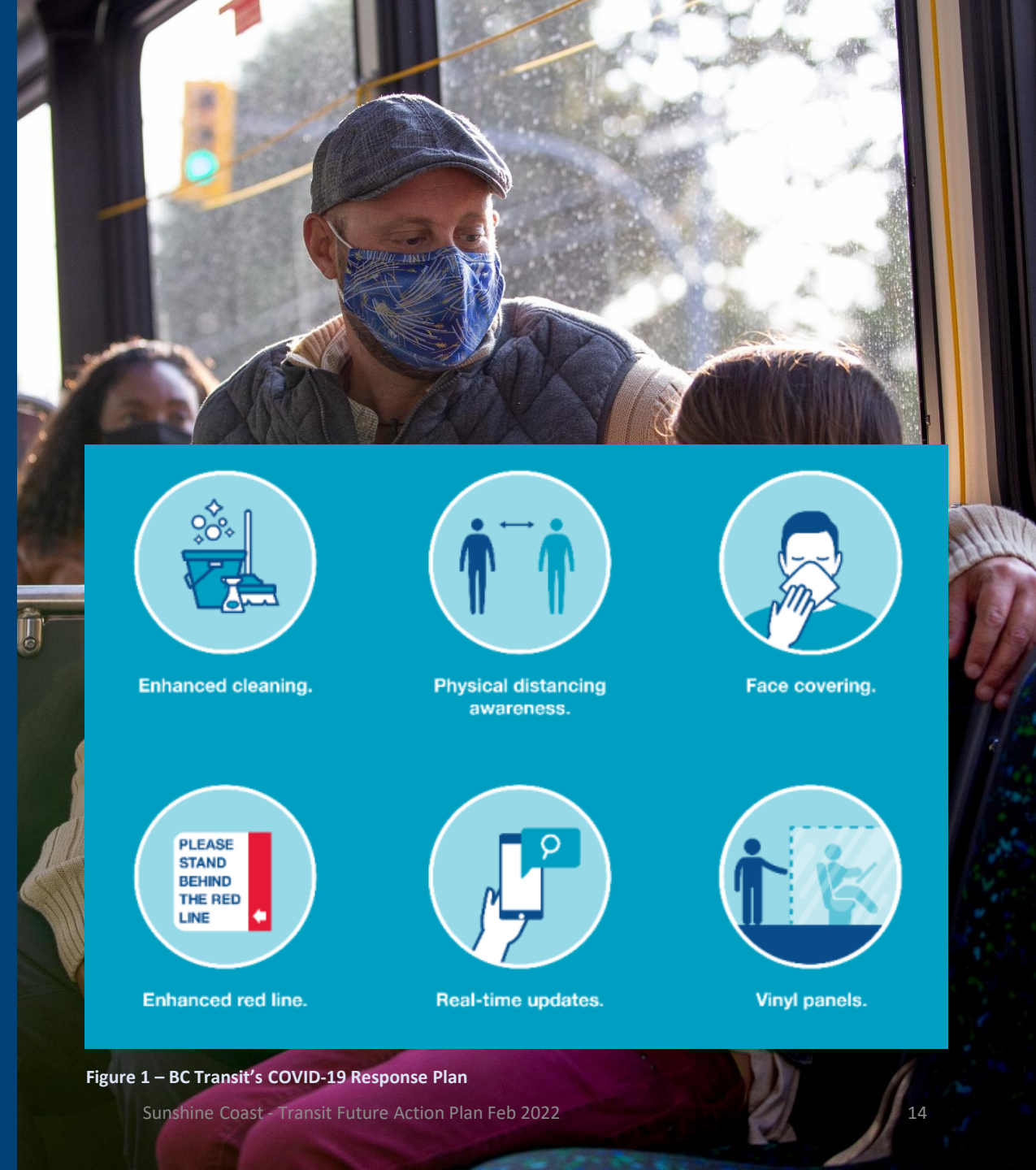


Figure 1 – BC Transit's COVID-19 Response Plan

07 Engagement

How we Engaged with the Sunshine Coast Community

As part of BC Transit's commitment to public engagement, outreach was carried out to identify draft service and infrastructure priorities through workshops, conversations with key stakeholders, and a transit operator survey.

Public engagement was launched online from August 20, 2021 to September 17, 2021. Marketing to the community was facilitated through a variety of tools including: a project website, news paper and digital ads in the Coast Reporter, radio ads, internal bus ads, and social media.

840 people visited our engagement webpage in comparison to 652 in person attendees in 2013. The response rate was 30%, which was significantly higher than the target 10% response rate.



360 Survey
Respondents



9 Stakeholder Workshop
Attendees



41 Pins added to
the map
New bus stops
and key
destinations



792 Total Comments
on the project
webpage

Stay Engaged.

Check out the full engagement summary report and register for future updates.

<https://engage.bctransit.com/sunshinecoast2021>

07 Who We Heard From

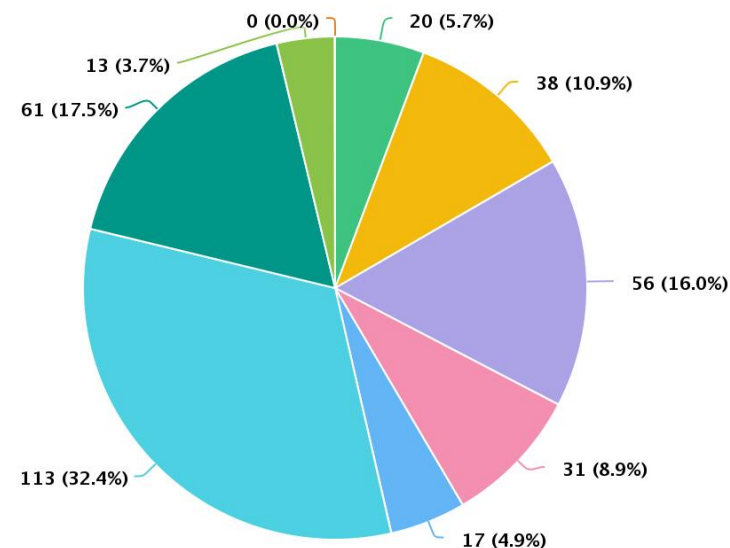
The Majority of Sunshine Coast Transit Riders use the System for Daily Commuting

360 survey responses were received.

Key Findings:

- Most respondents are regular passengers catching the bus for work or shopping.
- Top three age group: 32.7% (50 to 64 years old), 29.8% (Seniors 65+), 22.4% (35 to 49 years old).
- 52% of the respondents use transit to travel outside of Sunshine Coast.
- 96% of respondents live on Sunshine Coast.

Where do you live?



Question options

(Click items to hide)

- Area A: Egmont and Pender Harbour
- Area B: Halfmoon Bay
- Area D: Roberts Creek
- Area E: Elphinstone
- Area F: West Howe Sound
- District of Sechelt
- Town of Gibsons
- Other (please specify)
- Sechelt Indian Government District - Shishalh Nation

53%

Use transit a few times
A week

68%

Participants continue
to use transit during
COVID

52%

Use transit for
shopping
or errands, leisure

07 What We Heard

Improve Connections, More Service, More Places

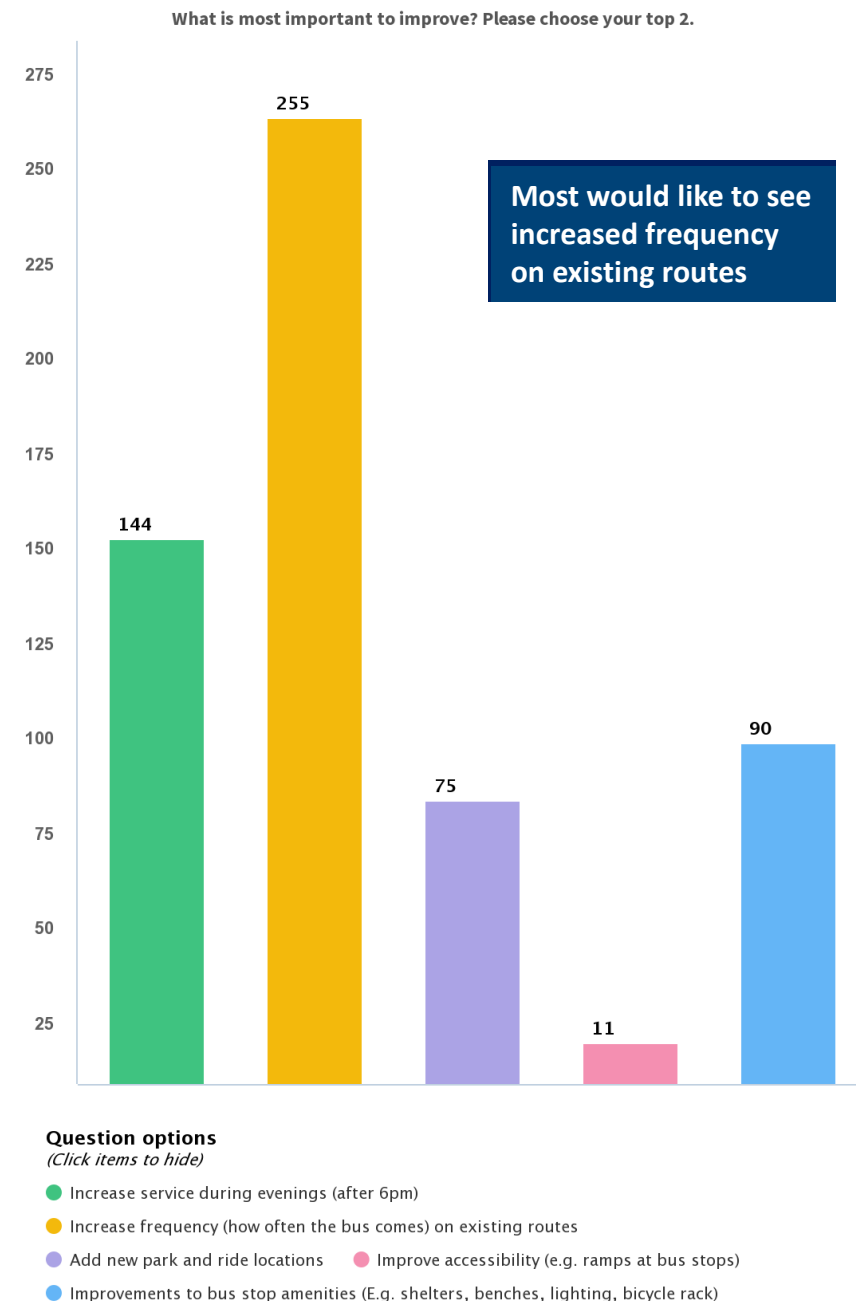
Frequency – Desire for increased frequency on existing routes, particularly to run route 90 on 30 minutes frequency for the whole day

Evening Service – Desire for increased frequency during evenings (after 6 pm)

Bus Stop Amenities – Improvements on shelters, lighting, and bicycle facilities

New Park and Ride Location – promote more park and ride opportunities to attract new ridership. Service to Earls Cove Ferry Terminal and Pender Harbour is among the highest priorities

Improving Connections – Improve timed connections to facilitate transfers

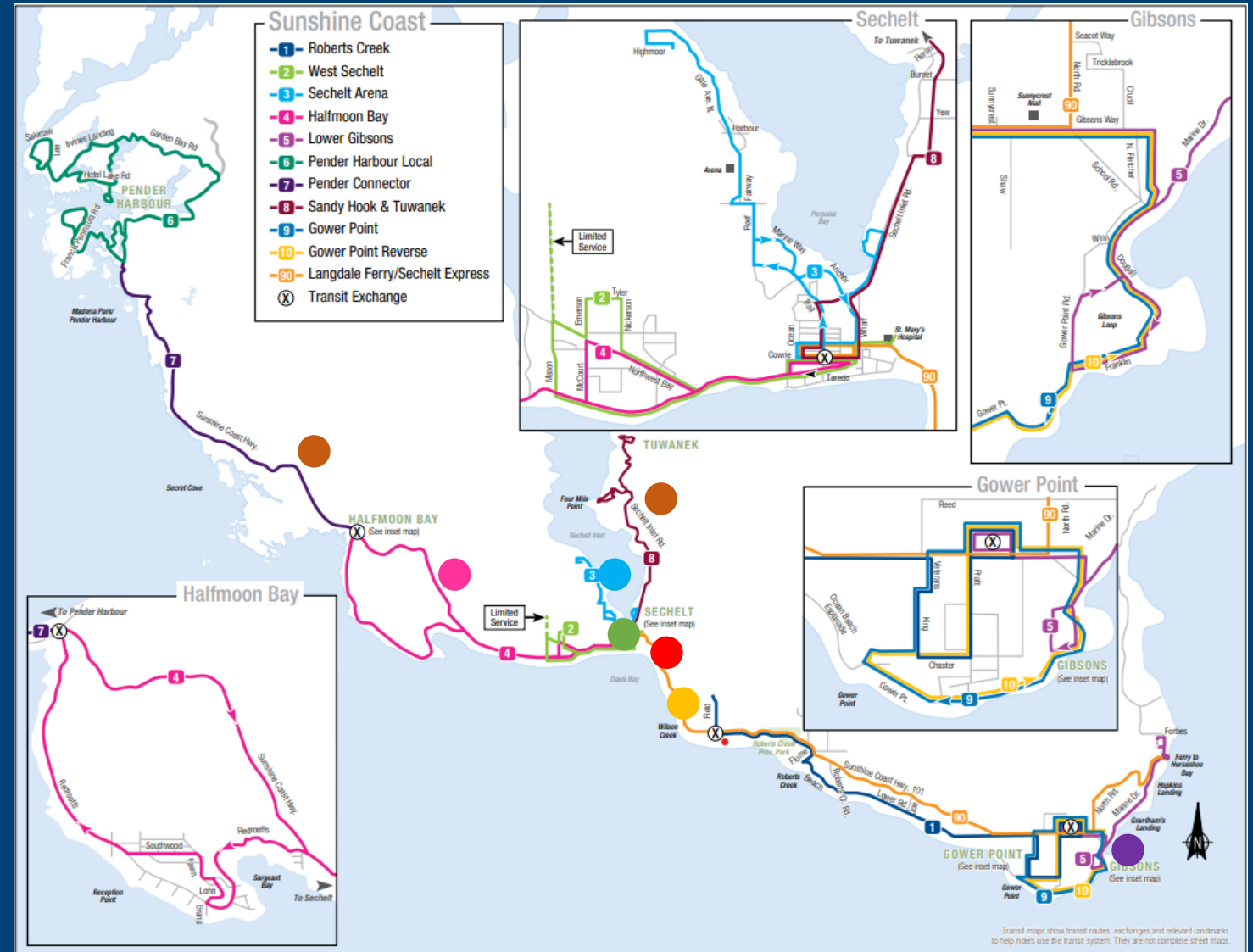


08 Your Future Network

These service priorities will help to shape the Sunshine Coast Transit System over the next five years, providing improved transit connections. The prioritization of transit investments was based on the needs and challenges identified through the planning process and public feedback.

The system continues to achieve the vision and goals of the 2014 Transit Future Plan.

-  Route 90 30 Minutes Service
-  Route 4 Halfmoon Bay Service Improvements
-  Route 1 Re-Alignment, and New Route 5
-  Service to new Areas: Earl's Cove, Pender Harbour/Madeira Park, Sandy Hook/Tuwaneke
-  Route 2 West Sechelt Improvements
-  Improvements to facilitate transit connections and evening service
-  Route 3 Sechelt Arena Extension



09 Service Priorities 2022-2026

Priority	Description	Resources
Phase 1: Route 90 increase frequency to 30 minutes from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.	Increase frequency to offer 30 minutes service between Sechelt and Langdale from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays. The service would be more reliable by effectively eliminating the need to wait for any late ferries.	1,800 service hours, 1 bus
Phase 2: Route 90 increase frequency to 30 minutes for the entire service span on weekdays	Build upon Phase 1, this priority will increase frequency to 30 minutes service between Sechelt and Langdale on all weekdays for the entire service span. Phase 2 priority should be implemented along with the modification of route 1 to balance the service hour expansions and costs.	2,300 service hours, 1 bus
Modification of route 1 Sechelt/Langdale Terminal	New route 1 will provide service between Field Rd. and Langdale Terminal, with limited service to Downtown Sechelt, Trail Bay Mall. This priority should be implemented alongside with frequency improvements on route 90.	-2,000 service hours
Service Optimization	Pursue opportunities to reallocate underperforming service to high ridership growth areas.	TBD
Improve existing connections	Short term - improve timing and connections with West Sechelt to the Arena, and Halfmoon Bay onwards to Sechelt and Langdale. Long term- increase frequencies to route 1 and 90. Engagement revealed better connections was strongly preferred by respondents not only benefiting tourists but also residents through improved ferry connections.	Cost Neutral Change

09 Service Priorities 2022-2026

Priority	Description	Resources
Increase frequency to route 2 Sechelt to 60 minutes Monday to Saturday, 30 minutes at peak times	The Transit Future Network proposes that this would become a Frequent Transit Network due to the existing population density and expected future development. This service expansion would increase the frequency on Route 2 to hourly service with service every 30 minutes at peak times.	820 hours, 1 bus*
Modifying route 2 Sechelt from circular route to a two-way bi-directional service	Provide two-way service on route 2 would improve access for local transit users and improved service. This service would match existing service on the road today with hourly service during the week, and reduced service on weekends and holidays.	1,480 hours, 1 bus
New Service to Pender Harbour	a local flex-route service in Pender Harbour (route 6) with a separate connector service between Pender Harbour and Halfmoon Bay (route 7), enabling passengers to connect to route 4 to continue on to Sechelt.	840 service hours, 1 bus
New Service to Earls Cove Ferry Terminal/Egmont	New service priority linking Sechelt/Halfmoon Bay to the Earls Cove Ferry and Egmont.	750 hours, 1 bus

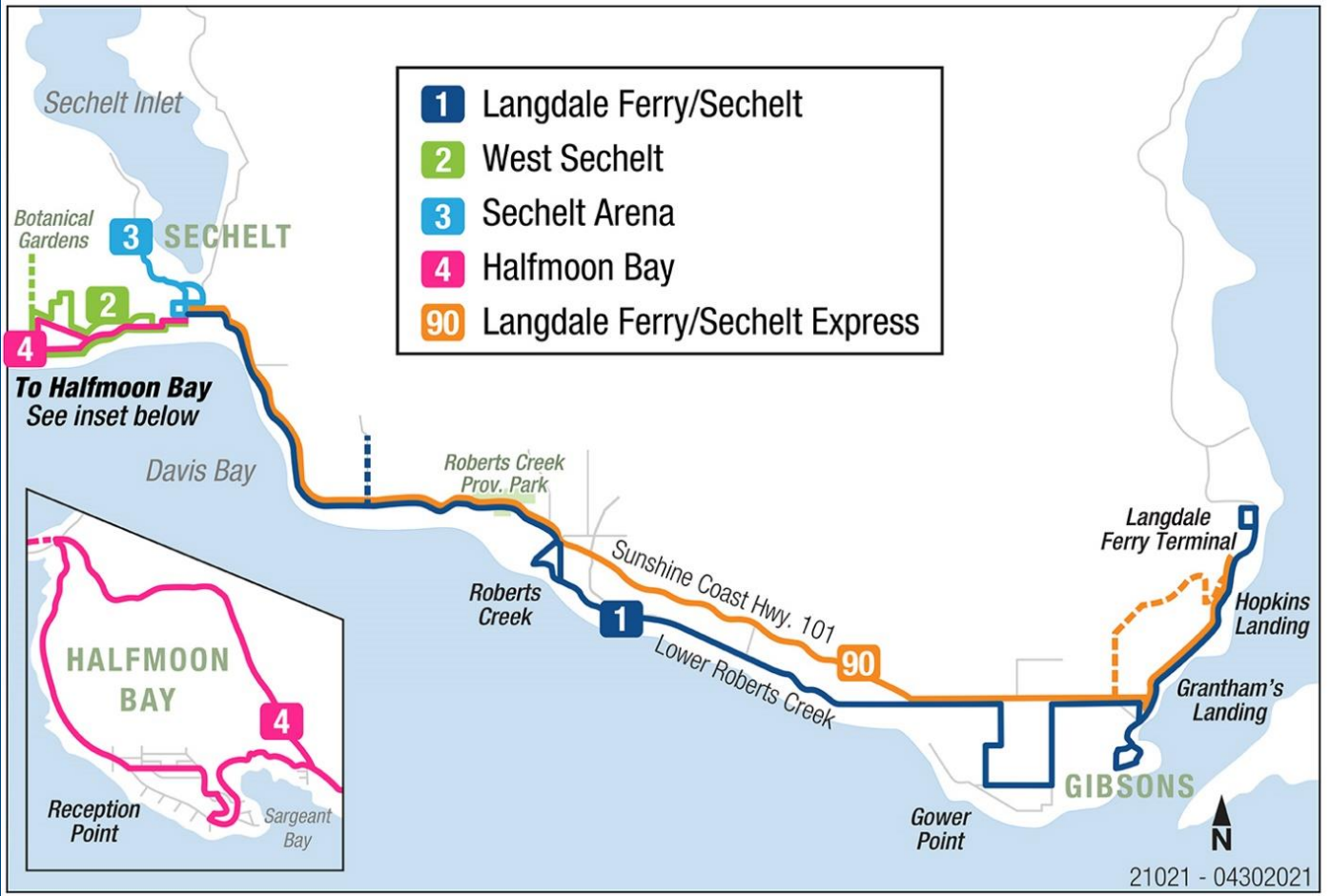
*Vehicle resources are calculated separately for each priority, and may change as other priorities are implemented

Route 90 - 30 Minutes Frequency

Phase 1: Route 90 would see increased frequencies to 30 minutes between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. all weekdays. Most trips would operate via North Rd. The service would be more reliable by effectively eliminating the need to wait for any late ferries.

Phase 2: Route 90 would see increased frequencies to 30-minute for the entire service span on weekdays.

Phase 1: 1,800	Phase 1: 1
Phase 2: 2,300	Phase 2: 1
Annual service hours	Heavy Duty vehicle



Modification of Route 1

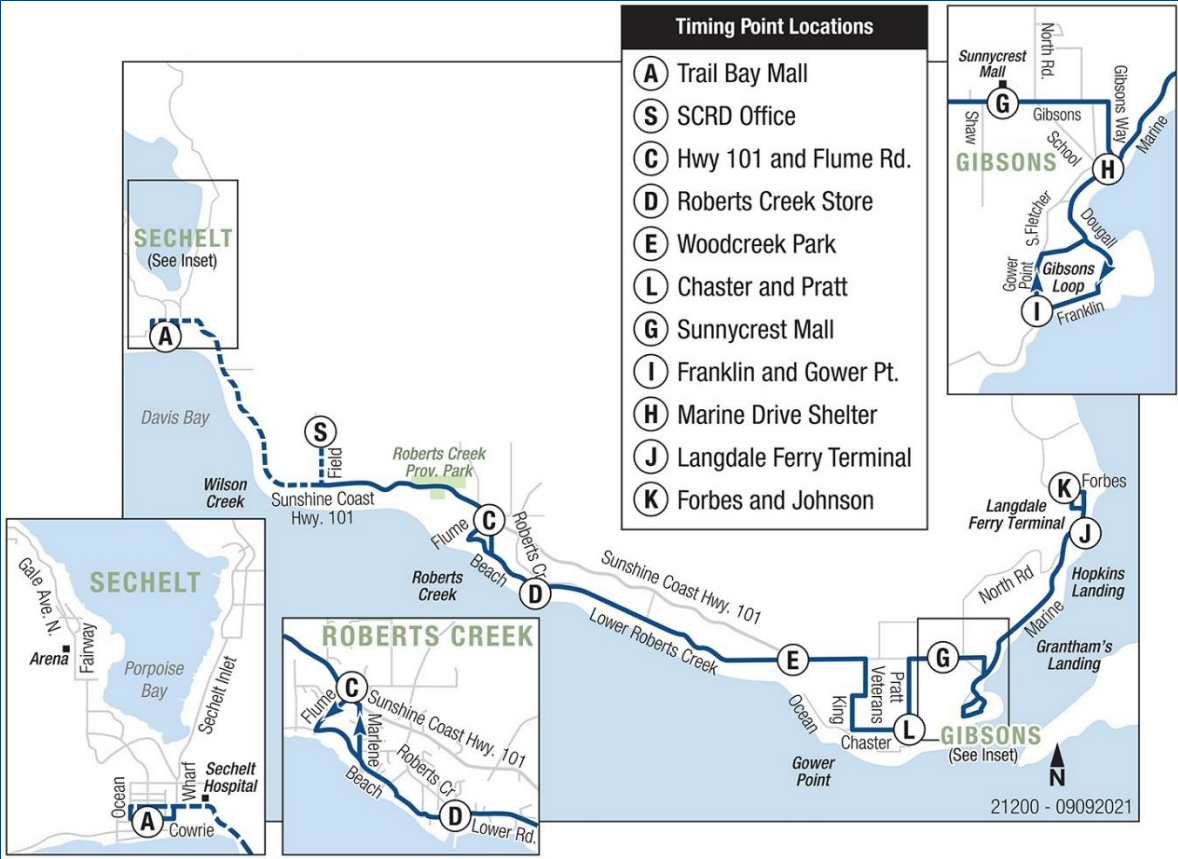
Modification of Route 1 Langdale/Sechelt

New route 1 will provide service between Field Rd. and Langdale Terminal, with limited service to Downtown Sechelt, Trail Bay Mall. This change will result in a savings of 2,000 service hours, which can be redirected to high ridership growth service.

It is recommended that this change happens simultaneously with frequency improvement on route 90 to balance the cost.

-2,000

Annual service hours



Route 2 West Sechelt 30 Minutes Frequency at Peak Time

Increase frequency to 30 minutes service at peak times to west Sechelt Monday to Saturday

The Transit Future Network proposes that this would become a Frequent Transit Network due to the existing population density and expected future development. route 2 would see hourly service between Monday and Saturday with service every half hour at peak times of the day.

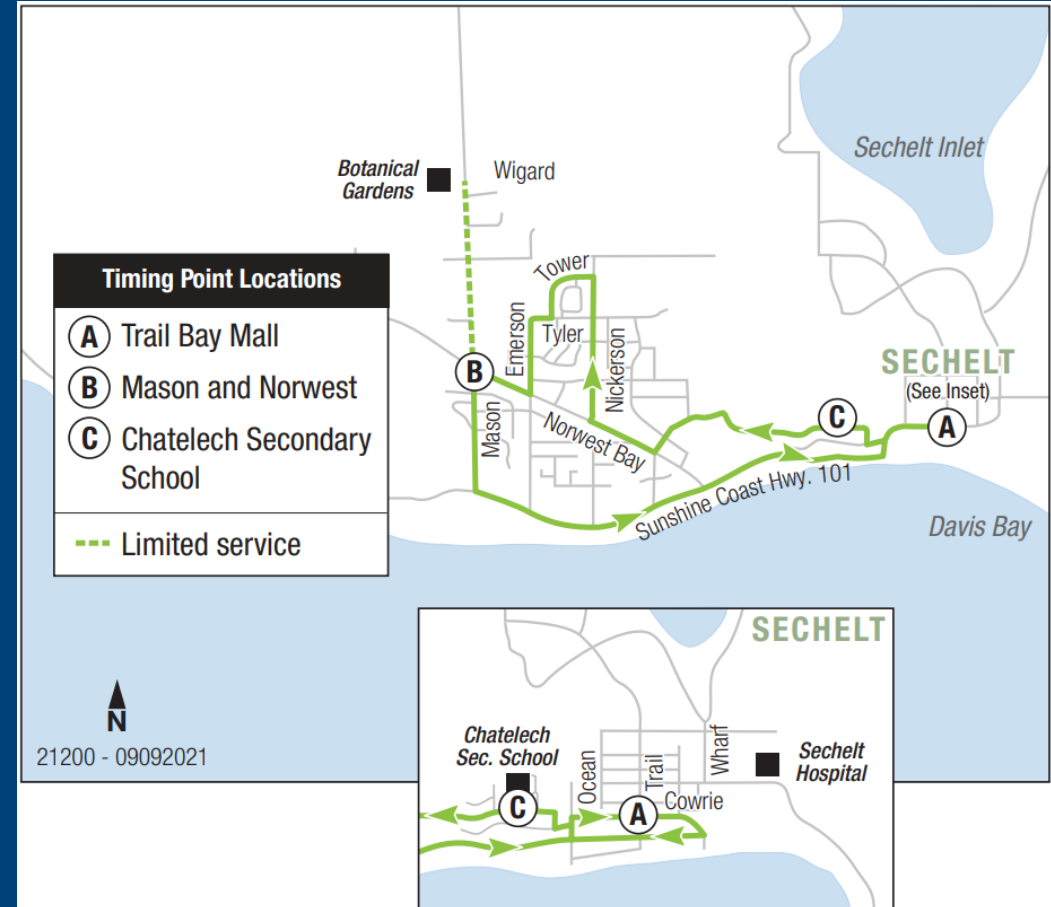
820

Annual service hours

1

Light Duty Vehicle*

*The additional bus will be shared with other priorities



Route 2 West Sechelt Bi-Directional Service

Introduce Bi-Directional Service on 2 West Sechelt, Hourly during the week, reduced on Weekends and Holidays

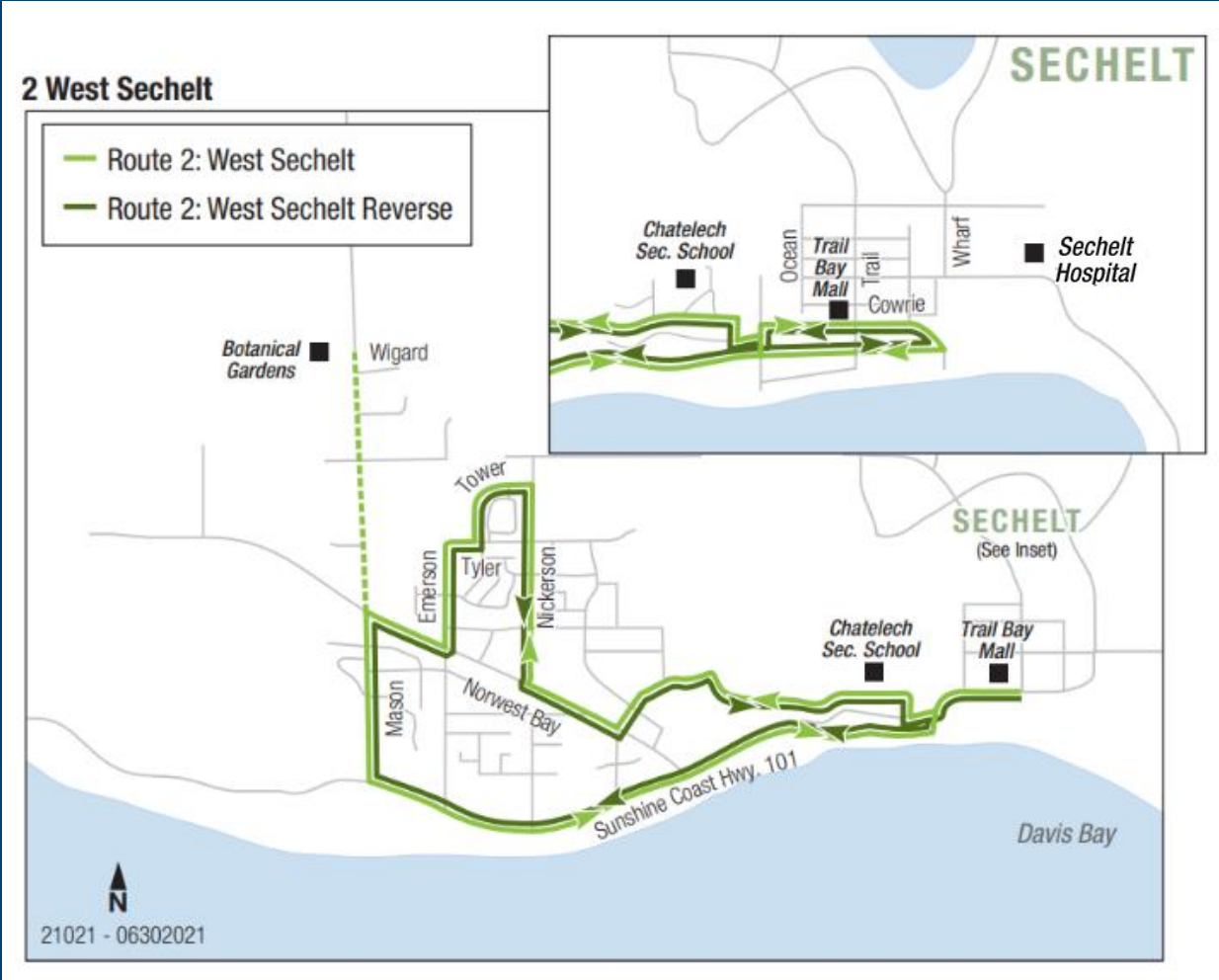
Public engagement Key Stakeholder conversation revealed a call to provide bi-directional service on route 2 West Sechelt. This service would match existing service on the road today with hourly service during the week, and reduced service on weekends and holidays.

1,480

Annual service hours

1

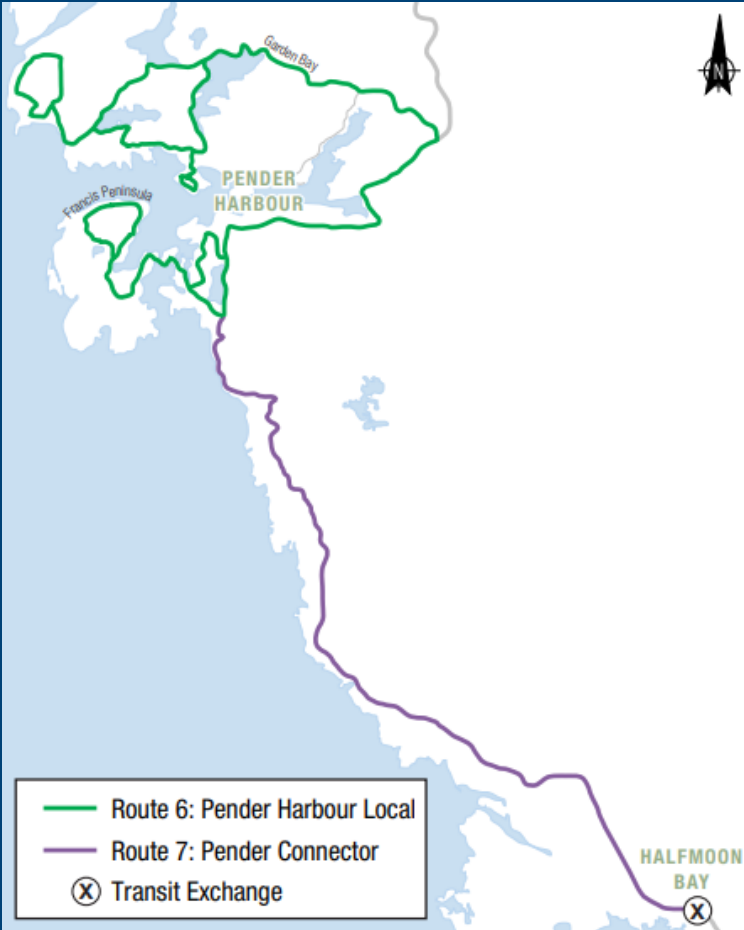
Light Duty vehicle



Introduce Service to Pender Harbour

New Route 6 Pender Harbour Local, and New Route 7 Pender Harbour Connector to Halfmoon Bay

This priority includes the provision of a local flex-route service in Pender Harbour (route 6) with a separate connector service between Pender Harbour and Halfmoon Bay (route 7), enabling passengers to connect to route 4 to continue on to Sechelt.



Introduce Service to Earls Cove

New Route to Earls Cove Terminal

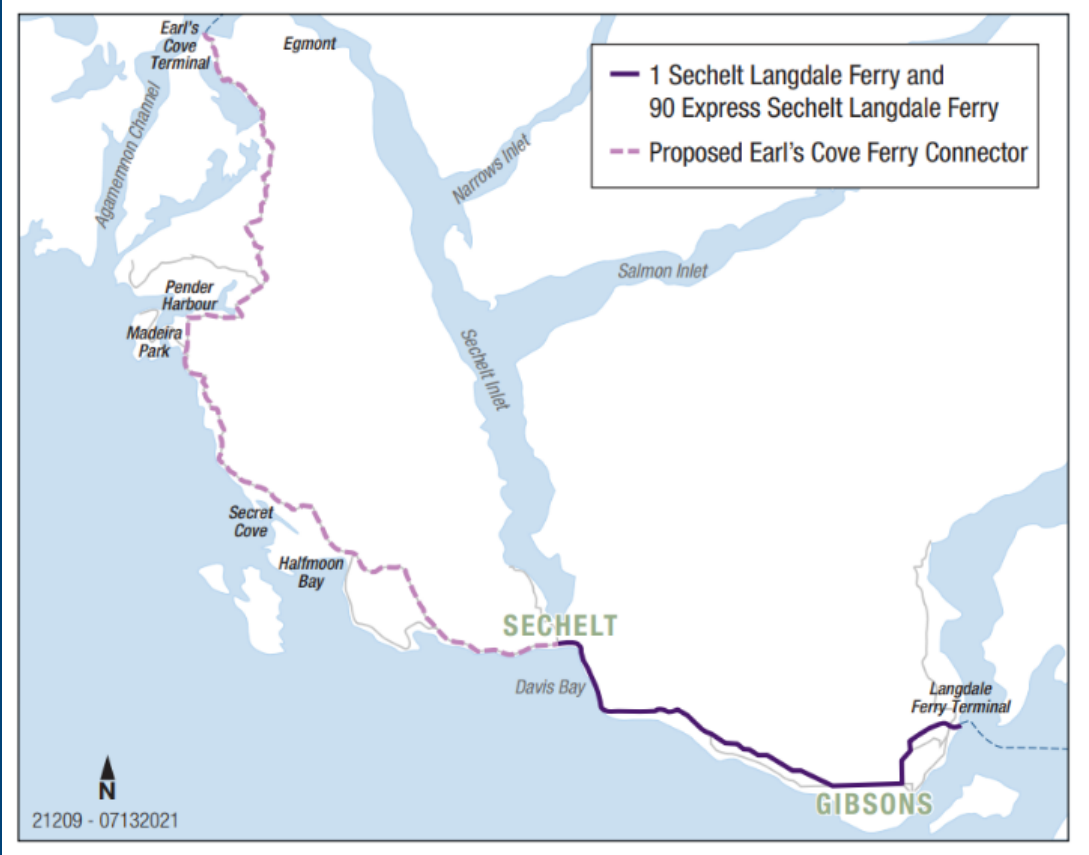
This service would fill in a gap in the transit system that currently exists between Halfmoon Bay and the Earls Cove Ferry Terminal. This service would connect transit riders with ferry service between Earls Cove and Skelhp. This service would provide 1 trip per day Monday to Saturday to match ferry trips coming from qathet.

750

Annual service hours

1

Light Duty vehicle



10 Beyond 2026 Service Priorities

Priority	Description	Resources
Phase 1: Increase route 90 frequency to 30 minutes on weekends and holidays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.	Increase frequency on route 90 to 30 minutes on weekends and holidays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. to support future ridership.	2,400 service hours, 1 bus
Phase 2: Increase route 90 frequency to 30 minutes on weekends and holidays	Build upon Phase 1, this priority will increase frequency on route 90 to 30 minutes from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. all days including weekends and holidays, route 90 service level reaches the FTN design standards.	2,100 service hours, 1 bus
Increase Frequency to route 4 Halfmoon Bay to 60 minutes Monday to Saturday	Increase frequency on route 4 to hourly service between Monday and Saturday to support ridership and future population growth in the area.	2,100 service hours, 1 bus
Extending route 3 to provide Service to East Porpoise Bay Rd.	Provide service to Shishalh First Nations residential development and potentially also the new industrial site on Sechelt Inlet Crescent, as well as a campground, outdoor sports adventure facility and additional developments. Provide service up to Dusty Rd.	330 service hours, 1 bus*
New Service to Sandy Hook and Tuwanek	Would increase mobility and access to amenities for residents of Sandy Hook and Tuwanek. Potential to service a local camping ground and provide a closer access point adventure sports facility.	170 service hours, 1 bus*
Introduce New route 5 Connector, Re-align route 1 and Increase Frequency to 60 minutes	Restructure route 1 and provide a local commuter shuttle between Langdale/Upper/Lower Gibsons to better service the community. New route 5 will share the same bus with route 1, with future expansion to increase frequency to 30 minutes at peak times.	Cost Neutral

11 Infrastructure Priorities 2022 Onwards

Priority	Description	Resources/Partners
Invest in bus stop infrastructure	Improve accessibility, safety and provide additional amenities at bus stops.	BC Shelter Program, SCRD
Operations & Maintenance Facility Expansion	In order to meet future expansion needs from this plan, the existing operations and maintenance facility must grow. The existing facility on Mason Rd. is leased from MoTI, and work will be done in collaboration with them.	MoTI, BC Transit, SCRD
Right Sizing	Investigate the implementation and operation of the appropriate vehicle type and size for the ridership demand now and in the future. Adding flexibility and opportunity to service more local communities.	BC Transit, Sechelt, SCRD
Sechelt Park N Ride	Frequent Service on route 90 between Sechelt and Gibsons and Langdale presents opportunity for a park and ride in Sechelt to attract new transit passengers and increase ridership.	BC Transit, Sechelt, SCRD
Field Rd. Transit Exchange	Changes to route 1 will require passengers who wish to travel from Elphinsone and Lower Rd to/from Sechelt to transfer at an exchange in ts'ukw'um near Field Rd.	BC Transit, SCRD
Upper Gibsons Transit Exchange	Changes to route 1 and 5 facilitate transfers onto route 90 on street.	BC Transit, Town of Gibsons, SCRD

12 Your Future Infrastructure Priorities

Infrastructure

These infrastructure priorities will help to shape Sunshine Coast Transit over the next five years providing improved transit infrastructure for customer convenience and safety. New infrastructures will support the implementation of the plan and the ability to accommodate expanded fleets.



Field Rd. Exchange



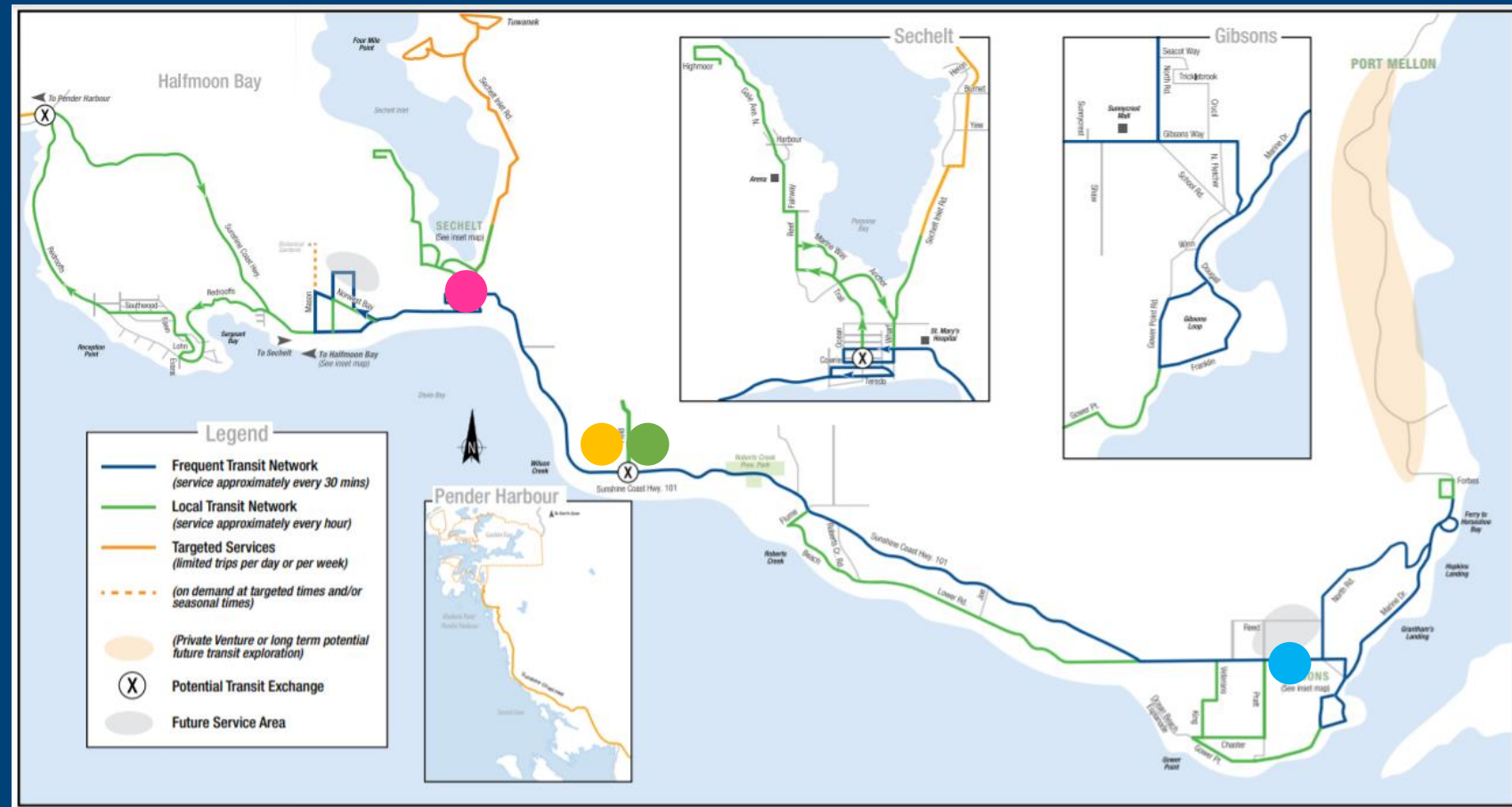
Gibsons Exchange



Sechelt Park n Ride



O&M Facility
Expansion/Satellite



13 Future Fleet

Right-Sizing Buses for Flexibility

The existing Sunshine Coast Transit System has a mix of 14 heavy duty and medium duty vehicles. Through public engagement feedback, we heard that the system could use smaller, light-duty vehicles to better meet the demands of the local routes. Additionally, route 90 and route 1 could benefit from upsizing buses for busy summer months.

As a result of the proposals from this Transit Future Action Plan, one of the key recommendations is to look for right-sizing opportunities. This work involves reviewing fleet sizes and identifying opportunities to upgrade medium-duty buses on Route 90 and downgrade on the local routes to meet flexible demands. Right-sizing practice will be considered in parallel with the electrification opportunities for the system.



14 Investment Strategy

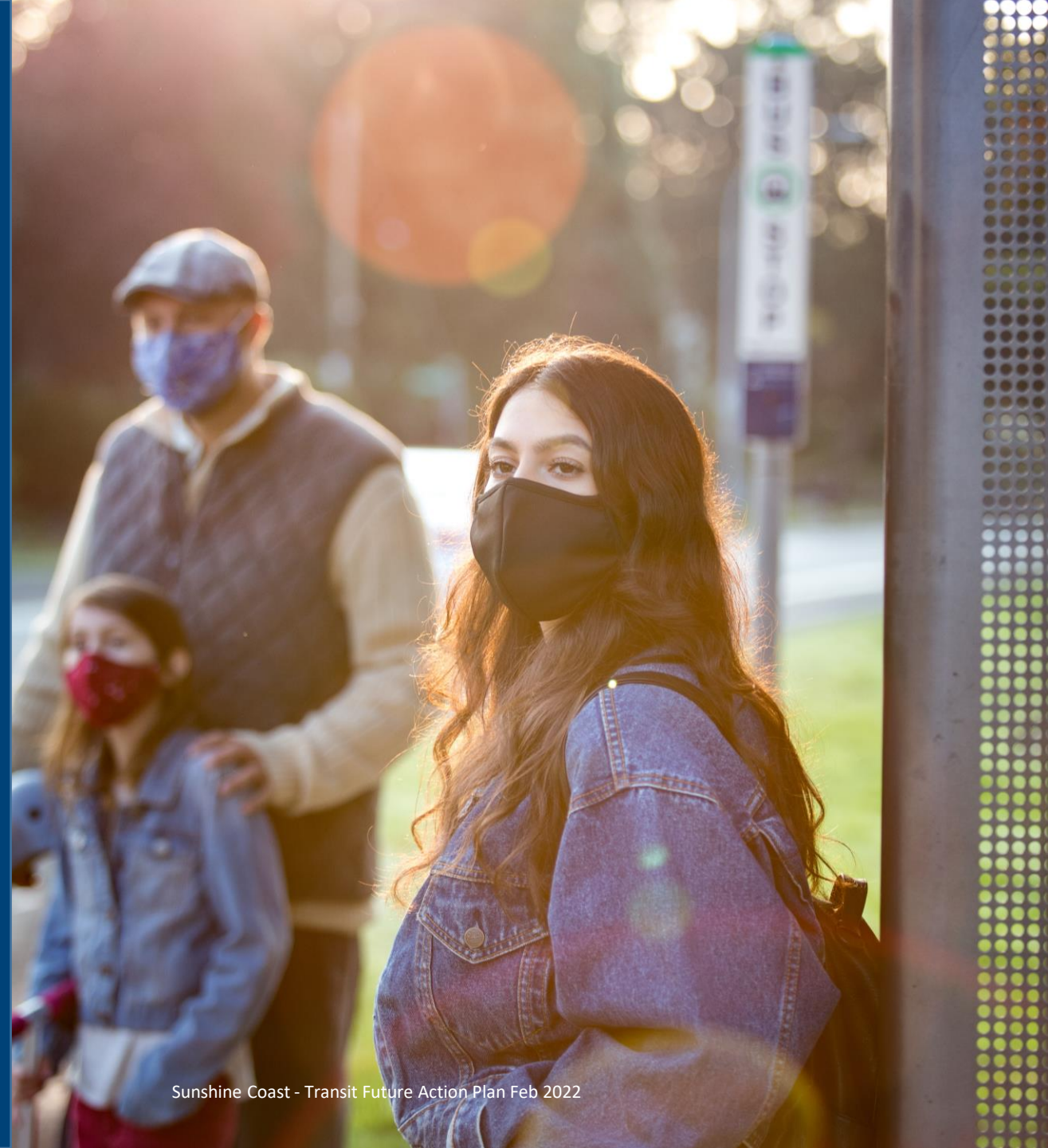
Funding the Plan

To achieve the goals of this plan, sustained capital and operating investments in the transit system will be required over the next five years and beyond. Annual operating costs are based on service hours that are projected to increase over 13,090 hours by 2029.

The plan also calls for capital investments that include:

- An additional nine buses added to the transit fleet, which some expansions can be achieved through right sizing analysis
- New transit exchanges or upgrades to existing transit exchanges
- Improvements to customer amenities at transit stops

Given the level of transit investment anticipated over the coming decades, BC Transit and the Sunshine Coast Regional District will need to prioritize and plan for these investments and ensure there are stable and predictable funding sources available.



15 Moving Forward

Monitoring + Implementation

Performance of the transit system is monitored on an annual basis, which is typical for transit systems of this size. Performance may be monitored more closely after a significant service change to evaluate the change.

Service improvements will be integrated into the Three Year Transit Improvement Process (TIP), which is updated on an annual basis. Infrastructure improvements will be incorporated into BC Transit's Capital Plan. Prior to implementation of service changes, BC Transit planning staff will work with staff at the Sunshine Coast Regional District to ensure service improvements appropriately reflect local needs. Additional targeted engagement may be conducted.



16 Acknowledgement

Thank you

The development of this Transit Future Action Plan provides a roadmap for the continued development of the Sunshine Coast Transit System.

This plan was made possible by participation from local governments, key stakeholders and the public. BC Transit would like to thank the project working group members from:

- Sunshine Coast Regional District
- BC Ferries
- Sechelt Indian Government District
- Squamish Nation
- Tla'amin Nation
- District of Sechelt
- Town of Gibsons
- City of Powell River
- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- Qathet Regional District

