

New plans pave way for future of BC Transit in Penticton

(Penticton, BC – Sept. 13, 2023) – City Council has endorsed two new plans that will create a roadmap for the future of BC Transit throughout the city and the South Okanagan.

“This is a positive step forward for the future of Penticton’s transit services, providing a long-term vision for planning the network’s growth and advancing our climate initiatives,” says Mayor Julius Bloomfield. “Transit is a key focus for our Community Climate Action Plan and an essential means to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, so we hope the Province will increase funding, making it possible for us to move forward with our plans to expand services.”

BC Transit developed the two plans following public and stakeholder engagement, which included open houses, workshops and online surveys. The first is the Transit Future Action Plan, which sets the medium- to long-term vision for the transit network throughout the region, proposing service improvements such as additional frequency and weekend service for existing routes, as well as new local routes in communities outside of Penticton.

The second is the Penticton Network Restructure Plan, providing a framework for future transit decisions in our community. This plan looks to increase service frequency, simplify the network to ensure it is easy for riders to navigate, and align the network with the community’s **growth patterns and the City’s strategic plans**. The recommendations include increasing the frequency of the Route 5 Main Street bus to operate every 15 minutes on weekdays, and to restructure existing routes, with services every 30 minutes weekdays plus an expanded service on evenings and weekends.

Residents living in the Abbott Street area will be pleased to know that the bus route will not only remain in the transit network, but the plan involves enhancing the route with a two-way service in the future.

Implementation is proposed in three phases, which will require future funding approvals by the City in the future, as well as additional funding from the Province, and prioritized by BC Transit for Penticton. The goal is to implement the first phase in 2025/26. As more details are available, BC Transit will share the details with the public. **For more information about these plans, visit BC Transit’s webpage at engage.bctransit.com/penticton2023.**

The City endorsed its Community Climate Action Plan in 2021, with a goal of reducing emissions by a projected 40 per cent below 2007 levels by 2030. The plan identified that approximately 54 per cent of our community emissions are from vehicles, and in order to reach the emissions targets, it needs to focus on six key areas. **One of these is to ‘Shift Beyond the Car’** by encouraging active transportation

and transit. Specific to this goal, the City is striving to reduce total vehicle kilometres travelled by 13 per cent over the next 20 years, with a quarter of these being switched to transit.

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