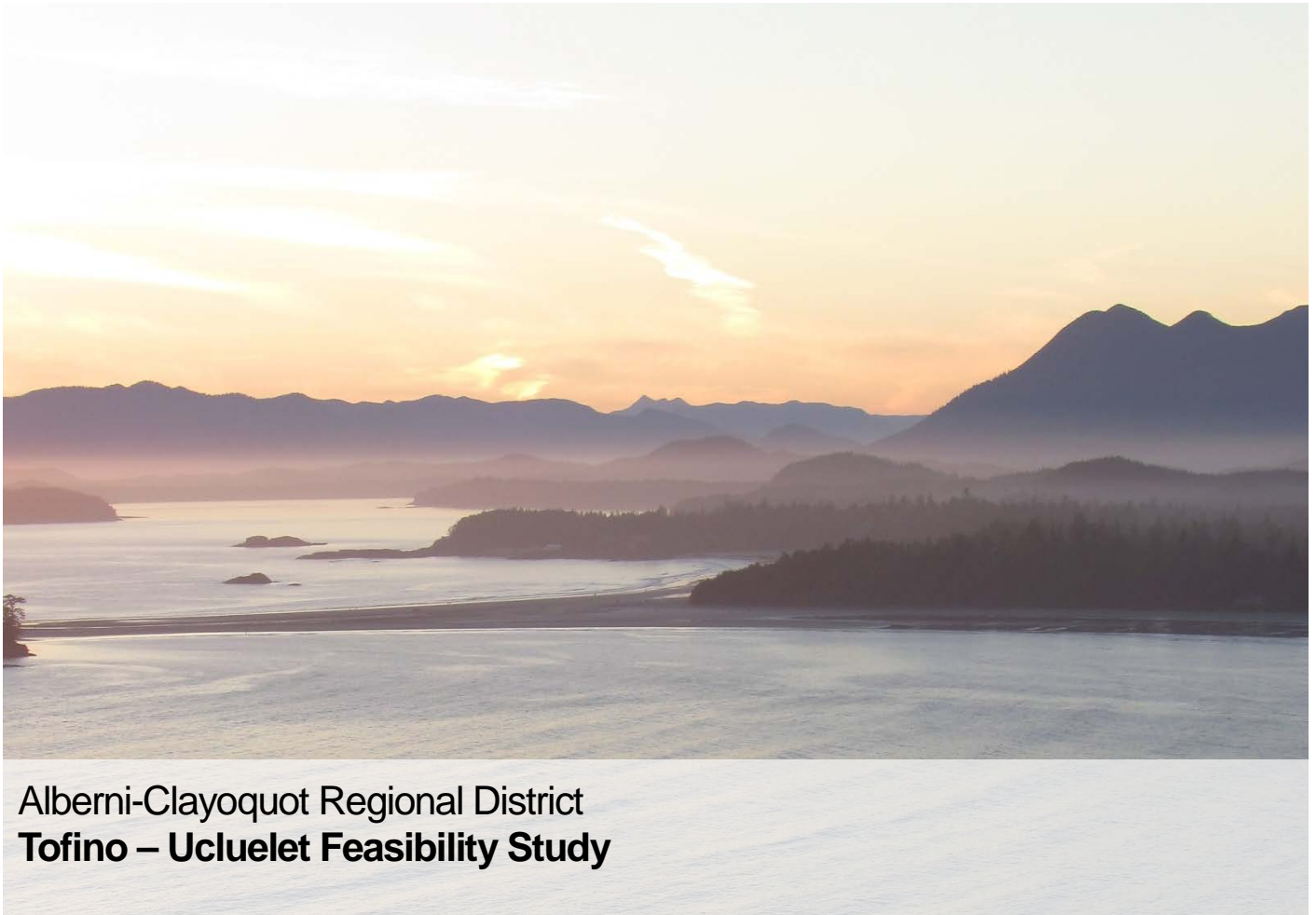


Tofino - Ucluelet Feasibility Study



Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District
Tofino – Ucluelet Feasibility Study



Alberni-Clayoquot
Regional District



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1. Introduction

The purpose of this feasibility study is to describe the potential service options and resources required to implement transit service between the Districts of Tofino and Ucluelet.

2. Background

In 2009, the Corporation of the District of Tofino approached BC Transit to conduct a feasibility study in the area servicing Tofino, Ucluelet and the Ahousaht, Hesquiaht, Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ, Toquaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations. BC Transit completed a Pre-Feasibility Study to provide a scope of the service and high level cost estimates for consideration by all parties. No action was taken from the initial study. Though this study was completed, a refresh of scope and costs is required due to population growth in each of the communities.

In preparation for the Feasibility Study, the ACRD undertook a market demand analysis to define desired scope of the transit system and current transportation assets in the region. The West Coast Transportation Study Scope Setting document (Appendix A) outlines population demographics, community land use and transportation plans, existing transportation solutions and an analysis of the potential market.

The purpose of this document is to provide a conceptual overview of service options and a final recommended service option for consideration by the ACRD Board. Further work, including detailed schedule development and detailed costing, is required to implement transit service in the area. In addition, an amended Annual Operating Agreement is required.

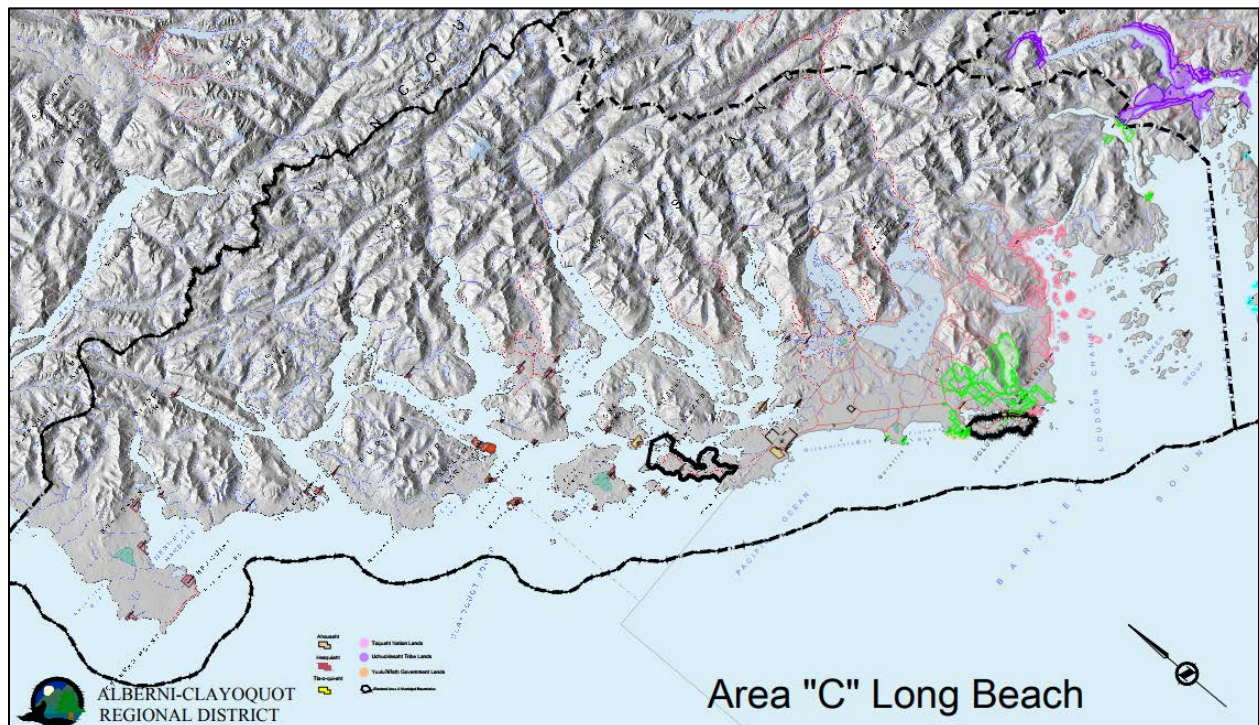


Figure 1: Study Area

3. Objectives

The objectives of the feasibility study, as discussed and reviewed with the local partners, are listed below. The objectives serve to define the expected role of transit in the region in terms of

service levels and form the basic requirements any proposed transit system must fulfill in order to be acceptable to the regional district, local municipalities and First Nations communities.

1. Identify the transit market based on demographic data and existing transportation services.
2. Develop service options and outline associated costs. Service options will be consistent with the area’s population and land use patterns.

4. Transit Market

Community profiles are useful in determining the size and characteristics of the potential transit markets. Various factors impact transit ridership, including sociodemographic characteristics, individual travel patterns, land use and development patterns, comparable travel times with the private vehicle, parking prices, access to key destinations, transportation network design, existing transportation options, fare prices, and fuel prices.

The west coast communities of the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) are made up of the two municipalities of Tofino and Ucluelet; the ACRD Electoral Area C; and the 5 Nuu-Chah-Nulth Nations, Hesquiaht, Ahousaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Yuu-thlu-ilth-aht and Toquaht. Travel between these rural and remote communities varies between highway access, logging roads, boats and float planes. This study will focus on travel services between communities with paved road access along highway 4 and Port Albion Road - Ucluelet, Hitacu, Esowista, TyHistanis, Tofino and ACRD Area C.

4.1 Community Overview

Population and Employment Statistics

The 2016 Census recorded a permanent population of approximately 5340 residents in the west coast communities over 3228 square kilometres of diverse geography. The west coast communities host a young population with a median age of 34. According to the 2016 census, 26% of the population is aged 20 to 34, followed by those aged 35 to 49 at 23% and 19% of residents from age 50 to 64. The region has a smaller youth and senior population with 13% of youth aged 0 to 19 and 12% age 65 and older. Table 1 displays the population by community from the 2016 Census.

Community in Proposed Study Area	Reported 2011 Census Population	Reported 2016 Census Population	Population Increase	Population Reported by Community (2017)
Tofino	1876	1932	3%	3200
Ucluelet	1627	1717	5.5%	1717
Alberni-Clayoquot Area C	433	677	56.4%	677
Hitacu	240	274	14.2%	274
Esowista (and Ty-Histanis)	176	94	-46%	431
Total	4352	4694	6.6%	6349

According to the 2016 Census the permanent population of the west coast communities located within the study area is 4694 and showing growth. Due to some ongoing challenges in census data, each community was contacted to validate population through housing departments and district records as part of the Market Demand Analysis. With community data incorporated the west coast communities in this study area have a permanent population of 6349 showing considerable growth since the 2011 census.

Community Evolution

The allure of the Pacific Rim National Park and marketing for the region as a tourist destination has led to growth and a significant tourism economy in the west coast communities.

- The region sees an annual influx of visitors and seasonal workers, 940 000 visits to Pacific Rim National Park between May and October in 2015 according to Parks Canada.
- Most opportunities for employment are located in the municipalities of Ucluelet and Tofino, with ongoing economic and community growth the need for housing and transportation services within and between communities becomes more evident.
- Seasonality of the tourism industry draws a young demographic which are often not accounted for as residents in the municipalities for census although Districts are working to address this information gap.
- New housing developments in the First Nation communities have led to growing populations, increased training and employment opportunities in community as well as need to access services in neighboring communities.
- Although 2016 Census numbers identify a 6.6% growth, when community population data is incorporated the growth rate is significant and development is continuing.

Community Land Use and Form

Communities in the study area are comprised primarily of single family dwellings which account for 66% of housing. Official community plans and housing studies in the area as a whole are recognizing the need for increased affordability and housing options in order to accommodate long term residents and seasonal workers while balancing the demands of an attractive vacation destination. First Nation communities within as well as outside of the study area have been active in developing new housing opportunities for members which has seen an increase to populations as well as an increased need develop community amenities and means to access those in neighboring communities.

Employment

The 2016 Census reports that the median income after tax for households in the study area is \$52,448 while the 2017 Clayoquot Living Wage calculation suggests an annual household income of \$73,200 is required to meet regional living expenses. A large percentage of residents rely on sales and service roles in tourism as a primary occupation with 26.6% of residents reporting that they have two jobs and 11.6% have three or more jobs. According to the Clayoquot Living Wage calculation 40% of residents earn less than or close to minimum wage and 67% of residents earn less than the calculated living wage of \$20.11. The 2016 census demonstrates the strong trend towards the tourism based economic drivers, the top concentrations of industries which residents in the study area are employed:

- 28% in accommodation and food services;
- 9% in retail trade;
- 7% in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting;
- 7% in construction;
- 6% in public administration, healthcare and social work and transportation and warehousing respectively.

Community Amenities and Trip Generators

Due to the small permanent population in the region, infrastructure for basic needs such as health care, education, recreation and employment are shared between communities. Most infrastructure and employment opportunities are located in one of the two municipalities, which necessitates increased travel between communities.

Recreation facilities and halls exist throughout the region with local programming for residents, annual and special events at both indoor and outdoor venues, in part due to the tourism industry as well as the prevalence of outdoor activities and culture. In addition, a new regional multiplex recreation facility is being planned on the traditional territory of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations along Airport road. The project consists of a multi-phased development of a recreation facility to serve multi-generational families and provide a basic community service that does not currently exist.

Transit routes that align with population density generate high levels of ridership throughout the entire duration of the trip. Based on evidence across North America, development that is concentrated in nodes but not contiguous generates less overall ridership as the bus will not pick anyone up for the majority of the trip. There are a number of key destinations that are located along the transit route that could generate demand throughout the day and not just at either end of the route. These destinations include, but are not limited to:

- Downtown Tofino
- Industrial Way
- Tofino Botanical Gardens
- Highway Plaza
- Tourism Tofino
- Tofino-Long Beach Airport (YAZ)
- Tofino – Ucluelet Junction
- Downtown Ucluelet

Existing Transportation Options

Transportation options around the region are limited. As with many rural communities, walking and cycling infrastructure can be limited in certain sections of each community, shoulders on highways are narrow if present at all, but recent efforts to plan more accessible active transportation options has seen improvements to this.

Since 2012, the District of Tofino has offered a free hourly, daytime shuttle from late June to early September through a contract with Tofino Bus. This service is funded by a blend of Resort Municipality Initiative funding, pay parking revenue, and Gas Tax grant funding. Ridership statistics from this six-year seasonal shuttle indicate steady growth and an increase in usage by residents and visitors alike. In 2017, the shuttle operated from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm with nine stops servicing 26,270 riders over the two-month program. A 40-foot low floor bus is used to provide this service and can accommodate large surfboards of up to 12 feet. Preliminary 2018 ridership numbers show an increase in demand over the previous year.

School District 70 also contracts Tofino Bus to transport students to local schools.

Many of the residents of the west coast communities rely on private transportation options in order to access basic needs, as such less safe transportation options such as hitch hiking are also common to those without personal transportation.

4.2 Estimated Transit Ridership

There are approximately 6,000 people who live in the communities in the Study Area. Due to limited transportation options in the region, it is anticipated that customers will use this service for all types of trips rather than for the purpose of commuting to work in peak morning and afternoon hours. Therefore, service options will be developed to meet ridership demand.

The community population, land use patterns, and low density along Highway 4 suggest that this transit line will be relatively low in productivity at an estimated 5-7 rides per hour. The service options provided below reflect an appropriate level of transit service for the anticipated demand.

5. Service Options

Service options are designed to meet the level of ridership demand and needs of customers. The service description of each option identifies the following:

Conventional Transit

Conventional transit operates mainly in urban areas and uses standard sized buses (35 feet long or more) or high capacity buses in dense urban areas. Trips operate on fixed routes and follow schedules.

Flexible Transit or Flex-Routed Transit is built on a fixed route; however extra time is scheduled into trips. This extra time enables the bus to go off route within to provide door-to-door pick up and/or drop off.

Given the relative high cost of providing HandyDART service, it is important to ensure that customers are matched with the type of transit service needed. This helps to ensure that limited resources are allocated appropriately and available for those that require the service. In order to meet the needs of the ageing demographic, alternative service delivery model, such as Flexible Transit should be considered.

The benefit to this flexible transit model is that it provides the predictability of scheduled service for the general population while also being providing a higher level of access.

Paratransit services typically use an accessible transit vehicle provided by BC Transit and are usually operated by contracted private operating companies or local governments contracted to provide that function.

Paratransit operates only when passengers request service and provides door-to-door service.

Dispatchers work to group similar trips together and have a specified number of service hours within each day to allocate trips.

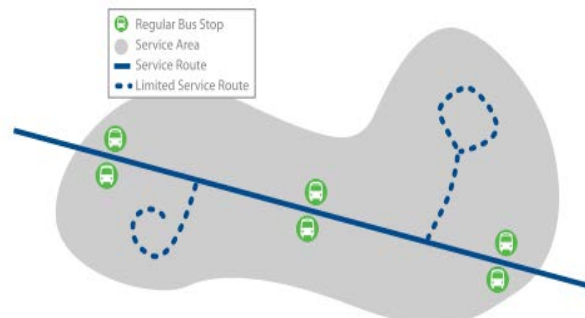
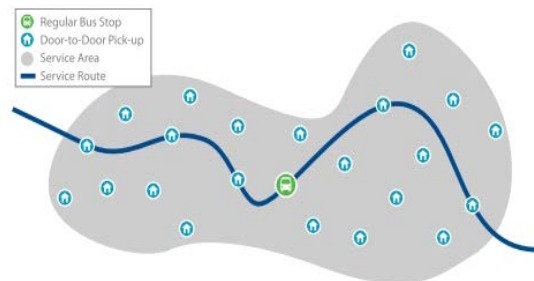


Figure 2: Flex-Routed Transit



The key benefit of this style of service is that it is the most efficient way of providing service to people with a disability and others in a rural setting. It groups similar trips together and ensures that the bus doesn't travel further than it needs to. The challenge is that it can be harder to mix with commuter needs and can provide less predictability and autonomy for general users.

Definitions

- Service Hours - Estimated number of annual hours that will be utilized based on the time to complete one round-trip and any recovery time.
- Ridership - Estimated annual ridership based on ridership levels on routes in other, similar transit systems.
- Vehicle Requirements - Estimated number of vehicles required to operate the service option.
- Estimated Cost - Expected annual cost based on a standardized operating cost per service hour and estimated vehicle costs, off-set by passenger revenue.

Service Options

The proposed routing is outlined in the map below. The route is 42 kilometers one way and would take approximately 60 minutes for a transit vehicle to drive. A 10-minute recovery would be added to the route to create a cycle time¹ of 70 minutes (one direction).

Proposed routing would require further analysis to identify timing points, potential stops and develop detailed travel times. In addition, analysis is required to determine whether the turnarounds identified in downtown Ucluelet and downtown Tofino are feasible.

The transit service options, as outlined below, seek to provide a minimum level of service to residents between Tofino and Ucluelet. The options provide high level cost estimates, two vehicle type (light-duty and medium-duty) options, frequency, and span. All trips would operate approximately between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm.

Proposed Transit Line

This route will operate bi-directionally between Tofino and Ucluelet via Highway 4.

¹ Cycle time is the total time it takes to complete a route, including travel time and layover time



Proposed Route Descriptions

4 Tofino

Start on Neil Street, left on Third Street, right on Campbell Street, continue on Pacific Rim Highway, continue on Tofino Ucluelet Highway, continue on Peninsula Road, left on Marine Drive, left on Helen Road, right on Fraser Lane

4 Ucluelet

Start on Fraser Lane, continue on Cedar Road, left on Bay Street, right on Peninsula Road, continue on Tofino Ucluelet Highway, continue on Pacific Rim Highway, continue on Campbell Street, left on First Street, left on Neil Street

Service Option 1

Conventional Transit - Monday to Sunday

The conventional service option provides transit service along a fixed route Monday through Sunday between Ucluelet and Tofino. This option focuses on providing a higher level of service in the summer during tourist season, and a focus on providing basic transit service in the winter

for local access for everyday trips. This routing also services the Esowista and TyHistanis First Nations communities. This routing does not directly serve the Hitacu First Nations community, though future expansion could consider directly servicing the community.

Service Option 1 proposes 70-minute service in the summer months from 6:00am to 9:00pm. During the winter months, 140-minute service is provided from 7:00am to 9:00pm. This service option requires two vehicles to be in service during peak season. A third vehicle would be required as a spare for the fleet.

Pros:

- Regular, predictable service;
- Operates 7 days a week, provides reliable option for residents;
- Attractive option for commuters

Cons:

- Winter service span differs in Tofino and Ucluelet because system uses one bus in the winter
- Does not directly serve the Hitacu First Nations community;

Service Option 1 – Summer (May to October)

Span of Service

First trip	Last trip	First trip	Last trip
From Tofino to Ucluelet		From Ucluelet to Tofino	
6:00	21:10	6:00	21:10

Service Frequency, Approximate headways between trips

Route Segment	All Day
Tofino ↔ Ucluelet	70
Ucluelet ↔ Tofino	70

Potential Schedule

Tofino to Ucluelet	
Leaving Tofino	Arrive Ucluelet
6:00	7:00
7:10	8:10
8:20	9:20
9:30	10:30
10:40	11:40
11:50	12:50
13:00	14:00
14:10	15:10
15:20	16:20

Ucluelet to Tofino	
Leaving Ucluelet	Arrive Tofino
6:00	7:00
7:10	8:10
8:20	9:20
9:30	10:30
10:40	11:40
11:50	12:50
13:00	14:00
14:10	15:10
15:20	16:20

16:30	17:30
17:40	18:40
18:50	19:50
20:00	21:00
21:10	22:10

16:30	17:30
17:40	18:40
18:50	19:50
20:00	21:00
21:10	22:10

Service Option 1 – Winter (November to April)

Span of Service

First trip	Last trip	First trip	Last trip
From Tofino to Ucluelet		From Ucluelet to Tofino	
7:00	19:40	8:10	20:50

Service Frequency, Approximate headways between trips

Route Segment	All Day
Tofino ↔ Ucluelet	140
Ucluelet ↔ Tofino	140

Potential Schedule

Tofino to Ucluelet	
Leaving Tofino	Arrive Ucluelet
7:00	8:00
9:20	10:20
11:40	12:40
15:00	16:00
17:20	18:20
19:40	20:40

Ucluelet to Tofino	
Leaving Ucluelet	Arrive Tofino
8:10	9:10
10:30	11:30
13:50	14:50
16:10	17:10
18:30	19:30
20:50	21:50

Service Option Summary

Season	Service Frequency	Trips per day	# of buses	Days per week	Weeks per year	Est. Annual Hours
Summer	70 minutes	14	2	7	27	7000
Winter	140 minutes	6	1	7	25	3000
Total						10,000

Service Option 2 – summer (May to October)

Flex-Route Transit

This service option operates using a conventional route and schedule, with time built into the schedule for the bus to deviate from the route. Residents can request a pick-up or drop-off and

the bus deviates from the route to provide the door-to-door service. If there are no requests, scheduled service continues and the driver has extra time at either end of the route.

The service would provide a connection for the Hitacu First Nations Community. The maximum distance the vehicle should deviate from the fixed route system is 8km.

Pros:

- Accommodates demand from neighbourhoods and First Nations Communities not directly on the Highway;
- Provides a reliable daily option with door-to-door service.

Cons:

- Winter service span differs in each community because system uses one bus;
- Trip travel times inconsistent, not attractive for commuters

Span of Service

First trip	Last trip	First trip	Last trip
From Tofino to Ucluelet		From Ucluelet to Tofino	
6:00	20:00	6:00	20:00

Service Frequency, Approximate headways between trips

Route Segment	All Day
Tofino ↔ Ucluelet	90
Ucluelet ↔ Tofino	90

Potential Schedule

Pick-ups and drop-offs will be scheduled with the operating company at least one-day prior.

Tofino to Ucluelet	
Leaving Tofino	Arrive Ucluelet
6:00	7:30
7:45	9:15
9:30	11:00
11:15	12:45
13:00	14:30
14:45	16:15
16:30	18:00
18:15	19:45
20:00	21:30

Ucluelet to Tofino	
Leaving Ucluelet	Arrive Tofino
6:00	7:30
7:45	9:15
9:30	11:00
11:15	12:45
13:00	14:30
14:45	16:15
16:30	18:00
18:15	19:45
20:00	21:30

Service Option 2 – winter (November to April)

Span of Service

First trip	Last trip	First trip	Last trip
From Tofino to Ucluelet		From Ucluelet to Tofino	
7:00	20:00	8:45	18:15

Service Frequency, Approximate headways between trips

Route Segment	All Day
Tofino ↔ Ucluelet	180
Ucluelet ↔ Tofino	180

Potential Schedule

Pick-ups and drop-offs will be scheduled with the operating company at least one-day prior.

Tofino to Ucluelet	
Leaving Tofino	Arrive Ucluelet
7:00	8:30
9:30	11:00
13:00	14:30
16:30	18:00
20:00	21:30

Ucluelet to Tofino	
Leaving Ucluelet	Arrive Tofino
8:45	9:15
11:15	12:45
14:45	16:15
18:15	19:45
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Service Option Summary

Season	Service Frequency	Trips per day	# of buses	Days per week	Weeks per year	Annual Hours
Summer	90 minutes	9	2	7	27	5500
Winter	180 minutes	5	1	7	25	3500
Total						9,000

Service Option 3

All-day On-demand Transit Service

In addition to the above service options, a paratransit option was explored centered around the by-request model and is not tied to a schedule or fixed-route. To schedule a pick-up, customers call the operator the day prior to their trip to request a pick up. The operator creates a schedule based on the requests received that day and notifies the riders of the schedule for the next day. Customers who did not schedule a pick-up can still catch the bus by flagging down the bus along the route. This service option would provide service to all of the First Nations communities with paved road access and could even be extended to Toquaht Bay Road to provide a connection for the Toquaht First Nations Community.

This option would be in addition to service option 1 or 2.

Pros:

- Provides basic service for shopping, social, or medical trips; and
- Provides door-to-door service.

Cons:

- Expensive to operate

- Three days per week service will not meet all resident needs; and
- Commuters are not accommodated;

Span of Service

Service would be available from 7am to 7pm Tuesday through Thursday. Future phases could consider extending service span and days of the week the service is offered.

Season	Hours per day	# of buses	Days per week	Weeks per year	Annual Hours
All year	12 hours	1	3	52	2,500

6. Fleet and Infrastructure Options

Operations and Maintenance Facility

A transit operations and maintenance facility is required for storing and maintaining buses. At minimum, there needs to be secure off street parking for fleet vehicles, servicing of fareboxes, office space for administration, driver check in, lost and found and dispatch space to support Custom Transit Service.

There are two approaches that can be considered.

Option 1 – Operating Company

Acquiring land, building and maintaining facility can be included in the request for proposal when hiring an operating company. This option increases costs, but requires less maintenance and administration. In this scenario, the proponent is responsible for securing a location to park and service the fleet.

Option 2 – ACRD, or local partner owned facility

The ACRD or one of the local partners provides a location for a maintenance facility. This option minimizes costs.

Transit Vehicle

Tofino and Ucluelet are world renowned surf locations, with over 35 kilometres of pristine beaches that attract surfers from all over the world. As a result, consideration must be given to allowing surfboards on transit vehicles. There are two types of vehicles that were considered for modifications to accommodate surfboards. These modifications would require capital investment before delivery, and design approval from the Fleet Standards team.

Rear-loading International El-Dorado

The International El-Dorado is a dynamic specialty bus, commonly used in paratransit systems or custom transit systems. They are a light duty high-floor design vehicle which typically have lower maintenance costs than low-floor models, but raise the challenge of loading ambulatory passengers via a lift instead of a kneeling ramp.



Figure 3 - International El-Dorado

Currently, all International El-Dorado buses in the BC Transit fleet have curb-side loading at the front and rear sides of the bus. A true rear-loaded International could be explored to accommodate putting surfboards on buses. However, this is not an efficient way of loading ambulatory passengers because loading would occur off the curb on the road behind the vehicle. The International bus can accommodate 30 seated passengers and four wheel chairs. The International has the potential to accommodate surf boards up to 12', but a modified floor plan is required and could come at the cost of seating.

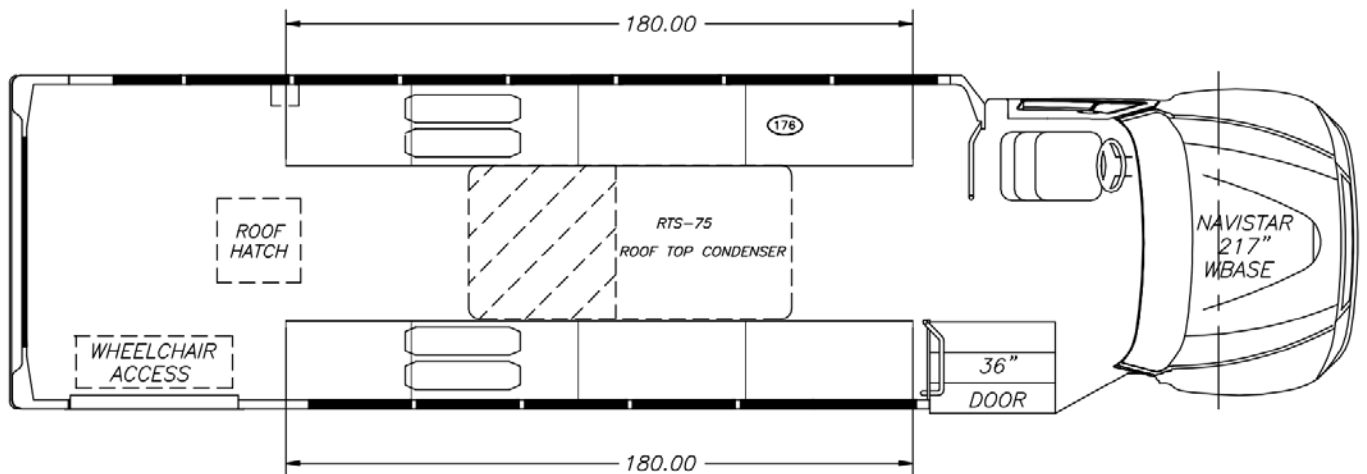


Figure 4 – Current International El-Dorado Floor Plan. Wheelchair access door would need to move to back of bus to accommodate loading surf boards

30' Vicinity

The 30' Vicinity bus resembles a more traditional public transit vehicle and is commonly used in conventional transit systems. It is a medium duty bus that can accommodate 24 seated passengers plus standees and 2 wheel chairs. There is an opportunity to order a modified floor plan Vicinity 30' bus to accommodate surfboards, but it will come at the expense of passenger seating and initial capital investment. The Vicinity bus can load surfboards through the rear doors and can potentially accommodate a board up to 10.5' in length. The lease fees and fuel costs are more expensive for the Vicinity than an International El-Dorado.



Figure 5 - 30' Vicinity

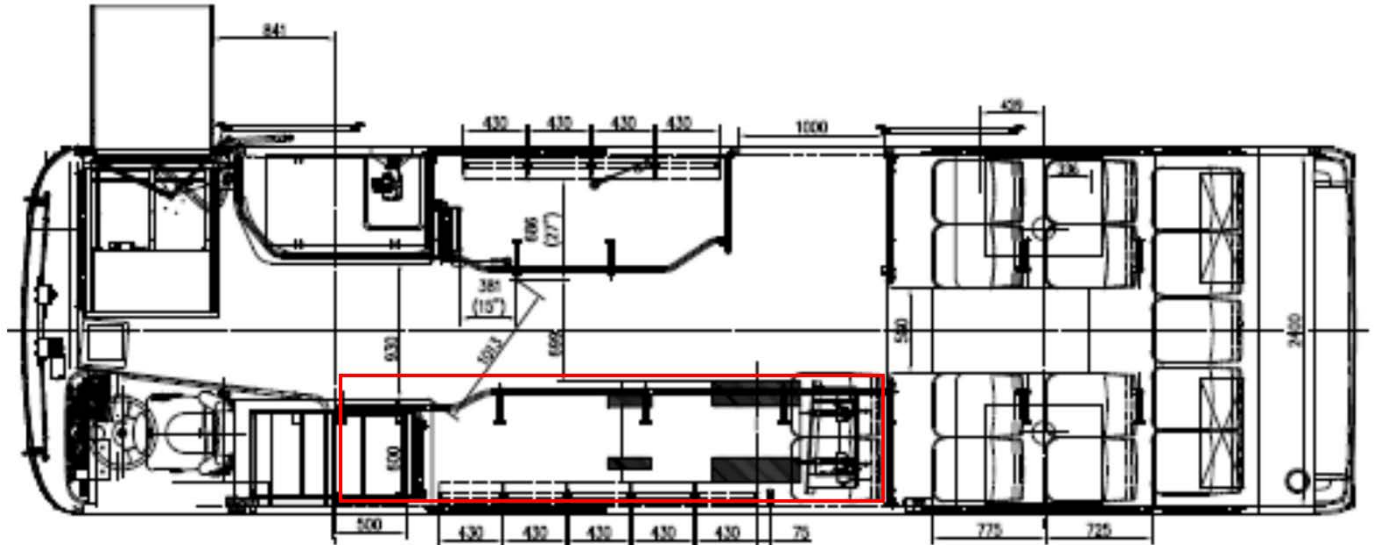


Figure 6 - Proposed 30' Vicinity surf board storage area. Enables rear-loading of surf boards

Maintenance Provider Considerations

An in-depth feasibility study of maintenance providers in the region would need to occur to verify which fleet type would be suitable for the service. Maintenance for an International El-Dorado bus could be contracted out to maintenance providers that work on school buses or city fleet vehicles because of the simple high-floor design that is similar to automotive trucks. Maintenance for a Vicinity would involve a BC Transit presence to train maintenance providers and to provide parts inventory stock as Vicinity buses are an atypical vehicle. Because of the low-floor design, Vicinity buses require hoists to work on them. If the maintenance provider doesn't have access to hoists, it would require an additional capital investment of roughly \$60,000 cost shared between BC Transit as an initial lump sum and the local government as a lease fee. Port Alberni operates Vicinity buses today, and work could be contracted to their maintenance facility, but there would be large costs and downtime associated with maintaining buses further away from the operating system.

Fleet Compatibility Considerations

Consideration should be given to the compatibility with the BC Transit fleet if modifications are made to buses servicing this area to accommodate surf board as a modified vehicle would limit fleet movements and use of the contingency fleet.

7.7 Service Option Summary & Recommendations

The service options presented are intended to provide a preliminary high-level sense of the feasibility and scope of transit options for the west coast communities. They are intended to be further refined through public engagement and implementation.

BC Transit is recommending to move forward with Conventional Service Option 1. Service Option 1 offers a more attractive level of service for a marginal increase in cost.

	Total Vehicle s	Annual Service Hours	Ride s per hour	Annual Ridershi p	Est. Revenu e	Operatin g Costs	Lease Fees (Local Share)	Total Est. Cost	Est. Net Muni Share
Option 1: Convention al Transit	2+1	10,000	7	70,000	\$140,00 0	\$850,000	\$91,00 0	\$941,00 0	\$404,10 0
Option 2: Flex-Route Transit	2+1	9,000	5	45,000	\$90,000	\$765,000	\$91,00 0	\$856,00 0	\$408,80 0
Option 3: All-day on- demand Paratransit	1+1	2,500	5	12,500	\$25,000	\$212,500	\$60,70 0	\$237,20 0	\$149,00 0

* Assumes use of a light duty vehicle

** Assumes \$2.00 fare

*** Assumes conventional cost sharing % with the province (local share = 53.31%, prov share = 46.69%).

Ultimately community appetite to fund the local portion of costs for service—as well as provincial funding and prioritization for expansion--may make the final call as to whether or not implementation of transit is pursued. Maintenance capacity at the time of implementation may also impact what service might look like and whether service is feasible.

7. Next Steps

This report is provided for review by the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District. BC Transit will await direction from the ACRD to pursue implementation. There are a number of issues related to next steps and potential implementation that should be highlighted:

- **Jurisdiction** – As the local government partner for any potential transit service in the ACRD, the ACRD would need to confirm the process by which the local municipalities, electoral area and First Nations communities might enter into a transit function, what the governance structure might look like, and any local taxation implications.
- **ACRD support** – As this feasibility study was conducted on behalf of the ACRD through the existing transit partnership with BC Transit, this report must be formally received by the ACRD. The West Coast Transportation Committee is the ACRD body that would provide a recommendation to the Regional District Board on next steps. Board approval and direction would be required to move forward on any of the cost-shared proposals.
- **Resident support** – There has not been any consultation as to whether there is resident appetite to pay for transit through property taxes. Public consultation should also include soliciting feedback on the proposed route and schedule to ensure transit accommodates key trip times for residents. If the ACRD Board is supportive of the recommended transit option provided in this report, it would be useful to undertake a public consultation process to gather resident feedback on the plan's service option as well as their appetite to enter into the transit funding function.
- **Funding** – Under the BC Transit Act, funding for transit systems must be cost shared between BC Transit and the sponsoring local government at a prescribed rate, with passenger revenues used to offset the local share of costs. This funding arrangement

means that both parties must come to the table with funding before service can be implemented. For instance, if a local municipality has funding for new transit services but the corresponding provincial share is not available, then service cannot be implemented.

BC Transit receives its funding on an annual basis from the provincial government. This annual funding arrangement means that BC Transit cannot confirm a timeframe for service implementations over the long term. Typically, BC Transit receives more expansion requests than available funding and as such BC Transit cannot accommodate all requests. Similarly, any new service would also require provision within the ACRD's budgets.

- **Prioritization** – BC Transit uses a number of transit service performance and land use criteria to prioritize available funding for service expansions between transit systems. Therefore, moving ahead on any of the west coast transit service would require both available provincial funding and sufficient ranking against other requests for services within the ACRD as well as among other communities.
- **Detailed Implementation Plan** – If the service option is approved, BC Transit would work with the ACRD to create a detailed implementation plan. This plan could include issuing a request for proposals to operate services and would also undertake the detailed operational planning to confirm route, schedules, maintenance feasibility and capacity, vehicle requirements, costs and—pending its confirmation of overall service viability--implementation timelines. In addition, an operating agreement is required to implement a transit service.

It is recommended that the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District:

- Receive this report for approval;
- Provide direction on whether the ACRD Board would like BC Transit to proceed with an implementation plan