

Report to Council



Date: June 13, 2022
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Rutland Local Area Transit Planning Transit Study
Department: Integrated Transportation

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives for information, the report from Integrated Transportation dated June 13, 2022, regarding the Rutland Local Area Transit Planning Study.

Purpose:

To inform Council that a Rutland Local Area Transit Plan will be developed over the remainder of 2022 and first quarter of 2023.

Background:

The 2018 Central Okanagan Transit Future Plan (TFAP) identified actionable transit service and infrastructure investments to improve ridership and mode share within the Central Okanagan over the following five years. Transit service priorities in the TFAP were separated into short (1–3 year), medium (3-5 year) and long term (5+ years) horizons.

Many short-term priorities within the TFAP have been implemented¹ and a key remaining short-term planning initiative, Mission restructuring, was launched in May of this year. Mid-term proposals within the plan have been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing capacity constraints at the Hardy Street transit operations centre.

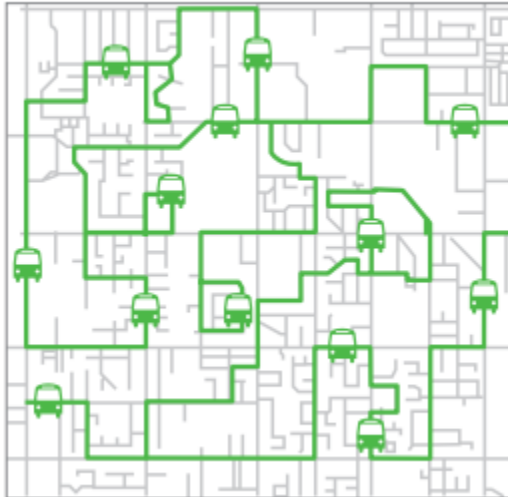
Fueled by rapid population growth and land use intensification within Rutland, the area will continue to contribute significantly to transit ridership. Rutland area network restructuring is an important mid-term proposal in TFAP that requires significant planning and community consultation in advance of implementation of service changes. The rapidly recovering transit ridership provide the impetus to develop a Local Area Transit Plan for Rutland. The exercise will seek opportunities to streamline transit service in the area to better align service according to density and ridership potential.

¹ Completed short term TFAP initiatives – invest in Frequent and Rapid routes, new service to UBCO via John Hindle Dr, introduction of service to Academy Way, and the realignment of most Rutland area routes to the new Rutland Transit Exchange.

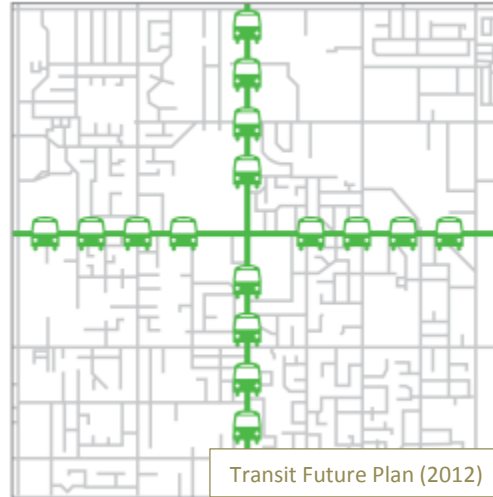
Discussion:

Rutland remains the only area within the urban core with Frequent Transit Network (FTN)² routes that have retained circuitous one-way route segments³. This route design, common in small to medium sized transit systems, is utilized to provide service coverage throughout the community. However, it can result in longer travel times for many riders and can contribute to demand imbalances between route segments.

Infrequent, Coverage Service



Frequent, Direct Service



This planning study will investigate options to establish a FTN grid network, where the road network permits, and will identify potential new coverage, or Local Transit Network (LTN) services that may be required to support the future Rutland FTN. The TMP proposes changes to the road network within Rutland, specifically the future extension of Hollywood Road north of McCurdy Road. This future roadway may provide an opportunity to establish a strong FTN in North-west Rutland addressing limitations of the current network structure.

Study approach:

BC Transit will lead the study in consultation with City transportation staff and with the support of a consultant. The consultant's scope will include:

1. Identify key stakeholders, data sources and engagement strategies.
2. Review of relevant community plans, existing and future transit network, stop and route level ridership and transit infrastructure.
3. Conduct analysis and develop route redesign opportunities considering optimization strategies to improve the alignment between service frequency and ridership, improve coverage and contribute to system-wide efficiency.

² Frequent Transit Network is defined as a route that arrives every 15 minutes or less.

³ Routes 10 North Rutland and 11 Rutland operate as unidirectional coverage services in lower density residential neighborhoods throughout Rutland.

4. Consider the goals and objectives of the City’s Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and integration of TMP transit projects.
5. Support the development and implementation of a robust public engagement plan including collaboration with First Nations communities. Thereafter, refine service and infrastructure options.
6. Produce a final Rutland Local Area Transit Plan based on the results of engagement, analysis, and collaboration with the PWG.

Study Scope:

1. Support the implementation of the priorities in the Central Okanagan Transit Future Plan and the Transit Future Action Plan, while building ridership and supporting goals and projects identified in Kelowna’s Transportation Master Plan.
2. Engage with residents and key stakeholders to gain a better understanding of current customer travel patterns, travel behaviors and service priorities.
3. Consider key changes, challenges and opportunities in the study area that may shape transit service and infrastructure and impact other transportation modes; and
4. Develop and prioritize proposals for transit service and infrastructure to better align with current and anticipated future land uses and density, road networks, community plans, demographic changes, and public priorities.

The role of Rutland Transit Exchange:

Rutland Exchange provides a focal point from which to develop the transit network in the area. As the Rutland Urban Centre evolves, this facility is well situated to support residential and employment growth. As part of a separate infrastructure study, enhancement options for Rutland Exchange were developed in 2021 through collaboration with stakeholders. The study sought to identify where additional capacity and amenities may be accommodated at the site in the future. Proposed improvements include an additional bus bay (originally envisioned in initial planning for the facility), micro-mobility/bicycle parking infrastructure, a dedicated operator washroom and formalized transit park & ride area. A separate report detailing the status of this, and other exchange enhancement studies will be brought to Council later this year⁴.

Rutland LATP proposed timeline:

Date*	Deliverable
July 2022	Project Launch – Project Working Group established, data collection.
August 2022	Initial analysis of routing options and changes to travel demand ➤ Development of draft routing options and infrastructure improvements
September/October 2022	Public engagement ➤ Project website kickoff

⁴ Studies have been undertaken for Rutland, Mission and Okanagan College Exchanges and the YLW transit hub to identify enhancements to support service growth and address current operational issues. Facility replacement scenarios for Orchard Park Exchange are also being investigated. Each are potential candidates for Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program funding.

	➤ Stakeholder Engagement & Online survey and mapping (2-3 weeks)
November 2022	Engagement Summary Report ➤ Modify routing options if required
December 2022	Draft report developed based on local government and public feedback
January 2023	<i>Final draft report to key stakeholders and local government officials.</i>
March 2023	Project completion – plan endorsement by City of Kelowna Council and BC Transit’s Senior Leadership Team. Explore opportunities for implementation
Ongoing	Integration of information into future Annual Service Plans, and Three-year Service and Financial Strategies and ongoing implementation of recommended projects.

* NOTE: The completion of deliverables within the timelines outlined above may be subject to change.

Conclusion:

The TFAP details short, medium, and long-term transit service priorities for communities throughout the Central Okanagan. Rutland network restructuring is an important medium-term initiative. A planning study will be undertaken between July 2022 and March 2023 that will consider TMP goals, objectives, and projects as well as changes in population, travel patterns and land-uses throughout Rutland. Study deliverables include detailed ridership analysis, an engagement summary and implementation priorities that consider short and long-term routing options as well as supporting infrastructure improvements.

Internal Circulation:

Communications
 Strategic Transportation Planning

External Circulation:

Senior Transit Planner, BC Transit

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

There is no budget change required to deliver this project. Financial and budget implications are to be determined through the study process and considered in future transit budgets and subsequent Annual Operating Agreements.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Communications Comments:
 Existing Policy:
 External Agency/Public Comments:
 Legal/Statutory Authority:
 Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Submitted by: M. Kittmer, Transit Service Coordinator

Approved for inclusion: M. Logan, Infrastructure General Manager

City Manager

June 13, 2022

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Attachment 1: Rutland Local Area Transit Plan Presentation

cc: Divisional Director, Corporate Strategic Services
Divisional Director, Partnerships, and Investments
Divisional Director, Planning and Development Services
Divisional Director, Financial Services