



# WEST KOOTENAY TRANSIT COMMITTEE

## AGENDA

May 28, 2024 | 1:00 p.m.

Regional District of Central Kootenay  
RDCK Boardroom, 202 Lakeside Drive, Nelson  
Zoom Meeting

### 1) Call to Order

Chair Rik Logtenberg will call the meeting to order.

### 2) Territorial Acknowledgement

We recognize and respect that we live and meet within the unceded territories of the Columbia Basin Indigenous Nations peoples.

### 3) Approval of the Agenda

***Recommendation:***

Moved by Director \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded:

That the agenda for the May 28, 2024 meeting of the West Kootenay Transit Committee be approved as presented.

### 4) Approval of the Minutes

***Recommendation:***

Moved by Director \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded:

That the minutes of the West Kootenay Transit Committee September 26, 2023 meeting be approved as presented.

### 5) Introductions

- a) Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager, BC Transit

- b) Alan-Michael Scofield, General Manager – West Kootenays Regional Transit Services, PW Transit

**6) Communications/Correspondence**

- a) No communications/correspondence submitted.

**7) Reports**

BC Transit

*Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager/Anthony Mirando, Regional Operations Manager*

- a) Ridership and revenue update
- b) GradPASS in WKT
- c) Umo update
- d) Battery Electric Bus update
- e) Operating Company transitions (April 1, 2024)
- f) Operations Update
- g) Transit Exchange Updates: City of Nelson, City of Trail
- h) Transit expansion implementation
- i) RDCK Critical fix
- j) Transit expansion proposals and costing

*Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager on behalf of Jen Getz, Transit Planner*

**Recommendation:**

Moved by Director \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded:

That staff present transit expansion initiatives to Boards and Council for consideration.

- k) Fare Review

*Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager*

**Recommendation:**

Moved by Director \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded:

That staff discuss at the board and council level (RDKB, RDCK and City of Nelson) whether they would like to receive a Fare Review from BC Transit.

**8) New Business**

a) UBCM – Funding for regional transit, advocating as a committee, *Rik Logtenberg, Councillor, City of Nelson*

b) **Selkirk College** – Moving forward with UPASS, *Elise Wren, Government Relations Manager*

## **8) Adjournment**



CITY OF NELSON

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## WEST KOOTENAY TRANSIT COMMITTEE

September 26, 2023 | 10:00 a.m.

Regional District of Kootenay Boundary  
RDKB Boardroom, 843 Rossland Avenue, Trail, BC  
In Person and Virtual Meeting

### In attendance

Rik Logtenberg, Chair	City of Nelson
Linda Worley, Vice Chair	Area B, RDKB
Chris Jury	City of Nelson
Jody Koehle	City of Nelson
Baron Gould	City of Nelson
Brian Bogle	City of Castlegar
Diana Lockwood	Village of Salmo
Tom Newell	Area E, RDCK ( <i>via Teams</i> )
Walter Popoff	Area H, RDCK ( <i>via Teams</i> )
Steve Morissette	Village of Fruitvale
Terry Martin	City of Trail
Daynika White	BC Transit
Anthony Mirando	BC Transit
Tessa Stewart	BC Transit
Trevor Stach	NextGen Transit Inc.
Sherry McCuaig	NextGen Transit Inc.
Sarah Breen	Selkirk College
Tom Dool	RDCK ( <i>via Teams</i> )
James Chandler	RDKB
Anitra Winje	RDKB

### 1) Call to Order

Chair Rik Logtenberg called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

### 2) Territorial Acknowledgement

In the spirit of respect, truth and reconciliation, we honour and thank the Indigenous Peoples on whose traditional and unceded lands we operate. We would also like to acknowledge the enduring presence of the Indigenous Peoples of this region.

### 3) Approval of the Agenda

**Moved by Director Worley and seconded:**

That the agenda for the September 26, 2023 meeting of the West Kootenay Transit Committee be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

### 4) Approval of the Minutes

**Moved by Director Morissette and seconded:**

That the minutes of the West Kootenay Transit Committee June 6, 2023 meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

### 5) Communications/Correspondence

- a) Presentation from Dr. Sarah-Patricia Breen PhD, Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development, Selkirk College  
*Selkirk College Moving Forward: Determining the Influence of Place on Public Transit in Rural Canada*

She explained that there has been minimal rural transit research in Canada. She has identified five key issues: rural areas are treated as uniform; there is an uneven knowledge of different regions and communities; a lack of integration exists; and there is a narrow focus on traditional solutions. Her team formulated a “triangle” to illustrate the influence of place: macro = applies universally across rural areas; meso = applies over larger rural areas; and micro = applies on case-by-case basis. Her theoretical framework was designed to be tested in case studies (four to six). Data collected will be analysed and shared with participants. The first case study is for the West Kootenay transit system.

Preliminary findings in a current study in Salmo and Area G: 38% of respondents currently use transit and 90% of respondents would be willing to use transit if improvements were made. Most respondents also shared they are willing to pay for transit. Many want to travel to Nelson and Trail during weekday office hours.

Dr. Breen anticipates that the findings from the case studies could affect policies at the Provincial and Federal levels.

Mayor Lockwood shared that she cannot rely on transit to transport her from Salmo to Nelson.

Director Popoff raised the issue of seniors accessing transit in the Slokan Valley and recommended that more buses be added to the route.

Mr. Dool shared that many of the issues raised will be addressed in the Transit Future Services Plan.

Ms. White suggested that the Salmo and Area G case study could help the RDCK with decision-making around transit expansion.

Mr. Dool remarked that there are two approaches to consider: tactical and strategic. Plans need to be revisited and updated regularly. He said that a different metric is needed in rural areas to measure success.

Chair Logtenberg said that the Province just released its rural strategy, of which transportation is a key component. The vision is for a rural transit system that will be affordable, equitable and deliver riders to healthcare. MLA Anderson has asked to engage with the Committee on a bus to talk about these issues.

**Moved by Director Lockwood and seconded:**

That the West Kootenay Transit Committee write a letter to Premier Eby and Minister Rob Fleming requesting that the Provincial government make transit one of its top three priorities for funding.

CARRIED.

The transit operators shared that recruiting transit drivers is challenging. Securing affordable housing for part-time workers is one roadblock. This may affect the ability to expand transit if no drivers are available.

## 6) Reports

### a) Update on transit expansion proposals for 2024/25 implementation

*Daynika White, Government Relations Manager, BC Transit*

Ms. White shared the service expansion timeline for 2023/24. The following expansions were approved: additional service on Route 98; Route 34 expanded to Grandview Heights; and two new round trips on Route 99.

### b) U-PASS implementation process and considerations

*Tessa Stewart, Business Development Advisor, BC Transit and Tom Dool, RDCK*

Ms. Stewart provided a brief overview of the U-PASS system, which gives students unlimited access to transit in their local system for a heavily discounted rate. She discussed the benefits of the program: environmental, guaranteed annual revenue, reduced parking demand and creating lifelong transit users. Considerations include increased demand on the system, pricing, and the post-secondary institution, which can include multiple campuses and remote learning. To join, a

regional district board or municipal council must give approval, in addition to the post-secondary institution (referendum vote usually held).

Ms. Stewart said that approval must consider capacity.

Mr. Dool suggested that staff go to their Boards and Council and seek approval before moving forward with this U-PASS offer to students.

**Moved by Director Popoff and seconded:**

That the Committee recommends that staff be directed to develop a U-PASS plan to be put forward to the City of Nelson and the RDCK and RDKB prior to engaging with Selkirk College students.

CARRIED.

**c) BC Transit contract strategy for West Kootenay Transit System**

*Anthony Mirando, Regional Operations Manager, BC Transit*

Mr. Mirando updated the Committee on the status of contracts for the provision of transit services.

**d) Update on labour shortage and service delivery**

*Trevor Stach, CEO, NextGen Transit*

Mr. Stach advised that NextGen is currently short only one position, but that staffing has been a challenge. The Salmo run has been adversely affected by this, resulting in cancelled runs. He suggested that the Committee may want to investigate funding for training transit drivers.

Chair Logtenberg asked if ETSI funding could be used for training; it was determined that it is.

When the Route 98 bus arrives first thing in the morning, the doors are not open.

**Moved by Director Bogle and seconded:**

That the Committee send a letter to Selkirk College requesting that the college doors be opened at 6:35 a.m. to accommodate riders on the first Route 98 bus.

CARRIED.

**Moved by Director Lockwood and seconded:**

That the West Kootenay Transit Committee recommends to the City of Nelson, the RDKB and the RDKB support NextGen Transit Inc.'s application to ETSI-BC for funding for driver training.

**7) New Business**

None.

## **8) Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12 p.m.