

Mayor's Communiqué

APRIL 2013

Our Creston Valley Transit

The majority of our local residents own their personal source of transportation. As such, most of these individuals do not currently have a need to use the Creston Valley Transit System. However, there are many people within our community who rely on transit services as their sole source of transportation. For these individuals, people who will come to use the service in the future, and the health of our community as a functioning whole, transit service is a necessary and valuable asset.



The existing Creston Valley Transit System is comprised of four (4) different types of bus service:

HandyDART	Buses provide door-to-door service for people with disabilities.
Health Connections Service	Buses provide limited service to Cranbrook (medical trips are given first priority).
Local Fixed-Route Service	Buses follow a predetermined route & schedule.
By Request Service	For information on this service, phone ahead or ask your driver

Over the past 3 years, the transit system has been modified and changed to assist in improving the ridership. Two new "Arboc" buses (20 passengers) were received this year and are now in service. These buses have a "kneeling feature" and a front-door ramp extension for wheelchair access. The buses are also equipped with seat belts and a front-mounted "bike-rack". In total, three buses are used to provide the Community's transit service, and these buses can be used interchangeably between the different kinds of services listed above.

The funding for our local transit service is provided by BC Transit; defined portions of Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) Electoral Areas A, B, and C; and, the Town of Creston. The

RDCK collects funds for the transit service on behalf of the Town, to cover the local government's share of the yearly operating costs. Additional funding for the Health Connections Service is provided by Interior Health (IH), in partnership with the Kootenay East Regional Hospital District. The last component of revenue funding is provided through "farebox" revenue.

The farebox or "user pay" component of our transit service is highly affordable for those people who use the service. The HandyDART fare is \$1.50 (for a one-way trip) and individuals can book their trip by phoning 250 428 7750. It should be noted that the HandyDART system is well-used and much appreciated by its users.

The Health Connection bus travels to/from Cranbrook on Tuesday and Thursday of each week, with a one-way fare costing \$2.50. In 2012, approximately 2,676 passengers were transported to and from Cranbrook, with about 53% of the ridership being classed as "medical passengers". This statistic demonstrates the importance of this kind of transit service to our community.

The Local Fixed-Route Service currently has a low ridership rate. As a result, routes were recently re-designed by BC Urban Transit. In addition, a "24 hour booking system" is available for certain areas in the community. To access this "By Request" service, please call 250 428 7750. For more information on routes available in the community, brochures are available at Town Hall, and the Creston Valley Chamber of Commerce, or on the web at www.bctransit.com.

The big question is how can we better utilize the local fixed-route system, now and in the future?

As society progressively focuses on increased energy efficiency, minimized use of increasingly costly fossil fuels, and freedom from financial burdens such as car payments and associated maintenance costs, it will be interesting to see what results occur for rural transit systems, both locally and throughout our country.

I want to hear from you:

Please share your concerns, your experiences, and your issues (both positive and negative) on how we can improve the quality of life in our community (the Town and the Creston Valley).

Thanks
Mayor Ron Toyota
Email: Ron.Toyota@creston.ca
Phone 250-428-2214, extension 227