



March 18, 2025

Leslie Gaudette, President
Tim Larsen, Member
Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC
PO Box 26036
RPO Langley Mall
Langley BC V3A 8J2

Reference: 331520

Dear Leslie Gaudette and Tim Larsen:

Re: Transportation for Seniors

Thank you for your letter, sent on behalf of the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC, regarding the transportation needs of B.C. seniors. I also appreciated you congratulating me on my appointment as Minister of Transportation and Transit. It is an honour to represent British Columbians in this role.

Our government recognizes public transit plays an important role in giving seniors the independence and mobility needed to safely participate in their communities. To ensure we can continue to support access to convenient transit service, [Budget 2025](#) provides over \$1.1 billion in provincial operating and capital funding to BC Transit over the next three years to support transit service delivery and expansion in communities across B.C. Our government is also partnering with the federal government and local governments to invest in electric buses to support BC Transit's [Low Carbon Fleet Program](#).

As you note, a key part of my mandate as the new Minister of Transportation and Transit is to find ways to support low-income people, including seniors and young people, in accessing affordable transit, and you can be sure the ministry is prioritizing this goal. I have ensured your comments have been shared with the ministry staff involved in this work for their consideration.

In the meantime, you likely know that there are several programs and tools to make transit more equitable, accessible and affordable for seniors. Through the [BC Bus Pass Program](#), the provincial government currently offers a bus pass to low-income seniors aged 60 and older, as well as persons receiving disability assistance, for a reduced fee of \$45 per year, instead of the regular monthly adult rates of \$85 to \$105.

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Seniors aged 65 and over in Metro Vancouver can apply for an orange Concession Compass Card, which provides discounted fares for conventional transit services including buses, SkyTrain, SeaBus, and West Coast Express services. The orange Concession Compass Card also allows seniors to access HandyDART services, subject to eligibility.

For communities outside Metro Vancouver, BC Transit collaborates with local governments to determine fares, service levels and routes. Local governments can work with BC Transit to develop their own programs to provide discounted or free transit for seniors.

As you are probably aware, handyDART services are provided by BC Transit in 20 communities across the province through [a partnership model](#). Each local government partner determines where and how handyDART services are offered in their region. The provincial government recognizes that this service is vital to the quality of life of British Columbians who are unable to use conventional transit, and we are committed to working with BC Transit and local governments to improve handyDART services in communities across the province. I have shared your support for the expansion of handyDART services with BC Transit CEO Erinn Pinkerton for her information.

Meanwhile, HandyDART services in the Metro Vancouver region are delivered by TransLink, which is an independent transit authority governed by the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation and a board of directors, rather than by my ministry or the provincial government. Last year, the Province provided TransLink with \$300 million as part of the agency's 2024 Investment Plan for much need service expansion, including improved HandyDART services.

In July 2024, TransLink initiated a HandyDART Delivery Model Review to examine how custom transit is best delivered. The review, which will build on the work completed in 2017 as part of the [Custom Transit Service Delivery Review](#), will provide an updated overview of the system. As part of this process, TransLink is evaluating HandyDART's long-term service delivery options to understand how to respond to the changing transportation and custom transit landscape and continue to deliver high-quality HandyDART service well into the future.

As TransLink is responsible for decisions regarding its day-to-day operations, including those pertaining to its subsidiary companies and contracted services, I have shared your email with Lorraine Cunningham, Chair of TransLink's Board of Directors, and with TransLink CEO Kevin Quinn, so they can consider your comments.

You may be aware that both BC Transit and TransLink have Accessibility Plans, which are required under the 2021 Accessible British Columbia Act. These plans identify actions the agencies are taking to identify, remove and prevent barriers to individuals interacting with them. Both agencies are accepting ongoing feedback on their plans, which can be submitted through their websites.

The ministry also remains open to considering improvements for rural areas where long distances between low-density populations mean that certain routes will not be profitable for private operators but are needed by people and their communities. In spring 2023, [the Province provided funding](#) to three regional economic trusts to conduct engagement and analysis on rural, regional and inter-city passenger transportation across the Province. The three regional trusts published their reports on their websites last August, and the ministry is currently reviewing the reports and considering next steps.

You can be sure the provincial government will continue working with all levels of government to support the delivery of efficient, reliable and affordable public transportation across the province.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,



Mike Farnworth
Minister

Copy to: Erinn Pinkerton, President and CEO
BC Transit

Lorraine Cunningham, Board Chair
TransLink

Kevin Quinn, CEO
TransLink