



# Exploring Transportation Options

FOR LADYSMITH &  
SURROUNDING  
COMMUNITIES

September 2024



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# Acknowledgements

We acknowledge with respect and gratitude that this strategy was created on the traditional territory of the Stz'uminus First Nation. We are honoured to work together and celebrate your achievements on the launch of your new community shuttle that began operation while this project took place.

We also want to express our sincere appreciation to the members of the Transportation Action Committee for their support, thoughtfulness, time, dedication and commitment to guiding this process.

Thank you to the many community groups, organizations, and individual participants who took the time to share insights, knowledge, perspectives, and aspirations with us. Your input was crucial in shaping the direction of this study and in identifying meaningful solutions to improve transportation for all.

This study is a reflection of the collective efforts of everyone involved, and we acknowledge the importance of your work in helping to create stronger connections, accessibility, and shared prosperity for future generations.



# Executive Summary

Public transportation was identified as one of ten priority themes in the Poverty Reduction Strategy developed by the Town of Ladysmith through their CommUNITY Together to End Poverty Hw-nuts'-ulwum project in 2021. Recommendations and actions were made based on extensive community input. The Strategy emphasized that poor public transportation disproportionately affects those living in poverty, making it challenging to access jobs, groceries, medical appointments, and education, especially for those with physical limitations, given the town's geography.

The Exploring Transportation Options for Ladysmith and Surrounding Communities project investigated the feasibility of the transportation actions proposed and heard from the community to fully understand the transportation gaps and needs, and to identify possible solutions. A Transportation Action Committee was established to guide the two public engagement processes and oversee the project. Social Planning Cowichan was the project lead, facilitating regular meetings of the Transportation Action Committee, coordinating the public engagement activities and researching and writing the feasibility report.

The first public engagement survey highlighted that individuals without vehicle access often feel disconnected from the community. Many rely on others for rides, limiting their ability to work, socialize, shop, and engage with nature. A lack of reliable transportation particularly affects youth, seniors, and those with diverse abilities.

The top options for improving transportation in and connecting to Ladysmith that were identified by community through the first public engagement survey were:

1. **Neighbourhood Shuttle Service:** A hop-on, hop-off model for better coverage and connectivity.
2. **Safer Active Transportation Infrastructure:** Enhanced bike lanes and other safety/security measures.
3. **Reliable Taxi Services:** Improved and more frequent local taxi options.
4. **Recruiting a Local Rideshare Service:** Establishing a rideshare program to meet community needs.

The second round of engagement focused on the feasibility and effectiveness of these four options.

## Option #1 Neighbourhood Shuttle Service:

The most favoured solution for improving transportation in Ladysmith is the introduction of a neighbourhood shuttle with circular, hop-on/hop-off routes. The consensus was that a shuttle could extend transit coverage to include more Ladysmith neighbourhoods and bordering areas, while improving connectivity to existing routes in rural areas, including the 70 NCX bus that connects to Nanaimo and Duncan. Rural residents in CVRD Area G (Saltair) and Area H (Diamond/North Oyster) favoured a shuttle service as their top transportation option.

Several benefits were identified including improved accessibility, increased independence, ability to age in place, expanded access, improved safety, cost savings, reduced traffic, more support for local businesses, boosting public transit, connections to larger centres, back up transportation and extended coverage. The results describe factors such as priority neighbourhoods, willingness to walk to shuttle stops, preferred timing, frequency and cost preferences, comfort levels and concerns and potential to use the service if it became available.

Based on the following considerations, the most sensible next step would be to share the engagement feedback with BC Transit to explore potential modifications to the current routes in Ladysmith before considering a new shuttle service.

- A shuttle would inevitably overlap in coverage with the existing BC Transit routes,
- It would lead to double fare payments for riders making connections, and
- While Provincial and Federal grants are available for capital expenses (i.e. purchasing the shuttles), funding the ongoing operations and maintenance would be difficult especially as the Town of Ladysmith already designates transit taxes to the existing BC Transit service.

Insights from the Ladysmith Trolley and the experience of the successful community bus model – Gabriola Islands’ GERTIE also provided in this report, support this notion.

Considerations for modifying existing BC Transit routes include increasing the frequency and time of day for all routes Monday to Saturday and extending service for Sunday and holidays, extending service to the 31 Alderwood–Ladysmith to cover more of 4th Avenue and other areas including connecting directly to Coronation Mall.

If BC Transit is unable to add new routes, a shuttle would be useful to connect the Transfer Beach and Ladysmith Marina area to downtown and Oyster Bay to Ladysmith to accommodate the Stz’uminus Shuttle riders and the workers and residents in that area.

## Option #2 Active Transportation:

Many participants prefer integrating walking, cycling, or other forms of active transportation but emphasize the need for enhanced safety infrastructure – more sidewalks, bike lanes, street lighting,

charging stations and secure bike/mobility scooter parking were the top suggestions. There are multiple benefits to supporting more people to incorporate more active transportation in how they get around as it promotes physical and mental health, reduces vehicle traffic and parking demands, and lowers the community carbon footprint. This is not an adequate option for those who are unable to bike due to physical limitations, navigate the steep hills or travel in unfavourable weather conditions.

With the increasing uptake of electric bikes and scooters, it would be prudent to explore potential community collaborations to create an E-Bike Share Program and/or an E-Bike Ownership Program. Residents are also encouraged to participate in the engagement process expected to occur with the Town of Ladysmith during the development of the Town's Mobility Plan. This will assist in prioritizing active transportation routes for improving safety and security, the potential design of a Safe Cycling Route Map; and consideration for creating safety engagement campaigns for vehicle drivers and pedestrians.

### **Option #3 Improved Tax Services:**

Information from the community about how to improve local taxi services will be shared with taxi provider(s) that serve the Ladysmith area. As private enterprises, funding support for this service is not generally possible. Some participants said they would use a taxi service if it were more reliable and consistent. They emphasized the need for convenient, reliable, door-to-door transportation and flexibility without fixed schedules especially for trips in an emergency or out to the Nanaimo Airport or ferry terminals.

### **Option #4 Rideshare Service:**

Rideshare services was considered a transportation option that would be used by many participants, in particular for those making longer trips such as ferry and airport service. The information gathered will be shared with provider(s). Uride, an active rideshare service in Nanaimo, has been considering expansion into Ladysmith, however, providing 24/7 service in a small town presents challenges. The limited population size means fewer ride requests, making it hard to incentivize drivers. Many consider that a rideshare has benefits over using a taxi service, and anticipate for example, that it would be less expensive and more convenient to use.

While implementing the options discussed in this report may seem complex and expensive to realize quickly, the process of evaluating where services are, identifying what is missing along with what is needed and exploring potential solutions, keeps the conversation going and allows for the opportunity for ongoing collaboration, cooperation and innovation.

# Introduction & Overview

## Background Context

The Town of Ladysmith and surrounding rural communities are located on the east coast of Vancouver Island overlooking the Salish Sea surrounded by mountain views with lush forests and valleys.

As part of the Cowichan Valley Regional District, the Town of Ladysmith serves growing suburban neighbourhoods and communities including Oyster Bay and Stz'uminus, Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) Area G Saltair and Area H Diamond/North Oyster.

Larger communities with more urban services can be found north in Nanaimo and south in Duncan and Victoria.

Between 2016 and 2020, the population of the Ladysmith [census agglomeration area] <sup>1</sup> increased by 6.4%, from 14,572 to 15,501 residents, slightly faster than the rate of growth across the CVRD as a whole. In 2020, the median age in Ladysmith was 52.4 years, which is slightly older than the average age across the CVRD with a similar median household income of \$80,000.

In 2016, the Cowichan Valley North Health Area Profile (which includes Ladysmith and Stz'uminus), included 2,375 adults, 2,438 seniors and 3,132 children and youth (<18) living in low income. <sup>2</sup>

Public transportation is available through the Cowichan Valley Transit System and the 70 Nanaimo–Cowichan Express (NCX) route which includes a stop in Ladysmith at the Trans Canada Island Highway and First Avenue and a stop at Oyster Bay. With this service, there are multiple limitations that impact the lives of many residents who do not have a personal vehicle.

The fact that the town is built on a hill makes walking and cycling in general a more difficult option even in favourable weather conditions. The topography and limited mobility also makes accessing bus stops a challenge.

Commuting data from the 2020 census <sup>3</sup> revealed that 32.3% of employed individuals aged 15 and over who commute to a regular workplace travel outside of Ladysmith but remain within the CVRD census division. Furthermore, 36.6% commute to a different census division, such as Nanaimo, highlighting the importance of transportation options for the local workforce.

Time spent commuting by employed individuals aged 15 and over:

|              |               |               |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>36.4%</b> | <b>31.9%</b>  | <b>20.4%</b>  |
| < 15 minutes | 15–29 minutes | 30–44 minutes |

<sup>1</sup> [2020 Canadian Census Data](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Island Health Cowichan Valley North Health Area Profile](#) based on 2016 census, and a total population of 21,018

<sup>3</sup> [2020 Census Canada Ladysmith Commuter Data](#)



## How We Got Here

The need for the Ladysmith and Surrounding Communities Transportation Planning project was a recommended action from the work undertaken through the Town of Ladysmith’s CommUNITY Together to End Poverty Hw-nuts’-ulwum project. Their Poverty Reduction Strategy<sup>4</sup> developed recommendations and actions in 2021 based on extensive community input as included in Figure 2.

Public transportation was identified as one of ten priority themes with the general needs highlighted through the challenges heard and why improving public transportation is important as indicated in Figure 1.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**CHALLENGES WE HEARD**

We heard from the community that the lack of, or unreliability of public transportation in the Ladysmith and Stz’uminus area is a critical concern for those living in poverty. If you don’t have a reliable vehicle, poor public transportation affects every aspect of life, including where you can work, getting groceries, accessing medical appointments or attending post-secondary institutions. For those with physical challenges, the geography of the Town of Ladysmith makes getting around difficult without a vehicle or frequently available public transportation.

**WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT**

The geography of Ladysmith, the distance between the communities of Ladysmith and Stz’uminus, and the absence of regular public transportation present a significant local challenge for accessing services and employment.

Figure 1: Public Transportation Challenges

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

| Recommended Actions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Who should participate? |            |                                   |                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Federal                 | Provincial | ToL/SFN/SD68/CVRD*                | Individuals/Organizations*            |
| <b>Improve Local Transportation with Regional Connections</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                         |            |                                   |                                       |
| Establish a focus group with representatives from Stz’uminus First Nation, CVRD, BC Transit, the Town of Ladysmith and interested community members to explore solutions to create connectivity between communities and other areas not serviced by public transit and to increase frequency of existing routes within Ladysmith and trips south to the rest of the Cowichan Region. |                         | BC Transit | ToL<br>SFN<br>SD68<br>CVRD<br>RDN | Everybody;<br>Community<br>Engagement |
| Participate in engagement and planning with Regional District of Nanaimo, CVRD and BC Transit on the new routes between Nanaimo and Ladysmith scheduled for Spring 2022.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                         | BC Transit | ToL<br>SFN<br>SD68<br>CVRD<br>RDN | Current & potential<br>transit users  |
| Explore interim/long-term transportation options for connecting Stz’uminus First Nation and the Town of Ladysmith.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                         |            | ToL<br>SFN                        | Community<br>Engagement               |
| Affordability - Improve access and availability of existing bus service for low income individuals and families, including bus passes, companion passes for seniors, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                         |            |                                   | Individuals                           |

\*Town of Ladysmith (ToL), Stz-uminus First Nation (SFN), Nanaimo/Ladysmith School District 68 (SD68), Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD), Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN)

Figure 2: Public Transportation Actions

4 Town of Ladysmith Poverty Reduction Strategy, page 19

# 10 PRIORITY THEMES



**Public Transportation**

**Food Security**

**Addressing Stigma, Racism and Discrimination**

**Access to Education and Employment Options**

**Adequate Income Supports and the Means to Make Ends Meet**

**Affordable Housing and Adequate Living Conditions**

**Access to Mental Health and Addiction Services**

**Mental Discomfort and Stress**

**Access to Health Care Services**

**Physical Health & Wellness**



At that time, the strategy stated that “transportation costs in Ladysmith are high but could be reduced with more focus on improving active and public transportation”.

The strategy also pointed out that challenges arising from gaps in public transportation have been identified in multiple community plans ranging from the Official Community Plan and the Ladysmith Economic Development Strategy, to the Ladysmith Youth Plan and the Age-Friendly Report.

Due to the broad geographic nature of the Regional structure of the public transportation system, there are limitations as to how each municipality is able to fund their localized services leaving gaps in areas such as north of the town to and including Stz’uminus First Nation, Transfer Beach, Davis Road south and other areas including those that have been or will be newly developed.

CVRD Areas H (North Oyster/Diamond) and G (Saltair) do not contribute to or participate in the CVRD’s Transit Function.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy emphasized that poor public transportation disproportionately affects those living in poverty, particularly in Ladysmith and Stz’uminus. Without a reliable vehicle, individuals face challenges in accessing jobs, groceries, medical appointments, and education, especially for those with physical limitations, given the town’s geography.

As a result, the purpose of this project was to:

- explore the feasibility of the transportation actions proposed in the Poverty Reduction Strategy,
- hear from the community to fully understand the transportation gaps and needs, and
- identify possible solutions.

A Transportation Action Committee was established to guide the public engagement and project process. Funding for this project was made possible through Island Coastal Economic Trust’s Community Passenger Transportation Fund and was awarded in February 2024.

# Transportation Action Committee

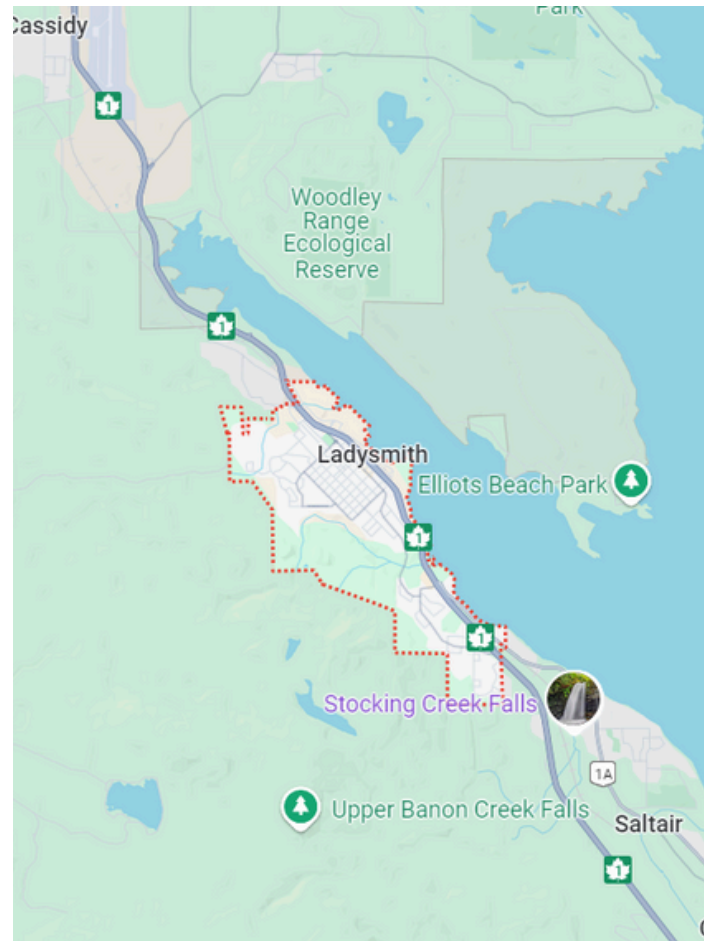
The Transportation Action Committee (TAC) was brought together to provide oversight of the project. The agreed upon goals by the TAC were to explore the feasibility of the actions proposed under the transportation theme of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and identify other potential solutions through community consultation.

The TAC guided the public engagement process and ultimately explored the feasibility of possible solutions to create connectivity between communities not serviced by public transit in the Ladysmith and surrounding communities. Specific areas not serviced include:

- North of 1st Avenue and the Island Highway between the Oyster Bay Development area (aside from the NCX),
- Between Ladysmith and the North Oyster/Diamond and Saltair CVRD Areas H and G, and,
- Connections south to the Cowichan Region and Victoria as well as north to Nanaimo and the rest of the North Island.

TAC members were selected to represent the diversity of the community and included representatives from:

- Stz'uminus First Nation senior staff
- Town of Ladysmith member of Council
- CVRD Transit Division staff
- CVRD Areas G & H Area Directors
- Ladysmith Resource Centre Association
- Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce
- SD68 Board Trustee
- Island Health
- Two community members at large



Social Planning Cowichan was the project lead and facilitated regular meetings of the TAC. The TAC committed to supporting this work by advising on the workplan and engagement activities; promoting engagement activities with existing and new relationships, networks and the public; and participating in the review and analysis of researched possible options and compiled community input.

The Terms of Reference for the TAC can be found in Appendix A.

# Project Engagement & Timeline

To inform the development of the overall study, two rounds of public consultation were completed.

The initial round of public engagement took place from April to May and the second, follow up round occurred between June and August. Two surveys were created for each round of engagement and several activities took place to promote and encourage participation. Both sets of survey questions can be found in Appendix B and C with a complete list of activities in Appendix D.

The target audience was anyone who lives in Ladysmith or travels to Ladysmith as their community for accessing goods and/or services.

The the best potential option(s) were prioritized by the TAC who gave consideration to:

- the local resources that would be required,
- possible funding sources and opportunities, and
- additional strategic relationship building/partnerships.

The finalized plan was completed in September 2024 with social media graphics posted online and presentations scheduled with local government and the community to share the results.

## Ladysmith & Surrounding Communities Transportation Project Timeline 2024





# Shuttle Service Connecting Stz'uminus First Nation with Ladysmith

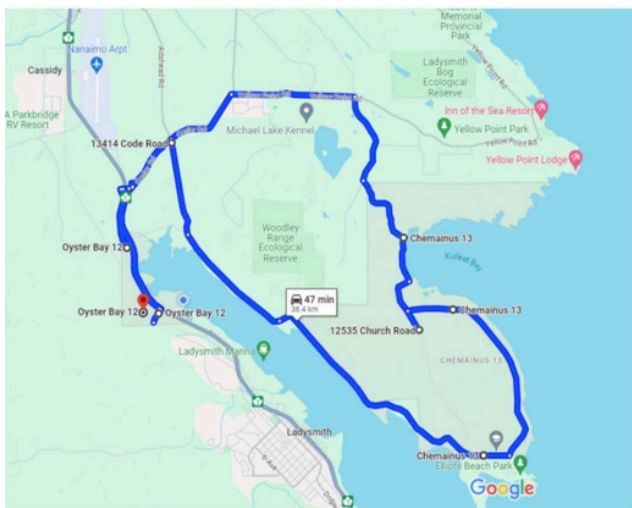
A priority action identified in the Poverty Reduction Strategy was to explore interim and long term transportation options for connecting Stz'uminus First Nation and the Town of Ladysmith.

During the course of the public engagement planning for this project, Stz'uminus First Nation was already underway to create a shuttle bus service for residents living on Chemainus 13 reserve and connecting them to Oyster Sto'Lo Road in Oyster Bay.

From there, riders can transfer on the Route 70 NCX Nanaimo–Cowichan Express bus as requested by Stz'uminus First Nation, providing a long anticipated and much needed service for Stz'uminus members. This created a connection to Ladysmith and beyond and improved access to essential services, employment and education opportunities, and so much more.

The shuttle is free for Stz'uminus members and includes the cost of half of a round trip on the 70 NCX route (\$7.50 one-way fare) with costs covered by Stz'uminus First Nation.

With logistical decisions actively in the development phase through community consultations with Stz'uminus members, there was concern about creating confusion between the two projects. Therefore, the scope of this project was limited to engaging with Stz'uminus members to explore transportation options available while in Ladysmith, rather than addressing transportation to or from Ladysmith from Reserve 13.



| Stz'uminus Shuttle Bus (Monday to Friday) |           |                   |                     |               |                 |                      |                      |                  |                  |                      |              |        |                   |              |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|--------------|
| Time                                      | Oyster rd | Deer Point Inter. | KB shelter below BH | Shahar Church | Salksan shelter | Single cross shelter | Nelson Point shelter | Viewview Mailbox | Community Centre | Silverstand mail box | Stranpage Rd | Hr. 12 | Exchange with NCX | NCX Schedule |
| 6:03                                      | 6:17      | 6:19              | 6:22                | 6:23          | 6:24            | 6:26                 | 6:27                 | 6:28             | 6:30             | 6:34                 | 6:48         | 6:54   | 7:01              | 7:01         |
| 7:10                                      | 7:24      | 7:26              | 7:29                | 7:30          | 7:31            | 7:33                 | 7:34                 | 7:35             | 7:37             | 7:41                 | 7:55         | 8:01   | 8:09              | 8:18         |
| 8:18                                      | 8:32      | 8:34              | 8:37                | 8:38          | 8:39            | 8:41                 | 8:42                 | 8:43             | 8:45             | 8:49                 | 9:03         | 9:09   | 9:17              | 9:17         |
| 9:40                                      | 9:54      | 9:56              | 9:59                | 10:00         | 10:01           | 10:03                | 10:04                | 10:05            | 10:07            | 10:11                | 10:25        | 10:31  | 10:39             | 10:39        |
| 10:38                                     | 10:52     | 10:54             | 10:57               | 10:58         | 10:59           | 11:01                | 11:02                | 11:03            | 11:05            | 11:09                | 11:23        | 11:29  | 11:37             | 11:47        |
| 11:35                                     | 11:49     | 11:51             | 11:54               | 11:55         | 11:56           | 11:58                | 11:59                | 12:00            | 12:02            | 12:06                | 12:20        | 12:26  | 12:34             | 12:34        |
| 12:32                                     | 12:46     | 12:48             | 12:51               | 12:52         | 12:53           | 12:55                | 12:56                | 12:57            | 12:59            | 1:03                 | 1:17         | 1:23   | 1:31              | 1:39         |
| 2:03                                      | 2:17      | 2:19              | 2:22                | 2:23          | 2:24            | 2:26                 | 2:27                 | 2:28             | 2:30             | 2:34                 | 2:48         | 2:54   | 3:02              | 3:10         |
| 3:00                                      | 3:14      | 3:16              | 3:19                | 3:20          | 3:21            | 3:23                 | 3:24                 | 3:25             | 3:27             | 3:31                 | 3:45         | 3:51   | 4:00              | 4:08         |
| 3:57                                      | 4:11      | 4:13              | 4:16                | 4:17          | 4:18            | 4:20                 | 4:21                 | 4:22             | 4:24             | 4:28                 | 4:42         | 4:48   | 4:57              | 5:05         |
| 5:44                                      | 5:58      | 6:00              | 6:03                | 6:04          | 6:05            | 6:07                 | 6:08                 | 6:09             | 6:11             | 6:15                 | 6:29         | 6:35   | 6:44              | 6:52         |
| 6:41                                      | 6:55      | 6:57              | 7:00                | 7:01          | 7:02            | 7:04                 | 7:05                 | 7:06             | 7:08             | 7:12                 | 7:26         | 7:32   | 7:41              | 7:49         |
| 7:38                                      | 7:52      | 7:54              | 7:57                | 7:58          | 7:59            | 8:01                 | 8:02                 | 8:03             | 8:05             | 8:09                 | 8:23         | 8:29   | 8:38              | 8:46         |
| 8:35                                      | 8:49      | 8:51              | 8:54                | 8:55          | 8:56            | 8:58                 | 8:59                 | 9:00             | 9:02             | 9:06                 | 9:20         | 9:26   | 9:35              | 9:43         |

| Stz'uminus Shuttle Bus (Sundays) |           |                   |                     |               |                 |                      |                      |                  |                  |                      |              |        |                   |              |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|--------------|
| Time                             | Oyster rd | Deer Point Inter. | KB shelter below BH | Shahar Church | Salksan shelter | Single cross shelter | Nelson Point shelter | Viewview Mailbox | Community Centre | Silverstand mail box | Stranpage Rd | Hr. 12 | Exchange with NCX | NCX Schedule |
| 1:14                             | 1:16      | 1:19              | 1:20                | 1:21          | 1:23            | 1:24                 | 1:25                 | 1:27             | 1:31             | 1:45                 | 1:51         | 1:59   | 2:07              | 2:15         |
| 2:06                             | 2:08      | 2:11              | 2:12                | 2:13          | 2:15            | 2:16                 | 2:17                 | 2:19             | 2:23             | 2:37                 | 2:43         | 2:51   | 3:00              | 3:08         |
| 2:58                             | 3:00      | 3:03              | 3:04                | 3:05          | 3:07            | 3:08                 | 3:09                 | 3:11             | 3:15             | 3:29                 | 3:35         | 3:43   | 3:52              | 4:00         |
| 3:50                             | 3:52      | 3:55              | 3:56                | 3:57          | 3:59            | 4:00                 | 4:01                 | 4:03             | 4:07             | 4:21                 | 4:27         | 4:35   | 4:44              | 4:52         |
| 4:42                             | 4:44      | 4:47              | 4:48                | 4:49          | 4:51            | 4:52                 | 4:53                 | 4:55             | 4:59             | 5:13                 | 5:19         | 5:27   | 5:36              | 5:44         |
| 6:04                             | 6:06      | 6:09              | 6:10                | 6:11          | 6:13            | 6:14                 | 6:15                 | 6:17             | 6:21             | 6:35                 | 6:41         | 6:49   | 6:58              | 7:06         |
| 6:56                             | 6:58      | 7:01              | 7:02                | 7:03          | 7:05            | 7:06                 | 7:07                 | 7:09             | 7:13             | 7:27                 | 7:33         | 7:41   | 7:50              | 7:58         |

# Key Takeaways from the Engagement Process

One of the key takeaways from the first survey conducted in April and May 2024, highlighted that individuals without vehicle access often feel disconnected from the community.

Many rely on others for rides, limiting their ability to work, socialize, shop, and engage with nature. We heard from several participants who expressed that a lack of reliable transportation implies that non-drivers cannot thrive in Ladysmith. This especially impacts youth, seniors, and those with diverse abilities.

While 39% of respondents reported having nearby public transit, only 1% use it daily, and 54% use it rarely. Among those with a vehicle (78%), many expressed a willingness to use public transit if it had more frequent service and broader coverage. Of those with a vehicle, 90% were the primary driver, but only 38% said they preferred using their vehicle over transit. This indicates that improved public transit services could encourage many to switch to transit.

*“When I moved to Ladysmith two years ago, I had to invest in a small car as there was no reliable, frequent, affordable ways to get to Nanaimo or Victoria. Buying a car was an incredible strain on me financially”*  
– Survey 1 participant

With strong support for improved public transit options, many suggested the option of a smaller community shuttle with hop-on, hop-off flexibility as well as expressing interest in a reliable taxi service and potential rideshare programs like Uber, Lyft, or [Uride](#) (which is currently available in Nanaimo).

66% of participants stated they will walk when they do not have access to a personal vehicle with 35% indicating they would cycle, however the hilly terrain is a challenge especially when carrying groceries.

|                   | SURVEY 1 | SURVEY 2 |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| # of Participants | 270      | 224      |

*“We would like to reduce to one car but it is difficult in this community. We will need to move away from Ladysmith once driving is not an option.”*

– Survey 1 participant

The top options identified through Survey 1 for improving transportation in Ladysmith included:

### Option 1: Neighbourhood Shuttle Service

A hop-on, hop-off model for better coverage and connectivity.



### Option 2: Active Transportation

Enhanced bike lanes and other safety/security measures.



### Option 3: Local Taxi Service

Improved and more frequent local taxi options.



### Option 4: Rideshare Service

Recruiting a rideshare service to meet community needs.



## Engagement Round 2:

The second round of engagement was conducted between June and August 2024 and further explored each of these four options, focusing on their feasibility and effectiveness.

# Neighbourhood Shuttle Service

The most favoured solution for improving transportation in Ladysmith is the introduction of a neighbourhood shuttle with preference for circular, hop-on/hop-off routes.

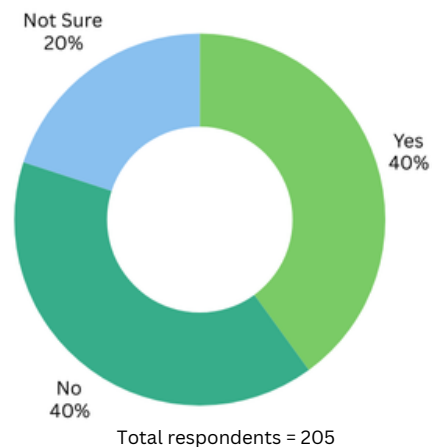
The consensus was that a shuttle could extend transit coverage to include more Ladysmith neighbourhoods and bordering areas, while improving connectivity to existing routes in rural areas, including the 70 NCX bus connecting to Nanaimo and Duncan.

During the initial engagement, 40% of respondents indicated that they lacked access to nearby transit routes, and 20% were unsure whether they had transit access nearby, pointing to the need for improved coverage and accessibility.

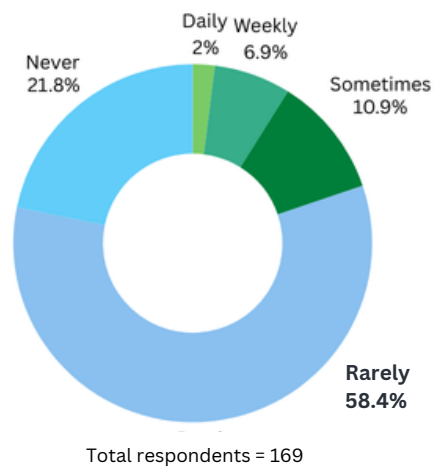
For a shuttle to be fully utilized, it is clear that the service needs to:

- have accessible stops,
- run more routes covering more neighbourhoods with connectivity between Downtown, and Coronation Mall and other transit connections; and
- have a frequent schedule during the day, later into the evenings and on Sunday and holidays.

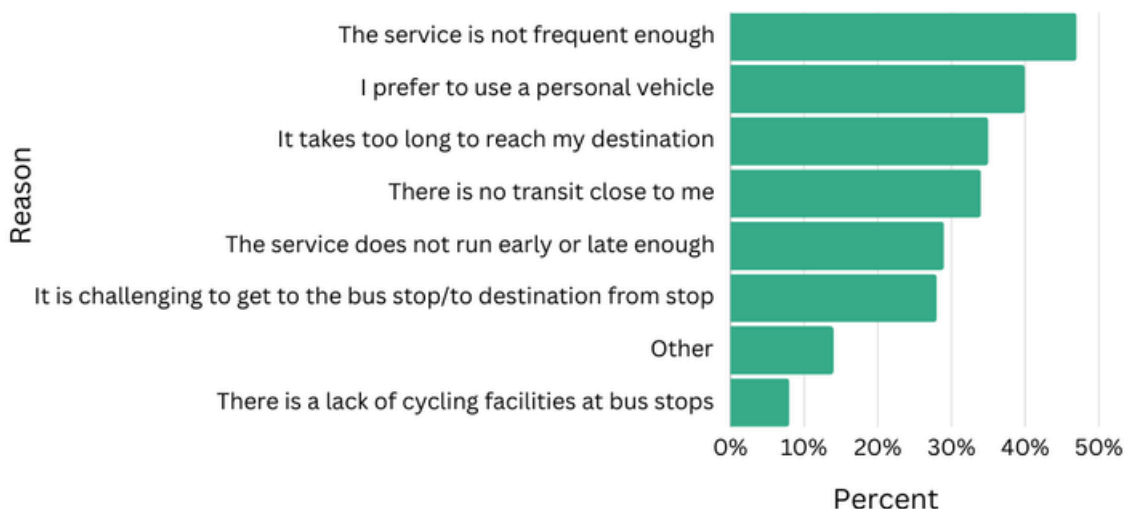
Do you have access to public transit that is accessible and close to home?



How often do you use public transit?



If you do not use public transit, why not?



Multiple selection question.  
Total participants = 192. Total selections made = 454



## Survey respondents outlined several benefits of a neighbourhood shuttle service:

- **Improved Accessibility:** Easier access to services, employment, education, social activities, and medical appointments, especially for people without a car or for those on a fixed income.
- **Increased Independence:** Greater flexibility for those who can't drive including youth, seniors and people with diverse abilities who would gain easier access to school, activities, and jobs.
- **Aging in Place:** Enables residents to remain in their homes longer with more transportation options.
- **Expanded Access:** Parks, sports fields, Transfer Beach, volunteer opportunities and community events (e.g., Festival of Lights) would be easier to reach, promoting more community participation.
- **Improved Safety:** The shuttle would assist those who find walking difficult, especially in poor weather, for navigating hills or when carrying items.
- **Cost Savings:** Reduces fuel, vehicle maintenance, and repair expenses.
- **Reduced Traffic:** Fewer cars on the road, reducing parking demand and emissions.
- **Support for Local Businesses:** More frequent local shopping and safe transportation options after visiting restaurants and pubs.
- **Boost to Public Transit:** Increased ridership would strengthen existing transit services.
- **Connections to Larger Centres:** Better links to transit routes for Duncan, Nanaimo, and Victoria.
- **Backup Transportation:** Reliable transit in emergencies, poor weather, or during vehicle repairs.
- **Extended Coverage:** Areas like Saltair, North Oyster, and Diamond would benefit from new transit options.

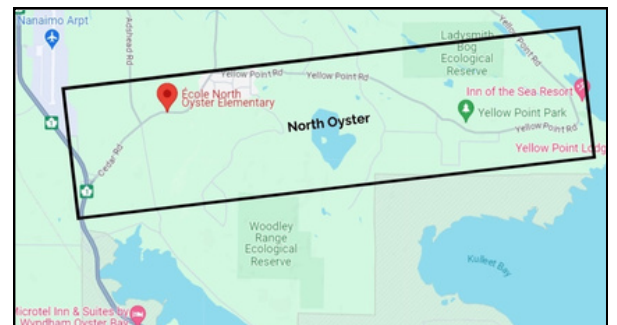
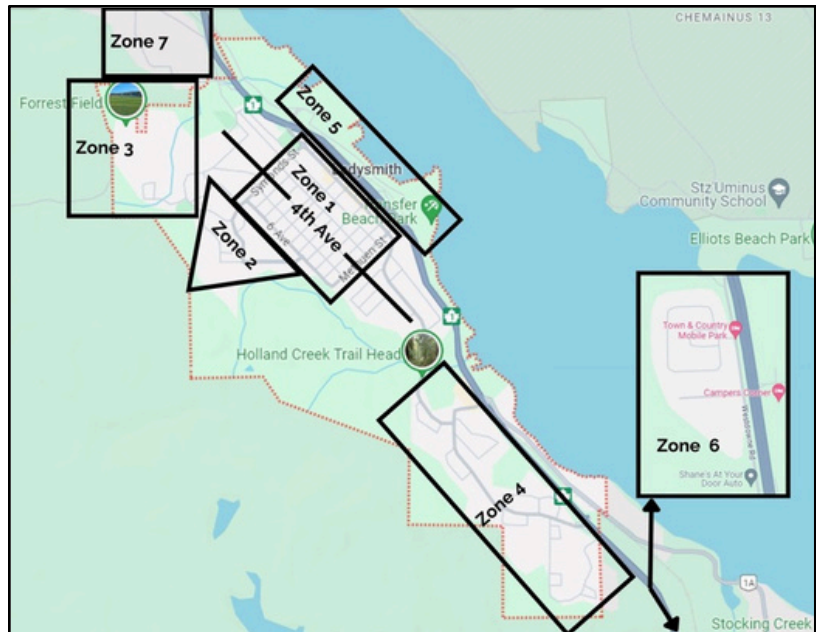
# Priority Neighbourhoods for Shuttle Service

Survey respondents were asked to identify which neighbourhoods would benefit most from a shuttle service. Based on the maps below, the top four priority areas/zones are:

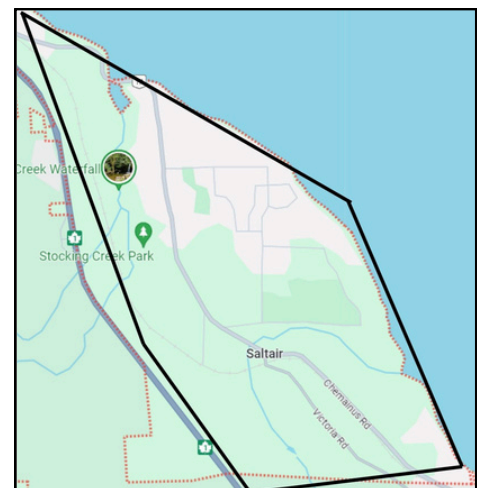
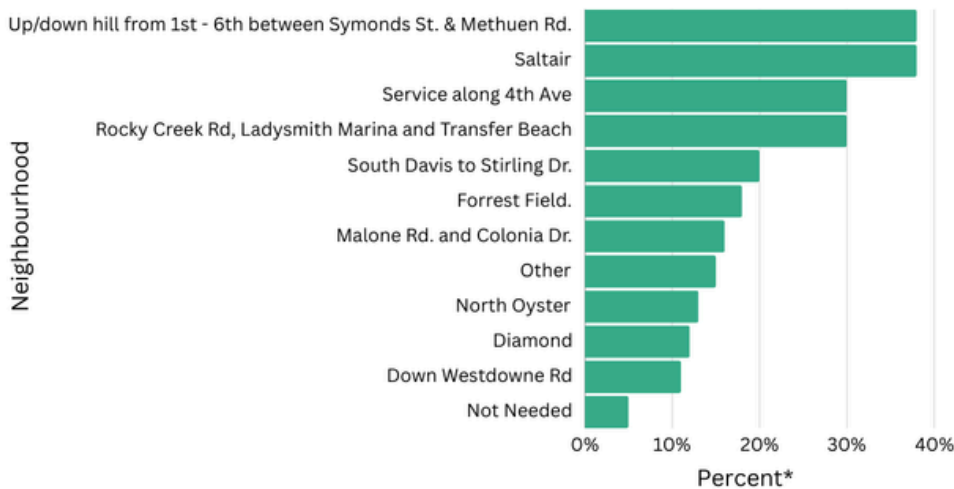
- Up and down the hill from 1st to 6th between Symonds St. and Methuen Rd. (Zone 1) (38.6%)\*
- Saltair (38.6%) – along Chemainus Road\*
- Service along 4th Ave (30.7%)\*
- Rocky Creek Rd, Ladysmith Marina and Transfer Beach (Zone 5) (30.7%)

\*Many expressed a preference for more frequent connections between these zones and getting to and from Downtown and Coronation Mall.

Most who selected "other" identified areas within one or more of the indicated zones.



Please indicate which neighbourhoods would benefit from having a shuttle service to and from?



(Survey 2, Question 2). Multiple selection question. Total selections =512; total participants = 208.  
 \*Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant. (Total percentage = 246%)

## Preferred Shuttle Service Timing and Frequency

Most respondents indicated they would prefer shuttle service hours between:

- 7:00 am to 8:00 pm on weekdays,
- 7:00 am to 11:00 pm on Saturdays, and
- 7:00 am to 8:00 pm on Sundays & holidays, with some suggesting that 6:00 pm might also be sufficient to meet most needs.

Many recommended extending the hours during the summer or for special events like Festival of the Lights. Testing various timing options over six months to a year was suggested to gauge demand and use.

The 7:00 am weekday start would suit students and workers in Ladysmith, but commuting to Nanaimo or Duncan for a 9:00 am start would require the shuttle to begin at 6:00 am. Commuting to Victoria would need to start at 5:42 am, although demand for this route is unknown and may be low due to cost (total cost of \$17.50 one-way).

Trip frequency in the survey showed only 7% of respondents travel daily to Duncan, Nanaimo, or beyond, with 50% making trips occasionally. This differs greatly from the 2020 census where 32.3% of employed individuals aged 15 and over commute to a regular workplace who travel outside of Ladysmith but within the CVRD with 36.6% commuting outside the Region, such as to Nanaimo. Furthermore, since the COVID-19 pandemic, Statistics Canada has observed that workers who have been working exclusively from home has declined from 24.3% in January 2022 to 12.6% in November 2023.<sup>5</sup>

*A shuttle would need to be... "early enough to catch a 6:30 am exercise class at the community centre, and late enough to enjoy a beverage in town."*  
- Survey Participant

Among daily commuters surveyed, half prefer public transit, while the rest use personal vehicles. Additional surveys could help determine the need for earlier or more frequent shuttles, especially for Victoria commuters.

2020 Census Commuting Data indicated that 18.1% of commuters leave for work between 6:00 and 6:59 am with 27.8% leaving between 7:00 and 7:59 am<sup>6</sup> which is a lower percentage compared to what was heard by surveyed participants.

## Shuttle Frequency and Cost Preferences

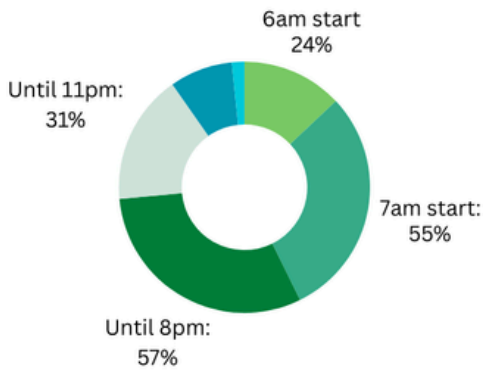
37% of respondents wanted weekday service to run every 30 minutes during peak hours and every 60 minutes mid-day with 36% selecting flexible, hop-on/hop-off service. Weekend preferences leaned towards a flexible hop-on/hop-off service. On Saturdays, the favoured responses varied by 1% between every 60 and 90 minutes, while on Sundays, flexible hop-on/hop-off service was most preferred.

Most respondents (95%) were willing to pay \$2.50 to \$3.50 per ride, with some who suggested offering flexible rates based on income, such as a seniors pass.

<sup>5</sup> [Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, November 2023](#)

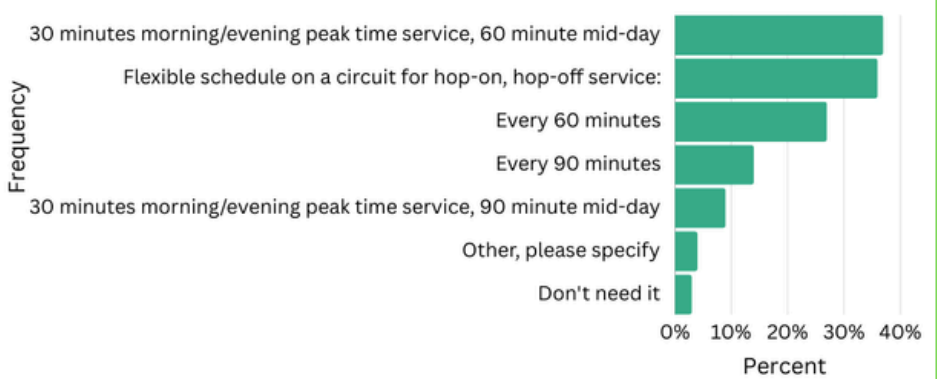
<sup>6</sup> [Ladysmith Census Agglomeration Commuting Data](#)

### How early and late during the weekdays would be ideal for a shuttle service?



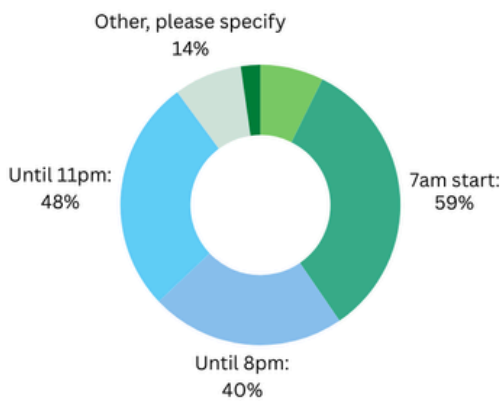
(Survey 2, Question 4).  
Total participants = 204, Total coded selections = 386.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
(Total percentage = 193%)

### How frequent would you want the shuttle service to run during the weekdays for you to use the service?



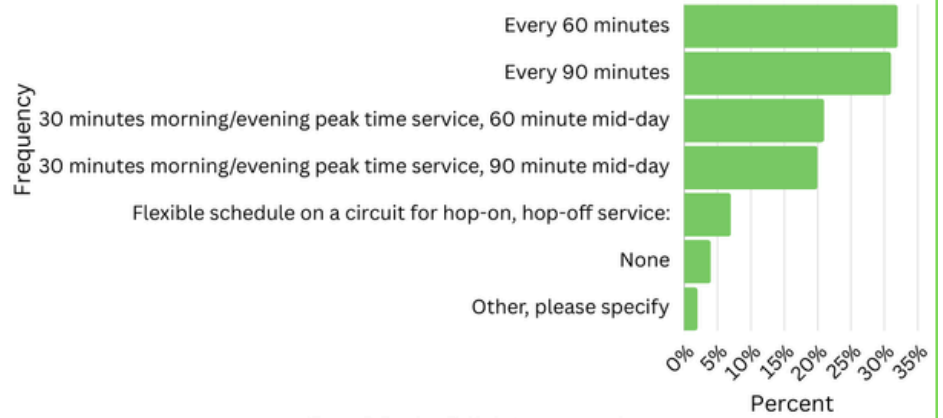
(Survey 2, Question 5). Multiple answer questions.  
Total participants = 205; Total responses = 267.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant. (Total percentage = 130%)

### How early and late on Saturday would be ideal for a shuttle service?



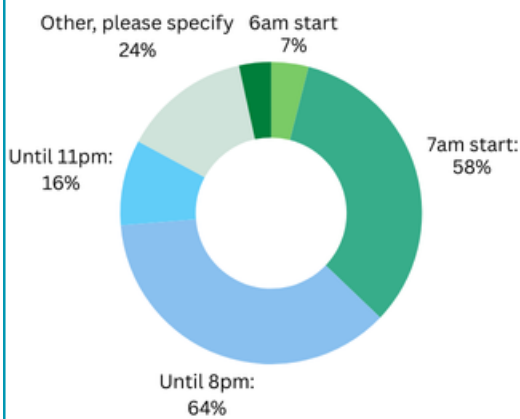
(Survey 2, Question 6).  
Total participants = 201, Total coded selections = 367.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
(Total percentage = 179%)

### How frequent would you want the shuttle service to run on Saturday for you to use the service?



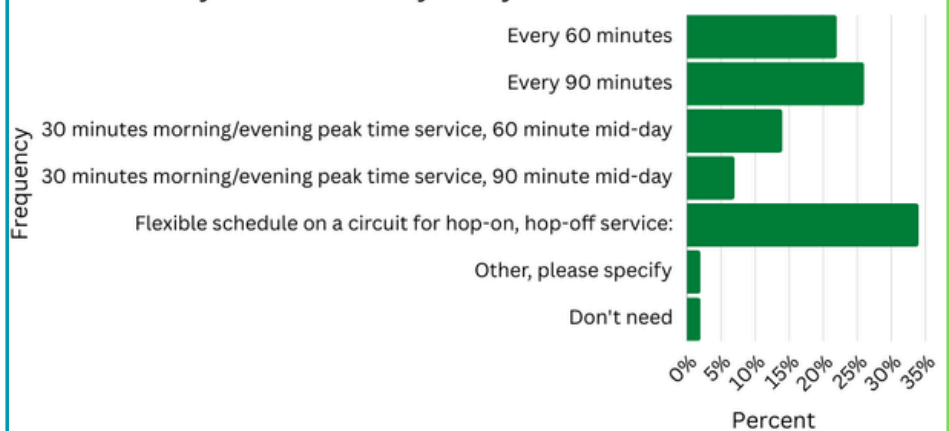
(Survey 2, Question 7). Multiple answer questions.  
Total participants = 205; Total responses selected = 238.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
(Total percentage = 117%)

### How early and late on Sundays and holidays would be ideal for a shuttle service?



(Survey 2, Question 8).  
Total participants = 197, Total coded selections = 358.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
(Total percentage = 176%)

### How frequent would you want the shuttle service to run on Sunday and the holidays for you to use the service?



(Survey 2, Question 9). Multiple answer questions.  
Total participants = 196; Total responses selected = 211.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
(Total percentage = 108%)



## Comfort and Concerns

Despite low ridership on existing services, 83% of respondents were comfortable using public transportation. For those who were uncomfortable, the main concerns were:

- Health and mobility issues (23.7%)
- Safety concerns (21%)
- Cleanliness of transit vehicles (21%)
- Difficulty navigating the system (18%)
- Stigma and social discomfort (7.9%)

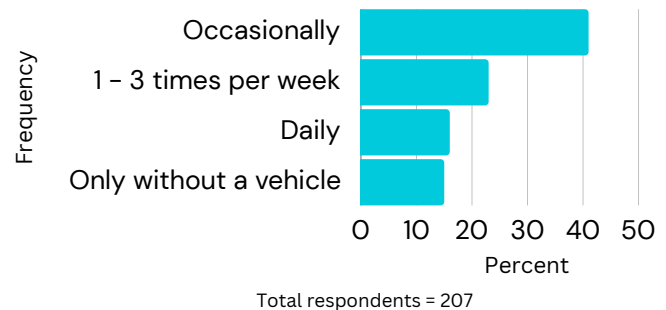
## Usage Potential

If the shuttle met their needs, 41% of respondents indicated they would use it occasionally, 23% would use it one to three times per week, and 16% said close to daily. 15% stated they would only use the service if they didn't have access to a vehicle.

Some expressed interest in participating in learning experiences to familiarize themselves with public transit, such as an orientation workshop or online tutorials.

There were also requests for better passenger behaviour policies, scent-free signage, and safety measures like mask-wearing during public health outbreaks.

Would you use this service, if it met your needs as you've indicated in your responses for this option?



## Summarized Preferences:



- Provides the option to avoid driving.
- Reduces vehicle use, saves on costs, eases parking demand, and reduces traffic.
- Convenient for appointments, local shopping, and errands.
- Encourages social interactions and community involvement.
- Avoids the challenge of walking uphill.
- Improves independence for teenagers, seniors, people with diverse abilities, and non-drivers.
- Helps reduce drinking and driving.
- Lowers emissions and improves air quality.

## Concerns Raised:



- Overall operating costs.
- Routes and schedules not aligning with personal needs or lacking adequate frequency.
- Long walks to fixed stops, especially in bad weather.
- Long waits at stops without shelters.
- Difficulty building ridership.
- Missed connections with other routes.
- Challenges traveling with children and associated costs.
- Lack of access to schedule information.

## Public Engagement Insights from Saltair

The second round of public engagement elicited an increase in respondents from CVRD Area G in Saltair (28% of respondents), where there is currently no public transportation service. This makes having a vehicle essential, unless relying on others for rides. When asked about a shuttle service, 80% of respondents expressed enthusiasm for connections to Ladysmith and/or Chemainus.

Though the sample size is small, many indicated a preference for a shuttle route along Chemainus Road connecting to and from Coronation Mall and Chemainus. Nearly half of Saltair respondents favoured a shuttle service as their top transportation option, with cycling and taxis as secondary preferences.



Photo credit Saltair Community Centre website

## Survey Responses from North Oyster/Diamond Area

Only 9 survey respondents were from North Oyster (4%) and 8 respondents from Diamond (3.6%), both located south of Cedar and Cassidy, and north of Ladysmith. The #70 NCX bus route between Nanaimo and Ladysmith has only two nearby stops—Nanaimo Airport and Oyster Bay—with most of these residents facing long distances to reach either stop, necessitating alternative transportation.

More than half of the respondents from North Oyster and Diamond rated the shuttle service as their top preference, while cycling and rideshare options were the least favoured. Many commented that cycling is too dangerous on the narrow rural roads.



Elliot's Beach Park - Photo credit CVRD website

## Gabriola's GERTIE: A Successful Community Bus Model

Gabriola's Environmentally Responsible Trans-Island Express (GERTIE) began as a community-lead initiative in 2013. It is operated by a non-profit charitable society and governed by a volunteer board that sets schedules and routes based on community feedback.

Since a 2016 referendum, a majority of the funding for the bus comes from taxes collected by the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN). The 2023 operational budget was \$253,487, and was funded by RDN taxes (\$177,315), grants, donations, fares, charter services, and advertising. GERTIE's fare revenue, totalling more than \$23,000 in 2023, reflects a gradual ridership growth over the 11 years in operation.

- GERTIE operates four routes with services from 6:47 am to 6:14 pm, taking a midday break.
- It uses a flag-down service, eliminating the need for fixed stops.
- Fares are \$2.75 for adults and \$2.25 for youth and seniors, with free rides for children under 13. Ticket bundles and passes are available for regular riders.

Currently, they run a 20-seat bus with a smaller backup. Two new electric buses will soon replace their older diesel fleet, funded through the Rural Transit Solutions Capital fund, helping to reduce future maintenance costs.

If considering a shuttle service for the Ladysmith and surrounding communities, there is much to learn from the previous Trolley and GERTIE experiences.

## Lessons from the Town of Ladysmith Trolley

From 2009 to 2014, the Town of Ladysmith offered a trolley service for residents, initially free of charge (donations accepted), covering seven routes from 8 am to 6 pm, Monday to Saturday. The service operated with one trolley and a backup. However, ridership declined over the years while maintenance costs rose, leading to a \$2.00 fare, reduced routes, and eventual negotiations to transition to a BC Transit-led service that was implemented in 2013. The trolley was discontinued, with one sold to the City of Langford and another retained for community events.

Feedback heard during this project engagement process indicated that the trolley was viewed as a novelty for tourism purposes, with wooden seats making it uncomfortable and service hours not accommodating early workers.

Average annual operational costs for the three full years the trolley ran at capacity exceeded \$168,000, peaking at nearly \$172,000 in 2012.



# Neighbourhood Shuttle Feasibility Summary

Implementing a Neighbourhood Shuttle would be complicated. To start, it would inevitably overlap in coverage with the existing BC Transit routes such as the 31 Alderwood-Ladysmith, 36 Ladysmith/Duncan Express, and 34 Ladysmith/Chemainus.

It's also important to consider the fare structure, since a neighbourhood shuttle would require its own fare, separate from BC Transit, leading to double payments for riders making connections. To ensure service reliability, a shuttle service would require two 14-20 seat shuttles, one for backup and extra runs, with accessibility features like wheelchair access, stroller space, and bike racks. While there are grants available for capital expenses (i.e. purchasing the shuttles), it is the operations and maintenance that would be an ongoing challenge to fund.

Operational funding would be a challenge as the Town of Ladysmith already designates transit taxes to the existing BC Transit routes, which also makes them an unlikely potential operator. As a result, a non-profit organization might be most appropriate to manage operations and secure funding with the option to run a charter service to help generate revenue.

Considering these factors, it is most sensible to first share these engagement results with BC Transit to explore potential modifications to the current routes in Ladysmith before considering a new shuttle service more fulsomely.

The 2023 Transit Future Action Plan identified the 31 Alderwood-Ladysmith route as the most underutilized in the Cowichan Region, making it a potential candidate for an On-Demand service model.<sup>8</sup> Adjusting the 31's route and/or schedule could cover more of "Zone 1" from the survey, including areas like 1st to 6th Avenues, Symonds St., Methuen Rd., along 4th Avenue and incorporating trips out to Coronation Mall and back.

While this doesn't address the need for additional service out to the Rocky Creek Rd., Ladysmith Marina, and Transfer Beach areas, a test phase could help assess demand and compatibility with the existing, revised routes. Cooperation between local non-profit groups, service clubs and the business community could be one option, especially for community events or a summer schedule. A more flexible schedule or "flag-down service" (similar to GERTIE) could also increase accessibility, especially given Ladysmith's hilly terrain and at times, unfavourable weather conditions.

Another option to explore is to coordinate one of the Cowichan Valley routes with the Stz'uminus shuttle to connect Oyster Bay and Ladysmith in an effort to save riders the \$7.50 fare on the #70 NCX route for those who only want to go to Ladysmith and not travel to Nanaimo or Duncan. This would better serve workers, residents and visitors travelling to and from the businesses and hotel at Oyster Bay area to Ladysmith.

Coverage from Coronation Mall through Saltair to Chemainus was also a highlighted top priority. This extension would either require a tax referendum for CVRD Area G residents or independent shuttle funding through a non-profit.

Given the current low ridership, consistent promotion and education will be essential to build awareness and usage. A simple-to-use, two-way communication process for service updates and rider feedback will be key to maintaining a responsive, rider-focused transit system.

<sup>8</sup> Transit Future Action Plan Cowichan Valley 2023 pg 15

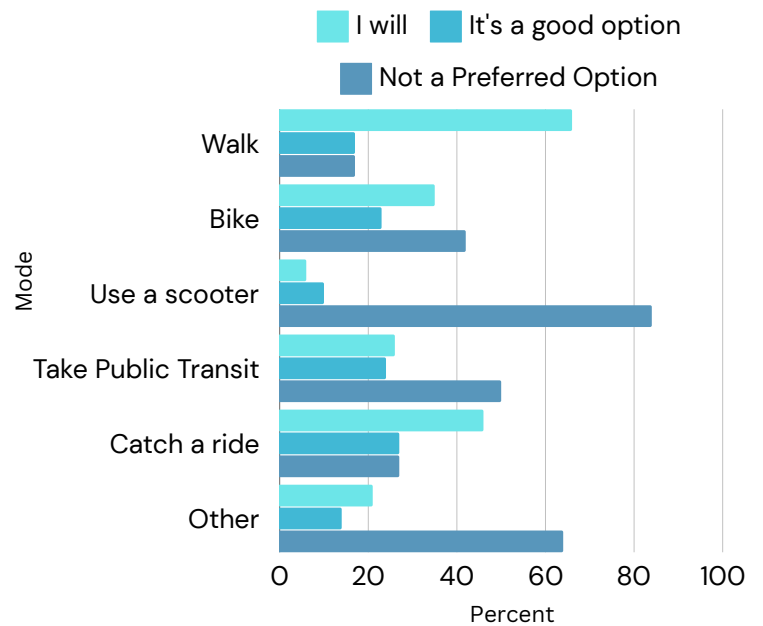
# Active Transportation

When asked how participants would prefer to get around when they do not have access to a personal vehicle, they could select whether they would do it and/or whether it was a good or not a preferred option.

- 66% said they will walk with 17% stating both it's a good option and not a preferred option, respectively.
- 35% said they would cycle with 23% saying it was a good option and 42% saying it wasn't a preferred option.

Both of these modes of getting around included comments that the hills, weather, distance needed to travel, whether they were carrying items and safety played a factor into their selections.

When you do not have access or you do not use a personal vehicle, how do you get around?



(Survey 1, Question 8). Multiple answer questions.  
Total participants = 199; Total responses selected = 267.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.

## Feedback on Active Transportation Infrastructure Improvements

Survey participants who prefer walking, cycling, or other forms of active transportation emphasized the need for enhanced safety infrastructure such as more sidewalks, bike lanes, street lighting, charging stations and secure bike/mobility scooter parking.

A safe Cycling Route Map was recommended by many, particularly for e-bike users, that could be built onto the 2019 Ladysmith Accessibility Recommended Routes Map.



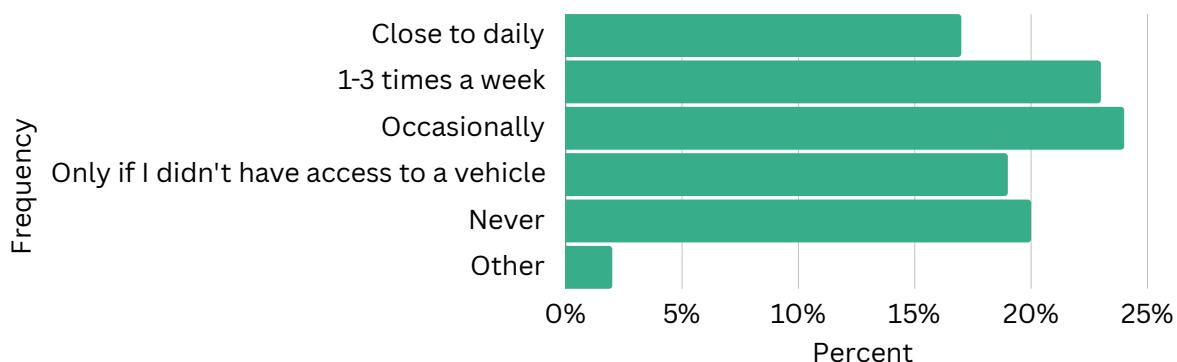


There are multiple benefits to the active transportation option, as it promotes physical and mental health, reduces vehicle traffic and parking demands, and lowers the community carbon footprint.

Challenges anticipated are for those who are unable to bike due to physical limitations, the steep hills, and varying weather conditions. E-bikes reduce some of the challenges but are a more costly option, making access a challenge for many. There are significant community costs associated with implementing the aforementioned infrastructure improvements, though the Town of Ladysmith is committed to enhancing active transportation routes, as outlined in their Official Community Plan.<sup>9</sup>

When asked about using bikes with improved infrastructure, 16% indicated they would cycle daily, and 21% would do so 1–3 times a week. However, some respondents still expressed concerns about highway road safety and issues with road-sharing between cyclists and vehicles. They also commented on the financial barriers to cycling, the potential loss of on-street parking and a lack of interconnected bike routes noting while some trails have been expanded, such as the Trans Canada Trail from Chemainus to North Watts Road in Saltair, more work needs to be done to ensure cycling routes are connected to Ladysmith and beyond.

If the changes were met as suggested in Option 2, how often would you cycle/use a scooter?



(Survey 2, Question 18). Multiple answer questions.  
 Total participants = 181; Total responses selected = 190.  
 Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
 (Total percentage = 105%)

**Positive aspects identified by respondents if improvements were met:**

- Increases safety for cyclists and mobility scooter users.
- Reduces the carbon footprint and improves environmental conditions.
- Promotes health, recreation, and social interaction.
- Offers greater flexibility and convenience.
- Lessens road congestion and pollution, enhancing pedestrian safety.
- Encourages investment in bicycles and e-bikes.



<sup>9</sup> [Town of Ladysmith's Official Community Plan \(OCP\)](#)

## E-Bike Collaboration Opportunities

**E-Bike Share Programs** offer short-term rentals for e-bikes that would be located at various stations around town with extended rentals available through "libraries". As of May 2024, BCAA is piloting two Evolve E-Bike Share programs on Vancouver Island;<sup>10</sup> one in Nanaimo and the other in Courtenay and Comox which if successful, could be explored in other communities.

**E-Bike Ownership Programs** can work through businesses, local governments, schools or community groups who would purchase e-bikes at a discounted rate. One idea put forward suggested implementing a high school program that allows students to learn maintenance and repair skills while supporting a community e-bike share or library program.

Establishing charging stations and secure lock-up areas for e-bikes is recommended to support users.

Cyclists can watch for opportunities for government rebates on e-bike purchases at <https://bcebikerebates.ca>.



<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bcaa.com/blog/automotive/evolve-vancouver-island>

# Improving Access and Mobility Safety to Increase Feasibility

It will be an opportune time for residents to work with the Town of Ladysmith during their community engagement to develop the Town's Mobility Plan. Residents can recommend that the Town prioritize the most active transportation routes for improving safety including more street lighting, sidewalks, bike lanes, chargers and secure parking/lock up areas. This could include the design of a Safe Cycling Route Map.

Developing and promoting a driver education campaign for sharing the road with cyclists and pedestrians, as well as a safe cycling education campaign for those using regular bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters would help to improve awareness of the rules and courtesies of the road to improve safety for all.



# Local Taxi Service(s)

Engagement around the option to improve local taxi services focused on gathering information for sharing with taxi provider(s) that serve the Ladysmith area. As private enterprises, funding support for this service is not generally possible.

Participants expressed a desire for more reliable and frequent service, emphasizing the need for convenient, door-to-door transportation and flexibility without fixed schedules.

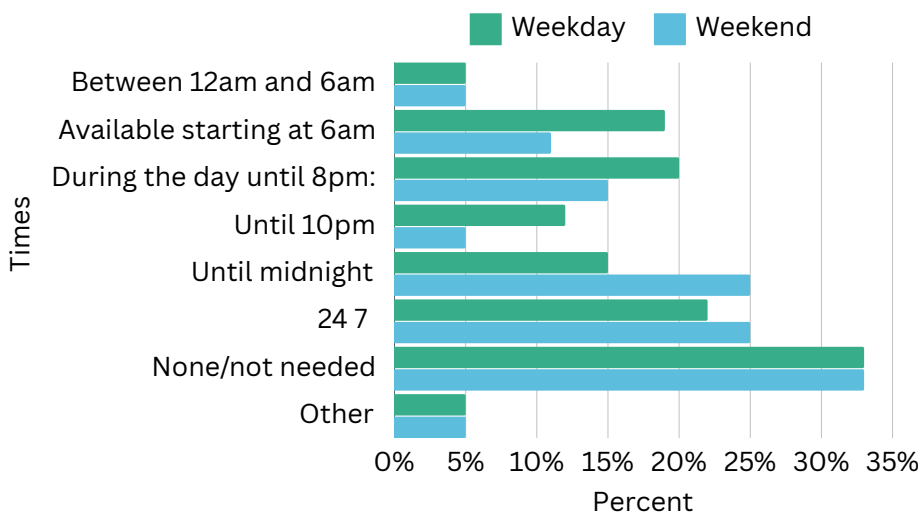
At the time of this project, the Ladysmith Taxi was operating with just one vehicle and two drivers, leading to challenges such as long wait times and inconsistent and unreliable availability, although Nanaimo services are known to be called into Ladysmith at times.

Increasing the fleet size and hiring more drivers pose additional costs to the company that would be reflected in rider costs, which is particularly difficult for riders who are on fixed incomes.

Survey responses indicated that 33% of participants didn't require a taxi on weekdays, while 22% wanted 24/7 service, and 20% preferred daytime service until 8:00 pm.

Concerns about cost and limited need were noted, with many indicating they would primarily use a taxi for trips to the airport or ferries. On weekends, 33% also indicated no need, while 25% each wanted 24/7 or service until midnight, with suggestions to be available for medical emergencies or to prevent impaired driving.

What time of day would you require a taxi service during the weekdays vs weekends?



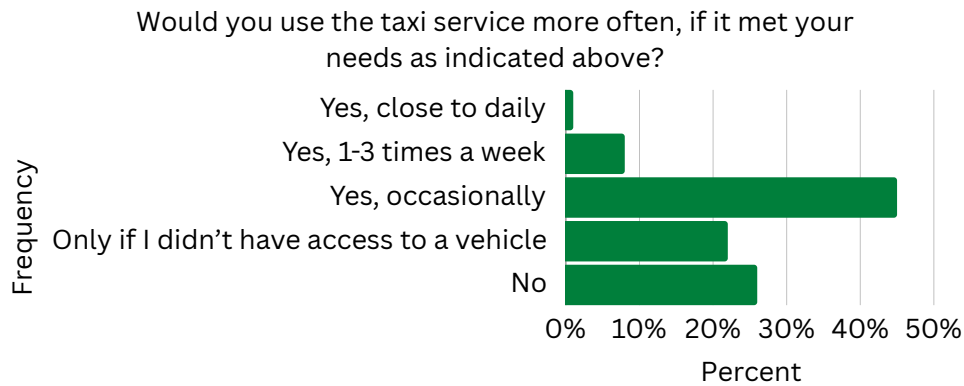
(Survey 2, Question 21 & 22). Multiple answer questions.  
 Total participants = 183/184; Total responses selected = 238/229.  
 Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
 (Total percentage = 130%/124%)

Victoria offers a Taxi Saver program<sup>11</sup> as an extension of their transit service, that provides a 50% subsidy for taxi rides to HandyDART users with disabilities. This could serve as a model for supporting some riders, however the challenge remains that with the limited taxi service available that may not have mobility assists, a cost subsidy program would have unrealistic service expectations.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.bctransit.com/victoria/riderinfo/handydart/taxi-saver/>



When asked if participants would use the taxi service more often if it met their needs, most indicated “occasionally”, followed by “no”, and “only if they didn’t have access to a vehicle”.



(Survey 2, Question 23). Multiple answer questions.  
 Total participants = 187; Total responses selected = 191.  
 Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
 (Total percentage = 102%)

## Summarized Preferences:



- **Flexibility and Convenience:** Provides an alternative to driving, and saves time.
- **Accessible Transportation:** Benefits teenagers, those with mobility challenges, and seniors.
- **Door-to-Door Service:** Ideal for individuals with mobility challenges, those with safety concerns and to minimize exposure to poor weather.
- **Cost Savings:** Reduces parking expenses at ferry terminals or airports.
- **Enhanced Safety:** Lowers risks associated with impaired driving.
- **Social Connectivity:** Improves access to social events and gatherings.

## Concerns Raised:



- **Affordability:** High costs may be prohibitive for youth and those on fixed incomes.
- **Business Viability:** Establishing a profitable taxi service can be challenging and out of government jurisdiction.
- **Driver Recruitment:** Difficulty in hiring and retaining drivers.
- **Limited Demand:** Potentially low usage due to a small market.
- **Reliability Perception:** Need to change current perceptions and increase awareness of the service’s dependability.



# Rideshare Services

## Rideshare Service Overview

Various rideshare services provide a viable transportation option in larger centres (e.g., Uber, Lyft and Uride) and operate by hiring drivers who use their personal vehicles to arrange rides to clients through a company app.

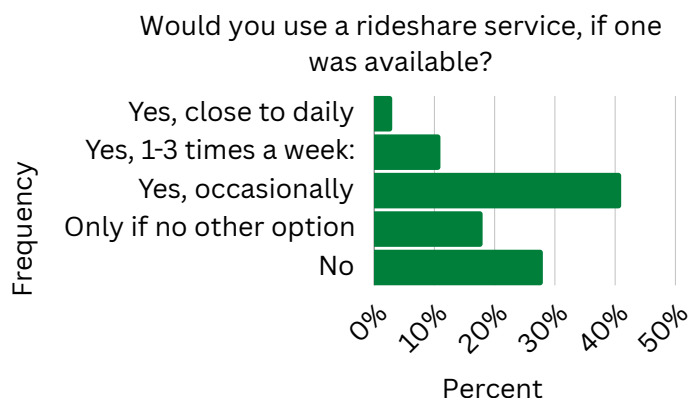
For similar reasons as the local taxi service, engagement around supporting the rideshare services option focused on gathering information that can be shared with rideshare services provider(s) that may have an interest in servicing the Ladysmith area, but will have limited influence over any rideshare company's business model. As private enterprises, funding support for these services is not generally possible.

This option will create competition with the existing taxi service(s).

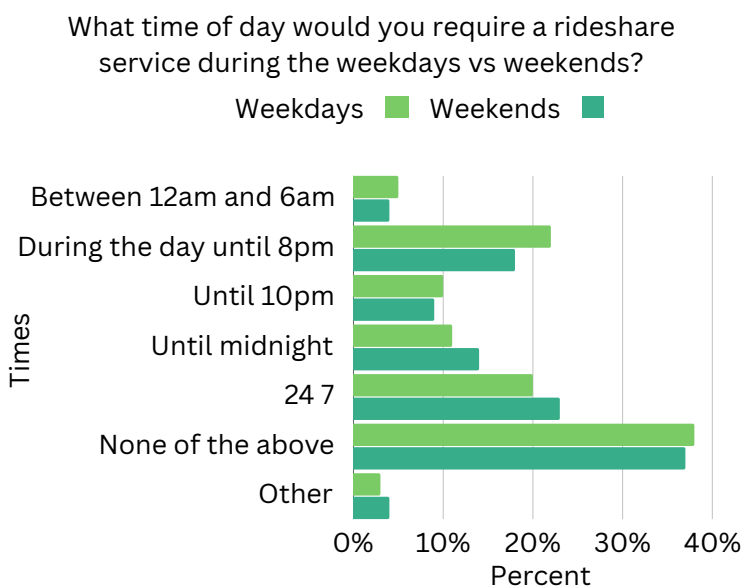
Uride, an active rideshare service available in Nanaimo, has been considering<sup>12</sup> expansion to Ladysmith. However, providing 24/7 service in a small town presents challenges, as the limited population size means fewer ride requests, making it hard to incentivize drivers.

Survey results showed that 28% of respondents would not use a rideshare service; 41% would use it occasionally; and 18% would use it only if no other options are available.

During the weekdays, 22% would prefer a service that operates until 8:00 pm, while 20% would like 24/7 availability. On weekends, 23% prefer 24/7, and 18% would like service until 8:00 pm.



(Survey 2, Question 28). Multiple answer questions.  
Total participants = 179; Total responses selected = 182.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
(Total percentage = 102%)



(Survey 2, Question 26 & 27). Multiple answer questions.  
Total participants = 177/175; Total responses selected = 195/192.  
Numbers are calculated as percent of the total participant.  
(Total percentage = 110%/110%)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.uride.co/locations/nanaimo>

## Summarized Preferences:



- **Benefits Over Taxis:** Respondents appreciated the flexibility, safety, and quick service, anticipating it to be cheaper than taxis while providing flexible job options for drivers.
- **Similarities to Taxis:** Offers door-to-door service, flexible scheduling, cargo transport and a means to strengthen community connections.



## Concerns Raised:



- **Economic Viability:** Private enterprises require a demonstrated demand for 24/7 service, which is often low in communities under 10,000 residents.
- **Safety Hesitations:** Some are reluctant to ride with strangers and have concerns about vehicle and driver safety.
- **Cost and Access Issues:** Expectations of high costs especially for those on a fixed income, a lack of understanding of regulations, and the need for a smartphone app are significant barriers. Additionally, limited demand raises sustainability concerns.

Similar to bike share programs, carshare programs like [Modo](#), [Zipcar](#), and [Evo](#) offer the opportunity to borrow vehicles that are parked in designated parking stalls throughout the community where people can book them out using an app. Only a few comments were made in favour of exploring this option for the Ladysmith area.

## Collaboration Possibilities

With food delivery service apps, such as Uber Eats and DoorDash already available in Ladysmith, one possibility that might increase efficiency and feasibility for rideshare services is to determine whether food delivery service drivers might consider taking shifts for a rideshare company at the same time, doubling up on their opportunity to deliver food and offer rides locally.

A rideshare vs taxi comparative analysis was completed which highlighted some of the pros of rideshare services, including:

- Offering different service levels (i.e. group rides for lower fares, premium options for added comfort, etc.),
- Convenience with using an app when ordering and paying, and
- The ability to rate the service and cleanliness of the driver and vehicle, potentially offering a higher level of standards<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> <https://colpittsclinical.com/rideshare-vs-taxi-a-comparative-analysis/>

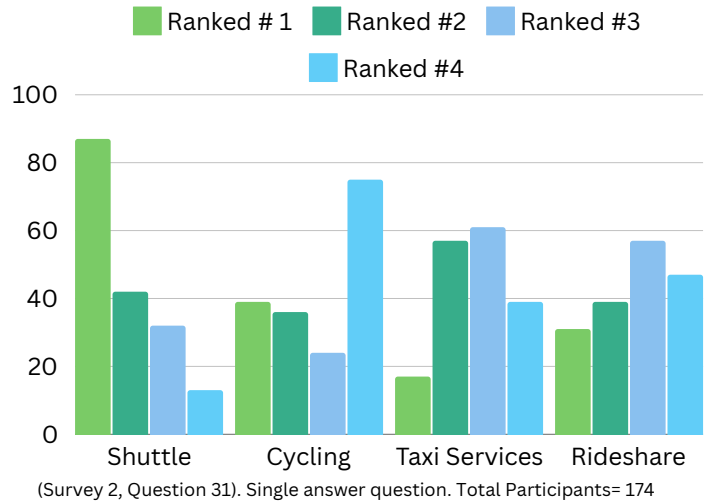
# Prioritizing Services Now and Into the Future

Participants were asked to prioritize each option based on their needs now, in 5 years from now and in the next 5-10 years. Ranking #1 is most likely and #4 is the least.

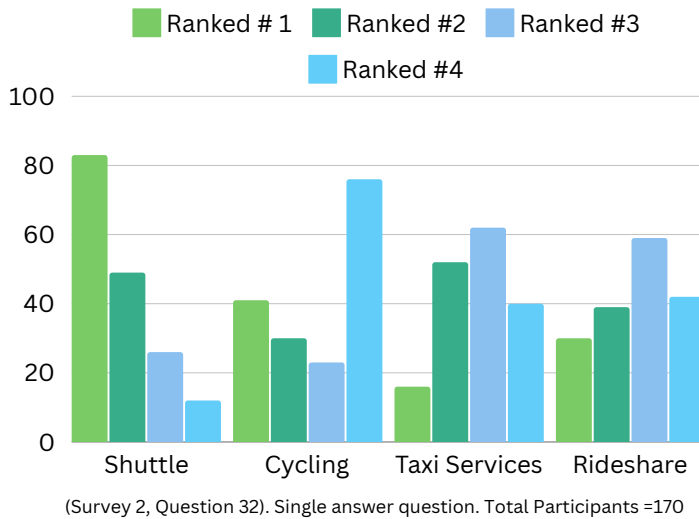
A shuttle was ranked highest as the #1 response in each timeframes with cycling coming in second, rideshare, third and taxi, fourth. Taxi service ranked slightly higher than the rideshare service as selected in the #2 and #3 priority rankings with cycling the highest in the #4 ranking in all timeframes.

There was no significant difference in the ranking between the three timeframes of now, in 5 years from now or in the next 5-10 years.

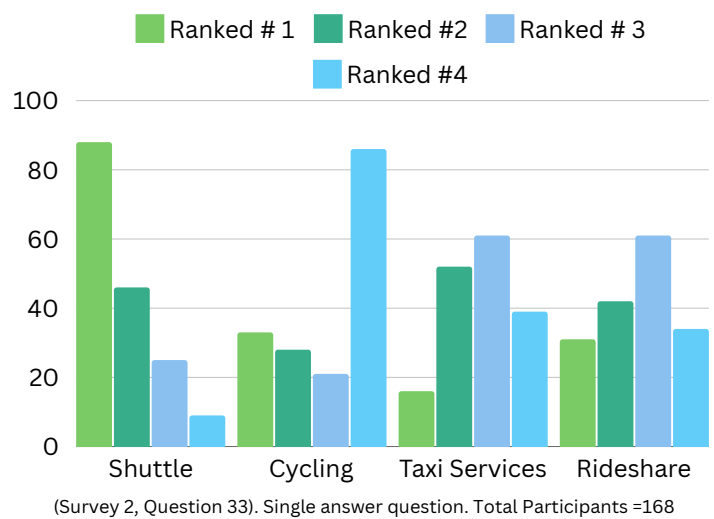
**Based on your needs today:**



**Based on your needs in the next 5 years:**



**Based on your needs in the next 5-10 years:**



The final comments from respondents summarized what has been indicated in this report above with another opportunity to emphasize concerns that as residents age, different transportation options will be vital to living a life that supports independence, accessibility, social inclusion, comfort, and health and well-being in the Ladysmith and surrounding communities.

# Closing Remarks

It's not unusual for rural communities to experience the challenges explored in this transportation report. The more people are spread out, the harder it is to offer services that get people around in a flexible, affordable and efficient manner. At the same time, it is always difficult to consider and plan for the future needs of a growing population with shifting demographics and settlement trends. Both are driven by housing affordability for a younger demographic, as well as for those with a desire to age in place, all seeking a good quality of life for themselves and their families.

When considering the findings within the Poverty Reduction Strategy there is an urgent need for continued action. Without a reliable vehicle, poor public transportation affects every aspect of life. At the same time, there are additional physical challenges with Ladysmith's hilly terrain,

While implementing the options discussed in this report may seem too complex and expensive to realize quickly, the process of evaluating where services are, identifying what is missing along with what is needed and exploring potential solutions, keeps the conversation going and allows for the opportunity for ongoing collaboration, cooperation and innovation.

This project has laid the groundwork for this by exploring the feasibility of the top four options chosen through a fulsome community engagement process. Evaluating community-generated potential solutions for each option of a Neighbourhood Shuttle, Active Transportation, Taxi Service(s) and Rideshare Service(s) leaves us with more to explore while also providing some direction to strive for.

The leadership found at the Transportation Action Committee, local governments, community groups, service clubs, organizations and the many residents and others in the community who participated in this project, are committed to continuing this conversation to improve opportunities for everyone to have access to the services and resources they need, to maintain or improve their independence and to be socially connected and thriving in their community.

# Gratitude to Contributors

On behalf of the Transportation Action Committee we would like to thank the following contributors:

Rosalie Sawrie for coordinating the project, engagement activities and writing the report.

Fernanda Gutierrez Matos for supporting the community engagement, research, data and graphics.

Sandra Thomson for helping with the research and report content.

BC Transit, GERTIE, Erin Anderson at the Town of Ladysmith, Ladysmith Taxi and Uride Nanaimo for sharing information during the research portion of this project and your willingness to collaborate.



# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Terms of Reference for the Transportation Action Committee

### **Mandate:**

To create connectivity between communities not serviced by public transit in the Ladysmith and Stz'uminus areas and specifically, to connect the Stz'uminus community with Ladysmith including:

- North of 1st Avenue and the Island Highway including between Stz'uminus First Nation and the Oyster Bay Development area,
- between Ladysmith and the North Oyster/Diamond and Saltair CVRD Areas H and G,
- that will connect to trips south to the Cowichan Region and Victoria as well as north to Nanaimo and the rest of the North Island.

We plan to do this by exploring the feasibility of the proposed actions under the transportation theme of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and identifying other potential solutions through community consultation.

Between February 2024 to September 30, 2024, the Transportation Action Committee Members will support this work by:

- Advising on the workplan and engagement activities to include two rounds of six focus group engagement sessions with pre-established groups and two public community engagement sessions (one in Stz'uminus & one in Ladysmith) and an online survey;
- Champion engagement activities with existing and new relationships, networks and the public;
- Participating in the review and analysis of researched possible options and compiled community input to prioritize the best potential option(s) giving consideration of:
  - other local resources that will be required,
  - possible funding sources and opportunities and
  - additional strategic relationship building/partnerships.

The outcome of this project is to create an inter-community passenger transportation feasibility study endorsed by the Transportation Action Committee, that identifies primary option(s) and is supported by residents in the Ladysmith and Stz'uminus areas by September 30, 2024.

## **Membership:**

Transportation Action Committee shall represent the diversity of the community and include representatives from:

- Stz'uminus First Nation Chief and Council and/or senior staff,
- Town of Ladysmith,
- CVRD Transit Division,
- local community groups such as the Ladysmith Resource Centre Association and Ladysmith Family and Friends, etc.,
- local service groups such as Lions and Rotary,
- Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce and/or Ladysmith Downtown Business Association,
- interested community members including youth, seniors, people with disabilities and others,
- SD68
- Island Health

## **Membership Terms:**

This work will begin March 2024 with the final implementation plan due by September 30, 2024. Meetings will be at a minimum of once a month with the exception of March – April requiring 2-3 initial planning meetings. A timeline of the project overall will be shared at the first meeting. TAC meetings will be facilitated and coordinated by Social Planning Cowichan with the options for meetings to take place electronically and/or in-person.

# Appendix B: Round One Engagement Survey:

## Ladysmith & Area Transportation Survey April/May 2024

Link to [raw data for survey one results](#) along with [all of the graphs](#).

### **Survey One Introduction:**

Thank you for sharing your ideas for getting around Ladysmith and surrounding areas!

As we know, transportation provides access to every aspect of our lives. Whether to get to school, work, medical appointments, visits with family or friends, to run errands, go shopping, enjoy outdoor spaces or recreation, all require a way to get there.

Without access to a reliable personal vehicle, getting to, from or traveling within Ladysmith can be a challenge.

The purpose of this survey is to hear what the current gaps are in existing services, what your needs are in getting around and what your ideas might be to fill the gaps.

As a community, we know we have the answers. Now is the time to explore the possibilities, prioritize the best option(s) and put a plan together so we can work towards making it happen.

We look forward to hearing your ideas for getting around town!

## Ladysmith & Area Transportation Survey April/May 2024

**1. Below is a general list of transportation services that are currently available.**

**Please select the ones you are aware of:**

- Cowichan Regional Transit Bus Service with routes connecting to many communities in the CVRD.
  - handyDART service offering door-to-door shared transit service for people with permanent or temporary disabilities that prevent them from using fixed-route transit.
  - Express Route 70 Cowichan - Nanaimo bus which as of April 1, 2024 now includes a stop at Oyster Bay.
  - Ladysmith Resources Centre Association (LRCA) volunteer ride service for medical appointments from Ladysmith to outside communities.
  - Other medical transportation services including Island Health's non-emergency service, Granny Go Go, Wheels for Wellness and This Rides 4 U, (which offers other personal transportation services as well).
  - The Ladysmith Taxi (single vehicle).
  - None of the above
  - Other, please specify
- 

**2. Where do you currently live?**

- Ladysmith – Old Town
  - Ladysmith - South Davis Area
  - Ladysmith – Between Symonds & Forest Field
  - Ladysmith - Other
  - CVRD Area H Diamond
  - CVRD Area H North Oyster
  - Oyster Bay
  - Stz'uminus Reserve 13
  - CVRD Area G Saltair
  - Other, please specify
- 

**3. When traveling, do you often require any of the following supports:**

- Wheelchair or walker
  - Car seat or stroller
  - Bicycle
  - No supports
  - Other, please specify
-

4. Do you have access to public transit that is accessible and close to home?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Optional Additional Comments

---

5. If you use public transit, approximately how often?

- Daily
  - Weekly
  - Sometimes
  - Rarely
  - Other, please specify
- 

6. If you do not use public transit, why not?

- I prefer to use a personal vehicle
  - It takes too long to reach my destination
  - The service is not frequent enough
  - The service does not run early or late enough
  - There is no transit close to me
  - It is challenging to get to the bus stop or to my destination from the bus stop
  - There is a lack of cycling facilities at bus stops
  - Other, please specify
- 

7. Do you have access to a personal vehicle?

- Sometimes
  - No
  - Yes. Please indicate if you are the primary driver:
- 

8. When you do not have access or you do not use a personal vehicle, how do you get around?

|                     | I will                   | It's a good option       | It's not a preferred option |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Walk                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| Bike                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| Use a scooter       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| Take Public Transit | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| Catch a ride        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>    |
| Other               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>    |

9. If you selected "other" above, please share what other way you might get around:

---



10. What types of trips are you making or would you like to make when not using a personal vehicle? What mode of transportation would be most ideal for each type of trip?  
Please include suggested modes of transportation that may not be currently available now but you would like to be available in the future.

|                                                                     | Frequency (daily, often, sometimes) | Ideal Mode of Transport |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Regular trips to school/work.<br>(Please add the general location). |                                     |                         |
| Trips in Ladysmith area<br>(appointments, errands, visiting, etc.). |                                     |                         |
| Trips to connect me to<br>Nanaimo/Duncan/Victoria and beyond.       |                                     |                         |

11. When in the Town of Ladysmith, what would be the ideal mode of transportation to get around town?

12. Please add any other potential transportation option(s) that you think should be explored but have not already been mentioned:

13. (Optional info)  
What is your age?
- |                                              |                                            |                                              |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 years or younger | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 – 39 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 – 69 years old   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 – 18 years old   | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 – 49 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19 – 29 years old   | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 – 59 years old |                                              |

14. What is your approximate household income?
- |                                              |                                              |                                              |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$0 - \$25,000      | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,001 - \$55,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,001 - \$40,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$55,001 or greater |                                              |

15. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

16. If you would like to enter to win a \$50 grocery gift card and/or receive the results of this survey and/or updates on this project, please include your preferred contact information below. Your information will not be shared - Thank you!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for sharing your ideas!

Please help spread the word and share this survey with others you know by May 19, 2024. Once this survey is complete, we will report back with the top suggested options so please keep in touch!

# Appendix C: Round Two Engagement Survey: Creating a Transportation Plan for Ladysmith & Surrounding Communities

Link to [raw data for survey two results](#) along with [all of the graphs](#).

## Survey Two Introduction:

Thank you for helping to create a transportation plan for Ladysmith and surrounding communities!

In April and May of 2024, a transportation survey was conducted to hear from residents in the Ladysmith and surrounding communities about what are the current gaps in existing services, what the needs are in getting around and what ideas participants had that would work best to fill the gaps.

Here is a summary of what was shared in response:

- For those who are physically able, many indicated they enjoy walking and some enjoy cycling, however, the hills are a challenge and it is not always ideal with the weather, for long distances or when carrying items/need to transport cargo. Suggestions included improving safety with more sidewalks, bike lanes and street lighting as well as a Cycling Map. (An Accessibility Map was produced in 2019). More lock up areas for bikes and parking areas for scooters is also needed.
- There is a strong desire to use public transit if the routes covered more neighbourhoods and ran more frequently including later into the evenings and with expanded service to include Sundays.
- Many appreciate the Nanaimo Cowichan Express 70 route but stated the \$7.50 cost for a one-way ticket is too expensive.
- For those who do drive, there were concerns around:
  - the increasing costs of driving,
  - circumstances where they may no longer be able to drive due to injury, medical issues or aging (making it challenging to age in place) and
  - wanting to drive less to reduce environmental footprint but not having other reliable options.
- Some stated they plan to leave the community if/when they can no longer drive.
- There is the desire for more reliable and frequent taxi service and/or the implementation of a ride share program such as Uride (available now in Nanaimo), Uber, Lyft, etc.

Considering this input, this second survey has been designed to review the top four options suggested for improving transportation in the Ladysmith and surrounding communities.

For each option, we will explore the benefits and challenges and would like to learn from you what would be required for them to be a viable, efficient and effective option.

Thank you in advance for participating!

## Survey Questions:

### 1. Where do you currently live?

- |                                                                  |                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Ladysmith – Old Town                       | <input type="radio"/> CVRD Area H Diamond      |
| <input type="radio"/> Ladysmith - South Davis Area               | <input type="radio"/> CVRD Area H North Oyster |
| <input type="radio"/> Ladysmith – Between Symonds & Forest Field | <input type="radio"/> Oyster Bay               |
| <input type="radio"/> Ladysmith - Other                          | <input type="radio"/> Stz'uminus Reserve 13    |
| <input type="radio"/> Other, please specify:                     | <input type="radio"/> CVRD Area G Saltair      |

---

**What street do you live on?**

---

### Option 1: Incorporating a Neighbourhood Shuttle Service

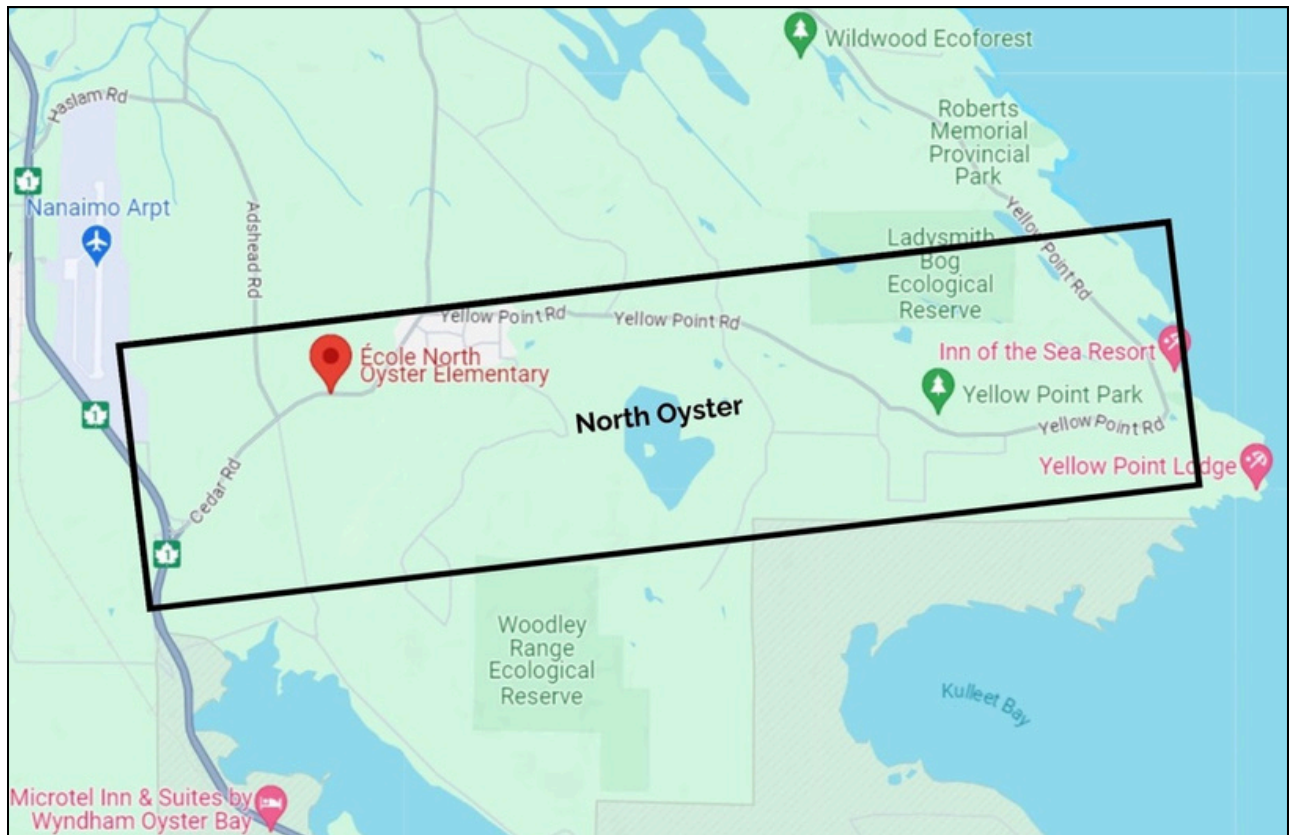
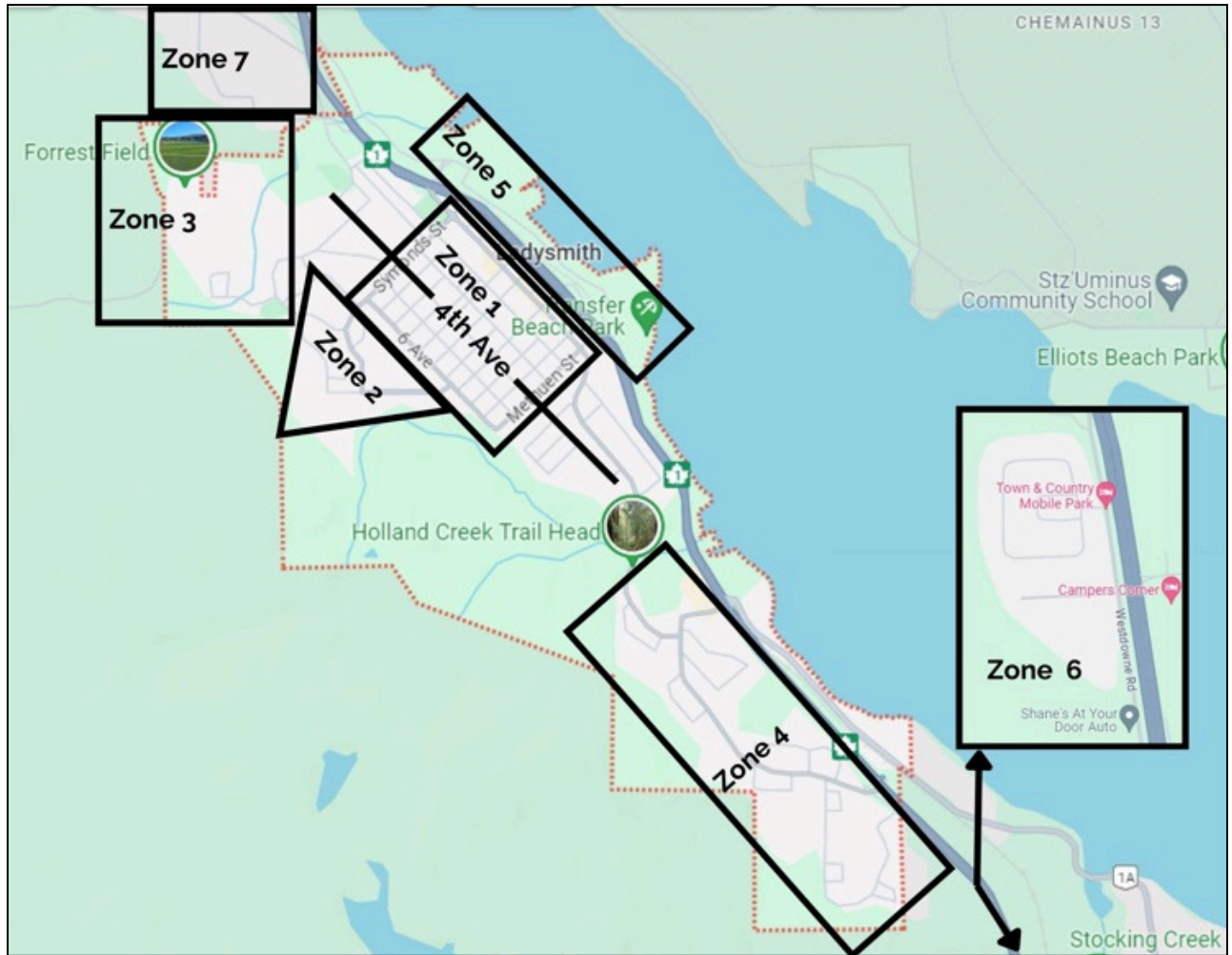
The most popular option for improving transportation was to expand public transit by offering a combination shuttle/trolley/van service that has circular/hop-on, hop-off routes in more Ladysmith neighbourhoods and neighbourhoods that connect with or border Ladysmith.

This would supplement the existing service and ultimately increase connectivity to routes travelling in and out of the community.

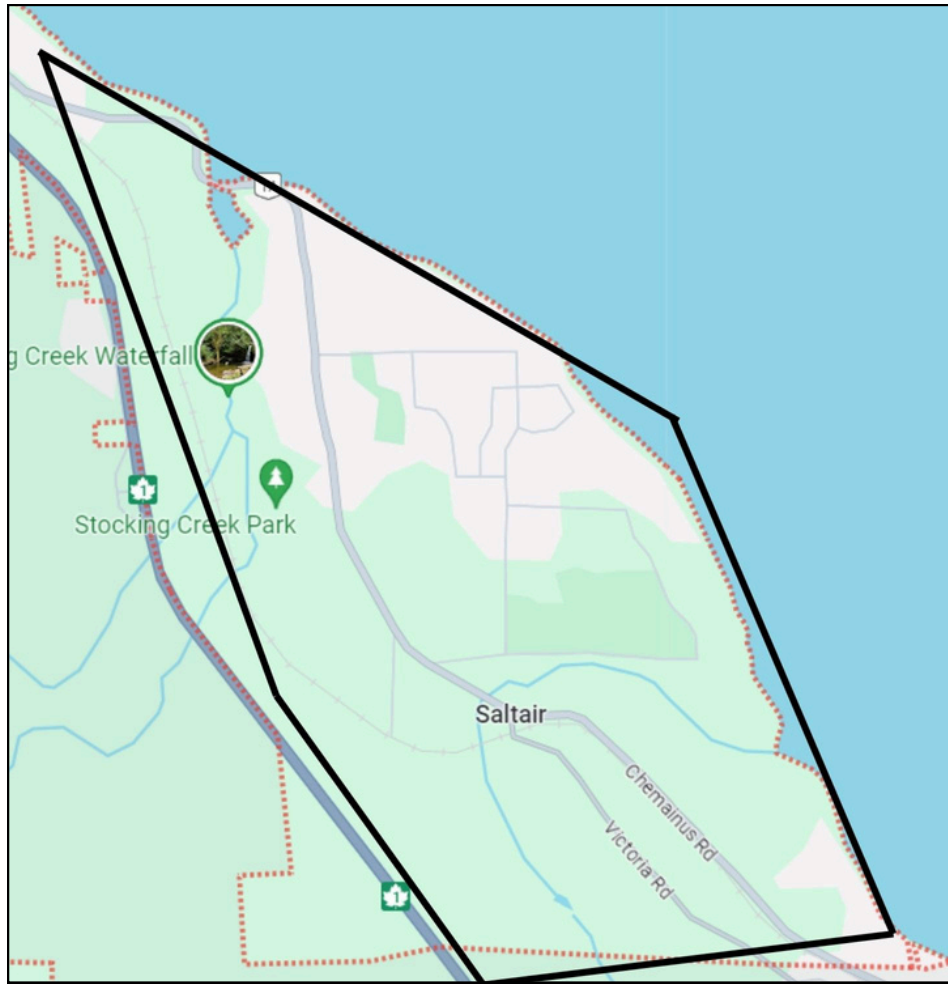
- **Anticipated Benefits:** More frequent service that is reliable for all income levels and connects people to more social activities, community & business services, educational and employment opportunities within and outside the community.
- **Anticipated Challenges:** Costly to operate, likely requiring an increase in government funding. Promotion and education about the service and how to use the service would be needed to build ridership.

### 2. Please indicate which neighbourhoods you would benefit from having a shuttle service to and from. Each area is indicated on the maps below:

- Service along 4th Ave
- Up and down the hill from 1st to 6th between Symonds St. and Methuen Rd. (Zone 1)
- Malone Rd and Colonia Dr. (Zone 2)
- Forrest Field (Zone 3)
- South Davis to Stirling Dr. (Zone 4)
- Rocky Creek Rd, Ladysmith Marina and Transfer Beach (Zone 5)
- Down Westdowne Rd. (which currently has bus service in one direction only). (Zone 6)
- Diamond (Zone 7)
- North Oyster
- Saltair
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_







3. How long in minutes would you be willing/able to walk or get to your nearest shuttle stop?

- Less than 2 minutes
- 3-5 minutes
- 5-10 minutes
- 10-15 minutes
- Can only do door-to-door
- None of the above
- If none or another reason, please explain:

---

4. How early and late during the weekdays would be ideal for a shuttle service?

- 6am start
- 7am start
- Until 8pm
- Until 11pm
- Other, please specify

---



5. **How frequent would you want the shuttle service to run during the weekdays for you to use the service?**

- Every 60 minutes
- Every 90 minutes
- More frequent 30 minutes service during morning and evening peak times with 60 minute service mid-day
- More frequent 30 minutes service during morning and evening peak times with 90 minute service mid-day
- Flexible schedule on a circuit for hop-on, hop-off service
- Other, please specify

---

6. **How early and late on Saturdays would be ideal for a shuttle service?**

- 6am start
- 7am start
- Until 8pm
- Until 11pm
- Other, please specify

---

7. **How frequent would you want the shuttle service to run on Saturdays for you to use the service?**

- Every 60 minutes
- Every 90 minutes
- More frequent 30 minutes service during morning and evening peak times with 60 minute service mid-day
- More frequent 30 minutes service during morning and evening peak times with 90 minute service mid-day
- Flexible schedule on a circuit for hop-on, hop-off service
- Other, please specify

---

8. **How early and late on Sundays and holidays would be ideal for a shuttle service?**

- 6am start
- 7am start
- Until 8pm
- Until 11pm
- Other, please specify

---

9. **How frequent would you want the shuttle service to run on Sundays and holidays for you to use the service?**

- Every 60 minutes
- Every 90 minutes
- More frequent 30 minutes service during morning and evening peak times with 60 minute service mid-day
- More frequent 30 minutes service during morning and evening peak times with 90 minute service mid-day
- Flexible schedule on a circuit for hop-on, hop-off service
- Other, please specify

---

10. **What is the maximum amount you would be willing to pay for a one-way ride for shuttle service?**

- \$2.50 or less
- \$2.50 to \$3.50
- Not able to pay
- Other, please specify

---

11. **Considering Option 1, are you generally comfortable with the idea of taking public transportation?**

- Yes – skip to Question 15
- No
- Sometimes, please explain

---

12. **Please share the reason(s) why you may be uncomfortable with taking public transportation:**

- I feel unsafe.
- Taking public transportation would be a new and unknown experience for me.
- I struggle to navigate it.
- Health concerns (e.g., disability, mobility, others) deter me.
- Cleanliness of transit vehicles.
- I do not feel welcomed by other passengers or drivers.
- There is stigma associated with taking public transit.
- Other, please specify:

---

13. **If you would like to share more about your selected response(s) above, please do so here:**

---

---

14. Would you like to participate in a learning experience (i.e. orientation workshop, online tutorial, etc.) to familiarize yourself public transit?

- Yes    No

Please explain:

---

---

---

15. Would you use this service, if it met your needs as you've indicated in your responses for this option?

- Yes, close to daily  
 Yes, 1-3 times a week  
 Yes, occasionally  
 Only if I didn't have access to a vehicle  
 No  
 If no or other, please explain

---

16. What do you like best about this option?

---

---

---

17. What might be the challenges for you with this option?

---

---

**Option 2:** Expand infrastructure to better support cycling including e-bikes and scooters including improved safety with bike lanes and secure places to lock up/park and create a safe Cycling Route Map (Accessibility Map produced in 2019).

- **Anticipated Benefits:** Excellent health benefits for those who are physically able, including mental health benefits. Decreases vehicle traffic and vehicle parking demands as well as decreasing the individual and community environmental carbon footprint.
- **Anticipated Challenges:** Limited to those who are physically able. Weather and hills are a challenge. Individual costs make it not accessible for everyone, especially when considering e-bikes or e-scooters. Some community costs are associated with creating parking and secure lock up areas, more moderate costs involved in creating more bike lanes. While this is identified in the Town of Ladysmith infrastructure planning it will take years to fully implement.

18. **If the changes were met as suggested in Option 2, how often would you cycle/use a scooter?**

- Close to daily
- 1-3 times a week
- Occasionally
- Only if I didn't have access to a vehicle
- Other, please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_

19. **What do you like best about this option?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

20. **What might be the challenges for you with this option?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Option 3: Improving the Reliability and Frequency of a Taxi Service**

Please note: The responses collected for this option is solely for sharing information with taxi services supporting Ladysmith and surrounding areas. Since these are private enterprises, this project will not be able to fund this service and will have minimal influence on their business approach.

- **Anticipated Benefits:** Good for door-to-door service and convenient planning around a flexible schedule. Ability to transport cargo.
- **Anticipated Challenges:** Costs for the business to increase taxi fleet and hirer more drivers. Cost a concern for those on a lower or fixed income.

21. **What time of day would you require a taxi service during the weekdays?**

- Between 12am and 6am
- Available starting at 6am
- During the day until 8pm
- Until 10pm
- Until midnight
- 24/7
- None of the above
- Other comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

22. **What time of day would you require a taxi service on the weekends?**

- Between 12am and 6am
- Available starting at 6am
- During the day until 8pm
- Until 10pm
- Until midnight
- 24/7
- None of the above
- Other comments:

---

23. **Would you use the taxi service more often, if it met your needs as indicated above?**

- Yes, close to daily
- Yes, 1-3 times a week
- Yes, occasionally
- Only if I didn't have access to a vehicle
- No
- If no or other, please explain or provide more comment:

---

24. **What do you like best about this option?**

---

---

25. **What might be the challenges for you with this option?**

---

---



**Option 4:** Recruit a Ride Share Service to the community (examples: Uride (available now in Nanaimo), Uber, Lyft, etc.).

- **Anticipated Benefits:** Good for door-to-door service and convenient planning around a flexible schedule. Ability to transport cargo. Creates flexible employment opportunities for drivers.
- **Anticipated Challenges:** Private enterprise that requires a demonstrated need for a 24/7 service to implement. Economic viability is difficult in communities with a population of less than 10,000 people as demand is often infrequent and trips are short making it an unreliable income source with limited incentive for drivers. Cost a concern for those on a lower or fixed income and requires an app through a smart phone for use.

Additional Note: Creates competition for existing taxi services. The responses collected for this option is solely for sharing information with ride share services. Since these are private enterprises, this project will not be able to fund this service and will have minimal influence on their business approach.

26. **What time of day would you require a ride share service during the weekdays?**

- Between 12am and 6am
- During the day until 8pm
- Until 10pm
- Until midnight
- 24/7
- None of the above
- Other comments:

---

27. **What time of day would you require a ride share service on the weekends?**

- Between 12am and 6am
- During the day until 8pm
- Until 10pm
- Until midnight
- 24/7
- None of the above
- Other comments:

---

28. **Would you use a ride share service, if one was available?**

- Yes, close to daily
- Yes, 1-3 times a week
- Yes, occasionally
- Only if there were no other options
- No
- If no or other, please explain or provide more comment:

---

29. What do you like best about this option?

---

---

30. What might be the challenges for you with this option?

---

---

---

31. Of each of the 4 options, please rate in order of how likely you would use each option based on your needs today (1 being the most likely, 4 being the least):

Rank the following items using numbers from 1 to 4.

Option 1:

Neighbourhood Shuttle Service \_\_\_\_\_

Option 2: Cycling \_\_\_\_\_

Option 3: Taxi Service \_\_\_\_\_

Option 4: Ride Share \_\_\_\_\_

32. Of each of the 4 options, please rate in order of how likely you would use each option based on your needs, looking into the future in the next 5 years (1 being the most likely, 4 being the least):

Rank the following items using numbers from 1 to 4.

Option 1:

Neighbourhood Shuttle Service \_\_\_\_\_

Option 2: Cycling \_\_\_\_\_

Option 3: Taxi Service \_\_\_\_\_

Option 4: Ride Share \_\_\_\_\_

33. Of each of the 4 options, please rate in order of how likely you would use each option based on your needs, looking into the future in the next 5-10 years (1 being the most likely, 4 being the least):

Rank the following items using numbers from 1 to 4.

Option 1:

Neighbourhood Shuttle Service \_\_\_\_\_

Option 2: Cycling \_\_\_\_\_

Option 3: Taxi Service \_\_\_\_\_

Option 4: Ride Share \_\_\_\_\_

34. (Optional info)  
 What is your age?
- |                                              |                                            |                                              |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 years or younger | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 – 39 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 – 69 years old   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 – 18 years old   | <input type="checkbox"/> 40 – 49 years old | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19 – 29 years old   | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 – 59 years old |                                              |

35. What is your approximate household income?
- |                                              |                                              |                                              |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$0 - \$25,000      | <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,001 - \$55,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,001 - \$40,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$55,001 or greater |                                              |

36. Do you have anything else you would like to add?
- 

37. If you would like to enter to win a \$50 grocery gift card and/or receive the results of this survey and/or updates on this project, please include your preferred contact information below.  
 Your information will not be shared - Thank you!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Your feedback will be put towards a feasibility and implementation plan for improving transportation in the Ladysmith and surrounding communities.

Please check the Community Together to End Poverty Hw-nuts'-ulwum facebook page for further updates or email [rosaliespcowichan@gmail.com](mailto:rosaliespcowichan@gmail.com) to keep in touch with the progress of this project.

Thanks again!

# Appendix D: Engagement Activities

This is a list of the engagement activities completed throughout the duration of the project:

- Sharing the survey with the Ladysmith schools for parent newsletters and other newsletters through the Town of Ladysmith, Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce, WorkBC, community organizations including Our Cowichan Our Health Network, Eldercare Partnership in Cowichan (EPIC, consisting of approximately 15 participants from organizations serving seniors), Youth 20/20 Cowichan, Air Cadets, Pride Ladysmith, Ladysmith Seniors Centre, service clubs, faith groups and other networks.
- In-person community outreach at various locations around Ladysmith including:
  - Ladysmith Volunteer Fair – April 14, 2024
  - Ladysmith Yacht Club Sailpast Event at Transfer Beach – May 11, 2024
  - Frank Jameson Community Centre Outreach – May 6, May 13, July 10, 2024
  - LRCA Food Bank – May 15, May 21, July 23, 2024
  - Community Links Connexions – May 15, 2024
  - CommUNITY Dinner & Dialogue – May 30, 2024
  - Cedar Community Hall – July 6, 2024
  - Transportation Info Exchange Event – July 15, 2024
  - Employer Seminar on the TogetherBC with Minister Malcolmson – July 24, 2024
  - Save-On Foods Outreach – July 25, 2024
  - Eagles #2101 Auxiliary Presentation – July 25, 2024
- Posters were delivered with the survey link & QR code during each round of engagement on bulletin boards and to each businesses in Ladysmith and Oyster Bay with a request to post publicly and/or in lunch rooms where possible and an invitation for staff to participate.
  - Posters and handbills were delivered to the Ladysmith Branch of the Vancouver Island Regional Library, LRCA main office and Shelter, Ladysmith Family and Friends (LAFF) at Aggie Hall.
- News releases were printed and online with the Ladysmith Chemainus Chronicle along with paid ads.
  - [Committee formed to look for transportation improvements for Ladysmith](#) – April 29, 2024
  - [Ladysmith residents asking for neighbourhood shuttle bus](#) – July 3, 2024



# Appendix E: Local Transportation Services

Below is a list of transportation services available in Ladysmith and surrounding communities that the TAC was aware of at the time of the project:

- Cowichan Valley Regional Transit (BC Transit) – Ladysmith is served by the 31 Ladysmith/Alderwood, 34 Ladysmith/Chemainus and 36 Ladysmith/Duncan Express with connections to other regional routes within the CVRD.
  - Ladysmith and Stz’uminus is connected north to Nanaimo with the 70 Nanaimo–Cowichan Express route with stops at 1st Avenue & the Trans Canada Highway and Oyster Bay. This route is operated by the Regional District of Nanaimo Transit which includes a \$7.50 fare separate from the Cowichan Valley Regional Transit system.
- handyDART service offering door-to-door shared transit service for people with permanent or temporary disabilities that prevent them from using fixed-route transit.
- Ladysmith Resources Centre Association (LRCA) volunteer ride service for medical appointments from Ladysmith to outside communities.
- Other medical transportation services including Island Health's travel assistance for non-emergency medical care service, Granny Go Go, Wheels for Wellness and This Rides 4 U, (which offers other personal transportation services as well).
- The Ladysmith Taxi (single vehicle).
- The Nanaimo Airporter offers 24/7 services to the airports and ferry terminals for the Greater Nanaimo Region, including Lantzville, Cedar, Extension and Yellow Point, as well as Ladysmith, Duncan, Parksville, Qualicum Beach and Nanoose.



# Appendix F: Potential Funding Opportunities

Below are a list of funding opportunities for various transportation initiatives that the TAC was aware of at the time of the project::

- Rural Transit Solutions Fund
  - Rural Transit Solutions Fund: Planning and Design Projects Stream
    - Eligible applicants can seek a grant of up to \$50,000 through the Planning and Design Projects stream to support transit planning activities toward the development of new or expanded transit solutions.
    - Some examples of activities that are eligible under the stream include: public engagement, needs assessments, feasibility or viability studies, surveys and assessments of routes or modes of travel.
  - Rural Transit Solutions Fund: Capitol Projects Stream
    - Covers a broad range of activities related to the delivery of rural transit solutions including a range of modes of eligible transport, including traditional solutions such as fixed-route buses and non-traditional solutions such as ride-share or on-demand services requiring the purchase of minivans, small craft, zero-emission fleets, shared fleets, the construction of intermodal hubs, the installation of charging stations or the purchase of software.
    - Through this stream, eligible applicants will be able to submit applications for up to \$3 million for capital costs of a new or expanded transit solution (e.g., purchase of a vehicle or digital platforms), and up to \$5 million to support zero-emission transit solutions (e.g., for the purchase of a zero-emission vehicle(s)).
- VisionZero BC, funds projects aimed at improving vulnerable road user safety in local communities.
- Transportation Infrastructure Funding and Grants- provides funding opportunities to help communities and groups, expand, maintain, and upgrade infrastructure and promote employment and economic growth. Under these are:
  - The B.C Passenger Transportation Accessibility Program (PTAP) that provides rebates to taxi owner-operators for the costs incurred to maintain, purchase, and convert wheelchair-accessible vehicles
  - The B.C Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants: The focus of the Grants Program is primarily on infrastructure that supports safer walking, cycling, rolling, and use of mobility devices. There is a limit of two infrastructure applications per community per intake cycle.
- Age-friendly Communities Grant: To implement age-friendly action(s)/projects identified in the age-friendly community assessment and action plan. To be eligible for Stream 2: Projects grant funding, applicants are required to have completed