

Metro Vancouver's Aging Population and the Need for Improved HandyDART Service

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Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1724

ATU Local 1724 represents the workers in the Greater Vancouver regional area with the paratransit service known as HandyDART. We are the operators, office workers, mechanics and road supervisors that serve the elderly and those with special needs. More information is available at www.atu1724.com

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Contents

Summary	4
1) Introduction	8
Aging Population, Greater Need	8
Metro Vancouver Aging Rapidly	9
HandyDART Service Cut and Frozen despite Increasing Demand	9
2) The benefits of Quality Custom Transit.....	11
3) Accessible Transportation for Age Friendly Communities	12
4) Poverty and Access	14
5) TransLink’s Move to Replace HandyDART Service with Taxis	15
Are Taxis Cheaper & Good Enough?	17
Taxi Drivers under Financial and Time Pressure	18
Taxi Licencing Costs.....	20
Crash Safety Problems with Taxis in Custom Transit Service	21
Other Safety Issues with Taxis.....	22
6) The Public Option	23
Problems with Outsourcing to MV Transportation	23
Private Contracts Impractically Complex	25
Coalition of HandyDART Users Public Proposal	25
7) Conclusion.....	26

Summary

HandyDART is a custom transit service for people with physical or cognitive disabilities who cannot use the regular transit system for at least some trips. HandyDART is not just for older seniors. The people who benefit from HandyDART include children on their way to school and specialized programs, young adults on their way to work and medical appointments, and middle aged people going to rehabilitation programs. Any one of us – even young able-bodied people – could be using these kinds of services next year; however, the probability increases greatly for those over 70 years old.

Over the last five years the number of people over 70 in Metro Vancouver has increased by two and a half times that of the general population. The population increase for those over 80 has been even greater. This aging trend will continue and accelerate. The number of people over 70 in Metro Vancouver is projected to increase by some 40% and 100,000 people in the next decade – about 10,000 per year. The ongoing increase in older seniors will translate into a greater number of people with disabilities and a resulting need for HandyDART.

There were 37,690 HandyDART service denials in 2012 – double the number in 2011 and over seven times the trip denials in 2008

HandyDART Service Cut and Frozen despite Increasing Demand

Most transit agencies have acknowledged that an aging population will require more custom transit service. For example, BC Transit in Victoria recently announced a significant increase in HandyDART service.

Unfortunately, TransLink has not made plans to meet the increased demand. TransLink has cut the HandyDART service

budget by 15,000 hours in response to the transit funding crisis, and plans to keep service hours frozen for the next decade. There were 37,690 HandyDART service denials in 2012 – double the denials in 2011 and over seven times the level of trip denials in 2008.

TransLink has also been contemplating a process that risks screening out some of the most vulnerable users – those who need the service the most.

The benefits of good quality custom transit service

There are many benefits to providing good quality transit service that is accessible to all. Accessible transit, including HandyDART, evolved as our society acknowledged the benefits of allowing people with physical or cognitive disabilities to participate in society rather than being segregated in institutions or isolated at home.

Even a small reduction in the barriers to employment and education for people with disabilities would result in large economic benefits. The reductions in health care costs with improvements to accessible transit would likely also be substantial. In addition there are

economic benefits of freeing family care-givers to seek employment. Failing to increase the amount of high-quality door-to-door custom transit service would impose substantial costs on the public health system and family care givers, as well as infringing on the rights of the increasing population of people living with disabilities.

With an aging population, it will be essential to have adequate and high quality programs, and transportation to these programs, so that older people with disabilities can fully participate in their communities.

Accessible Transportation for Age Friendly Communities

It is tempting to think that the answer to providing accessible transportation is to force some of the people who now use HandyDART onto the regular transit system, which is now equipped with low-floor buses. This approach would likely result in some of the most vulnerable HandyDART passengers becoming isolated and unable to access transit.

Improving the conventional transit system, the sidewalk network, and numerous other features of our communities is essential to creating the 'age friendly communities' that most governments now claim to be working towards. And there is considerable potential to moderate the increase in HandyDART service that will be required, with adequate investment and re-allocation of road space. Some of these changes can also increase the efficiency of HandyDART service.



A few of the measures that have the potential to increase accessibility and moderate the need for HandyDART service increases include:

- Increasing regular transit service and using larger buses to reduce overcrowding.
- Improving transit priority measures, including transit lanes that can be used by HandyDART vehicles.
- Installing accessible public washrooms at major transit transfer points.
- More training and assistance for seniors and people with disabilities who want to use regular transit services.
- Building and improving sidewalks and crosswalks region wide.
- Improving bus stops, with more transit shelters.
- Creating more cycling paths and protected bike lanes, and clarifying that people riding power wheelchairs and mobility scooters are permitted on them.
- Funding programs so people with disabilities on limited incomes can purchase and maintain good quality mobility scooters or power wheelchairs.
- Locating affordable housing, including for seniors and people with disabilities, in walkable areas with good quality transit.

Many of these improvements would require cooperation between multiple levels of government. These changes also involve considerable amounts of money. Other changes, such as concentrating health care facilities and employment in walkable areas with good quality accessible transit, will realistically happen only over decades.

Poverty and Access

People with disabilities tend to have much lower incomes than people who do not. This is largely related to the barriers to employment they face. About one in five people in BC who reported an activity limitation live in poverty, and individuals relying on the Persons with Disability benefit live well below the poverty line.

People with disabilities living in poverty need affordable transportation. Even regular transit fares for using HandyDART are a barrier. The half-price taxi saver coupons available from TransLink are far too expensive for many to use regularly, even for short trips.

People with disabilities face significant barriers in getting to potential employment locations, given that many cannot drive even if able to purchase and operate a reliable car or accessible van.

People with disabilities living in poverty need affordable transportation. Even regular transit fares for using HandyDART are a barrier

One of the acknowledged failures of regional planning in Metro Vancouver has been the failure to coordinate transportation and land use planning to concentrate employment in transit and pedestrian friendly areas. As a result, much of the recent employment growth has been located in automobile-dominated office parks with poor transit service and incomplete sidewalk networks. Even young people without disabilities find accessing these new employment locations by transit and walking a severe challenge.

Lower income people, including people of all ages with disabilities, have a right to social activity and to access recreational facilities. Restricting HandyDART service, or imposing higher fares, would further isolate those in deep poverty. Social isolation is associated with a wide range of negative health impacts, so inadequate HandyDART service translates to increased health care costs and shorter lifespans for some of the most vulnerable.

TransLink's Move to Replace HandyDART service with Taxis

In 2012 the TransLink Commissioner's *TransLink Efficiency Review* recommended replacing some HandyDART service with taxis. Following this report, TransLink announced a cut of about 2% of the service provided by HandyDART drivers, and claimed that re-allocating the money to taxis would result in a net increase of 7000 trips. However, this increase was

calculated by comparing the highest cost (low-productivity) HandyDART trips to the average taxi trip cost. This seems to be poor methodology at best.

The TransLink Commissioner's report claims lower costs for taxis. However, an analysis of CUTA data from the largest 29 custom transit systems in Canada shows taxis cost more than dedicated vehicles per service hour and per kilometer. The average trip distance in a dedicated vehicle, such as HandyDART van, is about three times as long as the average taxi trip. *The cost per trip appears lower for taxis only because the taxi trips are so short.* Taxis seem to be providing a less demanding type of service to people with less severe disabilities at costs similar to dedicated services such as HandyDART.

Experience in Metro Vancouver and elsewhere shows that substituting taxis for dedicated custom transit vehicles results in sub-standard safety and service, often without any reduction in costs. One hidden expense is the cost of taxi licences, which sell for about \$800,000 – and lease for about \$4500 per month in Vancouver.

Taxis seem to be providing a less demanding type of service to people with less severe disabilities at costs similar to dedicated services such as HandyDART

Experience from Manitoba shows that even after a fatal crash involving an improperly secured wheelchair, and resulting changes to training, safety is still taking a back seat in the taxi industry. The low pay and resulting high turnover in the taxi industry also exposes vulnerable passengers to increased risk of sexual assault and other crimes.

The Public Option

The shift of all TransLink HandyDART services from mainly non-profit contractors to the Canadian branch of MV Transportation (MVT) has had negative impacts on HandyDART riders, including poor service and a strike largely resulting from MVT's attempt to eliminate pensions for workers. The problems with privatized transit service worldwide suggest that this is a structural problem with for-profit contractors rather than an isolated incident.

In 2005 the Coalition of HandyDART Users (CHU) published a report calling for HandyDART to be operated as a subsidiary of TransLink rather than being contracted out. One of the main justifications for this proposed change was to improve staff retention, as experienced drivers provide better and more sensitive service. Given the poor track record that for-profit companies have for service quality and cost effectiveness, CHU's recommendation that HandyDART be operated as a publically owned subsidiary of TransLink should be seriously considered.

It is time to make the very considerable investments in public transit, including HandyDART, needed to make Metro Vancouver a livable and age friendly region.

1) Introduction

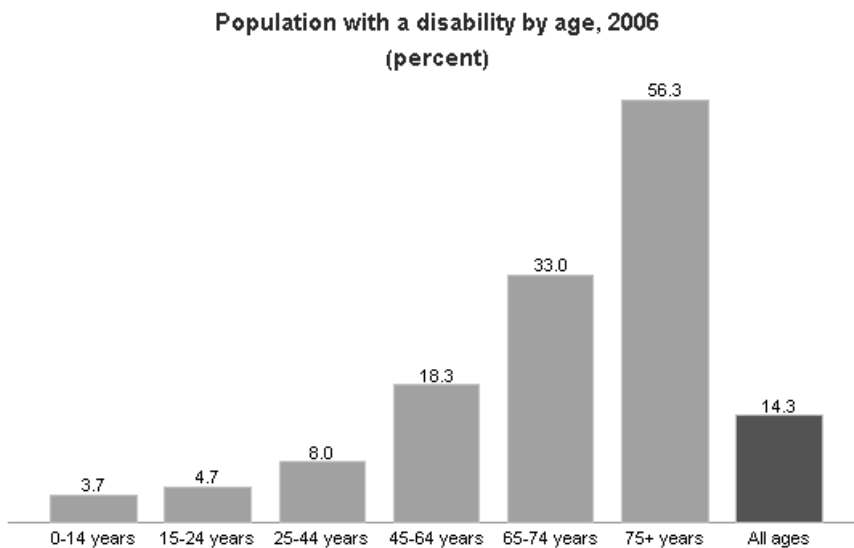
HandyDART is a custom transit service for people with physical or cognitive disabilities who cannot use the regular transit system for at least some trips.

HandyDART is not just for older seniors. The people who benefit from HandyDART include children on their way to school and specialized programs, young adults on their way to work and medical appointments, and middle aged people going to rehabilitation programs. Any one of us – even young able-bodied people – could be using these kinds of services next year; however, the probability of needing custom transit service increases greatly with age.

Aging Population, Greater Need

As people age they become more likely to acquire disabilities. As shown below in figure 1.1, only about eight percent of Canadians 25-44 years old live with disabilities while about a third of people between 65 and 74 do, and this increases to more than half for those over 75. Not everyone living with a disability needs services such as HandyDART, but the probability of needing specialized services to live independently with a high quality of life increases greatly for those over 70 years old.

Figure 1.1



Graph by HRSDC - www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/.3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=40

Data Source: Statistics Canada. *Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006*

Mobility disabilities, defined as “difficulty walking up and down a flight of stairs, standing in one spot for 20 minutes or moving from one room to another” are the most common

disability type among seniors. In Canada, mobility disabilities are experienced by 24 percent of people aged 65 to 74, 41 percent of seniors aged 75 to 84, and 61 percent of seniors aged 85 and over.¹ Statistics Canada reports that the proportion of people needing assistance with transportation similarly increases with age, but notes that women are much more likely to need transportation assistance than men of the same age.²

Metro Vancouver Aging Rapidly

Over the last five years the number of people over 70 in Metro Vancouver has increased by more than 40,000 – over 8,000 people each year. This is a growth rate two and a half times that of the general population. The population increase for those over 80 has been even greater – almost three times that of the general population. This aging trend will continue and accelerate. The population of people over 70 in Metro Vancouver is projected to increase by some 40% and 100,000 people in the next decade – about 10,000 per year.³

In 2016 the first baby boomers will turn 70, adding to the longer-term increase of older seniors. According to Human Resources and Skill Development Canada, due to an aging population, the number of people with disabilities in Canada will increase at almost twice the rate of population growth through 2036.⁴

The ongoing increase in the population of older seniors in Metro Vancouver will translate into a greater population of people with disabilities and a resulting need for HandyDART and other specialized services. Metro Vancouver has many of the specialized medical facilities in British Columbia, such as the G.F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre. Many with severe disabilities and serious medical conditions— particularly older people – will likely relocate here to access specialized healthcare in the coming years.

The number of people with disabilities in Canada will increase at almost twice the rate of population growth

HandyDART Service Cut and Frozen despite Increasing Demand

Most transit agencies have acknowledged that an aging population will require more custom transit service. For example, BC Transit's 2011 long range plan for the Victoria area states: "The aging population will increase the demand for handyDART and other custom transit services in the future. This will require an increase in resources."⁵ The same report notes that there is likely a hidden demand for HandyDART service by people who have

¹ HRDC (2011) *Federal Disability Report*. www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/disability/arc/federal_report2011/pdf/fdr_2011.pdf

² Profile of seniors' transportation habits: Table 4 Number and percentage of people needing assistance with transportation, 2009. www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2012001/t/11619/tbl04-eng.htm

³ Data Source: BC Stats Sub-Provincial Population Projections - P.E.O.P.L.E. 2012. www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Demography/PopulationProjections.aspx

⁴ HRDC (2011) *Federal Disability Report* Figure 1.9.

⁵ BC Transit (2011) *Transit Future Plan: Victoria Region*. P30 www.transitbc.com/regions/vic/news/bpl/pdf/vic-bpl1731.pdf

given up on requesting service due to a lack of peak time capacity. In August 2013, BC Transit announced the addition of 2,250 annual service hours and an additional HandyDART bus for the Victoria area.⁶

TransLink budgeted for 613,000 hours of HandyDART service in its 2012 'Moving Forward' plan, but due to the transit funding crisis this has been cut back to 598,000 hours in the

The HandyDART budget has been cut by 15,000 hours, and plans show service levels frozen for a decade

2014 Base Plan – *a reduction of 15,000 hours.*⁷ TransLink's 2014 Base Plan shows HandyDART service hours frozen at this reduced level for a decade to 2023. The 2012 'Moving Forward' Plan, assumed increased revenue and called for substantially increased conventional transit service hours, but freezes HandyDART service hours at 613,000 for a decade despite a forecast increase of about 200,000 trips from 1.5 to 1.7 million.

There were 37,690 HandyDART service denials in 2012 – this is twice the level of trip denials in 2011 and over seven times the number of denials in 2008 (a 673% increase).⁸ Not surprisingly, TransLink's survey of HandyDART riders shows that satisfaction with service availability is declining. The lowest satisfaction rating (1 or 2 where 1 means very poor) increased from 11% in 2011 to 17% in 2012, with a 5% decline in positive ratings over the

There were 37,690 HandyDART service denials in 2012 – twice the level of denials in 2011 and over seven times the number in 2008

same period.⁹ Trip denials do not show the full extent of unmet demand as people will not attempt to book trips that they know will be denied.

The City of Vancouver's Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee (PWDAC) responded to the service freeze and proposed that HandyDART funding and service be increased to meet the needs of the increasing population of people with disabilities. They also opposed invasive processes to screen HandyDART applicants as a way of reducing costs:

"For the last two years, Access Transit (TransLink) has been contemplating a new process to deal with increasing demand for HandyDART without increasing funding

⁶ BC Transit (August 21, 2013) *More Service Hours and Vehicles in September*.

www.transitbc.com/news/newsitem.cfm?newsid=1844

⁷ TransLink provided less than the budgeted HandyDART service hours in 2011 (603,000) and 2012 (592,000). Data from Table 1 in 2014 Plan and Table 4 in Moving Forward - available from www.translink.ca/en/Plans-and-Projects/10-Year-Plan/About-the-10-Year-Plan.aspx

⁸ TransLink (July 31, 2013) FOI Request 2013/179. http://ecoplanning.ca/?attachment_id=50

⁹ Ipsos Reid (December 14, 2012) *2012 HandyDART Customer Service Performance*.

www.translink.ca/~media/Documents/customer_info/translink_listens/customer_surveys/Customer_Service_Performance_Research/Access_Transit/2012_HandyDART_Cust_Svc_Performance.ashx

to meet the need. The process they are contemplating is an invasive, time-consuming, and upsetting process, which would discourage many people, especially persons with language issues, developmental disabilities, persons who are older, frail or confused, from applying for HandyDART. In essence, it solves the problem of not enough HandyDART rides by eliminating the most vulnerable of users.”¹⁰

The impact on people who need the service the most should be considered with regard to the type and quality of service offered, not just the formal screening process. If people with severe disabilities find that the service does not meet their needs, they will be screened out and not use the service. The cost of this silent screening process may not show up on TransLink's financial statements, but the individuals, families and the public health care system will pay the price.

2) The benefits of Quality Custom Transit

There are many benefits to providing good quality transit service that is accessible to all. Accessible transit, including HandyDART, evolved as our society acknowledged the benefits of allowing people with physical or cognitive disabilities to live and participate in society rather than being physically segregated in institutions or isolated at home.

A recent report by the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) asserts that even a small reduction in the barriers to employment and education for people with disabilities would have annual economic benefits in the hundreds of millions of dollars. The study also suggests that reductions in health care costs with improvements to accessible transit would be substantial.¹¹ There are economic benefits of freeing family care-givers to seek employment and costs borne by the public health system to forcing people with disabilities into institutions.



This CUTA report also identifies substantial safety benefits to accessible transit improvements. People 70 and older get into more crashes per kilometre than any other group except young males.¹² Without good options, people will be tempted to keep driving even when their ability to do so safely is impaired.

¹⁰ (2011) *Issues and Concerns about the Translink Report: "Moving Forward: Improving Metro Vancouver's Transportation Network."* p15 www.straight.com/files/pdf/pwdac_translink.pdf

¹¹ CUTA (2013) *Value Case for Accessible Transit in Canada.*

http://cutaactu.ca/en/publicaffairs/resources/CUTAREport_ValueCaseforAccessibleTransitinCanada.pdf

¹² Statistics Canada (2011) *Profile of seniors' transportation habits.* <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2012001/article/11619-eng.htm>

While the quantifiable economic benefits of HandyDART service are substantial, most of the social benefits are difficult to measure. With an aging population, it will be essential to have adequate and high quality programs, and transportation to these programs, so that older people with disabilities can fully participate in their communities. The Council of Senior

Accessible transportation services are a key component in helping seniors to stay active, involved and engaged in their communities

Citizens' Organizations of BC (COSCO) asserts that "Accessible transportation services are a key component in helping seniors to stay active, involved and engaged in their communities."¹³ Custom transit services such as HandyDART are essential for meeting the growing demand not met by regular transit service.

Quantifying the economic and social benefits of improving HandyDART service, along with improvements to the rest of the transit system, are beyond the scope of this study. But, given the costs and negative social consequences of inadequate service, improving HandyDART service is a very good investment. Failing to increase the amount of high-quality door-to-door custom transit service would impose substantial costs on the public

health system and family care givers, as well as infringing on the rights of the increasing population of people living with disabilities.

3) Accessible Transportation for Age Friendly Communities

It is tempting to think that the answer to providing accessible transportation is simply to force some of the people who now use HandyDART onto the regular transit system, which is now equipped with low-floor buses and other features to reduce barriers for people with disabilities. This approach is seriously flawed, as it would likely result in some of the most vulnerable HandyDART passengers becoming isolated and unable to access transit.

Improving the conventional transit system, the sidewalk network, and numerous other features of our communities is essential to creating the 'age friendly communities' that most governments now claim to be working towards. And there is considerable potential to moderate the increase in HandyDART service that will be required, with adequate investment and re-allocation of road space. Some of these changes can also increase the efficiency of HandyDART service.

Some of the measures that have the potential to increase accessibility and moderate the need for HandyDART service increases include:

- Increasing regular transit service frequencies, and using larger buses, to reduce overcrowding. Overcrowding makes accessing transit very difficult, and even dangerous, for many people with disabilities.

¹³ (April 2013) COSCO News. P 10 http://coscobic.ca/files/8313/6371/4102/COSCONews_2013_special_edition.pdf

- Improving transit priority measures, including transit lanes that can be used by HandyDART vehicles.
- Installing accessible public washrooms at rapid transit stations and major transit transfer points.
- Creating more spaces on buses for wheelchairs, mobility scooters and baby carriages. Most buses have only two spaces, and these are often full on some routes.
- More training and assistance for seniors and people with disabilities who want to use regular transit services.
- Building and improving sidewalks and crosswalks region wide. Transit is not accessible without good quality sidewalks all the way to and from the transit stop. One dangerous street crossing can make a trip risky and terrifying for a frail senior with mobility disabilities.
- Improving bus stops, with more transit shelters with spaces to sit and park wheelchairs out of the rain.
- Making bus stops accessible to wheelchairs. According to TransLink, in 2011 only 58% of bus stops were accessible, with plans to increase this by only 2% per year.¹⁴
- Creating more cycling paths and protected bike lanes, with changes in regulations and signage to clarify that people riding power wheelchairs and mobility scooters are permitted and encouraged to use these facilities.¹⁵
- Funding programs so people with disabilities on limited incomes can purchase and maintain good quality mobility scooters or power wheelchairs.
- Locating the services used by people with disabilities, including medical facilities, on major transit routes. And improving transit service and reliability to existing facilities.
- Locating affordable housing, including for seniors and people with disabilities, in walkable areas with good quality transit.

Many of these improvements would require cooperation between multiple levels of government and funding agencies. For example, in the case of neighborhood accessibility, TransLink cooperates with municipalities on planning bus stops but like most transit agencies normally has little involvement in the “big remaining challenge facing transit agencies in increasing the accessibility of fixed-route service” – improving the sidewalk and crosswalk network.¹⁶

These changes also involve considerable amounts of money – for example providing increased transit capacity will likely cost billions in capital costs alone. In the case of transit overcrowding at peak periods, on some routes improved HandyDART service might be more

¹⁴ TransLink (May 16, 2011) *Update on the Access Transit Strategy*.

¹⁵ E.g. BC Cycling Coalition (2013) *Better Cycling Facilities Means Mobility for Everyone – Not Just Cyclists* (Media Release) <http://bccc.bc.ca/press-release-mobility-for-everyone/>

¹⁶ David Chia (2008) *Policies and Practices for Effectively and Efficiently Meeting ADA Paratransit Demand*. Transportation Research Board. P25 www.nap.edu/download.php?record_id=14154

cost effective than increasing regular service enough to allow reasonable and reliable wheelchair access.



Other changes, such as concentrating health care facilities and employment in walkable areas with good quality accessible transit, will realistically happen only over decades and only with much stronger commitment from governments, including municipalities and the province. So far, the implementation of regional plans, such as the recently replaced Livable Region Strategic Plan, has been inconsistent – making it more difficult for people with

disabilities to get where they need to go. A detailed examination of options for funding transit in the region is beyond the scope of this paper, but the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives report *Transportation Transformation: Building Complete Communities and a Zero-Emission Transportation System in BC* outlines options for funding and improving transit while respecting social justice principles.¹⁷

4) Poverty and Access

People with disabilities tend to have much lower incomes than people who do not. This is largely related to the barriers to employment they face, resulting in both lower income during working years and lower retirement income. According the BC Coalition of People with Disabilities, about one in five people who reported an activity limitation live in poverty. Individuals relying on the Persons with Disability benefit live well below the poverty line – the Statistics Canada Low Income Cut Off.¹⁸

People with disabilities living in poverty need affordable transportation. Even regular transit fares for using HandyDART are a barrier. The half-price taxi saver coupons available from TransLink are far too expensive for many to use regularly, even for short trips; the social expectation to tip taxi drivers poses an additional barrier.

People with disabilities face significant barriers in getting to potential employment locations, given that many cannot drive even if able to purchase and operate a reliable car or accessible van.

One of the acknowledged failures of regional planning in Metro Vancouver has been the failure to coordinate transportation and land use planning to concentrate employment and residential development in transit and pedestrian friendly areas. For example, the provincial

¹⁷ Patrick Condon, Eric Doherty, Kari Dow, Mark Lee & Gordon Price (2011)

<http://policyalternatives.org/transportationtransformation>

¹⁸ Disability Without Poverty Network (2012) *Overdue: The Case for Increasing the Persons with Disabilities Benefit in BC*. P5 www.bccpd.bc.ca/docs/overdueincreasepwd.pdf

government recently went ahead with the \$3 billion expansion of Highway 1 and the Port Mann Bridge despite the project being opposed by the Regional District Board on the basis that it conflicted with regional transit-oriented land use objectives and would stimulate automobile dependant residential and commercial land use.

As a result of this failure of regional planning, much of the recent employment growth has been located in automobile-dominated office parks or other locations with poor transit service and incomplete sidewalk networks. Even young people without disabilities find accessing these new employment locations by transit and walking a severe challenge. Given that many older buildings are not wheelchair accessible, this means that many of the newer accessible worksites are inaccessible without custom transit – even for the proportion of people with disabilities who can use regular transit.

While employment is an important issue, so is the ability to participate fully in society. Lower income people, including people of all ages with disabilities, have a right to social activity and to access recreation facilities. Restricting HandyDART service, or imposing higher fares, would further isolate those in deep poverty. Social isolation is associated with a wide range of negative health impacts, so inadequate HandyDART service translates to increased health care costs and shorter lifespans for some of the most vulnerable.

While employment is an important issue, so is the ability to participate fully in society. People of all ages with disabilities, have a right to social activity and to access recreation facilities

In an ideal world Metro Vancouver would rapidly be transitioning to an age-friendly 'Livable Region' with greatly improved access for people with disabilities. But the fact is that people with disabilities are living and looking for work where many recently developed areas are inaccessible without an automobile or custom transit. Improved HandyDART service is essential for overcoming the barriers exacerbated by recent regional planning and transportation infrastructure decisions.

5) TransLink's Move to Replace HandyDART Service with Taxis

In March 2012 Martin Crilly, then TransLink Commissioner, released the *TransLink Efficiency Review* by Shirocca Consulting of North Vancouver.¹⁹ Shirocca Consulting concludes that:

“Increasing the use of non-dedicated vehicles, such as taxis, could be done relatively quickly and would offer cost savings. While it is acknowledged there maybe concerns over service quality, these can be managed.”²⁰

¹⁹ Martin Crilly's term as TransLink Commissioner ended April 30, 2013

²⁰ P 92

As discussed below, safety and service quality problems with taxis in custom transit service are extremely difficult to overcome so this unsupported assurance that these problems “can be managed” should be viewed with scepticism.

Comparing the highest cost HandyDART trips to the average taxi trip cost seems to be poor methodology at best

Following the Shirocca report, TransLink announced cuts of 10,000 hours in HandyDART service, about 2% of the service, with the stated intention of re-allocating the money to taxis. In a letter to the Vancouver Sun, TransLink's Chief Operating Officer claimed to “expect an overall addition of 7,000 customer trips” with this funding re-allocation.²¹ In response to a freedom of information request, TransLink explained that the claimed ‘expectation’ of 7,000 additional trips is based on comparing “low-productivity HandyDART runs” – with the fewest trips per hour – to “average taxi trip cost.”²² Comparing

the highest cost HandyDART trips to the average taxi trip cost as appears to have been done in this case seems to be poor methodology at best. Accurately estimating the taxi cost for these trips would be fairly complex since factors such as traffic congestion affect taxi fares; it should be expected that some of the low-productivity HandyDART runs operate in heavy traffic.

The Shirocca report relies on data from Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) reports. But instead of analyzing the CUTA data from all 29 custom transit systems serving centers with populations over 150,000 (Population Group 1) Shirocca only examines four systems in addition to TransLink. The report gives no explanation for why the four cities – Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton and Victoria – were chosen.

A basic analysis of CUTA data from all 29 custom transit systems shows taxis (non-dedicated vehicles) costing more than dedicated vehicles per service hour and per kilometer, as shown in Figure 5.1 below. However, this same data set shows that the type of service is very different – on dedicated services one in three passengers uses a wheelchair or mobility scooter whereas only one in eight taxi trips involves loading a wheelchair or scooter. The average trip distance in a dedicated vehicle, such as HandyDART van, is about three times as long as the average taxi trip. *The cost per trip appears lower for taxis only because the taxi trips are so short on average.*

²¹ Doug Kelsey (June 6, 2013) “HandyDart pilot project an attempt to better meet demand” *Vancouver Sun*.

²² Liina Marshall (Sept. 9, 2013) *FOI Request 2013/172*. TransLink – Access Transit.

http://ecoplanning.ca/?attachment_id=49 TransLink withheld all actual cost information on the basis that it could “harm the financial or economic interests of a public body.”

Figure 5.1 Taxis are More Expensive per Kilometer and Hour

	Dedicated Vehicles – Operating and Capital	Taxi
Cost per Revenue Km.	\$4.39	\$5.81
Cost per Revenue Hour	\$79.80	\$81.25
Average Trip Distance	7.3 km	2.5 Km
Wheelchair / Scooter	34%	12%
Cost per Trip	\$32.13	\$14.69

Data Source: CUTA (2011) *Specialized Transit Services Fact Book: 2010 Operating Data*. Population Group 1. p g22. Expenses for dedicated vehicles include maintenance, fuel, and all reported capital expenses.

In the past TransLink has also used a simplistic ‘cost per trip’ analysis to conclude that taxis would cost less than HandyDART.²³ But calculations that leave out costs per hour and per kilometre can lead to very misleading results as shown above in Figure 5.1 above. The costs per unit of time and distance for contracted taxis are also missing from TransLink’s custom transit data for 2010, as reported by the Canadian Urban Transit Association.²⁴

The assertion that taxis provide much less expensive service is not borne out by the available evidence. Instead, taxis seem to be providing a less demanding type of service to people with less severe disabilities at costs similar to dedicated services such as HandyDART. Anecdotal reports suggest that taxis contracted by HandyDART often provide only curb to curb service rather than the reliable door to door service required by many of the HandyDART users.

The Shirocca report suggests that using some smaller vehicles such as accessible mini vans could improve HandyDART system performance. Using some smaller vehicles might in fact improve performance on some types of trips, if the HandyDART dispatchers and computerized dispatch system can deal effectively with the added complexity. Since TransLink has recently started using smaller vans driven by trained and experienced HandyDART drivers, it is not necessary to compromise safety and service quality by using taxis in order to experiment with smaller vehicles.²⁵

Are Taxis Cheaper & Good Enough?

There is a history of simplistic and misleading claims regarding the cost of HandyDART service compared to taxis in Metro Vancouver. For example, in 1995 a group calling itself Fair Access to Custom Transit (F.A.C.T.) proposed replacing HandyDART service completely

²³ Martin Lay (March 25, 2011) *FOI Request 2011-041*. TransLink - Access Transit.

²⁴ CUTA (2011) *Specialized Transit Services Fact Book: 2010 Operating Data*. P54.

²⁵ (October 2013) TransLink’s draft 2014 Base Plan states that these smaller HandyDART vehicles “were not found suitable for the type of service currently provided” (p10)

with taxis as a cost saving measure. In response to assertions that taxis would be about half the cost of HandyDART, BC Transit staff pointed out some significant errors in F.A.C.T.'s analysis and noted that Maple Ridge Cabs had recently lost a HandyDART contract and that Yellow Cabs of Vancouver had recently submitted a proposal with the "highest cost (about 18 percent higher than the successful proposer) and lowest evaluation score of all four proposals"²⁶

The BC Coalition of People with Disabilities (BCCPD) rejected the F.A.C.T. taxi proposal and any privatization of HandyDART, stating that it would "leave the most vulnerable consumers isolated and disempowered [and] make it very difficult to monitor the system to ensure that standards of safety are being met and abuses are not occurring".²⁷ The BCCPD raised an important point about the most vulnerable HandyDART riders: lowering standards through increased contracting to taxis may create a system that is not suitable for the

Lowering standards through increased contracting to taxis may create a system that is not suitable for the people who need it the most

people who need it the most. The Amalgamated Transit Union noted in its analysis of the F.A.C.T. proposal that "Poor service from the taxi industry is not the fault of the taxi drivers, but how those drivers are rewarded for their service. They are rewarded for speed over safety."²⁸

Experience in the US also shows that substituting taxis for dedicated vehicles with specially trained drivers results in sub-standard service to passengers with disabilities. For example, a 2008 US Transportation Research Board report notes that using dedicated vehicles rather than taxis results in better trained drivers "providing a better quality of service to paratransit passengers" (p 22). The same report suggests that metered taxis

are often available for custom transit only when other taxi business is slow.²⁹

Taxi Drivers under Financial and Time Pressure

Taxi drivers are not normally paid by the hour; instead they are paid a percentage of the fares they collect plus tips and have to pay their expenses from this income. This means that taxi drivers need to be maximizing the income they bring in by quickly moving on to collect their next fare; it is not surprising that customers who take extra time and may not have extra money for a tip are often not welcome:

²⁶ Glen Leicester (May 2, 1995) *F.A.C.T. Report on Taxi Service*. BC Transit. P5

²⁷ BCCPD (June 1995) *Response to the FACT Brief*. P 3.

²⁸ Craig Wright (1995) *Cheaper equals better??? A comparison of accessible, door to door transportation services for persons with disabilities in BC*. Canadian Council of the Amalgamated Transit Union. P13

²⁹ David Chia (2008) *Policies and Practices for Effectively and Efficiently Meeting ADA Paratransit Demand*. Transportation Research Board. P25 www.nap.edu/download.php?record_id=14154

“Any person with a disability who uses taxis knows that some taxi drivers do not welcome passengers with disabilities during busy periods. Some drivers see the extra loading time as time they could be using for other fares.”³⁰

In Toronto, taxi drivers have been routinely charging far more than the legally permitted fares for wheelchair trips. Only the threat of a Human Rights Tribunal order convinced the taxi companies to take action to reduce this illegal practice.³¹ However, given the deep-rooted problems in the taxi industry it is unlikely that even this will really address the problems with underpaid taxi drivers caught in a struggle to make a living where every minute and opportunity for a tip counts.

A US Transportation Research Board (TRB) report points out that the skills and personality traits that make for a successful taxi driver are very different from those that make for a good custom transit driver providing safe door-to-door service for people with severe disabilities. “Taxicab drivers tend to be independent contractors. Finding people who have the entrepreneurial skills to be independent contractors and who meet all the requirements of a paratransit driver is an even more difficult task.”³²

A June 2013 survey by the Vancouver based Parent Support Group for Families of Mentally Handicapped Adults Society produced responses describing the problems encountered when taxis are substituted for HandyDART:

After an hour and a half . . . the cab had still not arrived. This meant the staff person could not go home and my son was very upset

“My son, G. is non-verbal [when HandyDART] sent a cab for him the driver tried to find out from him where he lives and drew a blank. [HandyDART] drivers are trained and familiar with G’s unique needs and provide a safe and relaxed ride for him.”

“After an hour and a half . . . the cab had still not arrived. This meant the staff person could not go home and my son was very upset . . . I definitely told Handydart that a taxi would not work for my son but my request was ignored. It seems that Translink is determined to subject my son to the unnecessary stress and uncertainty by substituting his regular Handydart ride with a taxi”

³⁰ Ann Vrlak (2005) *Engaging the Future: Making HandyDART a TransLink Subsidiary*. Coalition of handyDART Users. P 16 www.bccpd.bc.ca/docs/handydart-subsidiary-web.pdf

³¹ Patty Winsa (Apr 16 2013) *Toronto Star* “Toronto cab companies agree to stop illegal extra charges for wheelchair passengers”
www.thestar.com/news/gta/2013/04/16/toronto_cab_companies_agree_to_drop_illegal_extra_fees_for_wheelchair_users.html

³² Roy Lave & Rosemary Mathias (2000) *State of the Art of Paratransit*. Transportation Research Board. Pp 3-4.

“Door to door’ service is essential”

A coordinator for a day program for older adults in Metro Vancouver described in a June 2013 letter how substituting taxis for regular HandyDART service puts clients at risk and creates extra work for hospital staff.

“On three separate occasions a specific client was dropped off at the emergency entrance as opposed to the planned drop off area which is the Day Program for Older Adults entrance . . .It was fortunate that staff in emergency approached our client and took him down to the Day Program. This client has dementia . . . and several other complex medical conditions. This client would not have been able to navigate his way through the hospital to get to the Day Program. . . We are very concerned about the use of taxis with our clients who mostly have been diagnosed with some form of dementia or Alzheimer’s disease.”

In an April 2013 letter to TransLink a Coquitlam senior relates how the lack of assistance from a taxi driver and inadequate leg room caused her additional pain:

“This trip was made the first week of physio following knee replacement surgery. Getting into the Bonny’s Taxi was torture, as the vehicle had a very short leg space in front, it was difficult lowering my body into the vehicle, especially without any assistance. The Bonny Taxi driver provided assistance only after I had fully settled myself into the vehicle. As a result, my back was thrown out and the pain in my leg worsened, which was excruciating.”

Taxi Licencing Costs

It is easy to assume that taxi companies must be able to provide service at a lower cost than unionized workers with decent wages and working conditions – since taxi drivers are often poorly paid. However, the reality is much more complex – particularly in major centres such as Metro Vancouver.

**The market value
of a single taxi
licence is about
\$800,000**

One complexity, and major expense, is the cost of taxi licences. A recent Vancouver Sun article put the market value of a single Vancouver taxi licence at about \$800,000 with the sole licence owned by an individual valued at about \$1 million.³³ Transportation economist Stephen Rees describes the result of this for taxi drivers and people with disabilities:

“The rewards for taxi drivers are very low indeed as all the benefits of the shortage of licences accrue to those who currently hold them. Wages and conditions are

³³ Jeff Lee (July 12, 2013) “Vancouver taxis ride a fare road to profit: Restricted supply has inflated the market value of an average taxi licence to \$800,000” *Vancouver Sun*.

abysmal, and thus the training and customer service provided is low. People with disabilities who often have to rely on taxis have grave reservations about using the system as it is.”³⁴

The owners of taxi licences expect a return on their investment, and when money is borrowed from banks to purchase licences there is interest to be paid. All of this makes running a taxi much more expensive than might be expected. One source suggests that the lease cost for a single taxi licence is about \$4,500 a month.³⁵ Shifting large amounts of custom transit work to taxis could drive up the cost of taxi licences even further, resulting in public money flowing to banks for interest payments and to taxi licences owners rather than to the people who actually drive taxis.

Expenses such as high licence lease costs explain why taxis are not necessarily a low cost option for custom transit, even if the earnings of the drivers are low.

Expenses such as high licence lease costs explain why taxis are not necessarily a low cost option for custom transit, even if the earnings of the drivers are low

Crash Safety Problems with Taxis in Custom Transit Service

The extreme time pressures taxi drivers operate under make it very tempting for them to skip basic safety precautions such as properly securing wheelchairs, even when they have been trained how to do so, and operate accessible vans often enough to maintain their proficiency.

In a 2011 report the City of Vancouver's Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee (PWDAC) identified severe safety problems with the taxi system in Metro Vancouver, including the fact that taxi drivers are not required to do any hands-on training before driving accessible taxis. They reported that in the BC taxi industry:

“Lack of appropriate training and safety regulations has resulted in significant injuries for persons with disabilities. For example, a former Vancouver City Councillor recently fractured his ankle due to an improperly secured wheelchair. A member of the City of Vancouver Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee was recently injured and was told the driver was not “required” to secure wheelchairs.”³⁶

The same PWDAC report expresses optimism that the improved training and enforcement for taxi drivers implemented in Manitoba, after a woman was killed as a result of a taxi

³⁴ Stephen Rees (2012) “Auditing Translink” *Stephen Rees' Blog*

<http://stephenrees.wordpress.com/2012/04/11/auditing-translink/>

³⁵ Luke Brocki (June 1, 2012) “Welcome to Taxiland”. *The Dependant*. <http://thependent.ca/featured/taxiland/>

³⁶ PWDAC (2011) *Issues and Concerns about the Translink Report: “Moving Forward: Improving Metro Vancouver's Transportation Network”* p15 www.straight.com/files/pdf/pwdac_translink.pdf

driver failing to properly secure her wheelchair, would be effective. However, not surprisingly, when CBC TV did a hidden camera investigation in March of 2013 they found that little had changed, and people with disabilities were still being routinely endangered by being denied safety belts and wheelchair securement even when they clearly request that safety procedures be followed.³⁷

In Manitoba, a woman was killed as a result of a taxi driver failing to properly secure her wheelchair

One Burnaby resident describes her close call caused by a taxi driver who did not properly secure her wheelchair:

“Previously, while riding in a wheelchair taxi, the driver failed to tie down my wheelchair resulting in the power chair and myself tipping over inside the taxi. This is why I am on a NO TAXI list.”

Safety problems experienced by people with disabilities in taxis are not limited to Canada. An Irish study found that “wheelchair users do not have access to a reliable, safe taxi service . . . and people are being injured as a result.”³⁸

The issues that lead to safety problems for people with disabilities in taxis are complex, so simple remedies should not be expected to be effective. Optimism that minor changes to the taxi system will greatly improve safety and service quality for people with disabilities seems to be common among both transit professionals and members of the public, but documented examples of long-term improvements are hard to find.

Other Safety Issues with Taxis

Many of the people who need HandyDART service have physical and/or cognitive disabilities that make them extremely vulnerable to crime and abuse. While most taxi drivers are honest and responsible people trying to make a living in difficult circumstances, including being vulnerable to violent crime themselves, there are safety concerns inherent to this low-pay and high turnover industry.³⁹

In Toronto, a recent media investigation discovered that taxi drivers convicted of serious criminal offences committed while on the job – including assaulting passengers — were still

³⁷ CBC News: Winnipeg (Mar 28, 2013) *Wheelchair taxi drivers caught on hidden camera: Some wheelchair taxi drivers in Winnipeg are not properly securing wheelchairs and not offering safety belts to passengers, a hidden camera investigation by the CBC News I-Team has found.*

www.cbc.ca/player/News/Canada/Manitoba/ID/2363322419/?page=22

³⁸ Cooney M, Walsh D, Gannon S. (2007) “An evaluation of the taxi service available to wheelchair users.” *Ir Med J.* 2007 Jun;100(6):498-500 www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17668684

³⁹ CBC News (May 3, 2012) Cab driving riskier than police work: Taxi drivers twice as likely as police to be victims of homicide while working. www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2012/05/02/f-taxi-cabbie-safety.html

working.⁴⁰ In Metro Vancouver the situation has not been investigated to the same degree, but media reports from the last few years include two instances of taxi drivers convicted for sexually assaulting passengers.⁴¹

No industry is completely free of on the job misconduct, but careful screening and ongoing training is much easier with long term employees. The low pay and resulting high turnover in the taxi industry exposes vulnerable passengers to increased and unnecessary risk.

6) The Public Option

Given the financial pressures and increased demand for HandyDART service, it can be tempting to believe that quick fixes such as contracting out to taxi companies or multinational corporations will provide relief. But the track record of privatization in custom transit has been mixed at best. Generally, the expected cost savings have proven to be illusions, and the service quality problems are difficult to resolve without significantly increasing costs.

Problems with Outsourcing to MV Transportation

The shift of all TransLink HandyDART services from mainly non-profit contractors to the Canadian branch of MV Transportation (MVT) has had decidedly mixed results. The consolidation to one contract may have reduced some of the previous problems with trips between zones served by different contractors. However, other problems have emerged with service quality and efficiency. The TransLink Commissioner's report states:

“The consolidation of operations to one contractor does not appear to have produced any economies of scale. Instead, slippage has occurred in service cost efficiency and effectiveness, as well as productivity.”⁴²

The privatization of HandyDART services also had a negative impact on HandyDART riders, including poor service and a strike largely resulting from MVT's attempt to eliminate pensions for workers.⁴³

⁴⁰ Emily Mathieu & Mary Ormsby (Feb 5, 2013) *Toronto Star* “Assault, drunk driving, death threats: The cab drivers the city can't get off the road”

www.thestar.com/news/investigations/2013/02/05/assault_drunk_driving_death_threats_the_cab_drivers_the_city_cant_get_off_the_road.html#

⁴¹ Bethany Lindsay (July 22, 2010) *ctvbc.ca* “Cab driver raped passenger and stole her ATM card” <http://bc.ctvnews.ca/cab-driver-raped-passenger-and-stole-her-atm-card-1.534985>; Tom Zytaruk (April 5, 2012) *Surrey Now* “Surrey cabbie gets 18 months in jail for sex assault on teen passenger”

www.vancouver.sun.com/news/Surrey+cabbie+gets+months+jail+assault+teen+passenger/6418680/story.html

⁴² Shirocca Consulting (2012) *TransLink Efficiency Review*. P 42.

⁴³ Matthew Burrows (Nov 25, 2009) *Georgia Straight* “HandyDart strike leaves disabled passengers out in the cold” www.straight.com/news/handydart-strike-leaves-disabled-passengers-out-cold

Privatization in conventional public transit service has a poor track record – most notably the disastrous experience from the UK, including the London Underground ‘public private partnership’ which cost the public billions and went bankrupt in 2007.⁴⁴ The problems with trying to create and enforce contracts that create financial incentives for providing good service have proven to be immense, and the failures have been extremely costly both in terms of financial cost and the impact of poor transit service on individuals and society.

In the conventional transit sector, like other large for-profit operators, MV Transportation has a history of performance issues that affect riders and consume large amounts of transit agency staff time – including problems related to low wages and resulting staff turnover. As one former public sector manager with experience with MV Transportation put it:

“If you had a contractor that wanted to run the business and not maximize their profit at every turn, then it would be fine . . . As it tends to work out, you’re spending 85 percent of the time making sure that they’re doing everything in the contract instead of doing the things you need to be doing”⁴⁵

The Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force identified the following problems with MV Transportation custom transit (paratransit) services in US cities:

- “Washington D.C. - issues with timeliness of rides, riders stranded, GPS system malfunctions, increase in accidents when they took over, inexperienced drivers, rude dispatchers
- Dallas - when MV took over paratransit there was problems with timeliness of rides, rides not showing up, long waits on dispatch phone calls
- Gainesville , Fla. - riders filed a civil rights complaint with the federal Department of Transportation against MV because they did not provide rides at schedule times, the reservation system was not working properly and their vehicles were not safe
- Belchertown, MA - paratransit riders forced the city to cut contracts with MV transportation because of poor treatment of disabled riders”⁴⁶

There are many media reports of problems with MV custom transit service in the US. A 2008 Chicago article quotes Fancie Moeller, an Americans with Disabilities Act adviser to the state of California saying that MV "treat the disabled like they're cattle." The same

⁴⁴ E.g. Todd Litman (2011) *Contrasting Visions of Urban Transport - Critique of "Fixing Transit: The Case For Privatization"* Victoria Transport Policy Institute www.vtpi.org/cont_vis.pdf; CUPE (2008) *Metronet P3 failure 'spectacular'* http://cupe.ca/privwatchfeb08/Metronet_P3_failure

⁴⁵ Zusha Elinson (March 9, 2013) "MV Transportation woes go beyond Tahoe" *Lake Tahoe News*. www.laketahoenews.net/2013/03/mv-transportation-woes-go-beyond-tahoe/

⁴⁶ (2013) *MV Paratransit Concerns*. www.milwaukeeemhtf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/MV-paratransit-concerns1.pdf

article quotes a Washington DC transportation planner stating that MV's modus operandi is "to be the low-bid contractor and outbid the other competitors and then actually end up getting more money because it turns out they can't operate within the bid."⁴⁷ While MVT has a long record of problems, its track record seems to be fairly typical of large for-profit companies providing custom transit service.

Private Contracts Impractically Complex

In the book *A Very Public Solution* the Australian transportation planning professor Paul Mees puts forward a compelling and well documented case that for-profit companies should not be involved in coordinating and planning functions in conventional public transit. Mees explains that it is impractically complex to align public service with the profit motive in large public transit systems.⁴⁸ The same argument applies to at least the dispatch and supervisory aspects of custom transit – a contract that covered all aspects of quality service would be enormously complex and difficult to enforce.

A contract that covered all aspects of quality service would be enormously complex and difficult to enforce

Coalition of HandyDART Users Public Proposal

In 2005 the Coalition of HandyDART Users (CHU) published a report calling for HandyDART to be operated as a subsidiary of TransLink rather than being contracted out. One of the main justifications for this proposed change was to improve staff retention, as they believed that experienced drivers provide better and more sensitive service:

“The two things that handyDART users care about the most are:

- 1) expanding the availability and flexibility of rides, and
- 2) a safe and professional service with well-trained drivers.

Custom transit employees are the people we interact with every day. Drivers have a job that is very distinct from that of conventional bus drivers, including:

- Experience, training and sensitivity with a range of disabilities, conditions and impairments.
- Provision of a door-to-door service.
- Planning custom routes.
- Safety and securement of passengers.
- One-on-one attention for passengers.

⁴⁷ Jessica Pupovac (August 13, 2008) “Chicago paratransit operator no stranger to complaints” *Chi Town Daily News*. www.chitowndailynews.org/2008/08/13/Chicago-paratransit-operator-no-stranger-to-complaints-15353.html

⁴⁸ (2000) *A very public solution: Transport in the dispersed city*. Melbourne University Press.

For those of us using handyDART, the employees we most appreciate are those with experience and sensitivity. These are qualities and abilities that drivers develop through serving customers with a variety of needs over time. This is why it is CHU's position that longevity and training of employees is crucial to a safe, quality service for us – and why we are proposing a permanent subsidiary. The instability of the current contracting process undermines staff longevity.”⁴⁹

Custom transit drivers facing poor pay and working conditions quit as soon as they find better jobs, and the only way to overcome this is to improve wages, benefits and working conditions. A TRB report asserts that the “difficulty in hiring, training, and retaining qualified paratransit drivers will continue to be a problem in the paratransit industry until the industry finds a way to compensate quality drivers.”⁵⁰

Given the poor track record that for-profit companies have for service quality and cost effectiveness, CHU's recommendation that HandyDART be operated as a publically owned subsidiary of TransLink should be seriously considered.

**CHU's
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7) Conclusion

There is no denying that the increased numbers of older seniors will translate into a greater population of people with disabilities and a resulting need for HandyDART and other services. The question is how to respond to this need. Responses such as freezing service levels and allowing service to deteriorate, or attempting to cut costs by contracting to low-wage employers such as taxi companies are counterproductive.

Instead, it is time to recognize the benefits of providing good quality transit service that is accessible to all. These benefits include reduced barriers to employment and education, reductions in health care costs, and allowing older people with disabilities to fully participate in their communities.

Improving the conventional transit system, the sidewalk network, and numerous other features of our communities is also essential to creating the 'age friendly communities' that most governments now claim to be working towards. And there is considerable potential to moderate the increase in HandyDART service that will be required, with adequate

⁴⁹ Ann Vrlak (2005) *Engaging the Future: Making HandyDART a TransLink Subsidiary*. Coalition of handyDART Users. www.bccpd.bc.ca/docs/handydart-subsidiary-web.pdf P 13

⁵⁰ Roy Lave & Rosemary Mathias (2000) *State of the Art of Paratransit*. Transportation Research Board. Pp 3-4

investment and re-allocation of road space. Some of these changes can also increase the efficiency of HandyDART service.

These changes will involve investing considerable amounts of money in both capital and operating costs. But the benefits far outweigh the cost. It is time to make the very considerable ongoing investments in public transit, including HandyDART, needed to make Metro Vancouver a livable and age friendly region.

