

# HandyDART Modernization Program Customer & Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement Summary Report

TransLink Public Engagement

June 2021

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HandyDART is an on-demand door-to-door transit service for people in Metro Vancouver who are unable to use conventional public transit without assistance. The service has approximately 19,000 active customers and in recent years (excluding COVID-19 related impacts in 2020) has averaged over 1.3 million trips annually.

Demand for HandyDART has consistently increased over the years. Between 2014 (1,168,900) and 2019 (1,381,800), HandyDART delivered 18% more trips annually. Through the implementation of recommendations from the [2017 Custom Transit Service Delivery Review](#), TransLink has improved service quality by:

- Increasing HandyDART service
- Improving dispatching
- Providing high-visibility signage for taxis providing HandyDART trips
- Launching a travel training program

TransLink has continued to seek opportunities to improve HandyDART customer experience.

In spring of 2021, TransLink staff engaged on a package of potential HandyDART updates bundled as the HandyDART Modernization Program, designed to improve the customer experience from start to finish.

The engagement was conducted between March 29 and April 25, and included Compass implementation on HandyDART in 2021, updating fares to introduce age-based discounts, and updating the registration system to support long-term sustainability of HandyDART, and the future option of online booking.

Customers and stakeholders were informed of the engagement through multiple channels including, online (web, video, email, social media), print (postcards, newspapers) and traditional media. Feedback was sought through a survey (print, online and phone), virtual workshops, a telephone townhall, email and phone calls. The response was robust:

- Over 800 surveys were completed
- Over 100 people participated in workshops/townhall event
- Over 600 phone calls were received
- Nearly 50 email submissions of feedback

Some respondents raised concerns about the survey regarding length, complexity of content and the nature of the questions.

## COMPASS ON HANDYDART

Through the engagement, staff sought feedback on how to best support HandyDART customers to adopt Compass, and to understand what aspects of the change might be most concerning.

Most stakeholders expressed general support for rolling out Compass on HandyDART:

- Convenience of Compass is appreciated; easy to load fares and passes
- Compass gives access to stored value fares which are cheaper than cash fares
- Familiarity factor – many HandyDART customers mentioned they already use Compass

However, some concerns were also raised:

- Potential barriers for some to obtaining, loading and checking card balances, such as Compass Vending Machine locations, familiarity with online tools, and language barriers
- Due to a physical or cognitive disability, some customers may not be able to use a Compass Card
- May be challenging for customers who need to carry multiple cards
- Health service providers expressed concerns with managing fares for multiple clients

## POTENTIAL CHANGES TO HANDYDART FARES (AGE-BASED DISCOUNTS)

Through the engagement, staff sought input on the potential introduction of age-based discounts on HandyDART, to better align fares with the conventional transit system.

When survey participants were asked to indicate their level of support for age-based discounts on HandyDART, 78% of the 811 respondents indicated some level of support. Key reasons for supporting age-based discounts raised in the survey and workshops:

- Seniors and youth have limited income so cheaper fares help
- Helps seniors meet other life costs
- Discount is worth the small decrease in service availability (but some also indicated that they support cheaper fares but not at the expense of service availability)

Few stakeholders did express some concerns:

- Fares should be income-based
- Concession fares should be available to all HandyDART customers, regardless of age
- BC Bus Pass should be valid on HandyDART
- Concern that increased demand from age-based discounts will impact service availability

## POTENTIAL NEW REGISTRATION PROCESS WITH A PERSONALIZED CONSULTATION

The engagement also requested feedback on changing the HandyDART registration process. The potential change was to include a mandatory in-person consultation in place of the current paper-based medical verification, to better understand applicants' abilities and support customers with the best transit options to meet their needs.

While customers and stakeholders agreed that increased demand is a growing concern and HandyDART should only be used by those needing the service, a majority expressed concerns about a mandatory personal consultation component to HandyDART registration:

- Barrier to accessing HandyDART service
  - Customers with cognitive disabilities may find it difficult to participate
  - Customers with language barriers may find it difficult to participate
- Personal consultation adds to the burden of paperwork and appointments people with disabilities already face
- Delays approval to use HandyDART
- Applicants could feel judged and not trusted
- Doctors familiar with applicants are best able to assess their transit needs
- A healthcare professional (e.g. occupational therapist) may not understand complex, invisible, or episodic disabilities

Some participants expressed support for a personal consultation component to registration:

- Applicants learn about conventional and HandyDART transit services
- Helps HandyDART staff connect with applicant family members to align understanding and expectations about the service
- Personal consultation cost covered by TransLink, whereas some doctors charge a fee to fill out and submit application forms
- The personal consultation healthcare professional would be informed about HandyDART and conventional transit services
  - A personal doctor is in a better position to advocate for patient's needs than to do an initial assessment
- Support travel training, but not as part of the registration process.
- Stakeholders expressed support for a personal consultation as an optional part of registration process

## NEXT STEPS

The Compass project team will use feedback to inform the customer adoption plan that will roll out in advance of activating Compass on HandyDART in Fall 2021.

TransLink staff will use feedback on the potential changes to fares to inform their report to TransLink's Board of Directors and seek direction this spring. If approved by the Board, the fare changes would coincide with the introduction of Compass on HandyDART.

TransLink staff will use the feedback received to inform a proposal to update the HandyDART registration process and will seek direction from TransLink's Board of Directors. If approved by the Board, a new registration process is not anticipated to be implemented before 2023.

# **Customer & Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report**

## BACKGROUND

HandyDART has provided door-to-door transit service since 1980 for people in Metro Vancouver who are unable to navigate conventional public transit without assistance.

In March 2017, TransLink's Board of Directors endorsed recommendations for changes to HandyDART service identified through the Custom Transit Service Delivery Review (CTSDR). The recommendations focused on improving HandyDART customer experience and increasing the availability of service. As Metro Vancouver's population ages, demand for HandyDART is expected to substantially increase in the coming years.

TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company have continued to advance the programs and policies as endorsed by the Board. Progress reports on the implementation of the CTSDR recommendations were provided to the Board in December 2017, June 2018, March 2019, and March 2020. Recent HandyDART improvements include:

- HandyDART service increases
- Extended HandyDART booking window
- Improvements to dispatching
- High-visibility signage for taxis providing HandyDART trips
- Launch of a Travel Training program

In 2019, TransLink's Access Transit staff engaged with HandyDART customers, caregivers, support workers and other stakeholders to co-create a solution updating the registration process. By updating the registration process, applicants can be better matched with transit services that fit their abilities. In a parallel service-design engagement, stakeholders also provided their input on bringing Compass to HandyDART.

In the spring of 2021, TransLink staff engaged HandyDART customers and stakeholders on a package of updates designed to improve the customer experience from start to finish.

The HandyDART Modernization Program package includes:

- Bringing **Compass to HandyDART** for easier and more convenient payment options;
- **Potential Changes to HandyDART Fares** with age-based discounts (concession fares for youth and seniors) for eligible customers to better match the conventional transit system;
- A **Potential New Registration Process** with a personalized consultation to help meet the needs of customers and to support long-term sustainability of HandyDART service;
- Introducing **Online Booking** in addition to the existing phone booking system.

Beginning March 29, 2021, TransLink conducted a four-week engagement program, targeting HandyDART customers and stakeholders to seek feedback on potential changes to registration and fares; feedback on how to support HandyDART customers in using Compass; and to share information on the addition of an online tool to book HandyDART trips.

## ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

From Monday March 29 through Sunday April 25, 2021, TransLink conducted customer and stakeholder engagement on the HandyDART Modernization Program.

TransLink held six virtual workshops: two for service providers and medical professionals on April 7 and 15; two for HandyDART customers and their caregivers on April 15 and 17; one for TransLink's HandyDART Users' Advisory Committee on April 21; and one for TransLink's Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee on April 28.

A Telephone Town Hall was held April 8, which was open to all stakeholders or members of the public to attend.

TransLink also met with municipal committees and other groups during the engagement, including: City of Vancouver's Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, April 8; Maple Ridge's Municipal Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness, April 15; and Disability Alliance of BC, April 26.

Opportunities to provide input outside of events included a survey, which could be completed online, by phone, or by return mail. Stakeholders and customers could also correspond with project team staff through an email address and a dedicated project phone line. Translation services were available by request through the phone line.



## NOTIFICATION

Customers and stakeholders were notified about the public engagement opportunities, including options to complete a survey by phone or return mail, using several notification methods – all included a link to the project website ([translink.ca/hdm](https://translink.ca/hdm)), email address ([publicengagement@translink.ca](mailto:publicengagement@translink.ca)), and the dedicated project phone line (**604.953.3648**):

### Postcards

During the first week of engagement postcards were delivered by Canada Post to 19,000 registered HandyDART customers.

### Project website and TransLink Listens

Information about the engagement period, including ways to participate and project materials, were posted to the project website, [translink.ca/hdm](https://translink.ca/hdm). The landing page generated 2,547 unique page views during the engagement period. The survey was hosted on TransLink's civic engagement portal ([engagetranslink.ca/handydart-modernization-program](https://engagetranslink.ca/handydart-modernization-program)), where visitors could also register for events. The TransLink Listens project page generated 1,377 page visits.

### Newspaper ads

Between March 29 and April 9, 2021, two ads promoting the engagement ran in these 10 community newspapers (20 ads in total): *Vancouver is Awesome*, *Burnaby Now*, *Delta Optimist*, *New West Record*, *Tri-Cities News*, *North Shore News*, *Richmond News*, *Peach Arch News*, *Sing Tao*, *Mind Pao*, *Indo Canadian Times*, and *Sach Di Awaaz*.

### Transit advertising

Ads ran on digital platform information displays (PIDS) at SkyTrain, West Coast Express and SeaBus stations during the engagement period.

### Stakeholder emails

Emails promoting the engagement opportunities were sent to 258 organizations representing or providing services to HandyDART users.

### Social media campaign

The engagement was promoted across TransLink's social media channels, including Buzzer Blog (1 post); Twitter (4 posts), Facebook (1 post), LinkedIn (1 post) and Instagram (1 post).

### Media campaign

A March 29 news release promoting the engagement garnered coverage by online, broadcast and print outlets, including: Daily Hive, City News, Global News, BC1, CTV News, *Vancouver is Awesome*, *Burnaby Now*, *Delta Optimist*, *New West Record*, and *Mass Transit Magazine*.

### Newsletters

The engagement was promoted in newsletters including: Access Transit E-news (2,256 subscribers); TransLink's general e-newsletter (5,639 subscribers); and the HandyDART print newsletter, 10,000 copies of which were distributed to customers travelling on HandyDART and included in the welcome packages sent to new HandyDART customers.

## PARTICIPATION

Between March 29 and April 25, 2021, there was a total of 1,643 public and stakeholder interactions, including:

- **835 completed surveys:**
  - 580 online
  - 120 by phone
  - 135 by postage-paid return mail
  
- **20 participants**  
2 Virtual Workshops  
for Service Providers  
& Medical Professionals
  
- **16 participants**  
2 Virtual Workshops  
for Customers & Caregivers
  
- **12 participants**  
Virtual Workshop  
for TransLink's HandyDART  
Users' Advisory Committee
  
- **17 participants**  
Virtual Workshop  
for TransLink's Access Transit  
Users' Advisory Committee
  
- **57 participants**  
Telephone Town Hall
  
- **46 written submissions**  
emailed to [publicengagement@translink.ca](mailto:publicengagement@translink.ca)
  
- **645 calls**  
Project Phone Line

## ENGAGEMENT METHODS

### Survey

The survey was hosted on the TransLink Listens civic engagement platform and available through a link on the project webpage. Respondents could also choose to complete the survey by phone or through postage-paid return mail by request. Translation support to complete the survey by phone was available by request.

Each survey section included an open text field for respondents to provide additional comments or questions. An open text field at the end of the survey allowed respondents to provide comments on the HandyDART Modernization Program overall.

Attendees of the telephone town hall and virtual workshops were encouraged to complete the survey immediately following their participation to offer feedback while the content was still fresh in their minds.

### Telephone Town Hall

- A telephone town hall was held April 8 from 6:00 to 7:00 pm.

### Virtual workshops

- Two virtual workshops were held for **Service Providers and Medical Professionals** on Zoom on April 7 from 5:00 pm to 6:15 pm and on April 15 from 3:00 pm to 4:15 pm.
- Two virtual workshops were held for **Customers and Caregivers** on Zoom on April 15 from 6:00-7:30 pm and on April 17 from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm.
- A virtual workshop was held for the **HandyDART Users' Advisory Committee** on April 21 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.
- A virtual workshop was held for TransLink's **Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee** on April 28 from 11:45 am to 1:30 pm.

### Project web page

Engagement materials were posted on the project website at [translink.ca/hdm](https://translink.ca/hdm), including detailed information about the HandyDART Modernization Program and links to related background documents. The page included a link to the online survey on TransLink Listens.

### TransLink Listens project page

The TransLink Listens project page ([engagetranslink.ca/handydart-modernization-program](https://engagetranslink.ca/handydart-modernization-program)) hosted the online survey, event information and online registration, project contact information, detailed project information, presentation boards, and a narrated video of the presentation boards.

### Email

The TransLink Public Affairs email address, [publicengagement@translink.ca](mailto:publicengagement@translink.ca), was included in notification and presentation material as an additional way for stakeholders to connect with the project team and to register for events.

**Project phone line**

A project phone line was established for the duration of the engagement period. The number was included in the notification materials, on the project webpage, and at TransLink Listens to facilitate additional engagement opportunities, register for events, request paper surveys, and to do the survey by phone.

## WHAT WE HEARD

The following themes emerged in the feedback provided by participants in the virtual workshops and telephone town hall, and survey respondents. Themes are organized under the three sections of the HandyDART Modernization Program, with a section capturing feedback from stakeholders on the survey design.

Within the survey, respondents could provide additional comments in the open text fields at the end of each section, and for the overall package. Mustel Group Market Research conducted an independent analysis of the **1,721 comments** provided by respondents, measuring sentiment and capturing themes.

Detailed survey responses are included in **Appendix A**.

### COMPASS ON HANDYDART

Overall, most stakeholders expressed general **support** for rolling out Compass on HandyDART:

- Convenience of Compass is appreciated; easy to load fares and passes
- Compass gives access to stored value fares which are cheaper than cash fares
- Familiarity factor – many HandyDART customers mentioned they already use Compass

However, some **concerns** were also raised:

- Potential barriers for some to obtaining, loading and checking card balances, such as Compass Vending Machine locations, familiarity with online tools, and language barriers
- Due to a physical or cognitive disability, some customers may not be able to use a Compass Card
- May be challenging for customers who need to carry multiple cards
- Health service providers expressed concerns with managing fares for multiple clients

The nature of questions received during workshops and through the survey indicated a need to clearly communicate to customers and care givers how to purchase and manage a Compass Card; as well as when to use Compass for those who also use a BC Bus Pass, CNIB card, TaxiSavers, or a HandyCard.

#### Survey Comments

Of the **368 survey comments** on Compass on HandyDART 59% were supportive, 51% expressed concern, and 6% were neutral (total value exceeds 100% due to comments that included expressions of both support and concern).

**Supportive** comments noted the convenience of using Compass, with some commenting they already have a Compass Card.

Key themes of **concern** included issues with loading and checking card balances, location of Compass vending machines, and access issues related to internet use and language. Other

comments expressed concern about the ability of those with cognitive disabilities to use Compass.

### Virtual Workshops

**Concerns** were expressed about the need to carry both a Compass Card and BC Bus Pass; and how Compass would work for those unable to tap their card.

HDUAC members **shared ideas** on how to support HandyDART customers in using Compass: including providing customers with a lanyard; a desire to have Compass Cards sold on HandyDART with drivers being able to load fare products; videos on how to load and tap cards; and having HandyDART customers who already use Compass talk to their peers.

During the **UAC** workshop members had questions about whether CNIB card and BC Bus Pass users required a separate Compass Card for HandyDART; and whether stored value could be added to a BC Bus Pass. **Concern** was expressed over the requirement for some users to carry separate cards for travel on HandyDART and on conventional transit. Discussion of how to use and load fares on Compass Cards included concern that those without credit cards would not benefit from features such as auto reload.

**Ideas shared** by UAC members on supporting customers in using Compass included: having drivers share informational material; a training video with ASL for the deaf community; and training webinars for large groups of seniors.

During the **Customers and Caregivers** workshops stakeholders also wanted to learn about how to purchase and load Compass Cards. Support was expressed for extending Compass to HandyDART, with some stakeholders noting the convenience of Compass over FareSavers or cash fares.

**Concerns** were expressed about the ability of users unable to physically tap to pay their fare, with one stakeholder noting that requiring these users to wear a lanyard to hold their card was not dignified. Caregivers also raised the issue of how Compass would work for customers with cognitive disabilities, who do not manage their own fare payment (fares may be paid on their behalf by a caregiver or service provider at the beginning or end of a trip).

To support customers in using Compass, these stakeholders' **ideas** included: telephone-based information; providing a Compass Card to all new HandyDART customers; selling cards on HandyDART vehicles; providing lanyards for Compass and ID cards; training videos, which could be viewed several times and paused as needed; and printed material in a readable font.

**Service Providers and Medical Professionals** expressed the strongest **concerns** about how Compass would work for customers with cognitive disabilities, who do not currently manage their own fares, echoing concerns shared in the Customer and Caregiver sessions. We also heard questions from organizations that purchase fares for clients, such as Adult Day Programs, about how they would manage cards for multiple clients, noting it would be an administrative burden that many non-profits are not prepared to take on. Stakeholders also shared concerns about the ability of older clients to adapt to the new fare technology.

Ideas to support HandyDART users in adopting Compass included: training videos; and a phone line for those who can't access the internet.

### Telephone Town Hall

We heard **questions** about how customers with mobility issues and dementia would tap Compass Cards to pay fares; and about using BC Bus Pass on HandyDART. Participants also had questions on how to purchase Compass Cards and load fares, and the timing of Compass on HandyDART.

## POTENTIAL CHANGES TO HANDYDART FARES

Overall, the feedback supported extending age-based discounts (concession fares for youth and seniors) to HandyDART.

Key reasons for **supporting** age-based discounts raised in the survey and workshops:

- Seniors and youth have limited income so cheaper fares help
- Helps seniors meet other life costs
- Discount is worth the small decrease in service availability (but some also indicated that they support cheaper fares but not at the expense of service availability)

Few stakeholders did express some **concerns**:

- Fares should be income-based
- Concession fares should be available to all HandyDART customers, regardless of age
- BC Bus Pass should be valid on HandyDART
- Concern that increased demand from age-based discounts will impact service availability

### Levels of Support and Survey Comments

When asked to indicate level of support for age-based discounts on HandyDART in a multiple choice question, 78% of survey respondents supported age-based discounts (61% “strongly support” and 17% “somewhat support”), with only 10% opposing (5% “somewhat oppose” and 5% “strongly oppose”).

And when asked to indicate level of support for age-based discounts considering a potential increase in demand for HandyDART service a peak times, the level of overall support dropped to 64% (40% “strongly support” and 24% “somewhat support”), with opposition increasing to 21% (13% “somewhat oppose” and 8% “strongly oppose”). Even with this potential impact, the majority of respondents supported introducing age-based discounts on HandyDART.

Key themes expressed through 435 open-ended comments received included expressions of **support** for age-based discounts, noting the benefit for low-income seniors; expressions of **concern** included a desire to extend discounts them beyond age categories, as well as some concern about impact of discounts on demand for HandyDART service availability.

### Virtual Workshops

**HUAC** members expressed **support** for age-based discounts, as well as **concern** for age groups (adults 19-64 years old) that would not be eligible for discounted fares or able to use their BC Bus Pass on HandyDART. Concern was also expressed about the overall affordability of extending discounts to HandyDART customers.

**UAC** members expressed similar concerns about those who would not be eligible (adults 19-65 years old). One member stated that people with disabilities are significantly disadvantaged, but many seniors are not. **Support** was also expressed for age-based discounts.

A key theme of **concern** expressed by **Customer and Caregivers** echoed HDUAC and UAC concerns about limiting discounts by age, with a desire for discounts to be extended to all HandyDART customers, noting that people aged 19-64 may be on limited income. Some concern was also shared about the potential increase in demand for service because of discounts and a desire to expand service.

We also heard **support** for age-based discounts but concern that HandyDART could remain expensive for those 65 and older who would be unable to use a BC Bus Pass on HandyDART.

During the workshops for **Service Providers and Medical Professionals** there was limited discussion about the potential introduction of age-based discounts on HandyDART. Of the feedback received, **support** was expressed for age-based discounts. **Concern** was expressed about the impact on the fiscal budget of extending discounts to HandyDART users.

### Telephone Town Hall

Town hall participants did not express concern or support for age-based discounts. Questions were asked to clarify who would qualify for the discounted fares.

## POTENTIAL UPDATED REGISTRATION PROCESS

While customers and stakeholders agreed that increased demand is a growing concern, a majority expressed **concerns** about a mandatory personal consultation component to HandyDART registration:

- Barrier to accessing HandyDART service
  - Customers with cognitive disabilities may find it difficult to participate
  - Customers with language barriers may find it difficult to participate
- Personal consultation adds to the burden of paperwork and appointments people with disabilities already face
- Delays approval to use HandyDART
- Applicants could feel judged and not trusted
- Doctors familiar with applicants are best able to assess their transit needs
- A healthcare professional (e.g. occupational therapist) may not understand complex, invisible, or episodic disabilities

Some participants expressed **support** for a personal consultation component to registration:

- Applicants learn about conventional and HandyDART transit services
- Helps HandyDART staff connect with applicant family members to align understanding and expectations about the service
- Personal consultation cost covered by TransLink, whereas some doctors charge a fee to fill out and submit application forms



- The personal consultation healthcare professional would be informed about HandyDART and conventional transit services
  - A personal doctor is in a better position to advocate for patient's needs than to do an initial assessment
- Support travel training, but not as part of the registration process.
- Stakeholders expressed support for a personal consultation as an optional part of registration process

### Survey Comments

Analysis of **428 survey comments** on the potential registration changes identified 74% expressed concern, 16% were supportive, and 6% neutral.

The key themes in the **expressions of concern** around registration changes included concern that the updated process would be bureaucratic, complicated, and time consuming. Opposition to the proposed personal consultation was also notable, with a preference for assessment by a doctor, as well as a concern that the personal consultation favours expert opinion over the needs of individuals. The updated registration process was also seen as a potential barrier to accessing HandyDART service for vulnerable individuals who could not complete the steps or participate in a personal consultation. Comments also identified a concern that the process was discriminatory and seen as asking people to prove disability to access services.

Comments **supportive** of the potential updated registration process indicated the proposed process and requirements were fair and reasonable and noted HandyDART should only be used by those needing the service.

### Virtual workshops

During the virtual workshops the themes of **concern** identified in the survey comments were echoed to varying degrees, based on stakeholder group, with additional areas of concern emerging.

In the virtual workshop for **HandyDART Users' Advisory Committee** (H DUAC) members we heard strong opposition to the potential updated registration process. Key areas of concern about the proposed process included:

- Creating a barrier to accessing HandyDART service
- Delaying approvals to use HandyDART service
- Applicants feeling judged and not trusted, required to verify their disabilities
- Unlikely that people would apply for HandyDART who did not need to use it
- Concern about protection of personal information and who would have access to it

A key concern expressed by H DUAC members was around the personal consultation. We heard the following themes:

- Doctors or specialists familiar with applicants are best able to assess their transit needs
- A healthcare professional (e.g. occupational therapist) may not understand complex, invisible, or episodic disabilities
- Questions about criteria healthcare professional would use to assess eligibility

We did hear some **support** for the proposed process during the H DUAC workshop, with a member expressing support for the personal consultation, noting that learning about

conventional and HandyDART transit services would be valuable to applicants. Other HDUAC members supported travel training, but not as part of the registration process.

Participants in the virtual workshop for the **Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee** (UAC) expressed **concerns** similar to feedback from HDUAC members about the potential registration changes. Key themes included:

- The new process adds to the burden of paperwork and appointments people with disabilities and their families already face
- The new process requires individuals to prove disability
- Concern about ability of some to participate, e.g. those with cognitive disabilities
- Concern about who would be required to participate in a personal consultation
- Concern that conditions of a one-time personal consultation could impact the evaluation
- Doctor is better able to assess transit needs because they know applicant
- Support for a personal consultation as an optional part of registration process
- Support travel training, but not at the point where eligibility is being determined

During the two virtual workshops for **Customers and Care Givers**, participants highlighted **concerns** also heard in the users' advisory group sessions. Concerns focussed on the proposed personal consultation, echoing concerns about potential to be harmful for applicants and the new process overall being a barrier to service. Key concerns included:

- Opposition to a mandatory personal consultation, preferring it be an equal choice or voluntary part of registration
- Concern about cost of personal consultation process, preferring money spent on service
- Concern that the new process will not address sustainability of HandyDART service
- Providing more taxi trips would be a better way to address sustainability
- Travel training unnecessary: residential facility caregivers already understand options
- Travel training unnecessary: users can judge own ability to use conventional transit.
- Doctors know applicants best and are more qualified to assess patients' needs
- Doctors are qualified to assess episodic and invisible disabilities
- Concern about the criteria that a TransLink healthcare provider would use to assess eligibility
- Concern about whether a TransLink healthcare provider would be given enough time to understand applicants' abilities
- Questions about the ability to appeal eligibility decision
- Privacy concerns about how applicants' medical information would be kept secure

We did hear some **support** for travel training with the caveat that it, along with conditional eligibility, would be possible without a making a personal consultation a mandatory component of the updated registration process.

We also heard some **support** for a personal consultation conducted by a TransLink healthcare provider, noting that the cost would be covered by TransLink, whereas some doctors charge a fee to fill out and submit application forms.

We heard agreement that trip availability is a concern, and **support** for TransLink to make changes to ensure the long-term sustainability of the service in the future. There wasn't

agreement, however, that changing the registration process was the right solution to address sustainability.

During the two virtual workshops for **Service Providers and Medical Professionals**, participants' **concerns** about the potential updated registration process focussed on who would be required to participate in a personal consultation and the impact of the process on timely approvals. Key concerns included:

- Ability of clients with cognitive disabilities to participate in a personal consultation
- Ability of clients with language barrier to participate in personal consultation
- Recommendation that elderly, frail applicants and dialysis patients get direct approval
- Concern that proposed process would slow down and complicate access to service

These stakeholders expressed some **support** for including a personal consultation as part of the updated registration process. Key areas of support included:

- A personal consultation and travel training will benefit some clients
- A personal conversation could help HandyDART staff connect with family members
- A personal consultation with the applicant and their family would help them understand HandyDART and manage their expectations
- A personal consultation could help older clients and caregivers complete the application and explain HandyDART (a function currently provided by nurses at participant's facility)

### Telephone Town Hall

During the **Telephone Town Hall**, which was primarily a question and answer session, we heard a **diversity of comments** on the potential updated registration process.

**Concerns** similar to those heard in virtual workshops were shared about the requirement for a personal consultation and how it would be conducted. They included:

- User group is already burdened by many appointments to access services and healthcare; a personal consultation adds to the burden
- Question about value of consultation to the applicant
- Preference for applicant's doctor to assess transit needs, over an unfamiliar healthcare professional
- Comment that the requirement for a personal consultation feels threatening

Notably, **support** was expressed during this session for including a personal consultation conducted by a healthcare professional such as an occupational therapist, over a doctor. Reasons provided included:

- A healthcare professional would be informed about HandyDART and conventional transit
- A doctor is in a better position to advocate for patient's needs than to do an initial assessment

## ENGAGEMENT

Over the course of the engagement period we received feedback through stakeholder meetings, survey comments, and in virtual workshops that some respondents had **concerns** about the survey design. Key themes of concern included: survey included too much detail; it was difficult

for some to understand; it was challenging to complete; it focussed on implementation concerns while communicating policy aspects.

We also heard a concern that a focus on elements of the proposed personal consultation in the survey created an impression for some stakeholders that a decision had already been made to include a personal consultation as part of an updated registration process.

## NEXT STEPS

Following the conclusion of the customer and stakeholder engagement:

- TransLink staff will use the feedback received to inform a proposal to update the **HandyDART Registration Process** and will seek direction from TransLink's Board of Directors. If approved by the Board, a new registration process could be implemented in 2023.
- TransLink staff will use feedback on **Potential Fare Changes** to inform their recommendations to TransLink's Board of Directors and seek direction this spring. If approved by the Board, the fare changes would coincide with the launch of Compass on HandyDART.
- Compass project team will use feedback to inform the customer adoption plan that will roll out in advance of activating **Compass on HandyDART** later in 2021.
- Implementation of **Online Booking**, to complement HandyDART's existing telephone booking service, is pending IT readiness and anticipated in early 2022.

# Appendices

## APPENDIX A: Detailed Survey Responses

### SURVEY

From March 29 to April 25, 2021, a survey was available through a link on the project webpage and hosted on TransLink Listens. Participants could also choose to complete a survey over the phone or by postage-paid return mail. A total of 835 surveys were submitted, 580 online, 135 by return mail, and 120 by phone.

A majority of respondents were registered HandyDART customers (70%), over 65 years of age (62.8%); and described themselves as female (70.7%). Respondents from 20 municipalities completed the survey, with the highest participation (33.5%) coming from Vancouver (including the University Endowment Lands); followed by Surrey (15.9%); and Burnaby (10.3%).

Nearly half of the respondents had used HandyDART for several years, with 44.4% having registered more than 5 years ago; and 16.6% registering within the past 3 to 5 years. Only 10% had registered in the past year.

It is important to note that respondents may not have answered every question and may have opted to complete the survey more than one time.

### Who completed the survey

#### I am participating in this survey because I am...

Category	Number	Percentage
A HandyDART customer (or on behalf of a HandyDART customer)	579	69.3
A caregiver or loved one of a current/future HandyDART customer	81	9.7
Healthcare professional or individual working with people who have disabilities	60	7.2
A HandyCard only customer	50	6.0
Not currently a HandyDART customer but I might be in a few years	38	4.6
A member of a disability advocacy group	14	1.7
None of the above	13	1.6

### Age group

Age range	Number	Percentage
More than 85 years of age	149	19.1
75-84 years of age	184	23.5
65-74 years of age	158	20.2
55-64 years of age	107	13.7
45-54 years of age	71	9.1
35-44 years of age	46	5.9
25-34 years of age	38	4.9
19-25 years of age	15	1.9
18 years of age and younger	3	0.4
Prefer not to answer	11	1.4

**How do you describe yourself?**

Options	Number	Percentage
Female	562	70.7
Male	204	25.7
Prefer not to answer	27	3.4
Prefer to self describe	2	0.3

**I live in...**

Municipality	Number	Percentage
<b>Vancouver (including University Endowment Lands)</b>	267	33.5
<b>Surrey</b>	127	15.9
<b>Burnaby</b>	82	10.3
<b>Richmond</b>	65	8.1
<b>Coquitlam</b>	33	4.1
<b>New Westminster</b>	27	3.4
<b>White Rock</b>	25	3.1
<b>Langley (Township)</b>	24	3.0
<b>North Vancouver City</b>	21	2.6
<b>Langley (City)</b>	20	2.5
<b>Delta</b>	19	2.4
<b>Maple Ridge</b>	17	2.1
<b>West Vancouver</b>	13	1.6
<b>North Vancouver District</b>	11	1.4
<b>Port Coquitlam</b>	10	1.3
<b>Chilliwack</b>	6	0.7
<b>Port Moody</b>	4	0.5
<b>Abbotsford</b>	3	0.4
<b>Pitt Meadows</b>	2	0.2
<b>Anmore</b>	1	0.1
<b>Other (please specify*)</b>	21	2.6

\* Calgary, Harrison Hot Springs, Kelowna, Quesnel, Revelstoke, Vancouver Island, and Victoria. No respondents from: Belcarra, Bowen Island, Lion's Bay, Mission, Squamish, and Tsawwassen First Nation.

**I identify as... (Select all that apply)**

Options	Number
<b>A senior (age 65 or older)</b>	484
<b>A person with a visible or invisible disability</b>	444
<b>A person who speaks a language other than English or French at home</b>	105
<b>None of the above</b>	46
<b>Prefer not to answer</b>	34
<b>Other (please specify*)</b>	32
<b>Youth (age 15-24)</b>	16
<b>An indigenous person</b>	11
<b>A new Canadian (I moved to Canada in the last three years)</b>	7
<b>A TransLink or TransLink operating company employee</b>	5

\* Caregivers for seniors and young adults with a disability, healthcare providers, service providers, and visually impaired.



How would you describe your disability, if relevant? (Select all that apply)

Options	Number
Physical	303
Cognitive	73
Visual impairment	71
Neurological	68
Hearing impairment	47
Intellectual	30
Developmental	28
Psychiatric	26
Prefer not to say	21
Other (please specify*)	13

\*Respiratory, brain injured, temporary (pending surgery), fatigue, bladder control, and kidney disease.

Which of the following mobility aids do you use, if any? (Select all that apply)

Type of mobility aid	Number
Cane	226
Walker	225
I don't use a mobility aid	125
Wheelchair	95
Scooter	47
Other (please specify)*	34

\*Braces, require assistance from family member, lift, powerchair, walking poles, CNIB white cane, bariatric walker, bicycle, and crutches.

Before COVID-19, how many one-way trips did you take using HandyDART in a typical week? A one-way trip is a trip to a single destination; for example, a trip to work and home again would be 2 one-way trips.

Trips	Number	Percentage
2 or fewer one-way trips per week	387	66.8
3-5 one-way trips per week	123	21.2
6-10 one-way trips per week	56	9.7
More than 14 one way trips per week	7	1.2
11-14 one-way trips per week	6	1.0

Before COVID-19, how many trips did you take using more than one form of conventional transit in the same trip (e.g., buses, SkyTrain, SeaBus, West Coast Express)?

Trips	Number	Percentage
None	366	46.7
1 or 2 one-way trips per week	226	28.8
3-5 one-way trips per week	98	12.5
6-10 one-way trips per week	68	8.7
11-14 one-way trips per week	16	2.0
More than 14 one way trips per week	10	1.3

**Approximately how long ago did you register for HandyDART?**

Years	Number	Percentage
More than 5 years ago	257	44.4
3-5 years ago	96	16.6
2-3 years ago	91	15.7
1-2 years ago	77	13.3
Less than 1 year ago	58	10

**Which of the following cards do you have, if any? (Select all that apply)**

Type of fare payment cards	Number
HandyCard	335
BC Bus Pass	176
CNIB card	17
U-Pass BC	1

**What they said: about potential updates to the registration process**

How important is it to you that TransLink offers an introductory HandyDART ride to and from the personal consultation, for applicants who need it?

Options	Number	Percentage
I don't know	1	2.9
Extremely important	9	25.7
Very important	13	37.1
Moderately important	7	20.0
Slightly important	3	8.6
Not at all important	2	5.7

The potential new registration process would include a personal consultation. Which of the following options would be able to use if you were to travel to and from the personal consultation in the Metro Vancouver area? (Select all that apply)

Options	Number
An introductory HandyDART ride provided to you by TransLink	53
A ride from a friend of a family member	39
Conventional transit (e.g. buses, SkyTrain, SeaBus, West Coast Express)	22
Taxi	20
Volunteer driving service	11
Assisted living/care home driving service	8

**Before COVID-19, how many times did you use your HandyCard in a typical week?**

Number of trips	Number	Percentage
2 or fewer trips per week	38	76.0
3-5 times per week	10	20.0
6-10 times per week	1	2.0
11-14 times per week	1	2.0
More than 14 times per week	0	0

For each of the following statements, please select the response that best describes what is important to you about the HandyDART application form.

Statement	Level of importance					
	I don't know	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
The form is available in multiple languages	40	173	194	132	65	186
The application can be completed without a doctor/medical professional	51	160	210	143	74	155
The application can be submitted online	48	218	183	138	58	140
A doctor/medical professional must confirm that an applicant needs HandyDART	33	191	210	159	72	125
The application can be submitted by mail	37	231	245	129	57	90

The potential new registration process for HandyDART includes a personal consultation with a healthcare professional who is knowledgeable about disabilities and transit, including HandyDART. For each of the following statements, please select the response that best describes what is important to you about preparing for the personal consultation.

Statement	Level of importance					
	I don't know	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
Scheduling and appointments are offered in a language the applicant is comfortable using, with translation services available if needed	26	188	225	120	69	160
Personal consultations are available on the weekends	46	146	183	174	83	151
Personal consultations are available in the evenings	45	132	163	169	89	178
Applicants who cannot reasonably attend the personal consultation will not be excluded	60	306	221	110	36	53
The reasons why some applicants may not be required to attend the personal consultation will be clearly stated	58	244	264	131	37	46
Someone is available to answer the applicant's questions before their appointment	47	238	277	118	47	54
The applicant is informed that their caregiver or companion is welcome at the personal consultation	40	316	240	90	30	64

For each of the following statements, please select the response that best describes what is important to you about the personal consultation.

Statement	Level of importance					
	I don't know	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
The personal consultation is designed to meet each applicant's needs	34	275	279	128	37	26
The applicant, the health care professional, and TransLink's Access Transit team are working together	33	313	272	102	38	21
The personal consultation is an open dialogue with a healthcare professional where the applicant can ask and answer questions	32	282	276	120	30	31
The personal consultation is an opportunity for the applicant to learn how TransLink services can meet their needs	27	276	299	114	30	31

For each of the following statements, please select the response that best describes what is important to you about the healthcare professional at the personal consultation.

Statement	Level of importance					
	I don't know	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important
The healthcare professional knows how HandyDART works	26	321	283	95	24	28
The healthcare professional knows about the accessibility features available on conventional transit (e.g. buses, SkyTrain, SeaBus, West Coast Express)	32	301	269	102	32	38
The healthcare professional wants to learn about the applicant's day-to-day life	34	194	231	157	78	84
The healthcare professional accepts the applicant's description of their abilities and limitations	34	314	292	88	29	17
The healthcare professional helps the applicant find the best transportation solution for their needs and abilities	38	293	279	94	30	38
The healthcare professional answers all of the applicant's questions about the HandyDART service	34	291	279	104	30	36

The healthcare professional answers all of the applicant's questions about the eligibility recommendation	33	307	289	88	27	26
The healthcare professional clearly explains to the applicant how to appeal the eligibility recommendation if the applicant disagrees	54	341	248	89	25	23

### Do you have any comments you would like to share about the potential registration process?

In total, **428** comments were provided by respondents. An independent analysis of the comments measuring sentiment and identifying key themes was conducted by Mustel Group Market Research. Key themes are summarized in **What We Heard** section of this report.

### What they said: about the potential updated HandyDART fares

#### To what extent do you support or oppose accepting age-based discounts for HandyDART customers?

Level of support	Number	Percentage
Strongly support	496	61.2
Somewhat support	135	16.6
Neither support nor oppose	104	12.8
Somewhat oppose	37	4.6
Strongly oppose	39	4.8

#### It is estimated that age-based discounts will lead to a small increase in demand for HandyDART, which may make it more difficult to book a trip at busy times. With that in mind, to what extent do you support or oppose age-based discounts for HandyDART customers?

Level of support	Number	Percentage
Strongly support	325	40.2
Somewhat support	191	23.6
Neither support nor oppose	123	15.2
Somewhat oppose	101	12.5
Strongly oppose	68	8.4

### Do you have any comments you would like to share about age-based discounts for HandyDART customers?

In total, **435** comments were provided by respondents. An independent analysis of the comments measuring sentiment and identifying key themes was conducted by Mustel Group Market Research. Key themes are summarized in the **What We Heard** section of the report.

**What they said: about using Compass on HandyDART**

**Of the following options, how do think you'd be most likely to add money to your Compass Card balance?** *(Select all that apply)*

<b>Options to add money to Compass Card balance</b>	<b>Number</b>
Pay online using my credit card, Visa debit, or Mastercard debit	430
Call Compass Customer Service to pay over the phone	248
Pay in person at a Compass vending machine at select London Drugs stores	192
Send a cheque in the mail	161
Pay in person at a Compass vending machine at a SkyTrain or SeaBus station	147
Pay in person at the Compass Customer Service Centre	84
Other (please specify*)	81
None of the above	50

*\*Included some of the options listed above; options not currently considered (PayPal, sale and loading of cards by drivers on the HandyDART vehicles), and interactive e-transfers; and options unrelated to loading fares such as accepting BC Bus Pass on HandyDART and not charging transit fares. The responses included comments the options create barriers for some individuals and organizations.*

**Note:** Several people stated they would use BC Bus Pass or CNIB card, which are not valid on HandyDART.

**Of the following options, how do you think you'd be most likely to check your Compass Card balance?**

*(Respondents asked to select all that apply)*

<b>Options to check balance</b>	<b>Number</b>
Visit the Compass website to check my balance	356
Ask the driver to tell me my balance when they tap my card on the card reader	313
Check my balance on the card reader	271
Phone Compass Customer Service to check my balance	263
Check my balance in person at a Compass vending machine	132
Check my balance in person at the Compass Customer Service Centre	58
None of the above	53
Other (please specify*)	52

*\*Included some of the options listed above; comments that the available options create a barrier for individuals and organizations.*

**Note:** Several people stated they have BC Bus Pass or CNIB cards, which are not valid on HandyDART. Others stated they would use FareSavers, which will no longer be sold following a transition period. Others said they would check their balance when booking a trip, for which booker will have to transfer the call to the Compass call centre.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?**

Statement	Level of importance					
	I don't know	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree
I use a computer, tablet, or smartphone to check email	20	462	70	25	15	148
I use a computer, table, or smartphone to make appointments online	22	308	78	43	35	251
I use a computer, table, or smartphone to pay bills online.	20	367	55	24	19	252
I use a computer, table, or smartphone for online shopping	21	278	70	45	41	277
I prefer to do all of my financial transactions online	19	220	99	64	41	289
I am nervous about making payments online	40	169	86	95	62	278
I prefer to do all of my financial transactions in person	27	218	77	116	85	222
I prefer to do all of my financial transactions on the phone	25	107	73	115	83	342

**Do you have any comments you would like to share about TransLink introducing Compass to HandyDART?**

In total, **368** comments were provided by respondents. An independent analysis of the comments measuring sentiment and identifying key themes was conducted by Mustel Group Market Research. Key themes are summarized in the **What We Heard** section of this report.

**What they said: about the HandyDART modernization package****Overall, to what extent do you support or oppose the complete HandyDART modernization package?**

Level of support	Number	Percentage
Strongly support	327	41.2
Somewhat support	251	31.6
Neither support no oppose	104	13.1
Somewhat oppose	63	7.9
Strongly oppose	49	6.2

**Do you have any comments you would like to share with TransLink about the complete HandyDART modernization package?**

In total, **490** comments were provided by respondents. An independent analysis of the comments measuring sentiment and identifying key themes was conducted by Mustel Group Market Research.

Key themes included:

- expressions of **concern** (42% of comments), including:
  - the new registration process including the proposed personal consultation
  - a desire to expand fare discounts, and
  - a concern about the ability of some HandyDART customers to use Compass
- expressions of **support** (35% of comments) included:
  - support for registration changes and Compass
  - appreciation for the HandyDART service, staff and drivers
- **neutral** comments (23%) included:
  - desire for more consultation before HandyDART updates are implemented
  - suggestions for operational improvements and expanding service areas



## APPENDIX B: Summary of Town Hall & Workshop Feedback

### TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

57 people participated in the Telephone Town Hall held April 13, 2021 from 6-7pm. The discussion included questions and comments on the following themes:

#### Potential updated registration process

Medical professional conducting consultation

- Support for doctors to conduct consultation because they know applicant
- Support for occupational therapist to conduct consultation because they would be informed about HandyDART and conventional transit
- Support for occupational therapist to conduct consultation as it allows doctor to better advocate following initial assessment
- Question about criteria for HandyDART eligibility

Consultation requirement

- Question about the need an appointment for a user group already burdened by appointments to access services and healthcare
- Question about value of consultation to the applicant
- Comment that requirement feels threatening
- Concern that consultation will be subjective

Consultation, other

- Question about the need for registered HandyDART users to re-apply
- Question about whether consultation would be in person

#### Compass on HandyDART

- Question about how customers with mobility issues and dementia will tap cards
- Question about how to purchase Compass Cards
- Question about timing of Compass activation on HandyDART
- Question about how to add value to a Compass Cards
- Question about using BC Bus Pass on HandyDART
- Question about whether HandyDART Compass Card will be the same as cards used on conventional system

#### Potential Updated HandyDART Fares

- Question of whether loved one would qualify for age-based discount.

### VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS & MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

20 people participated in 2 virtual workshops held April 7 and 15, 2021. The discussion included the following themes:

### Potential updated registration process

Concern about updated process, including personal consultation

- Question about registration requirement for long-term care facility residents
- Concern about ability of clients with dementia to participate in a consultation
- Question about registered users' need to re-register
- Recommendation that elderly/frail residents and dialysis patients receive direct approval
- Concern about the ability of renal patients who start in hospital to participate
- Concern about the ability of adult day program attendees to participate in new process, noting even a phone is challenging for some
- Need to provide language support for some clients to participate
- Concern that personal consultation will delay access to service
- Will new process, with additional steps, be faster or slower than current process?
- Concern about who would conduct a personal consultation and the criteria to be used

Support for updated process, including personal consultation

- It will help students, youth applicants and families understand HandyDART and manage expectations
- A personal consultation could help customers go through the application process and learn about HandyDART
- In-person interaction could be really helpful for some people.
- Opportunity for a personal conversation could help TransLink staff be more connected with family members.
- Support for shorter application form
- Support for occupational therapist conducting consultation over a doctor
- Support for occupational therapist conducting consultation, especially for those with invisible disabilities
- Desire for more than one person to be involved in consultation so that it would be a collaborative experience

### Compass on HandyDART

Concern about managing and using Compass Cards

- Concern that managing cards for multiple clients places a burden on non-profits
- Concern that clients with cognitive disabilities will be unable to manage or carry a Compass Card
- Question about how to load fare products on Compass Cards
- Concern that Compass technology may be difficult for older adults to adopt.
- Concern that some clients will need to carry BC Bus Pass and a Compass Card

Ideas for sharing Compass information

- Training videos
- A telephone number/call centre for questions would be helpful

### Potential Updated HandyDART Fares

- Support for discounted fares, and surprise that fares are not increasing due to COVID
- Not concerned that fare would increase demand enough to change travel behaviour.
- Concern about impact of discounted fares on fiscal budget

## VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS FOR CUSTOMERS & CAREGIVERS

16 people participated in 2 virtual workshops held April 15 and 17, 2021. The discussion included the following themes:

### Potential updated registration process

#### Opposition to personal consultation

- Should be an equal choice or voluntary part of registration, not mandatory.
- Will be a barrier for many people to proceeding with registration process.
- Mandatory participation is harmful: people with disabilities overwhelmed with meetings in which they are judged.
- People unable to participate and would lose access to HandyDART. Reasons they may not be able to participate include developmental disability, brain injury, heart condition, fragility due to age.
- Setting up and operating consultation process would be expensive, and no information has been provided on a cost estimate.
- Consultation doesn't address the sustainability of HandyDART service.
- Providing more trips by taxi would be better way to address sustainability since they can deliver trips at half the cost of dedicated HandyDART vehicles.
- Prefer longer paper application form over consultation.
- Consultation would slow down the application process.
- Caregivers in residential facilities already understand the travel options.
- Problematic to assess individuals with episodic disabilities on a "good day."
- HandyDART users can judge when they are able to use conventional transit.
- People conducting consultations will be paid by TransLink, so will have a bias.

#### Support for personal consultation

- Will help HandyDART understand individuals' challenges.
- Will help applicants better understand transit options in their immediate area.
- Will help new users understand HandyDART; manage expectations.
- Will help new users understand how HandyDART integrates with conventional transit.
- Prefer talking with someone over filling out a form

#### Medical professional conducting consultation

- Doctors know applicants best
- Doctors more qualified to assess patient needs
- Doctors more qualified to assess episodic and invisible disabilities
- An occupational therapist may not get enough time to understand applicants' abilities
- Suggestion that a doctor initiate application and involve an OT or physio
- OT should do consultation because TransLink would cover the cost, whereas some doctors charge a fee to fill out and submit forms
- Support for OT assessing new applicants
- Question about criteria an OT would be given to assess applicants.
- Question about how OT would assess someone with a visual impairment
- Important that consultant has knowledge of the accessibility of the local environment.

#### Travel training

- Support for travel training
- Travel training and conditional eligibility are possible without mandatory consultation.

#### Other questions

- Question about ability to appeal eligibility decision
- Question about privacy, where applicants' medical information would be held
- Question about whether registered HandyDART users would need to re-apply
- Question about impact of registration changes for TaxiSavers users

### Compass on HandyDART

#### Using Compass

- Question about whether HandyCard user can use same Compass Card for HandyDART trips
- Question about whether Compass will be accepted for HandyDART trips by taxi.
- Question about how users unable to physically tap will be able to pay their fare
- Question about how Compass will work for those with cognitive disabilities who don't carry their fare during travel?
- Lanyards to hold Compass Cards for those unable to tap are not dignified
- Not ideal for a customer who frequently loses their card.

#### Obtaining a card and loading fare products

- Questions about how to get a Compass Card; where to purchase
- Questions about how to load fare products onto a Compass Card
- Question about using the same Compass Card if they already have one
- Provide support to set up autoloan

#### Sharing information about Compass

- Important to provide telephone-based information is important.
- Suggestion to provide Compass Card to newly registered HandyDART users.
- Should sell or give out a first Compass Card to customers on HandyDART.

#### Support for Compass on HandyDART

- It's about time.
- Looking forward to not having to use or buy FareSaver tickets
- Support roll out of Compass on HandyDART, particularly if you are using taxi
- It will be more convenient than using cash.
- Compass minimizes losses.
- Likes email update when card is automatically reloaded.
- Likes ability to load card at London Drugs
- Questions about how Compass will work with BC Bus Pass
- Questions about how Compass will work with TaxiSavers

#### How to support customers in adopting Compass

- Share information through the Compass interactive phone service
- Share information with organizations for seniors and people with disabilities
- Provide soft lanyards with plastic cover for Compass and ID cards

- Mail lanyards to customers.
- Provide a basic webinar for customers
- Provide a video that customers can watch many times and pause when needed
- Provide a video in different languages
- Print material is still important for those who are not online
- Print material should be readable for people with dyslexia; with Arial 12 pt or larger font

### **Potential Updated HandyDART Fares**

- Concern about increased pressure on demand for service.
- Should be advocating for more buses where we need them.
- Equity would be to enable all HandyDART customers to pay concession fares
- People aged 19-64 may be on limited income, but aren't getting a reduced fare.
- Fares are not fully and equitably aligned for customers 19 to 64 years old who have to carry two cards for HandyDART and conventional.
- Suggestion to lower age for concession fare to 60 years.
- HandyDART could remain expensive for low-income seniors eligible for BC Bus Pass

### **VIRTUAL WORKSHOP FOR HANDYDART USERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

12 members of TransLink's HandyDART Users' Advisory Committee participated in a virtual workshop held April 21, 2021, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. The discussion included questions and comments on the following themes:

#### **Potential Updated Registration Process**

Concern about new process, including personal consultation

- Preference for personal consultation to be optional, voluntary
- Concern that participants will be judged, personal consultation is not respectful
- Concern that applicants are having to ask to have access to a benefit
- Need to have eligibility verified assumes applicants aren't trusted
- Concerned about privacy of information being provided to HandyDART; who will have access
- Concern about ability of occupational therapist to assess complex, invisible and episodic disabilities
- Preference for a longer form over personal consultation
- A separate education campaign could inform HandyDART users about conventional transit
- Information on conventional transit can be provided to HandyDART users following the registration process
- HandyDART is one transit option, but people are not free to choose to use it
- Support improved education and understanding of transit options, but allow people freedom of choice
- Other options should be explored to tackle problem of HandyDART use by those who could travel on conventional transit
- Concern that new process could delay access to HandyDART service
- Concern that process will be used to weed people out instead of helping them

Support for new process, including personal consultation

- Experience of changing from a conventional transit to HandyDART is a big transition and good to have an understanding of the service through the consultation.

### Potential Updated HandyDART Fares

- Support for age-based discounts; great to see cost relief
- Concern that expanding discounts to HandyDART will impact fiscal budget

### Compass for HandyDART

- Support for Compass on HandyDART
- Concern for 19- to 64-year old customers who will be required to carry two cards

Ideas to support

- Provide a lanyard to hold Compass Card and other ID cards
- Have drivers sell Compass Cards and be able to load fares
- Training videos showing how to load and tap Compass Cards
- Link training videos to TransLink's website
- Short video clips for group locations and bulletins
- Have people who already use Compass talk with their peers

## VIRTUAL WORKSHOP FOR ACCESS TRANSIT USERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

17 members of TransLink's Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee participated in a virtual workshop held during their committee meeting April 28, 2021, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. The discussion included questions and comments on the following themes:

### Compass on HandyDART

- Will there be one card for regular transit and HandyDART or 2 cards.
- Asked about the orange pass. This would work for HandyDART.
- Would not be able to use this on HandyDART and with the red compass card will increase the cost of using HandyDART for people who are low income. Will try to avoid HandyDART because of the issue.
- Concern about how to tap Compass Card
- Questions about whether CNIB Card and BC Bus Pass users will also need a Compass Card
- Desire to be able to add stored value to BC Bus Pass
- Question about using a credit card to pay fares on HandyDART

Ideas for sharing information on Compass

- Provide an ASL video so that deaf community is included in this process
- Have drivers distribute information to HandyDART users
- Webinars for large groups of seniors
- Need to effectively communicate when BC Bus Pass and CNIB card holders need to use a Compass Card
- Information should be available in many languages

### Potential Updated HandyDART Fares

- Questions about who qualifies for discounted fares
- Desire for discounted fares to be needs or income based rather than age based.

- Concern that people with disabilities are significantly disadvantaged, whereas many seniors are not
- Support for age-based discounts for HandyDART
- Question about whether TransLink will provide more vehicles as demand increases

### Potential Updated Registration Process

Concerns about the new process, including personal consultation

- Concern about the ability of people with dementia to participate in process
- Concern about fair treatment of racialized communities in consultation process
- Concern that more a complex process will add to burden of paperwork and appointments people with disabilities already face to access services and health care
- Concern about impact on families of youth with cognitive disabilities transitioning into adulthood, a period during which they face a mountain of appointments and paperwork
- Concern about having to prove disability to access service
- Support for doctor to assess transit needs because they are familiar with the client
- Perception of that updated process is gatekeeping, which could create stress and confusion
- Process may diminish the level of comfort and adds to feeling of mistrust
- Question about who will have to participate in updated registration process
- Questions about qualifications and transit knowledge of healthcare provider conducting consultation
- Concern about criteria healthcare provide would use to assess transit needs
- Concern that doctor is being eliminated from the registration process
- Concern that personal consultation would be invasive
- Support for informing people about conventional transit, but not at the point when their access to the service is being determined

Support for the new process, including personal consultation

- Need for assessment for people who need to use HandyDART
- Need to maximize the use of the different services.
- Belief that doctors just sign the sheet without really knowing the person's abilities.
- Like educational aspect of consultation, suggest it could include trips on HandyDART and conventional transit.
- Sounds like a good educational tool and opportunity to talk about regular Transit

### Engagement

Concern about survey design

- Hard to understand point of some points in the questionnaire; appeared to be designed to get agreement



## APPENDIX C: Notification Material

Following are examples of notification material to create awareness of the HandyDART Modernization Program engagement and how to participate.

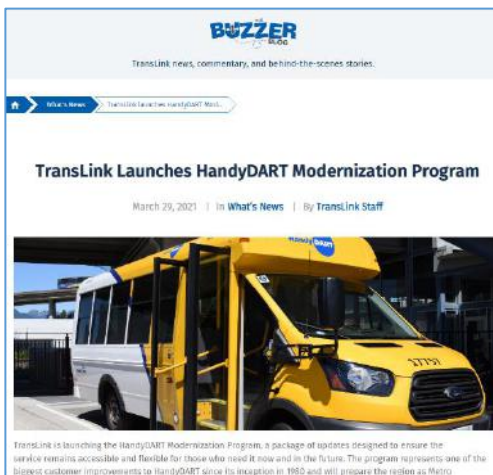
### Postcard

Sent by Canada Post to 19,000 registered HandyDART users



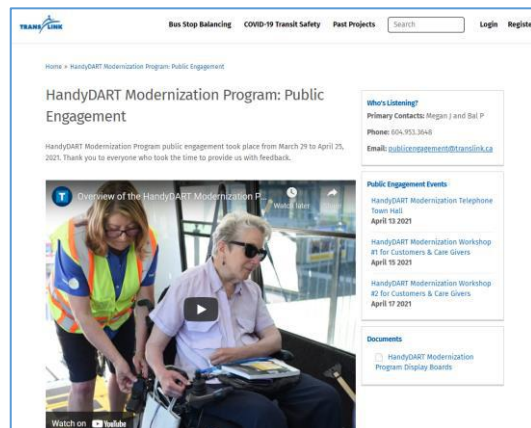
### Social Media

Posts on TransLink's channels: Buzzer Blog, Instagram, LinkedIn, facebook, and Twitter.



### TransLink.ca & TransLink Listens

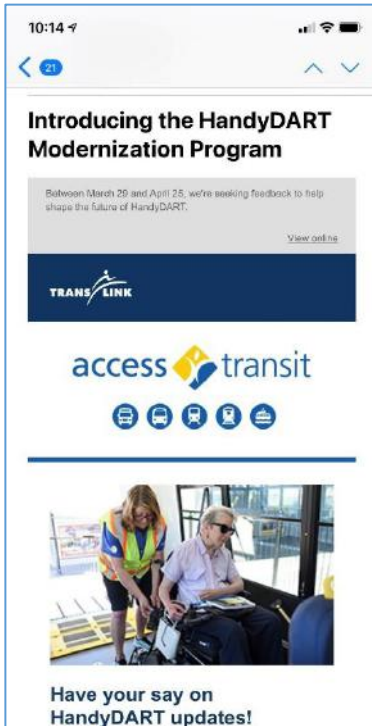
The project website provided project information linked to TransLink Listens for the survey and event information





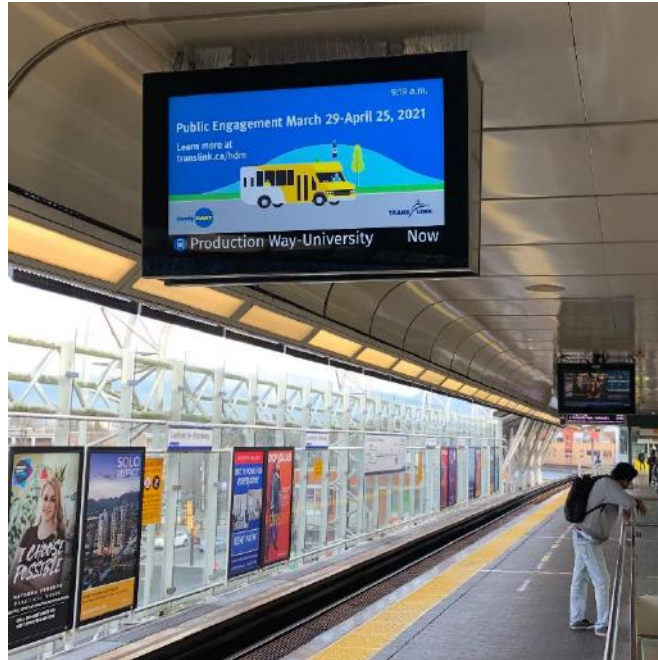
### Newsletters

Access Transit E-news, TransLink's general e-newsletter, and HandyDART printed newsletter included information on the engagement.



### Transit System Ads

Ads appeared on digital displays at SkyTrain, West Coast Express and SeaBus stations.



### Newspaper Ads

Ads were placed in 10 community newspapers.

A newspaper advertisement for the HandyDART Modernization Program. The ad has a blue background with white and yellow text. The main headline is "HandyDART Modernization Program" followed by "Public Engagement: March 29 to April 25, 2021". The text describes the program: "TransLink is considering a package of updates to improve the HandyDART experience from start to finish — including how people register, book trips, and pay for the service." On the right side, there is a white box with the text "Learn more at translink.ca/hdm" and "Sign up for the telephone townhall and virtual workshops, and complete the survey. Email publicengagement@translink.ca or call 604.953.3648 to request a print copy or do the survey by phone." Below this, there is a translation in Punjabi: "ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ! ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਲਈ ਇਸਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰਵਾਓ।" At the bottom, there is a graphic of a yellow and white HandyDART bus on a green hill, with the "Handy DART" logo on the left and the "TRANS LINK" logo on the right.

## APPENDIX D: Engagement Material

Following is an example of a presentation provided to virtual workshop participants. Variations were made to the content and sequence of information to tailor presentations to specific stakeholder groups. Similar content was shared with participants in the Telephone Town Hall.



# HandyDART Modernization Program

Virtual Workshop for Customers & Caregivers

April 17, 2021



### Overview

TransLink is considering **a package of updates to modernize HandyDART**, our door-to-door transit service for people who are unable to navigate conventional public transit without assistance

We're **engaging HandyDART customers, caregivers, and service providers** through virtual workshops like this one, a telephone town hall, and survey to collect your feedback on the elements of the HandyDART Modernization Program.



# Agenda

**Today's session is designed to get as much feedback and as many ideas from you as possible.**

Once you have a little background information, we'll jump right into the activities.

Agenda	
Welcome and Introductions	5 min
Overview of the HandyDART Modernization Program	10 min
Activity 1: Potential New Registration Process	25 min
Break	10 min
Activity 2: Compass for HandyDART & Potential Fare Changes	25 min
Final Thoughts & Next Steps	5-10 min



# Who's in the (virtual) room?

**Hello! We're your facilitators for today** 🙌

- Briana Ingram** – Lead Presenter
- Megan Johnston** – Lead Facilitator
- Bal Purewal** – Zoom & Logistics Lead



## Ground Rules

Following these ground rules helps all of us make the most out of the session.



Be an active participant



Respect others' voices and experiences



Help us cover ground



## Virtual workshop etiquette

Here are some remote collaboration tips to help our session run smoothly



Mute yourself when you aren't speaking



Turn your cameras on, if possible



## Context: Where we are and how we got here



## Background: Improvements

**Since 2017, we've focused on improving HandyDART availability and customer experience, including:**

- HandyDART service increases
- Extended HandyDART booking window
- 10-minute advance warnings of vehicle arrival
- Improvements to dispatching
- High-visibility signage for taxis providing HandyDART trips
- Launch of an expanded Travel Training program

*There is still more work to be done to improve HandyDART service and the accessibility of the conventional system. With a growing and aging population in Metro Vancouver, demand for HandyDART will continue to increase in the coming years.*

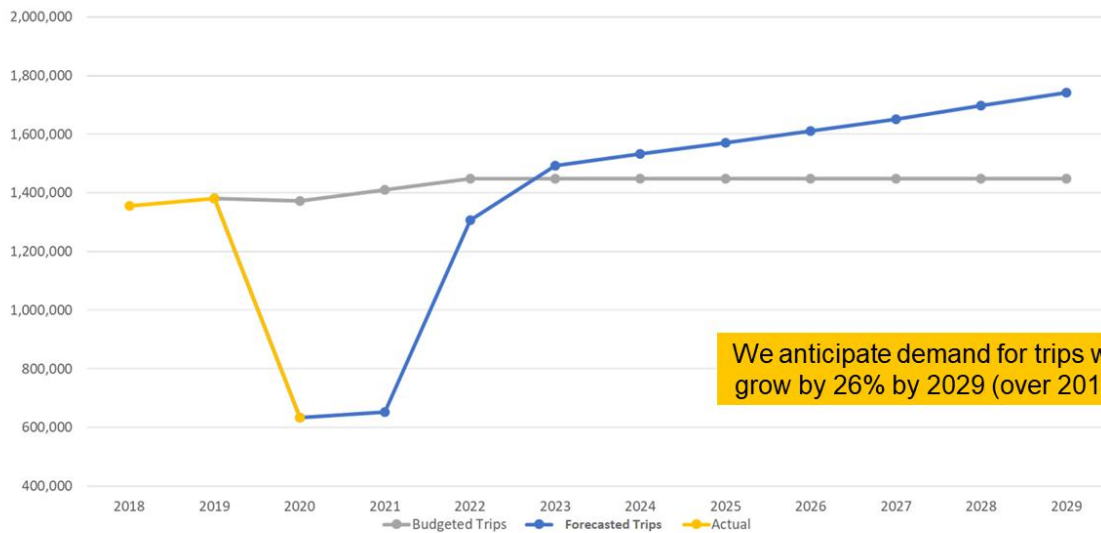


## Background: Key HandyDART Stats

<b>Weekday trips per day (pre-COVID)</b>	<b>4,920</b>
Registered customers	~19,000
Applicants per year	~9,000
Cost per trip	\$39.26 (in 2019), \$41.24 (in 2018)
Investments to increase service	In 2019 we provided 18% more trips than we did in 2014



## Planning for HandyDART into the future



We anticipate demand for trips will grow by 26% by 2029 (over 2019)

## What is the HandyDART Modernization Program?

We are consulting on a package of HandyDART updates to improve the customer journey from start to finish, including:

- Compass for HandyDART
- Potential Fare Changes
- A Potential New Registration Process
- Online Booking System



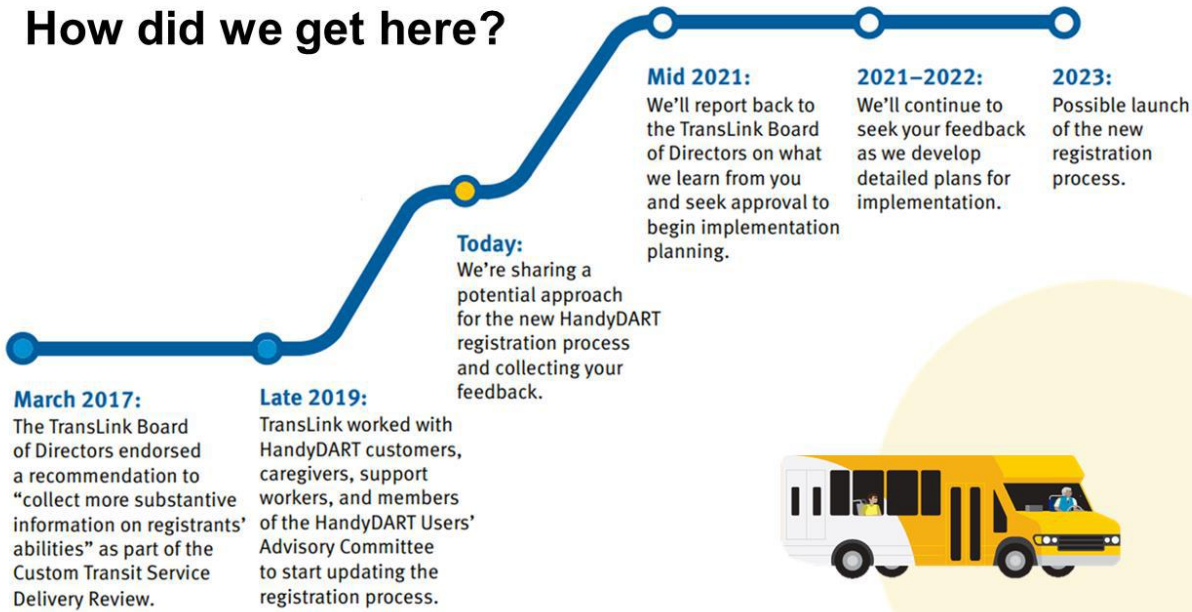
### Activity 1:

## Potential New Registration Process








## How did we get here?



**The purpose of the personal consultation would be to:**

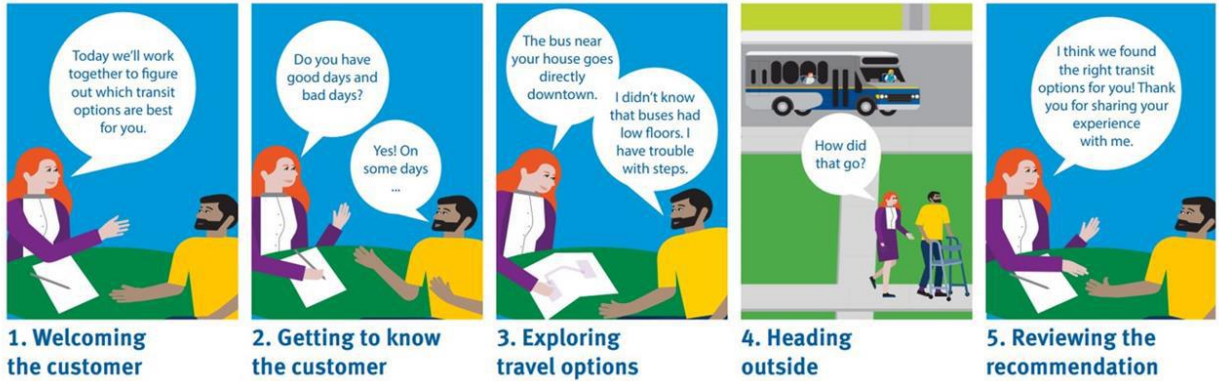
-  Discuss travel needs and abilities
-  Provide information on HandyDART and TransLink’s conventional transit services
-  Explore which transit options best meet the individual needs and abilities of each customer

**There would be four steps to register for HandyDART in the new process:**

- 1** Submission of an application form
- 2** Booking the personal consultation
- 3** Participation in the personal consultation
- 4** Receipt of the eligibility determination



## Participating in the personal consultation



## Registration principles

- Two-way exchange
- Transparency
- Flexibility and fit
- Curiosity and education
- Trust



## Registration at BC Transit

- Introduced an in-person registration process in 2014.
- The process is now active in 13 systems:
  - Vernon, Comox Valley, Kelowna, Shuswap, Kamloops, Penticton, Sunshine Coast, Prince George, Abbotsford/Mission, Chilliwack, Cowichan Valley, Campbell River, and Nanaimo
- BC Transit plans to introduce in-person consultations in Victoria in September 2021.



## Key changes from the current process

- **Shorter application form** that would include information about transit services (conventional & HandyDART)
- **Direct approval for some customers** based on prescribed criteria
- Primary method of eligibility determination would be a **personal consultation** (could be phone/virtual/in-person)
- Introduction of **conditional eligibility**



## Breakout Groups – Activity 1



### Question 1

Do you feel that a personal consultation could be a valuable component of the HandyDART registration process? Does it help achieve the goal of understanding customer needs and matching with the best travel options?



## Question 2

Considering what you've heard about the personal consultation, which could become part of the HandyDART registration process, **can you tell us what you like about it and what you don't like?**



10 Min Break!



# Compass for HandyDART



## Compass Card for HandyDART

**Many ways to pay, works across all transit modes, and customers can recover their balance if a registered card is lost.**

- Stored value or prepaid passes
- FareSavers will still be accepted on HandyDART during a transition period following the rollout of Compass
- We will continue to accept cash payments for fares
- Compass stored value fares will be the same price as FareSavers



**Spring – Summer 2021:** Compass Card reader installation

**Summer 2021:** Customer support materials before Compass activation

**Fall 2021:** Planned activation of Compass on HandyDART



# Potential New Fares



## Potential Changes to HandyDART Fares

Currently, HandyDART trips are a 1-zone Adult fare and inconsistent with the conventional system

We are considering:

- **Age-based discounts** (18 and under & 65+ years) on HandyDART, consistent with existing age-based discounts on buses
- **Use of day passes** on HandyDART

**Fall 2021:** would take effect at same time as Compass rollout (if approved by TransLink's Board)



## Potential Changes to HandyDART Fares

		HandyDART Fares	
AGE	FARE TYPE	CURRENT	POTENTIAL
19-64 (adult)	1-Zone Cash	\$3.00	\$3.00
	1- Zone Stored Value on Compass Card	<i>Not currently available to HandyDART customers</i>	\$2.40
	1- Zone FareSaver	\$2.40	<i>Discontinue sales after transition period</i>
	1- Zone Monthly Pass on Compass Card	\$98	\$98
5-18 and 65+ (concession)	1- Zone Cash	\$3.00	\$1.95
	1- Zone Stored Value on Compass Card	<i>Not currently available to HandyDART customers</i>	\$1.95
	1- Zone FareSaver	\$2.40	<i>Not available for concession</i>
	Monthly Pass on Compass Card	\$98 <i>(one zone)</i>	\$56 <i>(allows travel through all zones)</i>

\* Fares as of April 2021. Fare increases occur on an annual basis on July 1st and are subject to Board approval.  
 \*\* For simplicity, additional fare products, such as day passes, are not shown but will become available to HandyDART customers

## Impacts of fare changes

- ~70% of current HandyDART customers would benefit from introduction of age-based discounts
- Easier transfers from HandyDART to other transit modes
- Overall HandyDART trip requests might increase as a result of the change in fare policy



## Breakout Groups – Activity 2



### Discussion Questions

What are you looking forward to with the introduction of Compass to HandyDART? Is there anything you're nervous about?

How can we support you in using Compass on HandyDART?

What do you like or not like about the potential changes to HandyDART fares? Any concerns about increased demand for HandyDART?





## Next Steps

Timing	Milestones
Now – April 25	HandyDART Modernization Program engagement
June 2021	TransLink Board reviews and considers potential fare and registration changes
Spring – Summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install Compass Card readers on HandyDART vehicles</li> <li>• Customer support materials distributed before Compass activation</li> </ul>
Fall 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned activation of Compass on HandyDART</li> <li>• Fare changes take effect (if approved by TransLink Board)</li> </ul>
Early to mid-2022	Online booking platform goes live for HandyDART
2023	New registration process launch (if approved by TransLink Board)



# Thank you!

If you haven't already, please complete the survey at  
[translink.ca/hdm](https://translink.ca/hdm) or call **604.953.3648**

