
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

All 12 community services running, benefiting people in the North

PRINCE RUPERT – All 12 community transportation services are now operating successfully in northern B.C. communities along the Highway 16 corridor.

These services are helping thousands of people who live in small, remote and Indigenous communities travel safely around their communities and to neighbouring communities.

“This service is especially important for women and teenage girls, who have not had a safe way to get around,” said Claire Trevena, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. “I am very happy to see that all of the community vehicles are now providing this vital transportation connection for remote and Indigenous communities in the North. This is a service these communities fought hard for, and now we can see the positive results.”

These safe, reliable transportation services are providing more than 2,500 rides per month to people who live and work in the North. The services are run by the individual communities and are a key component of the British Columbia government’s Highway 16 Transportation Action Plan.

“It’s wonderful to see the community vehicle program is providing a safe ride home for so many people who live and work in northern B.C., in particular, for those in remote and Indigenous communities,” said Jennifer Rice, MLA for North Coast. “This program is working in conjunction with the newly established transit routes by giving people safe, reliable and affordable transportation options.”

“The Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert is proud to provide a transportation service between Prince Rupert and Terrace twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Thursdays,” said Anna Zanella, executive director, Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert. “Feedback is positive as passengers enjoy the affordable service at \$5 per seat each way. The impact of this transportation project has been immense, as transportation opportunities out of Prince Rupert are very limited. Passengers can stay connected with adjoining communities in the region for employment, education, medical, extended travel and personal needs.”

The B.C. government announced that 12 communities were receiving grants for the purchase of community vehicles and three years of operational support in spring 2017. These grants were primarily for Indigenous communities and organizations, enabling them to purchase and operate a community vehicle (such as a van, mini-van, SUV or bus) to transport people to jobs, school, appointments and shopping, as well as connecting them with family and friends.

“Takla Nation takes pride in the transportation service the bus is able to provide to our community and our neighbouring communities,” said Chris French, Councillor, Takla First Nation. “This is a positive and reliable new transport service for people who live and work in

our community. It's a comforting feeling knowing our people can travel safely."

The various recipients took the time necessary to fully develop their services prior to launching, with the final service launched in December 2018.

In Budget 2018, the Highway 16 Transportation Action Plan received a funding commitment for a fourth year, bringing the total investment to date to \$7.3 million.

Quick Facts:

The following communities have community vehicles providing service to people:

- Binche Keyoh Bu Society
- Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society (based in Smithers and Houston)
- Fraser Lake and Area Community Bus Service
- Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert
- Gingolx Village Government
- Gitanmaax Band
- Gitanyow Human Services
- Granisle Better at Home – Village of Granisle
- Kermode Friendship Society (based in Terrace)
- Nee Tahi Buhn
- Saik'uz First Nation – District of Vanderhoof
- Takla Lake First Nation

Learn More:

For more information on the Highway 16 Transportation Action Plan, go to:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/transportation-reports-and-reference/reports-studies/planning-strategic-economic/highway16-action-plan>

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