



**NEWS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**

November 16, 2021

**Northern B.C. still waiting for a long-term transportation plan**

VICTORIA – Three years since bringing an interim bus service to B.C.'s northern communities, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is still working on a long-term transportation plan, a new report by the Office of the Auditor General concludes.

Greyhound Canada withdrew bus service between northern B.C. communities in 2018 and no other private company came forward to replace it. In June of that year, the ministry directed BC Transit to provide a 12-month bus service – BC Bus North – while the ministry said it would work with communities to find a long-term solution. Interim funding for the service has been extended three times.

"Northern B.C. is an area larger than the entire country of France and the bus is a lifeline for many residents in places like Prince George, Prince Rupert, Fort Nelson, and Valemount," says Auditor General Michael Pickup. "People depend on the bus to get to jobs in other communities, access essential services like health care, go to school, or visit family and friends."

In its report, [Ensuring Long-distance Ground Transportation in Northern B.C.](#), the Office of the Auditor General finds that the ministry ensured BC Transit delivered interim services to half of the former Greyhound stops near communities and is working on a province-wide intercity ground transportation plan. However, it is not clear on how this work will address the needs of northern residents.

"The ministry has made progress in its planning but needs to make clear how its province-wide plan will support northern B.C. specifically," says Auditor General Michael Pickup. "Northern regions have particular transportation needs – the distances are vast, roads can be treacherous, and alternatives are few. People's livelihoods are on the line. I hope the ministry will consult with northern residents to ensure that the plan meets the unique needs of the region."

The audit also found that:

- BC Bus North routes reach 35 of the 62 stops near communities that Greyhound served.
- Trips are less frequent, reduced to once or twice a week, compared to the daily trips on most Greyhound routes.
- Fares are lower than Greyhound's.
- The ministry has done some community engagement on the bus service and community needs, with broader consultation limited by pandemic restrictions.
- The ministry monitored financial data, but not all of the reports that it was supposed to.



OFFICE OF THE  
**Auditor General**  
of British Columbia

### **Recommendations**

The report includes three recommendations for better monitoring of the delivery of interim bus services, engaging with northern communities, and presenting options for sustainable solutions in northern B.C.

The ministry has accepted all of the recommendations.

### **Related links**

[Report](#)

[Audit at a Glance](#)

[Video](#)

### **About the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia**

The auditor general is a non-partisan, independent officer of the legislature who reports directly to the legislative assembly. The *Auditor General Act* empowers the auditor general and staff to conduct audits, report findings and make recommendations.

### **Contact us**

For general questions and interview requests:

Nicholas Johnson

Manager, Communications

[njohnson@bcauditor.com](mailto:njohnson@bcauditor.com)

250-419-6117

[Subscribe to receive report eAlerts.](#)