Passenger Transportation Board
MOVING FORWARD, TOGETHER

Place names

Context

Section 28(3) of the Act allows the Board to establish the terms and conditions of licences for passenger directed vehicle authorizations (PDVAs) and transportation network services authorizations (TNSAs), including the geographic areas in which licensees may pick up and drop off passengers.

When the Board approves a licence for a PDVA or TNSA, it also may approve specific operating areas that a licensee may operate within. These are written into licence terms and conditions.

When the Board defines operating areas using the names of municipalities or regional districts, it is using the legally defined boundaries that the Government of British Columbia has set through letters of patent, charters, or direct legislation, unless otherwise stated. This policy clarifies how the Board uses defined areas from other B.C. government sources to set operating areas in passenger transportation licence terms and conditions.

Applicability

This policy applies to all PDV and TNS licensees in British Columbia. It also applies to applicants wishing to provide service in new or amended operating areas.

This policy does not apply to inter-city buses, as their service areas are defined in terms of routes and route points rather than municipal or regional boundaries.

Policy

Unless otherwise stated, the Board defines operating areas in its rates rules, terms and conditions of licence, policies, and other documents according to how the Government of B.C. defines municipalities, regional districts, and other boundaries.

Boundaries in B.C. are defined and classified according to multiple pieces of provincial legislation, and documents called letters patent.

Letters patent

As part of its constitutional authority over “municipal institutions”, the Government of B.C. issues letters patent to incorporate local governments. The Legislature has delegated the authority to create local governments to the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Letters patent are defined in the Interpretation Act as a type of regulation.

Letters patent define regional district and most municipal boundaries in B.C., which are used by the Board to define operating areas in terms and conditions of licences.

Municipalities and regional districts

Legally defined local government maps are based on a local government’s legal metes and bounds description in their letters patent as of the date of the Order in Council. Local government maps can be found and searched here to find specific boundaries for municipalities and regional districts, among other administrative boundaries.

If the Government of B.C. changes the boundaries of a municipality or regional district, it automatically changes the area(s) described in the Board’s terms and conditions and rates rules, unless otherwise stated by the Board.

Exceptions to the use of letters patent for incorporation include: City of Vancouver (see ‘Vancouver Charter’), Resort Municipality of Whistler, and City of Powell River, which were incorporated directly by the Legislature.

Municipal classifications are set according to population density in section 10 of the Local Governments Act, the act which is also the primary legislation governing regional districts.

Legislation

Act

28 (3) The board may establish terms and conditions that apply to a special authorization included in a licence, if issued, including, without limitation, terms and conditions respecting any of the following: …

(c) if the licence is to include a passenger directed vehicle authorization; …

(iv) the geographic region in which motor vehicles may be operated under the authorization

(d) if the licence is to include a transportation network services authorization; …

(iii) the geographic region in which motor vehicles may be operated under the authorization

Other relevant acts

Local Governments Act

- Part 2- Divisions 1-6 outline the incorporation of municipalities and regional districts, classification of municipalities, boundary changes, and related matters

Interpretation Act

- Section 1 defines “letters patent” as a type of regulation
- Section 40 explains that definitions in Community Charter and Local Government Act apply to other enactments

Vancouver Charter

- Section 6 defines the City of Vancouver and the boundaries of the city

Related topics:

- Operating areas policy