

1. SERVICE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND
1999 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AS AMENDED

That the Commission approve that:

- a) **the Service Design Guidelines be amended to change the minimum cost-recovery targets on local routes to 25% in off-peak hours and 35% in core hours;**
- b) **these guidelines be applied to the 1999 service, as outlined in this report and summarized in Appendix A;**
- c) **for future years staff be empowered to apply the approved guidelines as part of the regular scheduling process, and that the changes resulting from applying the guidelines be part of the annual Transplan process.**

DOCUMENTATION

- 1. General Manager's report dated 11 May 99 is immediately attached.
- 2. Extract of Draft Minute, Transit Services Committee, 19 May 99, follows the report and contains a record of all votes.

Our File/N/Réf.
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE: 11 May 1999

TO/DEST: Co-ordinator, Transit Services Committee

FROM/EXP: General Manager

SUBJECT/OBJET: **SERVICE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND
1999 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Transit Services Committee recommend to the Commission that:

- 1) the Service Design Guidelines be amended to change the minimum cost-recovery targets on local routes to 25% in off-peak hours and 35% in core hours;**
- 2) these guidelines be applied to the 1999 service, as outlined in this report and summarized in Appendix A;**
- 3) for future years staff be empowered to apply the approved Guidelines as part of the regular scheduling process.**

BACKGROUND

The current Service Design Guidelines were approved by the Transit Commission in April 1997 and are summarized in Table 1. Briefly, the guidelines are used to ensure that the resources available for on-street service are distributed effectively. They balance basic accessibility with ridership potential, and were developed with full public consultation.

The OC Transpo Comprehensive Review final report "The Way Ahead: Becoming the Best of the Best", made specific recommendations for enhancing and strengthening the current Service Design Guidelines.

This report discusses the current guidelines, the changes suggested in the Comprehensive Review, and recommends amendments. These incorporate the main principle of the guidelines from the Comprehensive Review to focus resources more sharply in areas where they will be well used.

A complete route performance review is carried out each year using the current Service Design Guidelines. The review identifies those routes which are not meeting the minimum ridership targets for some time period(s) and prescribes ways to improve performance, usually by reducing frequency or eliminating service. It also identifies top performing routes as candidates for increased frequency.

Such a review has been carried out this year and route performance has been measured against the recommended Service Design Guidelines. Implementation of the resulting service reductions and additions is recommended for September 1999.

THE CURRENT GUIDELINES

Service Design Guidelines are used to allocate resources in a manner that balances the basic mobility needs of the community with the objective of maximizing ridership. The current guidelines were developed on the principle that a Base Route network should be available during the full service day to meet basic mobility objectives, and that this would be supplemented by other services based on ridership. The guidelines are summarized in Table 1.

The Base Route network consists of Transitway service as well as Base Routes, although service hours for Transitway routes are longer to allow customers to get at least as far as the outlying Transitway stations in the early hours of the morning. One of the attractions of the current Service Design Guidelines is that the Base Routes are not subjected to any minimum cost-recovery targets. This provides assurance to customers that a minimum amount of basic service will always be provided.

The other all-day routes are categorized as Crosstown or Local and minimum cost-recovery targets are applied to these based on experience of performance that existed in 1996/97 and public consultation at that time.

A different approach is taken to Peak Period services, where the objective is for the average number of passengers at the busiest point on the route in the busiest 60 minutes not to exceed 45, which is the number of seats on a standard bus. This certainly does not guarantee a seat for everyone since, even within the peak sixty minutes, peaks of demand occur. However, it does provide an even-handed and reasonable method for scheduling frequencies on these commuter services.

The main shortcomings of the current Guidelines are the fact that the Base network is not as straight, fast and simple as it should be to provide for residents' basic mobility needs, and the minimum cost-recovery targets are very low (e.g. 15% for Local Routes outside core hours).

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

The rationale for the existing Service Design Guidelines was supported by the Comprehensive Review. However, changes were proposed to improve overall productivity. The recommended Guidelines, summarized in Table 2, include the key changes suggested by the Comprehensive Review, as discussed below.

Base Routes

The Comprehensive Review supported the principle of providing basic accessibility through the provision of a Base service network which includes Base Routes and Transitway Routes. The Base service network would provide region-wide coverage that serves eighty percent of the population within an 800 metre walk and would operate seven days a week throughout the service day in the major travel corridors, primarily on the main arterial roads and Transitways. Base service would form a region-wide grid network to ensure that a basic level of mobility is provided to residents when other routes are not operating. To operate effectively as a grid network with convenient transfer connections, the Base Routes would provide direct, frequent and reliable service with even headways and consistent spans of service.

The five year plan for the Comprehensive Review for route structure, which was reviewed with the public last fall, was developed using these principles. Major steps towards implementation are proposed in the Transplan 99 process and, with the Commission's approval, could be in place by September 1999.

The Comprehensive Review concluded that the current hours of service provided by the Base and Transitway services were appropriate and that these routes should continue to operate at a frequency of every thirty minutes or better. The report went one step further and suggested that service on the Base Routes should be operated at least every fifteen minutes during peak periods and core shopping hours. However, it is recommended that the current thirty minute or better guideline be retained since, in many cases, the Base Routes already operate at this level of service, or better, but for some of the Base Routes, especially those that operate exclusively outside the Greenbelt or in the more suburban areas inside the Greenbelt, the fifteen minute service guideline would be difficult to justify.

The Comprehensive Review also supported the philosophy of not subjecting Base Routes to any minimum cost-recovery targets but suggested cost-recovery values to signal the need for a review of the route structure in an area. The Comprehensive Review proposed cost-recovery values for Base Routes of 50% during core hours and 25% the rest of the time.

Other All-day Routes (Local Routes)

The biggest change proposed by the Comprehensive Review and included in the recommended Guidelines is with the minimum cost-recovery targets for all-day routes which are not part of the Base network. Today, Crosstown Routes must recover 45% of costs during core hours and 25% the rest of the time while Local Routes must recover 25% during core hours and 15% the rest of the time. The Comprehensive Review proposed a new combined guideline of 35% during core hours and 25% during the rest of the service day. This change is recommended and would have the effect of enabling resources to be focussed on services with greater ridership and assist OC Transpo in meeting the challenging ridership and productivity increases called for in the Comprehensive Review.

For Local Routes, the Comprehensive Review suggested a minimum of thirty minute service during core hours. As with the Base Routes, most Local services already operate at this higher frequency because customer usage supports it. However, there are some areas and time periods where this level of service is excessive and failure to meet the revenue target would result in elimination of service altogether. It is recommended that the sixty minute headway guideline be the only one for Local Routes.

Peak Period Only Service

There are two components to the current Service Design Guidelines for Peak Period Routes. The first is a passenger capacity standard for Peak Period Routes destined to downtown, which is currently targetted to be an average of 45 passengers per bus at the busiest point on the route, in the busiest hour. The Comprehensive Review suggests that this be changed so that the average number of passengers at the busiest point on the route in the peak hour is equal to or exceeds 45. This does not seem reasonable, especially with the arrival of the low-floor buses with fewer seats. The existing guideline does not guarantee a seat for all passengers but does balance comfort and cost fairly across the region.

The Comprehensive Review also proposed that the downtown route guideline be applied to Peak Period Routes outside downtown. However, the current guidelines work well, allowing for early expansion of the counter-peak services into growing business park areas because they are evaluated in terms of a revenue:cost target. The cost of providing counter-peak service is relatively low, which means that trips can run with considerably lower ridership than would be required for peak direction services. It is recommended that this approach be retained.

1999 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The 1999 performance review has been carried out based on the recommended Service Design Guidelines (Table 2). However, because of the major route changes planned inside the Greenbelt for 1999 and outside the Greenbelt for 2000, the new Guidelines have only been applied to those routes which are not affected by the changes. Outside the Greenbelt, the current Service Design Guidelines were applied.

The Transplan 99 route structure changes will, of themselves, improve performance on some routes. For example, the elimination of Routes 11 and 19 should improve the productivity of Routes 1, 2, 7, 14 and 18.

It is recommended that the service reductions and additions detailed in Appendix A be implemented in September 1999. The service reductions on 15 routes would result in an annualized saving of 7,337 hours which would be reinvested into routes which warrant more frequent service. The more significant reductions are on Routes 6, 183 and 189. On the other hand, service is being increased on weekends on Routes 95, 85 and 2 where ridership is growing.

Route 183 provides two daily trips to and from the Corel Centre. One trip in each of the peaks. This service would be discontinued. The ridership is very poor with fares recovering only 17% in the a.m. and 5% in the p.m. compared, in both cases, with a target of 25%.

Route 189 was originally proposed for complete cancellation through the Transplan 99 process. There are however several trips in both peak periods which do exceed the minimum target of 25%. Two trips will remain in the a.m. peak while three will continue to operate in the p.m. peak.

Route 6, which operates at very low productivity, would be affected by the tougher minimum ridership targets. The new Guideline for Local Routes is 35% in the core hours and 25% during the rest of the day. Based on these minimum targets, it is recommended that Route 6 be reduced to hourly service on weekdays during the midday, Saturdays and Sundays.

RIDERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

Some of those affected by the proposed reductions who do not have convenient alternative service available to them may find other means of transportation. Others would be able to walk to Base Routes. It is proposed to reinvest the savings in routes on which ridership warrants higher service frequency. Any losses in ridership due to the reductions proposed will be more than offset by ridership gains where the reinvested service has been introduced.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications because all savings are being reinvested into the service.

CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION

It is important that where trips are to be cancelled, the public must be clearly informed in advance of the service change. It is proposed to provide information to customers on all of the specific trips to be eliminated well ahead of the service change. This approach has worked well in the past.

Approved by
M.J.E Sheflin, P.Eng.

TABLE 1
Approved Service Design Guidelines

<p>Transitway Service</p> <p>Routes 95, 96 and 97 which today service the Transitway</p>	<p>It is recommended that minimum guaranteed service levels operate on Transitway routes 95 and 96/97:</p> <p>Weekdays:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>15 minutes</td> <td>6:00 a.m. to midnight</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 minutes</td> <td>midnight to 2:00 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Saturdays:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>15 minutes</td> <td>6:00 a.m. to midnight</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 minutes</td> <td>midnight to 2:00 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Sundays:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>15 minutes</td> <td>7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 minutes</td> <td>11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.</td> </tr> </table>	15 minutes	6:00 a.m. to midnight	30 minutes	midnight to 2:00 a.m.		5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.	15 minutes	6:00 a.m. to midnight	30 minutes	midnight to 2:00 a.m.		5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.	15 minutes	7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.	30 minutes	11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.		6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.
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<p>Base Routes</p> <p>Cross-regional routes operating largely on arterial roads such as routes 2 and 118.</p>	<p>It is recommended that a Base Route Network be established that would provide guaranteed minimum service levels:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>6:30 a.m. to midnight</td> <td>Weekdays</td> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>7:00 a.m. to midnight</td> <td>Saturdays</td> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.</td> <td>Sundays</td> </tr> </table> <p>On most Base routes a minimum 30 minute service headway would be operated, however, on Sundays, some routes may operate hourly outside of the core hours of 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Service would be provided on this network outside of these hours if the minimum cost recovery target of 25% were exceeded.</p>	X	6:30 a.m. to midnight	Weekdays	X	7:00 a.m. to midnight	Saturdays	X	7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.	Sundays									
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<p>Crosstown and Local Routes</p> <p>Other all-day routes which supplement Transitway and Base routes e.g. 4 and 156</p>	<p>It is recommended that Crosstown and Local routes operate at a minimum headway of 60 minutes in time periods when the following minimum cost recovery targets are met:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Crosstown routes</td> <td>45% in core hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>25% in off-peak periods</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Local feeder routes</td> <td>25% in core hours</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>15% in off-peak periods</td> </tr> </table> <p>These targets represent the percentage of fully allocated operating costs covered by fares. The core hours are:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td> <td>on Weekdays;</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.</td> <td>on Saturdays; and</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.</td> <td>on Sundays.</td> </tr> </table>	Crosstown routes	45% in core hours		25% in off-peak periods	Local feeder routes	25% in core hours		15% in off-peak periods	6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	on Weekdays;	10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	on Saturdays; and	11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	on Sundays.				
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<p>Peak Period Service</p> <p>Green express and red peak period only routes e.g. 32, 29 and 192.</p>	<p>It is recommended that for routes destined to downtown Ottawa:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>service be scheduled so that the average number of passengers at the busiest point on the route, in the busiest 60 minutes, not exceed 45 (based on a standard bus).</td> </tr> </table> <p>It is recommended for Peak-only routes outside downtown Ottawa that they must achieve at least a 25% cost recovery.</p>	X	service be scheduled so that the average number of passengers at the busiest point on the route, in the busiest 60 minutes, not exceed 45 (based on a standard bus).																
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TABLE 2
Recommended Service Design Guidelines

<p>Base Routes</p> <p>Routes 95/97 which service the Transitway</p> <p>Cross-regional routes operating largely on arterial roads such as routes 2 and 118.</p>	<p>It is recommended that a Base Route Network consisting of Transitway routes and other cross-regional routes be established that would provide guaranteed minimum service levels:</p> <p><u>Transitway Service:</u></p> <p>Weekdays: 15 minutes 6:00 a.m. to midnight 30 minutes midnight to 2:00 a.m. 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.</p> <p>Saturdays: 15 minutes 6:00 a.m. to midnight 30 minutes midnight to 2:00 a.m. 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.</p> <p>Sundays: 15 minutes 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. 30 minutes 11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.</p> <p><u>Other Base Routes:</u></p> <p>Weekdays: 6:30 a.m. to midnight Saturdays: 7:00 a.m. to midnight Sundays: 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.</p> <p>On most Base routes a minimum 30 minute service headway would be operated, however, on Sundays, some routes may operate hourly outside of the core hours of 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Service would be provided on this network outside of these hours if the minimum cost recovery target of 25% were exceeded.</p>
<p>Local Routes</p> <p>Other all-day routes which supplement Transitway and other Base routes e.g. 4 and 156</p>	<p>It is recommended that Local routes operate at a minimum headway of 60 minutes in time periods when the following minimum cost recovery targets are met:</p> <p>35% in core hours 25% in off-peak periods</p> <p>These targets represent the percentage of fully allocated operating costs covered by fares. The "core" hours are:</p> <p>6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Weekdays; 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays; and 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays.</p>
<p>Peak Period Service</p> <p>Green express and red peak period only routes e.g. 32, 40 and 192.</p>	<p>It is recommended that for routes destined to downtown Ottawa:</p> <p>X service be scheduled so that the average number of passengers at the busiest point on the route, in the busiest 60 minutes, not exceed 45 (based on a standard bus).</p> <p>It is recommended for Peak-only routes outside downtown Ottawa that they must achieve at least a 25% cost recovery.</p>

Savings	Recommended		
	Hours/day	Days/year	Total
Weekday	22.4	252	5,645
Saturday	22.3	53	1,182
Sunday	8.5	60	510
Annual Total	-	365	7,337

Expenditures	Recommended		
	Hours/day	Days/year	Total
Weekday	-	252	-
Saturday	120.0	53	6,360
Sunday	24.0	60	1,440
Annual Total	-	365	7,800

Net Cost/Savings	Recommended - Annual Hours
Savings	7,337
Expenditures	7,800
Net	(463)

Route	Class	Early Morning Service Removed	Evening Service Removed	Frequency Reductions	Service Added	Service Canceled	Committee Amendments
4	Crosstown		23:55 NB (12/25)				
4	Crosstown		0:07 SB (15/25)				
5	Crosstown		23:50 EB (12/25)				
6	Local	6:17 EB (16/25)		Reduce to hourly service in midday (28/35)			
6	Local		20:58 EB (17/25)				
16	Crosstown		23:38 WB (20/25)				
18	Crosstown		23:53 EB (17/25)				
86	Crosstown		0:05 EB (16/25)				
86	Crosstown		0:59 WB (18/25)				
144	Base		0:25 NB (8/25)				
162	Local	6:07 NB (6/15)					
162	Local	6:31 SB (10/15)					
166	Local		23:52 NB (10/15)				
166	Local		23:32 SB (7/15)				
183	PeakNonDT					8:37 EB (17/25)	
183	PeakNonDT					16:56 EB (5/25)	
189	PeakNonDT	7:11 SB (18/25)					
189	PeakNonDT		15:02 NB (9/25)				
189	PeakNonDT		17:02 NB (13/25)				
189	PeakNonDT		17:32 NB (17/25)				
(xx/xx) = (actual r/c % / target r/c %)							

Route	Class	Early Morning Service Removed	Evening Service Removed	Frequency Reductions	Service Added	Service Canceled	Committee Amendments
2	Base				Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 18:30 to 21:30 (102/84)		
6	Local	8:12 EB (10/25)		Reduce to hourly service (28/35)			
6	Local		21:12 EB (23/25)				
6	Local		21:00 WB (21/25)				
14	Base				Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 12:30 to 18:30 (107/84)		
18	Crosstown		23:18 EB (18/25)				
18	Crosstown		23:35 WB (10/25)				
85	Base				Increase from 15 min. to 10 min. 12:30 to 18:30 (142/98)		
95	Transitway				Increase from 7/8 min. to 6 min. 12:30 to 18:30 (185/126)		
118	Base				Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 12:30 to 18:30 (112/84)		
125	Base		0:08 WB (8/25)				
175	Local		18:22 WB (6/25)				
(xx/xx) = (actual r/c % / target r/c %)							

Route	Class	Early Morning Service Removed	Evening Service Removed	Frequency Reductions	Service Added	Service Canceled	Committee Amendments
6	Local			Reduce to hourly service (25/35)			
95	Transitway				Increase from 10 min. to 7/8 min. 12:30 to 18:30 (146/112)		
156	Local		22:40 SB (8/25)				
173	Base		22:44 NB (17/25)				
173	Base		23:10 SB (16/25)				
(xx/xx) = (actual r/c % / target r/c %)							

Route	Class	Day Type	Service Increase Proposed	Actual R/C Ratio (%)	Target R/C Ratio (%)	Exceeds Target R/C Ratio (%)	Est. Cost per year (hrs)	Comments
95	Transitway	Saturday	Increase from 7/8 min. to 6 min. 12:30 to 18:30	185	126	59	954	Recommended
85	Base	Saturday	Increase from 15 min. to 10 min. 12:30 to 18:30	142	98	44	2544	Recommended
95	Transitway	Sunday	Increase from 10 min. to 7/8 min. 12:30 to 18:30	146	112	34	1440	Recommended
118	Base	Saturday	Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 12:30 to 18:30	112	84	28	636	Recommended
14	Base	Saturday	Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 12:30 to 18:30	107	84	23	636	Recommended
2	Base	Saturday	Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 18:30 to 21:30	102	84	18	1590	Recommended
118	Base	Sunday	Increase from 30 min. to 20 min. 12:30 to 18:30	88	70	18	720	
86	Crosstown	Saturday	Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 12:30 to 18:30	100	84	16	636	
85	Base	Sunday	Increase from 20 min. to 15 min. 12:30 to 18:30	97	84	13	720	

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

SERVICE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND 1999 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW
- General Manager's report dated 11 May 99

In his introductory comments, the Interim General Manager, M. Sheflin, said that erosion in OC Transpo's reliability was caused by decisions to add or retain routes when resources to support them were not available. He posited that a bus company that is not reliable is on a slow road to destruction. Difficult decisions must be made about providing the resources to maintain routes. Mr. Sheflin said he could not over-emphasize how fundamental these decisions are to establishing a successful transit system. He cautioned that at no time should Commissioners attempt to stretch the system beyond the resources provided. He added that many morale and staffing problems are rooted in policy decisions related to bus purchases, stretching routes and tension between planners and operators trying to maintain schedules that only work under ideal conditions.

Dr. Helen Gault, Manager, Planning and Development, began by saying that the Comprehensive Review proposed that changes be made to better focus resources and that a 15% cost recovery in off-peak hours was neither sufficient nor reasonable if OC Transpo wanted to build the ridership it has been challenged to build. Dr. Gault said staff have incorporated the consultants' recommendation into the guidelines and are asking that the Committee approve them, as well as empower staff to apply the guidelines as part of the ongoing, regular scheduling process.

Dr. Gault described the current guidelines as they relate to base routes, cross-town and local routes and peak period service, noting the minimum cost recovery targets for each category are as follows:

- ⇒ base routes: in excess of 25%
- ⇒ cross-town routes: 45% in core hours and 25% in off-peak hours routes
- ⇒ local feeder routes: 25% in core hours and 15% in off-peak hours
- ⇒ peak period service: at least 25%

The proposed guidelines would increase the minimum cost recovery targets in local routes to 35% (from 25%) and to 25% (from 15%). Other changes include:

- ⇒ cross-town and local routes becoming one category
- ⇒ the base route network is improved and is being developed to provide a basic level of mobility for the entire service day.

Dr. Gault indicated that, once the base route network is complete, 60% of all people will be within 400 metres of it and 80%, within 800 metres. She noted this may be difficult to

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

achieve in some areas because of geographic imperatives. Some late evening trips will be discontinued on routes with low ridership and resources will be added in other areas of demand.

Dr. Gault continued by saying that, subsequent to completing the biggest Transplan in history, staff felt there was no point in applying guidelines to routes that will be changing. As a result, guidelines will be applied to routes largely unchanged inside the Greenbelt as the base route network will likely be in place in September. She added that current guidelines will be applied to current service in areas outside the Greenbelt.

Dr. Gault concluded her presentation by saying that, overall, the changes represent .04% of service hours. She drew Committee's attention to Appendix A, which provides information on individual trips on individual routes to be discontinued from September. Altogether, 22 hours of service will be removed and 120 hours will be added on Saturdays, and 8.5 hours will be removed and 24 hours will be added on Sundays.

The Interim General Manager, M. Sheflin, summarized by saying what is before Committee is a plan to increase the number of riders for property tax dollar, not to reduce resources. He posited that doing otherwise would reduce the number of riders for property tax dollar and he strongly recommended this not be done.

Commissioner A. Munter made reference to local routes in Table 2, and he asked whether the routes that don't meet the current guidelines will be removed. Dr. Gault replied that the proposal for areas outside the Greenbelt is to first put in the base network to guarantee a level of accessibility within the community. This will be accommodated by routes running the entire service day: outside the core hours, some routes would not meet service design guidelines. Commissioner Munter expressed concern about the fact the base network only touches the fringes of Kanata and if the decimation of service continues, there will be fewer and fewer riders. He also requested that Recommendation c) include a provision for consultation with the local Councillor to maintain accountability. Commissioner Munter also requested staff provide, prior to consideration of this item by the full Commission, a summary of expenditures related to the \$4.6 million approved during OC Transpo's 1999 budget deliberations for service improvements.

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

Commissioner D. Holmes asked what percentage of trips would fall to 60 minutes during core hours because the ridership cannot maintain 30 minutes, as was recommended by the consultants in the Comprehensive Review. Dr. Gault indicated few would be affected. She added one area of concern relates to areas outside the Greenbelt, specifically whether the base route network will support half-hour trips or whether more hourly routes will be required. She added staff's preference is that one-half hour be the vast rule but would like the flexibility of hourly routes if this is not possible. Commissioner Holmes noted that, once again, areas inside the Greenbelt will subsidize areas outside the Greenbelt as has been the case throughout the years. She said municipalities have built communities that public transit cannot service, and because of this, it may be time to punish them as opposed to rewarding them for their poor planning.

Replying to a question from Commissioner Holmes about changes to peak period service, Dr. Gault indicated staff worked closely with the Consultants on service design guidelines as part of Comprehensive Review. The consultants' strongest recommendation dealt with changes in minimum cost recovery on local services inside and outside core hours, and staff are recommending these changes be made. With respect to commuters from outside the Greenbelt, the Region relies on high ridership from these clients to maintain quality of life and to attract people to transit. Individuals coming from Kanata could be on a bus for as long as 45 minutes without a seat: unless some level of comfort is provided, OC Transpo won't be able to compete with the automobile for those trips. Dr. Gault added the company is trying to prevent over-crowding, to provide alternatives and to strike a balance but it is difficult to please everyone.

Commissioner M. McGoldrick-Larsen asked whether OC Transpo has taken initiatives to increase ridership in areas below 15% recovery during the week. Dr. Gault responded by citing the example of Route 114 which staff feel could generate more ridership and which will be strongly marketed as part of the overall marketing plan. Commissioner McGoldrick-Larsen asked that additional exploration be done regarding service to a new employment "node" in Bells Corners (600 employees). She said she concurred with Commissioner Holmes' comments about poor planning in certain area municipalities. She stressed the importance of continuing to work with suburban municipalities on land use and on making transit more accessible.

Commissioner J. Legendre commented on the practice of reducing frequency or removing service when routes fall below established guidelines. He suggested there may be other options, i.e., retaining the same frequency but reducing the service hours, or considering that certain standards are season-sensitive (the 800 metre standard would be more reasonable in summer than in winter). Commissioner Legendre said he would like to see these considerations and others overlaying the standards.

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

He expressed his confidence in staff's ability to appropriately handle the activity implied in Recommendation c).

Commissioner M. Bellemare asked whether full public consultation would take place for every route that does not meet minimum cost recovery targets. Dr. Gault indicated some routes that don't meet standards otherwise redeem themselves; staff would consult with the elected representative and/or with the community to see what could be done to improve their situation. Commissioner Bellemare asked how the consultation would compare with that of Transplan 99. Dr. Gault replied the exercise would be somewhere between seeking public input for each change and providing information to those affected by the proposals. She added it is difficult to commit to a full public consultation if a route is not going to be supported.

Commissioner Bellemare inquired about Recommendation (c), specifically, to what part of the 1999 service are the guidelines not being applied and, have staff identified all the routes that could be reduced or eliminated. Dr. Gault replied that staff have full information on every route by every time period and have focused on the route structure inside the Greenbelt. She added there are a number of routes outside the Greenbelt that would not meet the 25% target. The hope is that rationalizing the network now and doing the same with Transplan 2000 will improve the situation and maintain accessibility for those clients.

Commissioner Bellemare wanted to clarify that approving Recommendation (c) will mean decisions about routes outside the Greenbelt would be made by staff and not come before the Committee. Dr. Gault said it is the policy that would be applied, and she noted that information on routes is always be available to anyone interested in seeing it. The Commissioner asked what would be the range of level of service for the 20% of the population not within the 800 metre distance. Dr. Gault said it was important to remember that, during peak hours, 98% of businesses and residences are within 400 metres. Many of the route modifications will affect late night service when demand is small. Mr. Sean Rathwell, from Planning and Development, added that 100% of the population within the Urban Transit Area (UTA) is within a mile of a bus stop. He pointed out that a number of communities are already beyond the 800 metres because this is the way they have wanted it for a number of years.

Commissioner Bellemare asked whether staff have evaluated local amenities such as sidewalks and crosswalk are available to affected communities, and what weight would be accorded to public security. Dr. Gault replied the guidelines would be applied with consideration of local amenities, and judgements would be made: as well, staff would consult with municipalities about other improvements.

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

Commissioner H. Kreling asked that staff provide all Commissioners with the information they currently have on areas outside the Greenbelt, in anticipation of the year 2000 Transplan exercise. He asked whether there are industry standards related to cost recovery ratios. The Commission Chair, A. Loney, pointed out that Ottawa-Carleton has the lowest cost recovery in the country in terms of subsidizing the average passenger. Commissioner Kreling asked whether the Commission plans to present innovative ways of improving cost revenue ratios. Dr. Gault spoke about alternative service delivery models, citing the example of van service which is extremely successful. She noted that staff may be in a position to present something further on this matter to the Committee later in the Fall.

Chair Loney wanted to know whether staff propose to market “marginal” routes and whether the Committee would receive information reports on these activities. M. Sheflin said the intent is to proactively go into areas that have capacity and seek to increase it through special marketing campaigns. Chair Loney suggested drivers should be involved in the process, as well as ward councillors. Mr. Sheflin indicated the Unions want very much to be involved in this process.

Chair Loney asked whether more service would have been “on the block” if the guidelines had not been applied to routes inside the Greenbelt. Dr. Gault replied staff believe that overall performance was applied universally to unchanged routes and will err on the generous side in terms of service hours. Chair Loney said he detected a certain amount of concern and he wanted to reassure commissioners and the public this is not a cut and dried process. He asked whether, at the end of the Transplan 2000 process, staff would be able to reasonably predict upcoming changes. Dr. Gault replied in the affirmative, adding that in January/February 2000, staff should be able to do an overview of routes and examine what can be done to increase ridership in certain markets.

Chair Loney presented a Motion from Commissioner Holmes, asking that the changes resulting from applying the guidelines be part of the annual Transplan process (amending Recommendation (c)). Speaking to her Motion, Commissioner Holmes said her concerns center around going through a public process such as Transplan 99, then quietly passing guidelines no one knows about which result in bus service disappearing. She posited that, generally, people will be unhappy about the guidelines and should be informed about the proposed changes in the same manner as they were through the Transplan process.

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

Commissioner Bellemare expressed the view that making decisions about the need for resources rests with the Commission. He felt that absent from the report was any analysis of the impact of removing service from some communities within the UTA. He felt that, with the minimum cost recovery levels for local routes, any assurance to customers that a basic service will always be provided has been eliminated.

Commissioner Bellemare referred to a comment from Councillor Holmes about punishing local municipalities for poor planning decisions, and he posited it was the residents of those areas that are being punished, along with others who may have recently located in an area expecting a certain level of service from OC Transpo. He said he thought that adopting higher cost recovery targets was at cross purposes with the Regional Official Plan (ROP) and trying to increase bus ridership within the UTA.

Commissioner Bellemare expressed concern about the call for a major delegation of authority from the Commission to staff, as per Recommendation (c). He called guidelines “a pure numbers game” in relation to service to residents. He said guidelines have no regard for issues such as public security, amenities provided and ridership preferences in communities. In addition, public consultation would be taken out of the equation. The Commissioner posited that focusing resources in areas where they will be well used really is siphoning resources from the UTA in less densely populated areas.

Commissioner Bellemare agreed certain routes should be realigned from time to time and frequencies adjusted, but permanent changes should not be made without public consultation and without consideration of other issues. He wondered whether the means employed, i.e., guidelines, and raising cost recovery targets, will ultimately render ridership targets unattainable. Reducing local service may have a domino effect on the base routes. Commissioner Bellemare expressed the view this is not micro-management, but policy making. He concluded by saying the flaw of the report is in trying to oversimplify a complex issue. He put forward a Motion calling for Recommendations a) and c) to be deleted, meaning staff would have to come back to Committee for a case by case evaluation to see if cost recovery targets need to be adjusted and to evaluate other factors.

Commissioner Legendre said he was generally supportive of staff recommendations, and of Commissioner Holmes’ amendment. He noted that, while Recommendation a) makes him uneasy, he is not in a position to suggest other numbers, nor has he a way to assess whether the ones proposed by staff are correct. He presumed this is what the consultants suggested and he expressed a willingness to try, and an eagerness to see how things will develop. Commissioner Legendre added staff have said they will apply other considerations about service, over and above numbers, and he felt they should be supported in order to improve service and serve more people.

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

Commissioner W. Byrne spoke in support of staff's recommendations as well as of Commissioner Holmes' Motion. She expressed the view that determining routes on a case by case basis is micro-management, and this comment also applies to item about Transplan 99. Commissioner Byrne said that representing ward interests was her job, but at the same time the bigger picture about public transit has to be kept in mind. She posited staff are in a better position to determine what is and is not working since they have the experience, the exposure and they have done an excellent job at public consultation. Commissioner Byrne pointed out that if the guidelines don't work, the Committee can change them, and Transplan 2000 will provide an opportunity to see how constituents have been affected.

Commissioner Kreling spoke about being asked to take a leap of faith as it was recognized over the past year that a stronger business case must be built for transit operations in Ottawa-Carleton. Commissioners are trying to get away from day to day management and place it where it belongs, but must not shy away from constantly questioning policies. Commissioner Kreling said he was very interested in seeing how these changes will impact as the process moves into communities such as his, and the Commission must be prepared to revisit its policies within the appropriate timeframe.

Commissioner C. Doucet described visiting a suburban community and seeing buses with six passengers on board during rush hour. He voiced his support for staff's recommendations.

Chair Loney said that, had he not spent the time he did in the past year talking to operators, he might not feel as strongly about this matter as he does, as he shares some of the same concerns voiced by previous speakers. He concurred with Mr. Sheflin's comments about receiving complaints related to service because timetables cannot be met. Chair Loney noted the Commission will not have done its job if it doesn't deliver policies that work and the funding to back them up. He pointed out that what is being requested is not a guarantee, but guidelines that staff can reasonably rely upon: this does not mean that legitimate demands and complaints cannot be brought to the Committee's attention. Chair Loney suggested the strongest point to be taken from the consultants' work around scheduling is that OC Transpo should not try to deliver service it cannot deliver, and should stop giving the public unrealistic expectations. The company is in the business of carrying passengers and has to increase this substantially to meet its mandate.

Extract of Draft Minute
Transit Services Committee
19 May 1999

Chair Loney noted that Mr. Sheflin and all OC Transpo staff have made a renewed commitment to carry out the plan, to increase service reliability and quantity to more customers. Staff have to be given the tools to continue the work begun so that targeted ridership increases can be attained according to the ROP and to the Transportation Master Plan. Chair Loney posited that should this not be done, the Region has to be prepared to increase its budget.

Moved by M. Bellemare

That Recommendations a) and c) be deleted, and that Recommendation b) be referred back to staff for a complete list of routes that could be affected under the proposed guidelines given 1999 ridership levels.

LOST
(M. Bellemare in favour)

Moved by D. Holmes

That the following be added to Recommendation c):

and that the changes resulting from applying the guidelines be part of the annual Transplan process.

CARRIED, as amended

That the Transit Services Committee recommend to the Commission that:

- a) **the Service Design Guidelines be amended to change the minimum cost-recovery targets on local routes to 25% in off-peak hours and 35% in core hours;**
- b) **these guidelines be applied to the 1999 service, as outlined in this report and summarized in Appendix A;**
- c) **for future years staff be empowered to apply the approved guidelines as part of the regular scheduling process, and that the changes resulting from applying the guidelines be part of the annual Transplan process.**

CARRIED as amended