

MINUTES

TRANSIT SERVICES COMMITTEE

OTTAWA-CARLETON REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL 2000

8:45 A.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Loney

Members: M. Bellemare, W. Byrne, L. Davis C. Doucet D. Holmes, H. Kreling,
J. Legendre

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Transit Services Committee confirm the Minutes of 22 March 2000.

CARRIED

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

Notes: 1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by the Committee.
2. Reports requiring Commission consideration will be presented to the Commission on 10 May 2000 in Transit Services Committee Report 00-21

PRESENTATIONS

1. UPDATE ON TRANSIT FUNDING

- Committee Co-ordinator's report dated 18 Apr 00

The Commission Chair, A. Loney, made a presentation on the Funding Principles for Sustainable Urban Transportation. The presentation covered the provincial and federal mandates, the requirements and shortfalls of the Kyoto Protocol and the consequences of not acting immediately on reduction measures. Chair Loney described program initiatives in Montréal, Greater Vancouver and Alberta (Calgary and Edmonton), highlighting the following points:

- In Montréal, l'Agence métropolitaine de transport (a provincial transit coordination agency) receives 1.5 cents per litre of the fuel tax and a \$30 annual vehicle charge for transit funding;
- In Greater Vancouver, TransLink (a provincial/local agency for roads, transit, and transportation demand management) has existing revenues from fares, fuel tax, sales tax on parking, residential hydro surcharge and property taxes, as well as potential revenues from, among others, vehicle charges, tolls, parking tax and user fees;
- In Alberta, the Premier's Task Force on Infrastructure has recommended among other, provincial funding based on five (5) cents per litre for all on-road fuel sold in each city and "average annual" provincial funding for transportation. Recommendations for smaller urban and rural municipalities include one calling for the Province to take over full responsibility for major trade highways through several cities and for all secondary highways.

Chair Loney then spoke about a four-point proposal from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities:

- ongoing federal funding equivalent to three (3) cents per litre, nationwide;
- matching funds from provincial governments, new or existing;
- funding in urban regions for the preparation and implementation of a plan for sustainable, urban transportation;
- funding in non-urban areas to be worked out between the three levels of government.

Chair Loney indicated that the FCM Board of Directors has endorsed the four-point proposal in principle, directed staff to prepare a written proposal for Board consideration in June and will include the proposal in the discussions on the Infrastructure Program.

That the Transit Services Committee receive the presentation for information.

RECEIVED

2. MARKETING PLAN FOR ACCESSIBILITY - LOW-FLOOR BUSES
- Committee Co-ordinator's report dated 18 Apr 00

Oxana Sawka, Director of Marketing, Communications and Customer Services made the following presentation.

That the Transit Services Committee receive this report for information.

REGULAR ITEMS

3. TRANSPLAN 2000

- General Manager's report dated 13 Apr 00
- Appendices 1 through 4 issued separately

Dr. Helen Gault, Director, Planning and Development, began her presentation by saying that the Comprehensive Review recommended general route restructuring and, in 1999, major changes were made to routes inside the Greenbelt. Transplan 2000 makes recommendations for route changes outside the Greenbelt, further to extensive public and employee consultations. Dr. Gault pointed out there are ongoing discussions with residents and elected representatives from Kanata and South Nepean, and she proposed that the route changes in those areas be the subject of a further report in May. The Committee agreed with this course of action.

Dr. Gault went on to describe all the proposed route changes, highlighting the following areas of concern and outlining measures to address them.

1. Putting Route 125 on Creek Crossing, then onto Orléans Blvd, to provide relatively straight and accessible service to residents of Chapel Hill South. Dr. Gault pointed out that Creek Crossing was designated for transit in the plan of subdivision and already has areas for bus stops and shelters. Residents from Creek Crossing object to having bus service on their street and the Gloucester Councillor has suggested service would be unsafe because of a local park. Staff propose to provide service on Longleaf and Creek Crossing by an anti-clockwise loop through the community. In Chapel Hill south, Route 28 will run clockwise minimizing travel times; buses will run on Orléans Blvd rather than on Pagé Street to provide better accessibility.
2. Loss of local service on Innes Road between Viseneau Street and Orléans Blvd: petitions were received from employees of Builder's Warehouse and from residents of Ken Steele Court regarding service reductions. Staff recommend maintaining the service plan and providing service on Viseneau Street; the Builders' Warehouse can be accessed via a 400 metre walk to local transit service;
3. Bottriel Street (Fallingbrook): petitions and objections have been received from residents of the area, concerned about having two routes as opposed to one. This is a high density area, with a lot of transit demand. OC Transpo staff proposed a reduction in the number of routes but were advised by representatives of the Regional Transit Advisory Committee (RTAC) that there would be problems with congestion and parked cars. Staff propose to introduce a new, relatively fast route through the community: people living south of Innes Road will have reasonably direct service to downtown, and Route 35 will be extended to serve the Provence area.

Dr. Gault concluded her presentation by drawing Committee's attention to Table 1, which contains all the recommendations for service changes. She indicated that staff will report on changes in South Nepean and Kanata in May and will present a service performance report at the same time. Dr. Gault said OC Transpo would like to implement most of the changes on Labour Day weekend while the changes in South Nepean will await the opening of the Fallowfield station.

The Committee heard from Mr. Greg Bisailon, a property owner and resident of Creek Crossing. He said there is a speeding problem on this street and the situation is getting more serious. The property owners approached the municipal Councillor who, along with the City of Gloucester, stopped the circulation of heavy vehicles on the street. There are also safety issues related to a small, neighbourhood park and the presence of children in the area. Mr. Bisailon indicated that residents feel the problems will be resolved with the completion of the Orléans Blvd extension, and would prefer that service changes be made at that time. The residents of Creek Crossing have signed a petition, a copy of which was sent to the Committee, requesting that the proposed changes to Routes 125 and 28 be reconsidered.

Commissioner D. Holmes asked whether traffic calming studies were done on the street. Mr. Bisailon replied in the negative, however Gloucester has been quick to respond with increased police activity in addition to prohibiting heavy vehicles on the street. Commissioner R. Cantin wanted to know how Gloucester has responded to his suggestion of placing concrete islands in the centre of the road, as was done in several other locations. Mr. Bisailon responded by saying that Gloucester has not acted on this nor on any other residents' suggestions about the use of similar devices to reduce speeds. Commissioner Cantin inquired whether Mr. Bisailon was asked at the time he purchased his property, to sign a Schedule relative to Creek Crossing becoming a bus route in the future. He replied that he had not been informed of this eventuality, but he was aware that other property owners had signed the Schedule.

Sergeant John Crozier, Traffic Sergeant, East Division, Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service, informed the Committee that Creek Crossing has a history of enforcement and requests for speed enforcement. He noted that the municipal standard is 40 kms @ hr whereas the provincial standard is 50 kms @ hr. A municipal survey done for the 85th percentile has yielded speeds of 53 kms @ hr, 3 kms above the provincial standard and 13 kms above the municipal standard, which, in Sgt. Crozier's opinion, does not represent a real problem. He indicated that, while Creek Crossing is not recognized as a speed problem, the OCRPS would continue to monitor and enforce the situation on the street. Responding to questions from Commissioner R. Cantin, Sgt. Crozier expressed the belief that traffic on Creek Crossing will decrease once the Orléans Blvd extension is completed. Commissioner Cantin thanked the Chair of the Police Services Board, Herb Kreling, and Sgt. Crozier for the way the police have responded to complaints. He added that the statistics confirm that the situation on Creek Crossing is not any worse than on any other residential street in Gloucester.

Nicholas Patterson, a resident of Ottawa-Carleton, put forward the view that, with the expenditure of taxpayer money foreseen, the Committee should have detailed short and long term implications for ridership, and estimates of revenue and expenditures as part of the analysis and approval process. He said he was concerned about the addition of routes in the suburbs as a market-building enterprise, in light of the fact that the modal market share is 15% and it has not improved over the past several years. Mr. Patterson posited the suburbs are the areas of least ridership and regular usage. The Committee should be doubtful about adding new routes unless there is a clear, demonstrated need and financial projections to support this course of action. He cited the example of service on Thorndale Avenue, a street which is parallel and close to Walkley Road, a major thoroughfare with good bus service. Mr. Patterson said he has often observed there are no passengers on the Thorndale Avenue bus. He felt there should be more attention paid to adding service when OC Transpo represents 20 to 25% of the total regional budget and serves only 15% of the population, making the subsidy component astronomical.

The Commission Chair, A. Loney, asked how Transplan 2000 corresponds with the approved budget. Dr. Gault responded by saying it is in line with the 2000 budget. She added that staff are projecting 3% ridership growth in 2000 and the recommendation to provide better accessibility in high growth areas will add to this number. In response to a question from Commissioner Cantin, Dr. Gault confirmed that the actual modal split from Orléans is in the 30% range. The General Manager, G. Diamond, pointed out that all OC Transpo's efforts and initiatives are designed to increase the modal market share to meet the transportation plans of the Region. Dr. Gault added that ridership increased by 6% in 1999 whilst the Region's population grew by less than 2%. Chair Loney clarified no one was challenging Mr. Patterson's numbers, but there has been growth, and if this continues, the modal split may reach 16% in 2000.

Commissioner W. Byrne posed a number of questions regarding service changes to Route 356 and the effect on residents on Croydon and Regina Streets. She thanked staff for dealing with the situation, for hearing residents concerns and for making the recommended changes.

Commissioner M. McGoldrick-Larsen sought assurances that 15-minute service would be restored to express service on South Nepean Routes 181 and 95. Dr. Gault indicated that this would be done.

Commissioner J. Legendre, having heard the rationale for the existence of Routes 125 and 28, said he found it strange that the express route would have deeper penetration into the neighbourhood than the regular route. Dr. Gault explained that, as much as possible base service is run on arterial roads since it is expected to run 18 hours a day, 7 days a week: bringing these buses deeper into a community would affect their performance.

Commissioner Cantin spoke in support of the recommendation for changes to Routes 125 and 28, notwithstanding that a petition has been received and that other documentation in opposition has been circulated. He pointed out that the residents of Creek Crossing were made aware there would be bus service on this street at the time they purchased their

property. Commissioner Cantin posited that if Orléans enjoys 33% ridership today, it is because of the planning that was done and because people stayed with the buses that were provided. There is a very high density of housing in the area: buses have to be provided or the alternative is to provide more roads or widen existing roads. Commissioner Cantin urged the Committee to support staff and the good work they did to address local residents' concerns.

Commissioner L. Davis inquired whether staff researched the implications of lowering the age for seniors' bus passes to 60. Dr. Gault replied that many people in their sixties are still working and if this trend continues, reducing the age for passes would have serious ridership implications for OC Transpo. Another factor is that there is no need for the bus company to produce special documentation since it relies on other sources to identify seniors.

Commissioner H. Kreling commended staff for the amount of work that has gone into Transplan 2000. He said he was pleased to see the proposal for Route 130 since it will help alleviate overcrowding on buses. He put forward a Motion calling for changes to local route 136, removing it from Charlemagne Street and Bottriel Streets and placing it on 10th Line Road. Commissioner Kreling said he has had a number of discussions with staff, with community residents and with representatives from RTAC who support the idea. He expressed the view this is an opportunity to reintroduce bus service on 10th Line Road. Bottriel Street is already served by one local and one express route, the maximum distance between stops is no more than 35 metres at either end of the street, and there are pathways leading to a high density development at the corner of 10th Line Road and Charlemagne Street.

Commissioner Kreling reiterated that putting a bus on 10th Line Road will serve the area. This belief is shared by 75% of the area residents and the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School administration, and for these reasons, the change should be approved.

Commissioner Legendre asked that staff comment on the Motion. Dr. Gault said the rationale for staff's proposal is to provide better accessibility to transit for the entire community. She agreed it takes marginally longer to walk to Bottriel Street than to 10th Line Road from the school, but OC Transpo also provides buses for the school. She added that the area west of 10th Line is inward facing and people therein will likely use Route 137. With respect to the catchment area for Route 136, it would be improved if it were on Bottriel Street. Dr. Gault also pointed out that the route on the south end of Bottriel Street to Place d'Orléans is quite long on Route 135 compared to what is being proposed for Route 136.

Commissioner M. Bellemare made reference to New Routing Suggestions contained in the Appendices, inquiring whether staff have analyzed these or whether they will be carried over to Transplan 2001. Dr. Gault indicated some suggestions are incorporated immediately whereas others are kept for future consideration. Commissioner Bellemare asked to be provided with a copy of the petition requesting that Route 124 be put back into the Beacon Hill Shopping Centre so his office can respond to questions of constituents in this regard.

The Committee then discussed a number of operational issues and suggestions made by the public. Commissioner Bellemare highlighted two of these, installing clocks in transit stations and placing heaters on the floor as opposed to the ceiling. Dr. Gault reiterated that some of the suggestions are implemented immediately whilst others are passed on to the relevant operating staff. Commissioner Bellemare liked the suggestion that there be more meaningful destination signs on buses. He proposed that, given the upcoming amalgamation of the new City of Ottawa, staff canvass Commission members for suggestions on how some of the routes can be identified.

The Committee then considered the following Motions:

Moved by D. Holmes

That the Transit Services Committee recommend to the Commission that the service plan for 2000/2001 based on public and employee consultations through Transplan 2000, be implemented in September 2000.

CARRIED

Moved by H. Kreling

That the proposed Route 136 be amended so that it is removed from the north side of Charlemagne and all of Bottriel; and that the Route include 10th Line from Charlemagne (north side) to Charlemagne (south side) and also Charlemagne from 10th Line to Gardenway Drive.

CARRIED, as amended
(J. Legendre dissented)

Chair Loney congratulated Dr. Gault and her staff for the work they have accomplished during Transplan 2000.

4. **TRANSPORTATION DISCOUNT FOR
ONTARIO WORKS PARTICIPANTS**
- General Manager and Social Services Commissioner's
joint report dated 11 Apr 00

The Social Services Commissioner, D. Stewart, presented the report, which describes the first year of OC Transpo's 20% subsidy to the Department for the purchase of bus tickets and passes for Ontario Works participants. Mr. Stewart said the Department did not meet the target of \$1.5 million in purchases in the first year, however it is anticipated the target will be met and surpassed in the second year. The Department has indicated to OC Transpo that it will purchase 3500 transit passes effective May 1st, an increase over the 2000 mentioned in the report and ticket purchases will be maintained at approximately 40,000 per month. Mr. Stewart pointed out that, on an annualized basis, this will represent \$2.2 million as opposed to \$1.5 million.

Responding to a question from Commissioner J. Legendre, Mr. Stewart said the Department is paying for the tickets and passes out of the Ontario Works (O.W.) budget. He added that, as the demands for passes and tickets increase, there will be additional pressures put on OC Transpo's budget to absorb the 20% discount. Commissioner Stewart expressed the hope that the Commission will continue the current level of subsidy on the increased purchases. Commissioner Legendre made reference to the Ontario Government's criticism of the Region's implementation of the O.W. program, inquiring whether the current subsidy could be construed as a barrier to client participation. Mr. Stewart responded by saying this is proving to be a very effective method of helping clients meet the mandatory requirement of the O.W. Act and leave the caseload to work.

He added that departmental staff is careful about issuing passes to participants with sustained activities several days per month on a continuing basis.

Commissioner D. Holmes wanted to know how many clients ride the bus during peak as opposed to non-peak hours. Mr. Stewart replied that staff is unable to provide this information, as an entirely different level of manual record keeping is required. He added that the Department would bring forward a report to the Community Services Committee, detailing the Ministry's position on Ottawa-Carleton's participation in O.W., and more specifically, the contention that the Region is not meeting the community participation component of the program.

The Committee Chair, A. Loney, asked that OC Transpo report back on this matter at the 24 May meeting.

That the Transit Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

INQUIRIES

OTHER BUSINESS

5. UPDATE ON PARATRANSPO SERVICE
- Committee Co-ordinator's report dated 18 Apr 00

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

CHAIR

COORDINATOR