

Transit Windsor Advisory Committee
Meeting held May 26, 2020 via Teleconference

A meeting of the Transit Windsor Advisory Committee is held this day commencing at 9:30 o'clock a.m. via teleconference, there being present the following members:

Councillor Kieran McKenzie, Chair
Councillor Chris Holt
Councillor Rino Bortolin
Bernie Drouillard
Nathanael Hope

Absent:

Christi Chauvin
Ryan Hooey
Renee Morel
Carmen Salloum

Also present are the following resource personnel”

Pat Delmore, Executive Director, Transit Windsor
David Calibaba, Manager, Sales & Marketing, Transit Windsor
Steve Habrun, Manager, Operations, Transit Windsor
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 9:30 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Declaration of Conflict

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by B. Drouillard,
That the minutes of the Transit Windsor Advisory Committee of its meeting held November 28, 2019 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Business Items

4.1 Transit Windsor Advisory Committee 2019 Annual Report

Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by B. Drouillard,
That the Transit Windsor Advisory Committee 2019 Annual Report **BE**
ACCEPTED.
Carried.

4.2 Public Transit amidst COVID-19 – Transit Windsor Service

P. Delmore provides an overview of the Transit Windsor service amidst COVID-19 as follows:

- As per the Mayor's order, Transit Windsor was shutdown for one month.
- Now operating on an enhanced Sunday service schedule with the front of the bus cordoned off for the driver and for people with mobility issues.
- The riders enter from the back of the bus and no fares are being charged at this time.
- The seats are limited to 10 per bus with 1 additional seat for those with mobility issues.
- There are additional buses on hand if a driver reaches the maximum level of seats available on the bus.
- There has been a 90% drop in public transit use over the past three weeks over the same period in 2019.
- Ridership across the country has been a challenge, as they cannot provide two metres of social distancing on the buses.
- The next step is to recognize the huge costs related to public transit and the need to get back to front door boarding in order to collect the fares.

M. Winterton advises there have been challenges relating to ensuring the safety of the public and the workers. He acknowledges the fine work that P. Delmore along with his team have done during this difficult time.

In response to a question asked by Councillor Bortolin regarding the next steps to reinstate bus service, P. Delmore responds that some municipalities are going back to front door and fare collection in June/July 2020 and will be installing Plexiglass. He adds that there are capital costs associated with the purchase of Plexiglass, which is difficult to acquire at this time. He notes that the City of Edmonton is considering the cancellation of public transit for the summer months due to the costs.

Councillor Holt asks when the City made the decision to cancel the bus service how many other municipalities acquiesced. P. Delmore replies there were some

municipalities that cancelled their bus routes and only kept their mainline services. He adds that the City of Windsor was the only municipality that cancelled all service.

B. Drouillard reports there were several transit systems that were shut down in Michigan. He states that Brampton and Hamilton eliminated routes and concentrated only on certain roads and this practice is ongoing due to low ridership. He adds it will be a challenge to protect the drivers.

In response to a question asked by Councillor Holt regarding if any municipality has declared “transit” as an essential service, P. Delmore responds this has not been done formally.

The Chair questions if the workers feel safe on the buses. P. Delmore states that safety is their number one concern and that personal protective equipment has been provided to the drivers. He indicates the automated announcement system on the buses is utilized to educate riders on hand washing and the use of hand sanitizer.

Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by N. Hope,
That City Council **BE REQUESTED** to consider recognizing Transit Windsor as an essential service.
Carried.

At the request of the Chair, a recorded vote is taken.

Aye votes – Councillors McKenzie, Councillor Bortolin, Councillor Holt, Bernie Drouillard and Nathanael Hope.

Nay votes – None

Councillor Holt indicates it is imperative that City Council works to regain the confidence of the transit system. By declaring transit as an essential service, we will be saying it is integral to building a city that takes mobility seriously.

Councillor Bortolin expresses concern that when thousands of people are stranded for a month without transit service and without any mitigation plan; we need to understand it is an essential service. If people do not understand and know that transit is there when they need it most, they will not be able to rely on it and will find other arrangements.

The Chair states it is critical that an open discussion be held to understand the decision making process that will go into any adjustment to service levels.

4.3 Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (CIP) Update

PI Delmore provides the following update relating to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (CIP):

- Three of the projects submitted to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program were approved which will assist in the 2020/2021 transit service.
- The three successful projects include:
 - The replacement of 16 buses in addition to the 3 buses to expand the fleet.
 - A 2.5 million project for the design and upgrade of the Transit Windsor terminal, bus shelters and customer amenities.
 - Phase 1 of the completion of the Transit Master Plan in the amount of \$3 million.

In response to a question asked by the Chair regarding the key differences in the new buses as compared to the older fleet, P. Delmore responds that the new buses are identical to the 24 buses received two years ago.

Moved by N. Hope, seconded by Councillor Bortolin,
That the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (CIP) verbal update by the Executive Director of Transit Windsor **BE RECEIVED.**
Carried.

4.4 2020 and 2021 Services Plans

S. Habrun succinctly provides the following overview regarding the 2020 and 2021 Services Plans:

- The plan is to enhance the Sunday service with the new Sunday service schedule to increase service across all roads that currently operate on Sundays. It is expected this will be implemented in September 2020.
- There has been a recommendation for a small route tweak with Transway 1C that would see the bus stay on Tecumseh Road in both directions on the east end. The change to the 1C Transway route was to be discussed at a Public Open House, however, due to COVID it is postponed at this time.
- In 2021, the plan is to dive into the Transit Windsor Master Plan with the implementation of Route 18 which goes from Tecumseh Mall, Devonshire Mall and St. Clair College to connect the east end to the southern portion of the city.
- The implementation of this route would allow the rider to reach their destination in 30 minutes.
- The operating costs for this route is subject to approval by City Council at its 2021 budget deliberations.
- Plan to undertake an annual review. Due to COVID will be reviewing plans with a different lens, i.e. bringing in “on demand” service sooner.

Councillor Bortolin states that with respect to the Plan going forward, obviously, there will be budget implications. This year transit has taken a “beating” on the operation, which will parlay into 2021 to some degree and ridership will most likely be down for the rest of this year. He asks how do we see the budget implications affecting the plans going

forward as there are plans coming from Federal/Provincial dollars for these programs some of which are matched with local dollars. He questions do we see any of these at risk?

M. Winterton responds that we do know that projections have been reviewed through year-end. Transit Windsor continues to run a significant deficit and it will likely be the highest variance in the 2020 budget. Many of the unknowns are what is going to happen at senior levels of government. We do not know what funding is coming from them. As it relates to what the impact will be on the Transit Windsor Master Plan and the Service Delivery Review, it is their intention to continue with the plans.

P. Delmore reports that when the Transit Windsor Master Plan was brought to this committee, the Board and City Council, one of the things that Dillon Consulting did was to make the plan very flexible. There are a number of ways to implement the different phases of the Master Plan and there are capital dollars through ICEP to support the implementation of the Plan.

In response to a question asked by the Chair regarding if the Consultant quantified the returns on investment for transit in our community, P Delmore responds this was not undertaken.

The Chair asks if reports relating to “investing in transit” can be provided for the committee at the next meeting. P. Delmore responds those reports will be provided.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 10:56 o'clock a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR