

MISSION STATEMENT

“Our City is built on relationships – between citizens and their government, businesses and public institutions, city and region – all interconnected, mutually supportive, and focused on the brightest future we can create together”

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| REPORT #: | Report Date: 8/18/2017 |
| Author’s Contact: Stephan Habrun Planning Manager shabrun@citywindsor.ca 519-944-4141 ext. 2226 | Date to Council: |
| | Clerk’s File #: |

To: Transit Windsor Advisory Committee

Subject: Transit Improvements Required to Consider St. Clair College for a Universal Bus Pass

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report of the Planning Manager dated August 18, 2017 entitled “Transit Improvements Required to Consider St. Clair College for a Universal Bus Pass” in order to position Transit Windsor to approach St. Clair College students with a proposal for a universal bus pass be **RECEIVED**.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

Since the inception and success of the Universal Bus Pass (UPass) at the University of Windsor in the fall of 2015, there have been questions regarding the potential of a similar agreement with the students at St. Clair College. A universal bus pass for students attending St. Clair College presents different challenges than the University of Windsor from a service perspective. The University of Windsor is serviced by two main lines, Transway 1C and Crosstown 2, which operate a 15 minute service with 10 minute service during the AM/PM peak periods. The distance to the major transfer points downtown; Ouellette at Wyandotte and the downtown transit terminal are also attractive in allowing students who live in different parts of the city to have access to these main

lines. The existing service to St. Clair College would need to be greatly improved in order to provide frequent service from all parts of the city.

DISCUSSION:

Current limitations to implementing a universal bus pass with St. Clair College are that existing transit service levels compared to the University of Windsor are lower. Currently, three routes service St. Clair College; Dominion 5, Dougall 6 and South Windsor 7, which are all feeder lines in the city. Frequencies for all three routes would have to greatly increase throughout the service day along with an increase in service hours for 2 of the 3 routes. Another service issue is the lack of direct service from the east end of the city. Currently if a student uses transit, from Forest Glade or the east end terminal at Tecumseh Mall, it takes them approximately an hour and a half on two buses to get to St. Clair College. It takes approximately 20 minutes to drive to St. Clair College from Tecumseh Mall. A new express service or frequent service from the east end of the city to St. Clair College would need to be introduced.

Improving only frequencies on the existing routes that service St. Clair College, the following would be required per route for weekdays:

Dominion 5:

- Improve frequencies to 15 minutes all day before 6:00 pm, up from 25 minutes, and 30 minutes after 6:00 pm in the evenings. This results in needing a maximum of 5 buses all day, up from the current 3.
- This could effectively become a north-south travelling main line from downtown, providing improved services for this region of the city.

Dougall 6:

- Improve frequencies to 20 minutes all day before 6:00 pm up from 40 minutes, and 30 minutes after 6:00 pm in the evenings. This results in needing a maximum of 4 buses all day, up from the current 2.
- Evening hours would need to be extended to match the Dominion 5.

South Windsor 7:

- Improve frequencies to 20 minutes all day before 6:00 pm up from 50 minutes, and 30 minutes after 6:00 pm in the evenings. This results in needing a maximum of 4 buses all day, up from the current 2.
- Evening hours would need to be extended to match the Dominion 5 as service currently ends at 7:00 pm.

East End Service:

- A new frequent east end service would need to be formed in order to reduce the travel time on a bus from the current minimum of an hour and a half and make it attractive for a student.

A project that is currently being funded through the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF) is the Service Delivery Review. This review will update the Transit Master Plan focusing on the improvements in the City of Windsor since 2007, in the last conducted service review, as well as incorporate future growth plans. All transit routes would be reviewed with main routes streamlined and shorter feeder routes to accommodate residential, business and industrial areas of the city. Phase 2 of the PTIF funding could potentially fund growth and expansion of transit systems. Having this project "shovel ready" will support Transit Windsor's application for future funding programs at the provincial and federal levels. Any improvements should be deferred to the Service Delivery Review as it takes a look at the whole transit system rather than just one destination, in this case St. Clair College.

With improvements to the service, Transit Windsor would have a better service option to offer students at St. Clair College.

RISK ANALYSIS:

With the current levels of service, an agreement for a universal bus pass for St. Clair College students would be a challenge as transit would not be a competitive transportation alternative or advantageous to those who currently do not use a bus to travel to St. Clair College. St. Clair College will be contacted to gauge interest in such a program as part of the Service Delivery Review. Making any service changes of this magnitude prior to the service delivery review would undermine that project and could require further changes to the newly implemented service once the review is completed.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Transit Windsor would require capital investments in purchasing additional buses along with an increase in operating to deliver the improved service.

CONSULTATIONS:

Jason Scott, Planning Analyst at Transit Windsor

CONCLUSION:

Transit Windsor will contact St. Clair College to gauge interest in a universal bus pass program at the appropriate time. Improved service to St. Clair College will be one of the areas of review in the service delivery review.

APPROVALS:

| Name | Title |
|-----------------|---|
| Stephan Habrun | Planning Manager |
| Patrick Delmore | Executive Director |
| Mark Winterton | City Engineer - Corporate Leader Environmental Protection and Infrastructure Services |

NOTIFICATIONS:

| Name | Address | Email |
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| | | |

APPENDICES:

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| REPORT #: | Report Date: 8/29/2017 |
| Author's Contact: Stephan Habrun Planning Manager shabrun@citywindsor.ca 519-944-4141 ext. 2226 | Date to Council: |
| | Clerk's File #: |

To: Transit Windsor Advisory Committee

Subject: Tunnel Bus and Special Events Service During Windsor-Detroit Tunnel Construction Closures

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report of the Planning Manager dated August 29, 2017 entitled "Tunnel Bus and Special Events Service During Windsor-Detroit Tunnel Construction Closures" on the effects that the upcoming Windsor-Detroit Tunnel construction closures will have on the Tunnel Bus and Special Events service **BE RECEIVED**.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

This report is to bring forward the impact that the tunnel ceiling construction will have on the Tunnel Bus and Special Events services that are provided by Transit Windsor. The tunnel ceiling construction project is slated to begin in mid November 2017. It is our understanding that there will be weeknight closures (Sunday-Thursday) each week of the project. The project also provides for 4 full weekend closures before the 2017 holiday season to remove the ceiling.

Transit Windsor operates the Tunnel Bus service along with a Special Events service for all sporting events and concerts in downtown Detroit. The regular Tunnel Bus service operates 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The approximate start time of the

weeknight closures is 8:00 pm until 5:30 am. During these closures, along with the weekend closures, all vehicular traffic will be diverted to the Ambassador Bridge. This construction project will affect the ability to provide the scheduled Tunnel Bus service along with the Special Events service.

DISCUSSION:

The Tunnel Bus currently operates 36 round trips from 5:30am – 12:30am Monday to Friday, 37 round trips from 5:30am-12:30am on Saturday and 27 trips from 8:00am – 12:00am on Sunday. Annually, the Special Event service is provided to all pre-season, regular season home games for the Detroit Tigers (81 home games), Lions (10 home games), Red Wings (45 home games), and new for 2017, the Detroit Pistons (46 home games). Home playoff games are also serviced. The service is also provided for all concerts at Comerica Park, Ford Field and the new Little Caesars Arena. Service is provided for the North American International Auto Show at Cobo Hall every January.

Beginning in September 2017 with the opening of the new Little Caesars Arena for the Detroit Red Wings, we will experience a big increase in special events than in years past with the Detroit Pistons moving back downtown along with all of the new concerts that will be at the new arena. With the lack of a bus passenger processing area on the U.S. side of the Ambassador Bridge customs plaza, we cannot use the bridge for the regular Tunnel Bus service or Special Events service to bring patrons to Detroit.

When the tunnel closes in the evenings at 9:00pm or during the scheduled weekend closures, the Tunnel Bus will end its service with the 7:00pm round trip from Windsor and resume once the tunnel reopens the following day. This closure will affect a number of commuters and passengers who utilize either the service in the evenings.

The Special Events service will be affected for the return trips back to Windsor once the events are completed. Since most evening events start no later than 8:30pm, the buses can utilize the Tunnel to get passengers to the events. For the end of the event, empty buses will head to Detroit, using the Ambassador Bridge, to stage for the return to Windsor the same way. With all vehicular traffic diverted to the bridge, there is an expectation that there may be extensive delays than currently experienced when the tunnel is fully operational. While mileage will be saved on the Tunnel bus service during the closures, it will increase for the Special Events buses as the distance travelled to and from the downtown terminal to the event locations increase by using the bridge.

The plan for the use of the Ambassador Bridge for the return trips during Special Events, will require operating approvals of the Bridge, as well as Canada and United States Border Authorities.

RISK ANALYSIS:

When the proposed four weekend closures occur, Transit Windsor will not operate the Tunnel Bus service or provide the Special Events service for the duration of the full closures. There will be an impact in revenue for each of those weekends while Transit Windsor still has the costs for the operators that are scheduled for that service. This situation will occur for the daily evening closures as well, where at least 7 evening round trips will be missed along with a few in the early mornings depending on when the tunnel re-opens.

Transit Windsor is going to attempt to continue to provide the Special Events service during the regular evening tunnel closures. Due to the Ambassador Bridge's lack of bus passenger processing facility on the U.S. side, we cannot travel via the bridge with full buses. Meetings are scheduled with Canadian Customs to determine if there is an ability to process Special Events buses at their secondary inspection facility. The plan to operate Special Events buses during normal nightly closures is to bring passengers to the event via the tunnel as the closures are scheduled to occur at 8:00pm daily, the latest an event starts is 8:30pm. Empty buses would then use the Bridge to pick passengers up and return to Windsor via the bridge. With the added distance and time required for a special event round trip using the bridge, along with anticipated delays due to all vehicular traffic being diverted to the bridge, there could be some difficulties in providing a reliable and efficient special events service.

With federal hours of work legislation that Transit Windsor is required to comply with, and the potential for delays at the bridge along with the increased travel time, there is a realization that we could experience a lack of operator resources. This results in longer delays for passengers getting back to Windsor after the event if Transit Windsor cannot get everyone back without having to send buses back to Detroit to do more trips.

Currently when an event occurs in Detroit, many passengers go over early or stay later after the event finishes. If they do, they utilize the Tunnel Bus for this, especially post event as they can walk down to the Mariner's Church bus stop on the Tunnel Plaza, as that is the last stop for the Tunnel Bus prior to entering the tunnel back to Windsor. With the tunnel closures, this will not be an option and that despite the communication plan that Transit Windsor provides, people are used to going over early or staying late and run the risk of being stranded in Detroit after an event.

Communication to the public is also a risk especially with those attending events from out of town who utilize our services, when they arrive at the WITT and are told there is no service due to a weekend closure or major delays. During the weekend closures,

Transit Windsor will have to alter the Special Event departure times back to Windsor to allow for more time to make sure everyone gets on the buses to come back.

With Little Caesars Arena opening this September 12th and being home to the Red Wings and now the Pistons, along with the premier concert and event venue in the region, Transit Windsor will face increased pressure on the Special Events service. We project to carry more passengers than in past years for hockey games with the Red Wings playing in a new arena as people will want to see the venue and the new arena district that is built along with the arena itself.

While there will be a savings in time and distance costs with the Tunnel Bus as it will stop operating earlier in the evening on weekday event nights, that savings will not offset the time and distance for each bus to complete a round trip via the bridge. Transit Windsor still bears the cost of the Tunnel Bus operator's wages and any extra operators than normal that are needed to properly service the special events.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

Financial impact is unknown at this time and will be monitored and reported during the anticipated eight month project.

CONSULTATIONS:

Jason Scott, Planning Analyst at Transit Windsor

CONCLUSION:

Transit Windsor will continue to work with all parties involved to attempt to provide an acceptable level of service for Special Event Service during the Tunnel Construction Project. Administration will report back on the impact for Tunnel Bus riders.

APPROVALS:

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|-----------------|---|
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| Patrick Delmore | Executive Director |
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To: Transit Windsor Advisory Committee

Subject: Transway 1C Service Enhancements

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report of the Planning Manager dated August 29, 2017 entitled “Transway 1C Service Enhancements” **BE RECEIVED**, and further,

That the Transit Advisory Committee **DEFER** the service improvements to the 2018 Operating Budget with their endorsement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

In June 2014, as part of the Transit Windsor restructuring, City Council approved transit service enhancements of \$1,140,000 which were partly funded through operational efficiencies (CR136/2014). As part of these service improvements, the Transway 1C and Crosstown 2 routes saw service improvements during peak hours to 10 min headways. The goal at that time was to provide headways of 10 minutes during the full daytime service hours, however the off peak service of 15 minute headways remained due to limited funding at that time. The above service improvements have improved passenger overloads and running time issues during the peak hour service hours.

As part of the UPass Agreement made on August 3, 2016 between Transit Windsor and the University of Windsor Student Alliance (UWSA), the Graduate Student Society (GSS) and the recently added Organization of University Part Time Students (OPUS), proceeds from the UPass are to be reinvested in the transit system.

With one year of the three year pilot for the UPass in place, Transit Windsor has seen ridership and revenue increases. The Transway 1C continues to be the most utilized bus route. The peak hour improvements made in 2014 now need to be expanded during the entire daytime service hours.

DISCUSSION:

Transit Windsor is recommending a service enhancement that would see the Transway 1C run every 10 min from 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. This will assist in alleviating the overloading of buses, as well as running time issues, since there are additional buses on the route. As well, with the move downtown for the University of Windsor and St. Clair College campuses, improved transit service will continue to attract additional ridership with more reliable service.

The service improvement will be fully funded from the proceeds of the UPass. In the funding model for this program, \$250,000 was set aside for service enhancements. In addition to this amount, the revenue has exceeded expectations and with the current addition of OPUS, the remainder of the service enhancement will be funded from revenue.

RISK ANALYSIS:

The council approved UPass agreement stated the proceeds are to be reinvested back into the transit system by way of service enhancements or customer amenities. If the revenue is not used in this manner, it would go against the agreement and not send a positive message to the student groups at the University of Windsor. With another referendum taking place in the spring of 2019 to make the UPass program a permanent one, moving forward with service enhancements is a critical factor in the program being extended.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

It is expected, that this service enhancement will cost approximately \$600,000. It will be funded in part by the service enhancement component within the UPass Agreement as well as additional funding that has been realized with revenue increases. This enhancement will come with no additional operating budget requests.

CONSULTATIONS:

N/A

CONCLUSION:

Transit Windsor has experienced ridership growth as a result of the UPass agreement as have other cities that incorporated a similar agreement with a post secondary education institution. Improved ridership means additional gas tax funding and a more sustainable transit system within the community. The UPass has been very positive resulting in the need to reinvest into the service to react to increased demand, to further improve on this partnership, and continue to build a better transit system for the entire community.

APPROVALS:

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|-----------------|---|
| Stephan Habrun | Planning Manager |
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