

## **Transit Windsor Advisory Committee**

Meeting held February 16, 2021

A meeting of the Transit Windsor Advisory Committee is held this day commencing at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom video conference, there being present the following members:

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

### ***Regrets received from:***

Ryan Hooley

### ***Also present are the following resource personnel:***

Tyson Cragg, Executive Director, Transit Windsor  
Mark Winterton, City Engineer  
Deanna Crawford, Planning Analyst, Transit Windsor  
Steve Habrun, Manager, Operations, Transit Windsor  
David Calibaba, Manager, Sales & Marketing, Transit Windsor  
Jason Scott, Supervisor Planning, Transit Windsor  
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

### **1. Call to Order**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 4:00 o'clock p.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

### **2. Declarations of Conflict**

None disclosed.

**3. Adoption of the Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by Councillor Bortolin,  
That the minutes of the Transit Windsor Advisory Committee of its meeting held  
October 27, 2020 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.  
Carried.

**4. Business Items**

**4.1 2021 Budget – Recommendation by Administration – *attached*.**

T. Cragg states that the 2021 Budget includes the recommended items relating to contractual and other salary increases. Transit Administration also recommended an increase to staff training resources and the implementation of Route 18. This route runs from Tecumseh Mall which is the east end terminal to St. Clair College via Devonshire Mall. At this time, it is not recommended due to the higher end cost and the sensitivity issue of being in a pandemic. Certainly, it would be a service improvement and would represent a four percent increase in service hours.. It would also provide connectivity from the east end to the west end of the city.

Councillor Bortolin refers to the heading of the Implementation of the Master Plan and he asks if these are the first steps from the Master Plan.

T. Cragg concurs and adds that in year one of the Master Plan implementation, Route 18 is the first major service improvement. Route 18 represents one of the more significant increases in terms of service hours and service offer.

In response to a question asked by Councillor Bortolin regarding Route 18, T. Cragg responds that the route will originate from Tecumseh Mall and will terminate at St. Clair College. The route will travel along the EC Row Expressway which is a wonderful resource that we are currently not utilizing. This will also tie into Tecumseh Transit and will dovetail into other service improvements as the Transit Master Plan is implemented including further regional linkages with communities like Lakeshore.

Councillor Bortolin notes that the cost for the implementation of this new route is \$537,469 and he asks if this is up and running in September 2021, would the cost still be \$537,469 or, would it be prorated to a lesser cost. He asks if we would be looking at one-third of the cost or fifty percent.

T. Cragg responds that it would be a prorated amount and is an annualized amount. From a ridership perspective, we do not expect to get back to normal until later this year, so a September start is totally feasible and will represent a reduction in the annual budget ask.

Councillor Holt asks if this route would scavenge existing ridership from existing routes or whether or not there is a new market there that can increase our ridership.

S. Habrun indicates there is a new market based on the fact that it is highly inefficient to take the existing service to get to St. Clair College from the east end.

In response to a question asked by Councillor Holt regarding if we would see an increase in ridership and gas tax to partially offset the cost of moving forward with this route, S. Habrun responds possibly, depending on how ridership rebounds in the fall.

T. Cragg reports that one of the things they are looking at is the post-COVID recovery in terms of making the service attractive to ride. One of the goals that we are working toward is a tuition-based pass program with St. Clair College. St. Clair College in terms of their location offers a campus in South Windsor and in the downtown and he adds they are looking for connectivity. This will provide more incentive for St. Clair College to get on the tuition-based pass which will provide more sustainable, stable funding for Transit Windsor. In terms of scavenging ridership, there may be some of that based on the current connectivity, but the service we operate now is so poor with respect to those connections that this is a gilding opportunity as opposed to simply moving the riders from one bus to another.

In response to question asked by Councillor Gill regarding the frequency of the new route, T. Cragg responds that the frequency is scalable depending on the level of funding provided. There are opportunities to provide a high level of service and frequency and also opportunities to scale it back. The Transportation Master Plan implementation shows the frequency of five to six days a week running in the early mornings and late evening periods, or it is something that we could scale back to being Monday to Friday. We do not know what the class schedule will look like, so in this case there is some scalability of how we implement it.

S. Habrun states that the full implementation based on the Master Plan was seven days a week, with thirty minute frequencies throughout the service hours with the service hours varying depending on weekdays, Saturday or Sunday. This could be scaled down to either peak only service or to sixty minute frequency. As per the budget, it is based on a thirty minute frequency all day.

T. Cragg indicates that currently, it may take up to two hours to arrive at St. Clair College from the east end and with the new route it will take thirty minutes. He adds that thirty minutes will be the minimum frequency because in the transit world, if you frequencies greater than thirty minutes, it dials down the attractiveness of taking that service.

Moved by Councillor Bortolin, seconded by B. Drouillard,

That the recommendations presented in the reports by Transit Windsor and the Environment Transportation and Public Safety Standing Committee **BE ENDORSED** with specific emphasis on endorsing the Transit Windsor Master Plan implementation (Budget Issue 2021-0070), and further, that Administration **BE REQUESTED** to provide a memo

for City Council prior to the Budget deliberations to be held on February 22, 2021 outlining the prorated costs for Route 18 should the service commence in September 2021.

Carried.

#### **4.2 2021 Budget – Not Recommended by Administration – *attached*.**

T. Cragg advises that Budget Item 2021-0187 entitled “Reduced Transit Service” is a potential ten percent reduction that could be required if necessary. If this matter was endorsed by Council, Transit would then be tasked with selecting which service areas would be reduced in order to meet these deductions, i.e. elimination of Sunday service, elimination of routes, reduction of frequency and reduction in the hours of operation. The other item is the elimination of the Pathways to Potential Program which is funded through the City of Windsor to provide affordable bus pass programs. Neither of these are recommended by Administration because they are drastic but could be offered up as an option.

Moved by Councillor Bortolin, seconded by N. Hope,

That the update by the General Manager of Transit Windsor regarding the 2021 Budget – Not Recommended by Administration **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

#### **4.3 Introduction of Route 18**

T. Cragg indicates that the implementation of Route 18 is referenced in year one of the Transit Windsor Master Plan because it is a route that we can implement in isolation and does not require changes and other routing. It is a fairly easy implementation in terms of complimenting what we already have.

Moved by Councillor Bortolin, seconded by Councillor Gill,

That the update by the General Manager of Transit Windsor regarding the introduction of Route 18 **BE RECEIVED**.

Carried.

#### **4.4 Ridership Update**

T. Cragg reports that the ridership in 2020 was not what we expected given the gains made in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Ridership in 2020 came in at about approximately fifty percent lower as compared to 2019. All of the categories were significantly lower. We have not run the tunnel service since March 2020 and there was a month long service suspension back in the spring. When we see an increase in vaccinations and things begin to go back to normal, we will see a significant bounce back. Transit Windsor is not reliant on commuter travellers, rather on students, so as the University of Windsor and

St. Clair College begin to restore a campus presence, the expectation of ridership will return to more normal on campus levels.

In response to a question asked by the Chair regarding the current percentage or ridership, T. Cragg responds that we are at fifteen percent of normal ridership.

Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by Councillor Gill,  
That the ridership update provided by the General Manager, Transit Windsor  
**BE RECEIVED.**  
Carried.

## 5. New Business

The Chair asks Administration to provide a report that outlines the progress made in implementing the Transit Master Plan along with information that outlines the pace of investment over the next ten years.

Councillor Bortolin assumes that this kind of long term plan is already in the works and he asks Administration what is needed for the Plan, what we anticipate from current ICEP dollars and what we expect from the announcement recently received from the Federal Government.

T. Cragg advises that all of this information can be put in a report. Through the TMP, there is a requirement for annual reporting, so we would normally be preparing a status update with respect to the progress of the TMP.

Moved by Councillor Holt, seconded by B. Drouillard,  
That Administration **BE REQUESTED** to provide a report at the next meeting of the Transit Windsor Advisory Committee outlining the following:

- Outline the progress made as it relates to the implementation of the Transit Master Plan along with the pace of investment over the next ten years.
- What is needed for the Plan
- What we anticipate from current ICEP dollars
- What we expect from the recent Federal Government announcement.

Carried.

## 6. Date of Next Meeting

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

**7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 4:50 o'clock p.m.

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**CHAIR**

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**COMMITTEE COORDINATOR**