

Report to Council



Date: March 25, 2019
File: 1405-06
To: City Manager
From: Transit and Programs Manager
Subject: September 2019 Transit Service Expansion and Optimization Plan
Report Prepared by: Mike Kittmer, Transit Service Coordinator

Recommendation:

THAT Council, receives, for information, the Report from the Transit and Programs Manager dated March 25, 2019 with respect to the September 2019 Transit Service Expansion and Optimization Plan;

AND THAT Council approve the recommended service plan and direct Staff and BC Transit to initiate detailed service design and ultimately implementation of the Plan.

Purpose:

To inform Council of the recommended service plan proposed for implementation in September, 2019 following public engagement on the various transit service proposals presented to Council in January, 2019.

Background:

An 1,800-hour service expansion for September, 2019 was approved by Council on January 14, 2019. Staff presented service expansion and optimization options under consideration. Council directed staff to proceed to public consultation seeking feedback on the various service options detailed below. 715 responses to an online survey conducted between February 11th and February 22nd were received.

Proposed service options

- Route 8 University/OK College midday weekday and Sunday expansion
- Local transit service between UBCO and Academy Way
- Potential rerouting of the 4 UBCO/Pandosy Express into Rutland

Proposed route optimization

- Route #13 Quail Ridge – hourly service/larger vehicle (currently 30 min frequency)
- Route #15 Crawford - elimination of select underperforming trips

Service Investment Prioritization:

The Transit Future Action Plan details the hierarchical approach to transit service improvement prioritizing service reliability and safety followed by a focus on ensuring buses are well utilized but not overcrowded. With this in mind, the most pressing issue facing the system is service reliability and passenger volume growth on route #8 University, the highest performing route in the system.

Service Recommendation and Rationale:

Rides per trip on the #8 in the mid-day service period (9am to 2pm) and on Sunday afternoons is exceeding that of peak periods at approximately 60 rides per trip. The proposal to increase service levels on route #8 in both service periods was viewed very favorably by survey respondents. Addressing the need for increased mid-day service on weekdays on route #8 will require the full extent of the approved 1,800 expansion hours as well as an additional 550 hours proposed to be recovered from reallocation of underperforming service provided on route #15 Crawford. The reduction of service on route 15 was opposed by only 13% of respondents. Further analysis of ridership data has identified that Saturday service on the #8 has excess capacity that could be reallocated to Sundays to better balance resources to demand on weekends.

Although there was a reasonable level of public support for reallocating service from route #13 Quail Ridge to bolster service between UBCO and the Academy Way housing, it is recommended that a solution for Academy Way be addressed through a future expansion. Survey respondents commented that reducing frequency on the 13 would make it more difficult to meet class times and that walking to campus is generally not a viable option for Quail Ridge residents. A review of Fall 2018 ridership data also indicates that there may be challenges with focusing demand on fewer trips despite assigning a medium duty bus.

The proposal to re-route #4 Pandosy/UBCO Express through Rutland was generally well supported however, there were some concerns raised about this route change altering the nature of this service as an express route. Given the limited expansion resources available for Fall 2019, it is recommended that this option be considered for future expansion in the context of a comprehensive review of the transit network in Rutland.

Service Improvement Proposal		Service Hour Requirement
1.	Improve midday service on weekdays ¹	2,350
2.	Improve Sunday afternoon service by reallocating underperforming Saturday service	N/A ²

¹ From 30 minute headways to 20 minute headways.

² These improvements would be accommodated by reallocating underperforming service on Route 8 on Saturdays.

Detailed public engagement results and background in support of the recommended service proposal are included in the Kelowna Service Change Plan – Fall 2019 report by BC Transit (attached as an appendix of this report).

Council's approval to proceed with detailed service design and implementation of the recommended service plan for September, 2019 is respectfully requested.

Internal Circulation:

Communications Advisor, Community Engagement
Divisional Director, Infrastructure
Financial Planning Manager
Integrated Transportation Department Manager

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

The recommended Fall 2019 Conventional Transit service recommendations are accommodated within the 2019 transit operating budget request approved by Council in December 2018. An 1,800-hour service expansion first presented within the BC Transit TIPS Expansion MOU was endorsed by Council in August of 2018.

External Agency/Public Comments:

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements
Existing Policy
Personnel Implications
Communications Comments
Alternate Recommendation

Submitted by:



J. Dombowsky, Transit and Programs Manager

Reviewed & approved by: R. Villarreal, Department Manager, Integrated Transportation



Approved for inclusion:

A. Newcombe, Divisional Director, Infrastructure

Attachment 1 – Kelowna-Service-Change-Plan-Fall-19-03-08 – BC T.pdf

cc: Divisional Director, Corporate Strategic Services
Divisional Director, Financial Services
Divisional Director, Infrastructure
Divisional Director, Community Planning & Strategic Investments
C. Fudge, Regional Transit Manager, BC Transit
M. Boyd, Planning Manager, BC Transit