

# Report to Council



**Date:** August 26, 2019  
**To:** Council  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** Transit Improvement Program (TIP) 3-year Memorandum of Understanding  
**Department:** Integrated Transportation

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives for information, the report from the Transit and Programs Manager dated August 26, 2019, with respect to the Transit Improvement Program (TIP) 3-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);

AND THAT Council authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the 3-year Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the City of Kelowna for transit service over the 2020 –2023 service years.

## **Purpose:**

To provide Council with information and seek approval in principal for transit expansion planned from 2020-2023.

## **Background:**

Each year, an MOU related to the TIP is signed by the Local Government setting out the City's intention to proceed. This is subject to annual City Council budget deliberations each fall, but the lag time associated with ordering buses, if required, means that BC Transit must commit to purchase up to one year in advance of actual receipt of an expansion bus. The MOU also allows BC Transit to include local expansion hours in its draft Service Plan to the Province to seek the matching funding required for new operating costs. Due to constraints at the transit operating centre, no expansion buses are planned for 2020/21.

## **Discussion:**

Kelowna traffic patterns are the result of the daily travel decisions made by the City's 130,000 citizens. Where people live, how far they need to travel to get to work, school, or other services is the primary factor that influences how people choose to get around. Today, 79 per cent of residents commute by driving, while only 19 per cent commute by sustainable transportation modes such as walking, cycling, carpooling or taking transit (2016 Census). Over the next 20 years, by encouraging future growth in urban centres and making investments that make sustainable transportation options easier and more convenient, the City will be able to accommodate the increasing demand for travel while minimizing the need for costly roadway expansions. Increasing transit service hours and accompanying

infrastructure and amenities, including transit priority measures, will be a key component of this approach.

The TIP is reviewed by City staff in collaboration with BC Transit each year and expansion priorities are modified as necessary to reflect investment priorities and current conditions. The previously planned expansion of 5,000 hours described in the last MOU will not proceed in the 2020/21 period as it would trigger additional buses that cannot be accommodated at the current operations facility. Work to assess the servicing needs of the proposed new operations facility has commenced. With project completion a number of years off however, BC Transit is pursuing interim Paratransit fleet relocation, which would free capacity for expansions till the new facility is operational.

BC Transit conducted a Paratransit review in 2018/19 which provides an overview of current services, best-practices and a vision for system enhancements that will improve equity between the Conventional and Paratransit systems. Today, the days of operation and span of service differ between the two systems and incremental investments are proposed to address these inequities. Proposed expansions will be achieved by means of the Taxi Supplement Program which offers greater flexibility for users while providing a solution at a lower average cost per ride than traditional handyDART.

### **Three Year Proposed Service Expansion**

**2020/21** - Conventional Transit - Off-peak service improvements to the Core Transit Network.  
Paratransit – Introduction of basic weekend handyDART service on Sunday.

To address ongoing passenger crowding and service reliability challenges on key Frequent Transit Network routes, 950 hours of expansion are proposed for 2020/21. This investment is the maximum that can be accommodated without triggering an expansion bus.

Respondents to a 2018 survey of Paratransit users identified introduction of basic Sunday services as the top expansion priority; an improvement also recommended in the Paratransit review. No Sunday service is offered today.

**2021/22** – Conventional Transit - Key initiatives identified in the Transit Future Action Plan.  
Paratransit – Expand handyDART service hour span of weekday service.

Transit speed and travel times continue to erode each year as traffic volumes on frequent and rapid transit corridors grows. The result is buses are unable to adhere to schedules which affects customer satisfaction and ultimately ridership. While investments in physical transit priority measures can help to avoid paying more to maintain the same frequency of service along increasingly slower routes, these measures take time to plan and implement. As the community grows, more substantial operating investments are also needed to ensure buses are able to meet posted schedules and capacity demands in today's conditions. Deferral of investments in 2020/21 resulting from operation centre constraints will place additional strain on already busy bus routes warranting a more substantial investment in 2021/22. In addition to general investment in various major routes, streamlining services in the Rutland area over time is a priority. The objective is to better align routes and service levels according to changing density and ridership potential. In addition to service enhancements in the area, the 11 Rutland will be routed into the new Rutland Transit Exchange.

Improving weekday service coverage hours on the Paratransit system was a high priority among respondents to the Paratransit customer survey. The Paratransit review recommends expanding weekday service hours to better align with those of the Conventional transit system.

**2022/23** – Conventional Transit – Continuing to delivery on the Transit Future Action Plan. Paratransit – Expand weekend hours of handyDART service.

Continued investment in frequent and rapid routes to maintain service reliability and capacity with investment in higher-performing local coverage bus routes is envisioned for 2022/23. Select coverage routes have limited or no service through mid-day periods and on weekends. Routes that are meeting or exceeding performance standards would be candidates for service enhancements. With changes to travel patterns expected in the upper and lower mission upon the opening of the new Canyon Falls Middle School this fall, the structure of routes in the area will be reviewed to determine if restructuring is required.

Expansion of weekend service hours on the Paratransit system is the final recommendation of the Paratransit review and was also a popular expansion option among Paratransit survey respondents. This investment would complete the primary service expansion recommendations detailed within BC Transit's Paratransit review.

PROPOSED <b>CONVENTIONAL</b> EXPANSION INITIATIVES						
AOA Period	In Service Date	Annual Hours	Vehicle Requirements	Estimated Annual Revenue	Estimated Annual Total Costs	Estimated Annual Net Municipal Share
2020/21	Sep-20	950	0	\$21,576	\$101,067	\$32,303
		Description	Off-peak service improvements to the Core Transit Network to address passenger crowding and service reliability challenges			
2021/22	Sep-21	10,850	5	\$246,636	\$1,658,210	\$727,563
		Description	Initiatives from the Transit Future Action Plan including investing in Frequent and Rapid Routes with a focus on improving service to the Rutland area, investment to maintain service reliability, and expansion to bring Route 11 into the Rutland.			
NOTE: Due to identified operational constraints at the Kelowna facility, this option will be subject to further review and approval by BC Transit to ensure that additional vehicles can be accommodated.						
2022/23	Sep-22	5,950	3	\$135,284	\$805,985	\$350,134
		Description	Initiatives from the Transit Future Action Plan including investing in frequent and rapid routes, investment to maintain service reliability, investment in higher-performing local routes, and the Upper/Lower Mission Service Restructure			
NOTE: Due to identified operational constraints at the Kelowna facility, this option will be subject to further review and approval by BC Transit to ensure that additional vehicles can be accommodated.						

#### PROPOSED **CUSTOM (PARATRANSIT)** EXPANSION INITIATIVES

AOA Period	Estimated Revenue	Annual	Estimated Total Costs	Annual	Estimated Municipal Share	Annual	Net
2020/21	\$25,580		\$186,500		\$36,543		
	Description		Introduce basic weekend handyDART service on Sunday by means of Taxi Supplement.				
2021/22	\$69,980		\$535,000		\$108,229		
	Description		Expand the handyDART service hour span of weekday service to reflect Conventional hours of operation by means of Taxi Supplement.				
2022/23	\$34,990		\$267,000		\$53,948		
	Description		Expand the weekend hours of handyDART service to reflect the Conventional hours of operation by means of Taxi Supplement.				

#### Conclusion:

Transit will play a vital role achieving the vision and goals of the Transportation Master Plan so long as it is convenient, reliable, safe and equitable. Regular investment in service levels coupled with strategic transit infrastructure investments will ensure that transit is a key part of a diverse transportation landscape available to all residents of Kelowna.

#### Internal Circulation:

Strategic Transportation Planning Manager  
Financial Services, Financial Analyst

**Financial/Budgetary Considerations:** Net cost for Conventional and Custom transit to be considered for the 2020 budget is estimated at \$22,949 with the full year annual estimated costs of \$68,846 to be considered for the 2021 budget. Net cost for Conventional and Custom transit to be considered for the 2021 budget is estimated at \$278,597 with the full year estimated annual cost of \$835,792 to be considered for the 2022 budget. Net cost for Conventional and Custom transit to be considered for the 2022 budget is estimated at \$134,694 with the full year annual estimated costs of \$404,082 to be considered for the 2023 budget.

**External Agency/Public Comments:** BC Transit has reviewed and approved the report and attachments.

#### Considerations not applicable to this report:

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



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 - BC Transit TIPS MOU City of Kelowna 2020-2023

Attachment 2 - Transit Improvement Program MOU Presentation

cc: G. Davidson, Divisional Director, Financial Services  
C. Fudge, Senior Manager Government Relations, BC Transit  
M. Boyd, Planning Manager, BC Transit