



OAKVILLE

REPORT

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: JULY 14, 2015

FROM: Oakville Transit
DATE: June 15, 2015
SUBJECT: Transit Services Review and Five Year Plan
LOCATION: Town wide
WARD: Town wide

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report from Oakville Transit dated June 15, 2015 entitled "Transit Services Review and Five Year Plan" be received;
2. That the recommendations contained in the Five Year Plan be approved in principle; and
3. That the 2016 Operating and Capital Budget and Forecast be prepared in accordance with this 5 Year Transit Plan.

KEY FACTS:

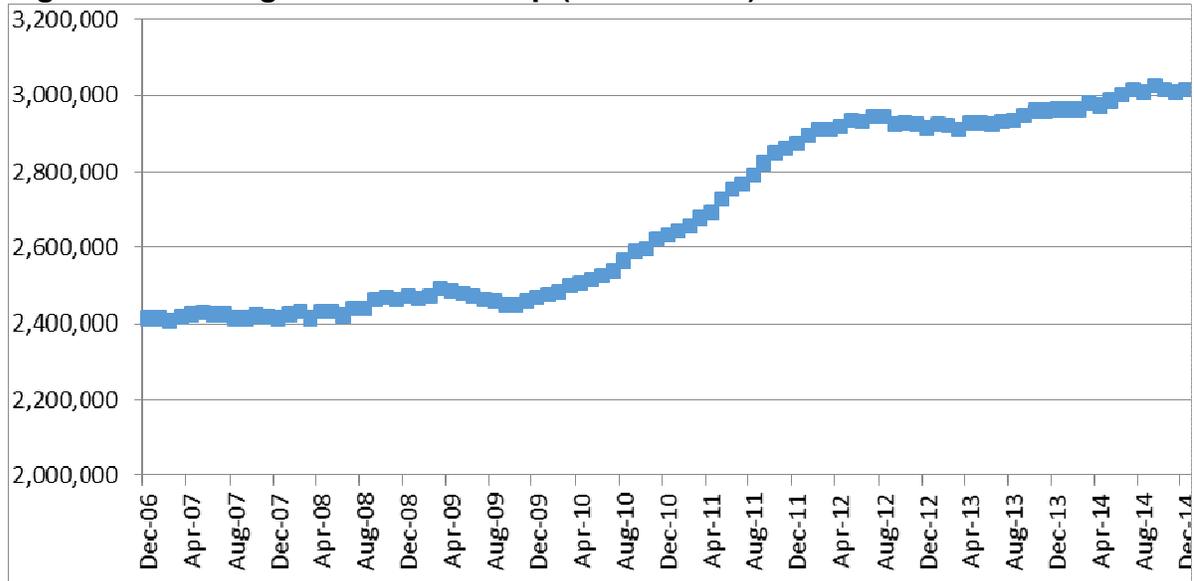
The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- This 5 Year Plan is highly responsive to the needs identified through public consultation
- Ridership and revenue will increase significantly over the life of this plan
- Service frequency will increase on corridors and high ridership neighbourhood routes
- The plan deploys the innovative and cost effective comingled "Home to Hub" service to achieve the objectives of "Transit First"
- The new service plan reallocates more than 38,000 hours of existing service (\$4.6 million in existing funding) to improve ridership and revenue
- The 5 Year Plan is more affordable than the existing service plan going forward as it reduces the forecasted transit tax levy impact by \$1.7 million
- Greater financial sustainability is achieved as the cost recovery rate improves from 30% to 36%

BACKGROUND:

Oakville Transit launched a new service design in September 2009 and over the subsequent 36 months there was a steady and significant increase in ridership as shown in Figure 1 below. However, with no further service level increases, ridership growth has slowed again with only a 3.4% increase over the three year period 2012 to 2014.

Figure 1 – Moving Annual Ridership (2006 – 2014)



In 2009, prior to the investment in a new service design, the Oakville Transit net operating budget was just over \$12 million compared to \$19.8 million in 2015. However, this increase has not been driven by on street conventional service level increases. Since 2009 the cost of providing the provincially mandated specialized transit service (care-A-van) has increased by more than \$1.2 million (65%). The costs associated with operation of the transit facility have increased from \$430,000 to \$2.5 Million; a 473% increase.

While investment in transit infrastructure and specialized transit are critical to the delivery of transit services, it neither stimulates ridership nor increases revenue. When costs are increased without generating revenue the rate of cost recovery is driven downward. As funding is limited, investment in non-revenue generating areas of the business can preclude the ability to invest in increased service levels. In light of these factors, we need to identify and implement improvements in the way Oakville Transit delivers its services; to be more efficient and innovative. Simply put, continuing to do what we have always done is no longer sustainable.

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In 2014 Oakville Transit retained the services of the transportation consulting firm Parsons Brinckerhoff to conduct a comprehensive review of its conventional and specialized services, maintenance operations, administration functions and support services. The objectives of the review were to identify opportunities for efficiencies, recommend appropriate industry best practices, and to be innovative in recommending strategies to increase overall ridership while maximizing Oakville Transit's rate of cost recovery. The services review would lead to development of a Five Year Plan for service delivery and staffing.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Highlights of the Plan

The Five Year Plan seeks to streamline Oakville Transit's operations with a prudent fiscal approach; specifically focusing on service improvements, affordability, sustainability and innovation. The plan has been carefully crafted to leverage the benefits of a series of initiatives to maximize their overall impact on the system. It is a comprehensive and fully integrated plan intended to optimize the customer experience while making the most efficient use of resources. Its guiding principle is that "providing high quality, high frequency service, to corridors where ridership is highest is preferable to providing lower levels of frequency over a greater number of weaker corridors to provide basic geographic coverage. Frequent service generates ridership, and high ridership generates fare revenue."

The plan provides strategies that are responsive to the public's priorities identified through a variety of public and stakeholder engagement activities including;

- Increasing frequency of service
- Enabling Transit First in North Oakville
- Improving GO train connectivity
- Servicing the future Regional Express Rail (RER)
- Providing direct access to the new hospital
- Improving the customer experience through the introduction of amenities enabled by ITS technology
- Addressing needs of seniors and students
- Maximizing the use of the entire fleet through the introduction of the new comingled Home-to-Hub service model
- Addressing optics of empty buses by right sizing fleet, more efficient service delivery and increasing ridership
- Ensuring success with strategic resourcing
- Delivering affordability and sustainability through innovation
- Effective performance management

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Stakeholder Consultation

The services review relied on significant stakeholder consultation including riders, non-riders, elected representatives, Sheridan College students, Halton Health Care and the town's Accessibility Advisory Committee transit staff, town staff and neighboring transit agencies,.

Public outreach included customer engagement at a number of high traffic transfer and boarding locations while care-A-van customers were engaged one-on-one on the bus during their scheduled trips. Pamphlets were distributed to encourage customers to participate in an online survey while non-users of the service were encouraged to participate in a separate survey. Meetings were held with representatives of the Sheridan Student Union and Halton Health Care representing the interests of the new hospital. The consultants also met with Town of Oakville elected representatives and executive management team members to solicit input from their perspective.

Key findings from the more than 500 customers who participated in the survey revealed are as follows;

- Only 46% were satisfied with Oakville Transit's services;
- The most important priority was frequency followed by reliability of service; and
- The third and fourth most important were longer service hours and better transfer connections.

Care-A-van customers proved receptive to online booking capability and most respondents indicated that they use the service to attend medical appointments.

The non-rider survey was reserved for residents who have never used Oakville Transit or who have used its services no more than once per month.

- 60% of these respondents indicated that they have used an Oakville Transit bus at least once in the last year
- 65% of these, indicated that their primary means of transportation was the car
- 77% confirmed that they were familiar with the services offered by Oakville Transit
- The top two reasons given for not using Oakville Transit service regularly were;
 - "Routes and schedules don't cover my needs"
 - "Service is not frequent enough"
 - Non-riders cited "frequency" as the most important feature
 - The majority of respondents indicated they would use public transit if it was more frequent and reliable.

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These findings were supported by the results of the town's Citizen Survey and the Metrolinx Customer Attitude Survey. The Citizen Survey identified Oakville Transit as having the lowest satisfaction rate (52%) among all town services; an 8 point decrease from the previous survey. This survey also indicated that, in the category of "Ease of travelling around Oakville", respondents rated "increasing the frequency of public transit on existing routes" as the second highest priority at 21%, only 8 points behind "adding and widening roads and bridges."

The 2015 Metrolinx Customer Attitude Survey reinforced the importance of transportation issues with 90% of respondents indicating that "transportation is one of the most important issues in the GTHA". More importantly, 43% of people currently commuting by personal automobile indicated that they would switch to public transit if it was "faster, more frequent and reliable".

Front-line transit staff participated in workshops while transit management and supervisors from administration, planning, operations and maintenance were interviewed for input. Consultation with front-line transit staff revealed concerns with traffic congestion impacting service, insufficient running time on some routes, inadequate washroom facilities, and driver security. Feedback from transit management included issues such as chronic staff shortages, funding for service expansion, communication, alignment of responsibilities and driver training.

Increasing Frequency of Service

Every survey confirmed that frequency of service is the single biggest driver of transit ridership. This plan seeks to realize the benefits of increased frequency while minimizing the additional investment required by identifying ways to be more efficient and innovative. Before anything we need to ensure that we are making the best possible use of the resources we already have.

To this end, the review of existing services included an assessment of all fixed route productivity in terms of rides per route, percent of system ridership, boardings per revenue hour, boardings per revenue kilometer, cost per passenger, and cost recovery ratio. The poorest performing routes were identified as Routes 2, 5A, 21, 22, 25 and 32. The performance under the categories identified above are provided in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – Poorest Performing Routes

Route	Rides	Percent of Total Rides	Boardings per Revenue Hour	Boardings per Revenue Kilometer	Cost per Ride	Cost Recovery
2	39,654	3.1%	9.1	0.3	\$ 14.00	16%
5A	859	0.1%	3.6	0.0	\$ 39.00	6%
21	15,241	1.2%	10.7	0.5	\$ 11.67	20%
22	12,893	1.0%	10.8	0.6	\$ 10.53	22%
25	4,632	0.4%	12.9	0.6	\$ 8.96	20%
32	12,955	0.1%	7.5	0.3	\$ 19.66	12%

These six routes currently offer almost 26,500 revenue hours of service annually which translates into approximately \$3.2 million of funding that could be reallocated to provide increased frequency on high demand routes. Another 11,900 revenue hours are also available for reallocation through service adjustments on other routes. This translates into an additional \$1.4 million in existing resources; a total of \$4.6 million in existing funding that could be used more productively.

In creating a transit network that operates at greater frequency the focus is on reducing or eliminating service on low demand, poor performing routes in favor of increased service levels on high demand corridor and neighbourhood routes. This includes a strengthening of the Trafalgar corridor, Dundas, Speers/Cornwall and Third Line. Neighbourhood routes that would see increased frequency of service include Westoak Trails, Lakeshore West, River Oaks, Northridge, South Common and Palermo (Figure 3).

More frequent service is also key to providing better connections locally within Oakville and regionally with our neighbouring transit systems. Our connections with Mississauga Transit (MiWay) will improve as we will match their existing higher frequency of service. In the west we currently have no scheduled connections with Burlington Transit. This plan will provide connection with 10 Burlington Transit routes at Appleby Station and another 9 Burlington Transit routes in the north through an extension of the Dundas service to the 407 Park and Ride at Walkers Line; two Oakville Transit routes fed by a total of 19 Burlington Transit routes.

Another important step in establishing a more frequent and reliable service is to move to “clock face headways”; service that operates at either 15, 30 or 60 minute frequency. Clock face headways are industry best practice, easier for customers to understand and provide better connectivity with GO train service.

Figure 3 – Frequency Improvements

Service Frequency Improvements				
Route	Weekday Peak		Weekday Midday	
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
3 - Third Line	20	15	40	30
4 - Speers/Cornwall	20	15	40	30
5 - Dundas	40	30	40	30
13 - Westoak Trails	20	15	30	30
14 - Lakeshore West	20	15	30	30
19 - River Oaks	20	15	30	30
20 - Northridge	20	15	30	30
24 - South Common	20	15	30	30
33 - Palermo	45	30	n/a	n/a
102 - Winston Park	40	30	0	60
120 - East Industrial	45	30	n/a	n/a

The frequency of service is also improved for some routes on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Saturday service on routes 3, 4 and 5 will improve from 40 minutes headways to a bus every 30 minutes. Routes 3 and 4 will also improve from 40 minute frequency to 30 minute on Sundays and holidays.

Service improvements do not end with increased frequency of service. While some routes have been cancelled, others have been restructured and/or extended to maximize catchment areas, provide trip generating origins and destinations, and/or improve connections with GO transit and Burlington Transit. Figure 4 below lists those improvements.

Figure 4 – Service Improvements

Restructured and Extended Service	
Route	Improvement
1 - Trafalgar	Combined with Route 17 to provide one seat ride from Uptown Core to Downtown. Blended with Routes 5 and 24 between Dundas and Oakville GO for composite 7.5
3 - Third Line	Extended north onto hospital site and south to Lakeshore and Bronte providing a one seat ride to hospital
5 - Dundas	Extended south on Trafalgar to the Oakville GO Station via White Oaks providing one seat ride to hospital. Extended west to 407 Park 'N Ride providing connection
11 - Linbrook	Restructured to maximize catchment, extended to Clarkson GO Station and scheduled to operate all day (18 hours).
14 - Lakeshore West	Extended north on Greta Lakes to harvester and then west into Appleby GO Station, providing west end connection to GO train and 10 Burlington Transit routes.
15 - Bridge	Extended west on Rebecca to Burloak and then north to service the RioCan Center
18 - Glen Abbey South	Restructured to become a bi-directional route operating all day between Oakville Go and Bronte GO
19 - River Oaks 20 - Northridge	Interlined at the Uptown Core Terminal to provide continuous trip capability between neighbourhoods east and west of Trafalgar
24 - South Common	Restructured to provide direct north south service on Trafalgar via Sheridan. White Oaks to be serviced by Route 5. Headways blended with Routes 1 and 5 on
28 - Glen Abbey North	Restructured to become a bi-directional route operating all day between Oakville Go and Bronte GO
33- Palermo	Restructured to serve section of Postmaster currently served by Route 22.
102 - Winston Park	Restructured to serve segments on Sheridan Garden Drive, Gable Drive and Kingsway Drive currently served by Routes 2 and 21. rescheduled for all day
120 - East Industrial	Extended north on Winston park Drive to Dundas.

Enabling Transit First in North Oakville

To date there have been two significant developments in North Oakville. In March 2013, Oakville Transit implemented Route 5A to provide a very basic fixed route conventional service to the new development north/east of the Dundas and Neyagawa. The nature of the road network within this development meant that transit could only operate its standard conventional bus on Sixteen Mile Drive. As a result, many residents of in this community are more than 800 meters from the nearest transit access point. After two years of operation Route 5A is only carrying an average of 167 rides per month; or 8.3 per day. Given the cost of the service, this is simply not sustainable.

Through its 2015 budget submission, Oakville Transit recommended replacing Route 5A with an innovative and inexpensive alternative; “Comingled Home to Hub.” This is a new type of service that blends two initiatives. Comingled simply means that buses normally used exclusively for specialized transit customers would also be used to transport customers without disabilities. Rather than being eligible for this

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service by virtue of a disability they would be eligible based on where they live. In effect, this is a demand response type of service that allows the customer to call ahead and book a ride. The difference is that instead of being transported from their residence to their destination they are transported from their residence to the nearest transit hub (and back). In the case of customers in this particular development, they would be transported from their residence to the Uptown Core Terminal where they can connect with anyone of five conventional fixed routes. The return trip would see them picked up at the Uptown Core Terminal and transported back to their residence.

The Home to Hub model allows us to introduce transit services into any new development at its earliest stages providing very convenient access to transit. By “comingling” conventional service customers with specialized service customers we are able to introduce the service with little or no additional costs. The same staff currently booking specialized transit rides would also book the Home to Hub rides. The same buses providing specialized transit rides would also provide the Home to Hub rides. The solution is innovative, flexible, cost effective and sustainable. Once the area road network has fully developed we would transition from a Home to Hub model to a conventional fixed route service. Comingled Home to Hub service was launched in North Oakville in July of this year.

Improving GO Train Connectivity

This service plan results in 15 minute frequency during peak service hours on our primary routes and a 7.5 minute composite headway on the Trafalgar corridor. All other routes (except Route 6 Upper Middle) would operate every 30 minutes during peak. During midday off-peak times, almost all routes would provide 30 minute frequency. This greatly improves connectivity with GO Transit’s Lakeshore West train service as it operates every 30 minutes in the off-peak. The 15 minute frequency during peak service hours eliminates the need to schedule connections based on GO Train schedules. GO train connections will also be added by extending Route 14 to Appleby Station, extending Routes 18 and 28 to Bronte Station and extending Route 11 to Clarkson GO Station in the east. These new connections and increases in frequency are also an important step towards ramping up our service to meet the demands of the planned Regional Express Rail (RER) which will offer operate every 15 minutes in off-peak on the Lakeshore West line.

Providing Direct Access to the New Hospital

Access to the new hospital will be provided by both conventional and specialized transit services using one of the three fully accessible bus stop locations on the hospital grounds. Conventional service Route 3 (Third Line) will provide north/south access and will provide opportunity for customers to connect from other transit

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routes at both the South Oakville Center and Bronte Station. Route 3 is also being extended at both ends. In the south it will continue south from the South Oakville Center in a counter-clockwise direction via Rebecca, Bronte, Lakeshore and Third Line. This provides residents in the Bronte area with direct one seat rides to the hospital. It also ensures safe and convenient access for seniors as they will board and alight on the south side of Lakeshore. In the north, Route 3 will extend onto the hospital grounds in a clockwise direction servicing all three stops. This plan recommends that the Route 3 extension described above be implemented effective December 2015 as the hospital opens in mid-December 2015. The associated costs have been included in the September 2016 launch funding strategy.

Route 5 (Dundas) will provide east/west transit access with on street stops directly in front of the hospital. It is also being extended at both ends to provide improved connectivity in the west and the opportunity for direct one seat rides from the Oakville GO Station.

Addressing Needs of Seniors and Students

The 5 Year Plan proposes that we maintain the three Senior Specials currently operating and that "Free Mondays" for seniors also be continued. As noted previously, the proposed plan includes changes in routing to provide safe and convenient access to the new hospital site. Transit's new Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) also provides the ability to place variable message information panels at senior residences and other key locations to display real-time bus arrival times.

The ridership increases realized from these service improvements will significantly increase revenues which in turn will reduce our reliance on fare increases to generate revenue. Students at Sheridan College will also benefit from increased direct access to the college by transit. While Routes 24 and 1 will continue to service the college bus terminal, Route 5 (Dundas) will be extended south from the Uptown Core Terminal to the Oakville Go Station. Not only will this provide direct access to the College from the north-west, but the service will intersect with 9 Burlington Transit routes. The result of Routes 1, 5 and 24 operating on Trafalgar Road will be a composite 7.5 minute frequency of service. These service improvements also serve to set the stage for the introduction of a transit U-Pass at Sheridan College.

Right Sizing the Fleet for Greater Efficiency

There are three ways to address the optic of "empty buses". The first would be to utilize smaller capacity buses on low ridership routes, the second would be to eliminate those routes, while the third is to increase ridership. This plan employs all three approaches.

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The recent availability of quality mid-size heavy duty buses with a lower capital cost, lower operating costs, similar life expectancy and lower life cycle cost has provided a viable option to the standard 40 foot bus. Oakville Transit has already converted its 10 year capital forecast to include purchase of smaller capacity 30 foot buses. Over the life of this plan the transit fleet will reach 130 buses and 30% of that total will be smaller capacity buses.

The 5 Year Plan also proposes the outright elimination of six poor performing low ridership routes. The service gap created by these cancellations will be addressed by reconfiguration of other more productive routes combined with introduction of comingled Home to Hub service.

The increase in frequency of service and restructuring of remaining routes will result in a significant increase in transit ridership. The integration of smaller buses into our fleet, combined with elimination of the poorest performing routes and increased ridership should serve to mitigate the optics of empty buses.

Ensuring Success with Strategic Resourcing

The TSR recommends a staffing model that will successfully support the increased service levels. The Transit team has taken those recommendations and refined them further to incorporate a more innovative approach to some of the staffing needs.

Although the TSR recommends 2 additional Transit Supervisors and 3 more care-A-van Coordinators, staff is proposing the creation of a new position within the Transit Control Center that would consolidate the duties of both thereby eliminating the need to expand beyond current strength while achieving AODA compliance. The functional Assessor/Travel Trainer is a contract position that will review applications for specialized service, determine eligibility and train care-A-van customers in the use of conventional services. The cost of this position is mitigated by savings on reduced specialized transit trips and a potential cost sharing arrangement with Burlington and Milton Transit. The Marketing and Customer Service Specialist is required to support the increased focus on both of these areas. The Driver Trainer position will conduct all initial and refresher training.

The TSR identified a number of gaps in staffing that need to be addressed to ensure the success of the plan. However, the total number of FTEs required over the life of the plan is 0.4 less than currently resides in the Transit operating budget forecast for the same period of time. Figure 5 below identifies each position and its timing.

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Figure 5 – FTE Impact Comparison

FTEs in FMW (operating impacts)						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
Bus drivers	13.7	10.7	9.2	6.1	10.7	50.4
Supervisors		1.0			1.0	2.0
Care-A-Van Coordinators		1.0	1.0		1.0	3.0
Mechanics	1.0			1.0		2.0
Total FTEs in FWM (operating impacts)	14.7	12.7	10.2	7.1	12.7	57.4
FTEs in TSR						
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
Bus drivers	13.0	3.0	9.0	12.0	5.0	42.0
Care-A-Van Coordinators*	3.0					3.0
Transit Supervisors*	2.0					2.0
Accessible Transportation Supervisor		1.0				1.0
Mechanics	1.0	2.0	2.0	1.0		6.0
Marketing and Customer Service Specialist		1.0				1.0
Driver Trainer	1.0					1.0
Transit Stores Supervisor**	1.0					1.0
Total FTEs in TSR	21.0	7.0	11.0	13.0	5.0	57.0
Difference	6.3	-5.7	0.8	5.9	-7.7	-0.4
*Position to be converted to Control Centre Service Supervisor.						
** Position was not identified inTSR but is recommended by Financial Operations						

Delivering Affordability

The Oakville Transit 5 Year Plan will result in a net operating budget impact of \$4.9 million over the life of the plan. However, the operating impact of this new service plan will be significantly less than if the town continues with the current model. The affordability of this plan is demonstrated in Figure 6 below. Compared to the current forecast, implementation of all recommended service and staff positions will result in a net tax levy savings of more than \$1.7 million over 5 year life of plan. This is accomplished, in part, through a significant reallocation of existing resources; 38,500 hours of service used more productively. The current bus purchase forecast is sufficient for the requirements of this plan with only minor adjustments to the timing of planned purchases. Oakville Transit and the Finance Department also recommend that the Transit operating budget should be based on the proposed service plan and that going forward planned service hour changes drive bus capital purchases and timing.

Figure 6 – Net Tax Levy Impact Comparison

Net Levy Cumulative Difference in Millions (less inflationary increases)							
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5 Year Difference
Net Levy in Budget Book	\$ 19.8	\$ 20.7	\$ 22.5	\$ 24.5	\$ 25.5	\$ 26.4	\$ 6.6
Net Levy per TSR	\$ 19.8	\$ 21.5	\$ 21.5	\$ 22.7	\$ 24.2	\$ 24.7	\$ 4.9
Net Levy Difference (Jan 2016)	n/a	\$ 0.8	\$ (1.0)	\$ (1.8)	\$ (1.3)	\$ (1.7)	\$ (1.7)

Financial Sustainability

This plan reverses the downward trend in cost recovery and raises it steadily from 30% to almost 36% over the five years (Figure 7). Fundamental to the establishment of a sustainable service delivery model is the elimination of current poor performing routes; those routes that seem to exist to provide geographic coverage. The other requirements of a sustainable model are investment in increased frequency throughout the remaining route network (\$4.6 million in reallocated resources) and implementation of a low cost service delivery alternative in low demand areas and new developments.

Figure 7 – Cost Recovery Comparison

Cost Recovery Ratios							
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5 Year Difference
Cost Recovery in Budget Book	30.5%	29.5%	28.4%	27.3%	27.1%	27.0%	-3.4%
Cost Recovery per TSR	30.5%	32.7%	34.5%	34.9%	35.1%	35.7%	5.2%

Innovative Solutions

Oakville Transit’s new Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) provides the opportunity to be innovative in addressing long-standing issues. The system’s real-time bus location and dispatch will significantly improve service on time performance and reliability; a customer priority in all surveys. Its Control Center provides the opportunity to consolidate after hours responsibility for conventional and specialized transit service coordination into a single position.

Comingling is a brand new concept currently being employed in only 2 or 3 municipalities in North America. The practice is not precluded by AODA and allows use of existing specialized transit booking, scheduling and dispatch resources as well as its severely underutilized bus fleet.

Home to Hub is a made in Oakville solution that, when used in conjunction with comingling” facilitates low cost delivery of transit services at the earliest possible opportunity in new developments; achieving “Transit First”. It can also be used to

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provide access to transit services in low demand areas of the town which have demonstrated an inability to adequately sustain a conventional fixed route.

Innovation and efficiency go hand-in-hand when describing the reallocation of 38,400 hours of unproductive hours; achieving ridership growth benefits equivalent to a \$4.6 million investment.

Measuring, Monitoring and Adjusting

The timing of implementation affords an excellent opportunity to leverage ITS in the monitoring, management and measuring of this service plan. ITS will provide objective, real-time evidence with which to measure success; making evidence based decision making a reality.

Adjustments or enhancements to the plan can be made based on ITS generated reports dealing with route and route segment ridership, bus stop on/off activity, on time performance, missed trips, bus speed and routing running times. ITS enables creation of objective and meaningful KPIs. This information is not only invaluable in managing and measuring performance but it also allows us to develop a stronger customer focus; including a “customer charter”.

Summary

This 5 Year Plan increases frequency of service and improves connectivity while reducing the forecasted transit tax levy impact by \$1.7 million. The plan’s recommendations also reverse the current downward trend in cost recovery, driving up the revenue to cost ratio from 30% to 36%, creating a financially sustainable service delivery model. The plan includes a strategy to right size the fleet for maximum efficiency and to be more responsive to neighbourhood service needs.

Staff recommends the following milestones to launch this new plan successfully:

- Introduce Home to Hub Service in North Oakville in July 2015;
- Introduce customer service improvements enabled by ITS technology in October 2015;
- Introduce new conventional and specialized transit services to the new hospital in December 2015; and
- A full launch of the new service in September 2016.

A September 2016 launch of the new service is recommended in order to allow time for acquisition of additional fleet, driver recruitment and training, and development and rollout of a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy.

CONSIDERATIONS:**(A) PUBLIC**

The general public will realize a number of benefits associated with improved transit and increased transit use. This includes

- A reduction vehicular congestion
- Improved air quality
- Improved social connectivity and sense of community
- Improved road safety
- Greater access to employment
- Improved ability to attract new businesses

(B) FINANCIAL

The proposed plan will result in a net operating budget impact of \$4.9 million over the next 5 years. However, compared to the current forecast of \$6.6 million, implementation of all recommended service and staff positions will result in a net tax levy savings of more than \$1.7 million over that same period. This plan also reverses the downward trend in cost recovery; raising it steadily from 30% to almost 36% over the five years.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

There is no impact on any other department

(D) CORPORATE AND/OR DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal to:

- To be fiscally sustainable
- To be innovative in everything we do
- To continuously improve our programs and services
- To provide accessible programs and services
- To be environmentally sustainable

(E) COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

This issue impacts on social and economic sustainability as it provides a more effective and sustainable public transit system giving more residents greater access to employment opportunities and educational institutions as well as cultural, entertainment and social events within the community.

Prepared and Submitted by:
Barry Cole
Director
Oakville Transit