

Town of Riverview

COUNCIL REPORT FORM



Presented to: Mayor and Town Council

Presented by: Colin Smith, CAO

Date: June 10, 2019

Subject: Codiac Transpo Route Options with Additional Operating Budget

BACKGROUND

Update

At the May 13, 2019 Regular Council Meeting, Codiac Transpo presented two transit options for Council to consider on how it could allocate the additional operating budget Council had included in the 2019 budget for transit services. The two options were:

- **Option 1:** Redesign route options within Riverview (i.e. Four routes: 30 minute service between Riverview Place and Moncton; Sussex route and Pine Glenn route; and additional runs on Route 80). This option is based on the route options developed by Codiac Transpo in its previous route review analysis it completed for the Town a few years ago.
- **Option 2:** Increase Frequency on existing Routes (30 minute frequency on Route 81 and additional run on Route 80).

Codiac Transpo's presentation on the options is attached.

Codiac Transpo indicated that Option 1, if approved, could not be implemented until 2020 due to the time needed to amend bus stop signage, route maps, etc. Furthermore, this proposed route design would be more effectively implemented when the Town owns a third bus and even has a fourth bus so that the two routes in Riverview are run at the same time instead of an alternative format.

The appeal of Option 2 is that it can be implemented this year and there are no amendments to the routes that are needed. This option simply increases frequency on the existing routes. Increasing frequency is always seen as the most effective way to increase transit ridership. So, if Option 2 was implemented, it would be a good test case for Riverview to see if simply more frequency results in more riders or simply makes the existing riders happier because they have more options.

Due to the simplicity of implementing Option 2, it is the CAO's recommendation that Council approve the implementation of Option 2 effective September 2019 and that we request that Codiac Transpo monitor the status of the Town's ridership over that time period to see what its impact has on the Town's ridership. Hopefully with that information and the establishment of the Federal and Provincial

Infrastructure program for transit, the Town would be able to take advantage of that program to purchase a new bus and at that time Council could decide if Option 2 is being successful or that it should consider implementing the new route model outlined in Option 1.

Codiac Transpo provided some update information on ridership for the Town's current routes as was requested by Council.

- With limited data samples, Codiac Transpo indicated that route 81 has an average of around 290 passengers a day with a high count of 358 passengers on one day.
- Route 80 has an average of 22 passengers a day with a count as high as 64 on one day.

May 13 Council Report Details

As was noted in the CAO's monthly report in March, I requested that Codiac Transpo look at what route options could be implemented in the short term with the additional funding the Town allocated in the 2019 operating budget for transit services, even though the Town would not be able to purchase a new bus in 2019. If Council will remember, it had approved additional funding in the capital budget to purchase a new bus with the assumption the Federal and Provincial Transit Fund application process would have occurred, and the operational dollars were needed to operate the new bus. However, the application process has not been opened up for the Public Transit Infrastructure Program so that purchase has been deferred, but Codiac Transpo was asked what temporary solutions could be implemented with the additional operating dollars. Ideally it would be temporary solutions that could be transitioned to permanent when an additional bus is purchased.

Codiac Transpo is going to provide Council with an overview of two route options that could be considered with these additional operating funds. Since the Town owns two buses, the only way these route enhances could be implemented is if the Town rents a bus from Moncton to run these additional service hours. That rental amount for the Moncton bus would be factored into the \$150,000 costs for these additional service hours.

The presentation on May 13 is to provide Council an overview of some options available and seek Council's direction on how they would like to proceed. This item will be brought back to a future meeting of Council for formal direction.

Council made the decision to invest in an additional bus and increase transit services 1) to address residents' requests for more frequent services and 2) to provide additional transit options to help alleviate the challenges we will face in 2020 with the causeway gate closure. The proposed route options presented by Codiac Transpo are designed to address those specific issues, and can be further enhanced once we receive federal/provincial funding for a new bus.

If one of the route options is approved, the new service hours could be introduced in September of 2019.

Other options for Council could be:

- 1) To delay route changes until 2020 and the new budget year.
- 2) To delay route changes until the Town is able to purchase a third bus.

This is being presented to Council for discussion and to get some perspective on Council's priorities. When this item is brought back to Council for discussion, a formal recommendation will be presented for response from Council.

CONSIDERATIONS

Legal: N/A

Financial: \$150,000 operating budget. Both options presented would have an anticipated annual cost in the range of \$150,000.

Policy: N/A

Stakeholders:

-residents; business community; recreation users. The users were consulted back in 2015 and the proposed routes address key feedback elements the Town received at that time.

Strategic Plan: Planning for the Future – investing in public transit

Interdepartmental Consultation: Codiak Transpo.

Communication Plan: does Council want to do any public consultation on these proposed route options or do you want to pilot one option and see what impact it will have on service. This item is on Council's agenda at a regular council meeting, as the CAO will not be in attendance at the next committee of the whole meeting, and he has been working with Codiak Transpo on this file.

Recommendation of Staff

That Town Council approve the allocation of the additional General Operating transit funds in the 2019 budget to increase frequency of the transit services outlined in Option 2 presented by Codiak Transpo and the new services commence in September 2019. Codiak Transpo are to monitor ridership results for Riverview and report back to Council on what impact this service change has on the Town's ridership numbers.