



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Andy Scott, Senior Director, Strategic Initiatives & Business Development

Date: December 18, 2023

Report No: ES-012-23

Subject: Post-secondary Supplementary Transit Service

Recommendation: THAT staff be delegated the authority to negotiate the final terms of the agreements with Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College for the provision of supplemental transit services, such that the incremental service cost is fully funded through the agreements.

THAT the Senior Director, Strategic Initiatives & Business Development be delegated the authority to determine the final terms of the agreement, and make any necessary adjustments to the agreements, subject to input from the Town's legal counsel.

THAT the Mayor and Town Clerk be delegated the authority to execute the final agreements, and any resulting amendments that may be required.

THAT the Manager of Purchasing and Supply Chain Management, in consultation with the Director, Transit Services, be delegated the authority to approve any revisions that may be required to the existing contract with Diversified Transportation Ltd. in order to enact the resulting transit service enhancements that are funded through agreements noted above.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Both Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier University will commence the provision of post-secondary academic programming across three temporary campus locations in 2024.
- The Town has reoriented existing transit resources to establish a conventional transit route which will link the three campus locations to the Milton Go Station and the 401 Park and Ride.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Town staff are negotiating a transit partnership with both academic institutions who wish to enhance the level of service currently proposed based on existing resources.
- This partnership will see both post-secondary partners make a financial contribution to supplement the planned service.
- The financial contributions are anticipated to fully offset any incremental costs of the additional transit service.
- Staff are seeking authority to executive the final negotiated terms and any subsequent amending agreements.

REPORT

Background

2024 will see the introduction of three new post-secondary campus locations across Milton as Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier University both begin to offer post-secondary academic programming in the community. With the introduction of these three campus locations, staff are anticipating an increased demand for local and inter-municipal public transit from a new post-secondary market population.

The locations of these new campus locations are:

- 8160 Parkhill Drive - (Conestoga College) Anticipated to open January 2024
- 433 Steeles Avenue East - (Conestoga College) Anticipated to open April/May 2024
- 555 Industrial Drive - (Wilfrid Laurier University) Anticipated to open in September 2024

At full enrollment, these locations have the potential to serve over 3,000 students collectively. In anticipation, the Town's Transit Services Division has worked closely with our academic partners to understand associated impacts with service delivery to and from these locations.

Given these locations are currently served exclusively by Milton Transit OnDemand service, it was necessary to assess the potential impact an additional 3,000 post-secondary students may have. Research conducted in 2019 by the University of Toronto ([StudentMove, 2019](#)) suggests that post-secondary students across the GTHA are high local and regional transit users with local transit mode split of 33%. This mode split is in line with the anticipated local transit demand anticipated by both Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College in

Background

Milton. If this level of demand was realized, the OnDemand service currently operating to and from these locations would exceed its capacity.

To prepare for this, staff have reoriented resources to implement a new conventional, fixed-route service which will link Conestoga Colleges post-secondary campus locations with the 401 Park and Ride and Milton GO Station. This line will also have the capacity to provide conventional transit service to Wilfrid Laurier's Milton Academic Campus (555 Industrial Drive) which is scheduled to operate from September 2024 onwards. The service reallocation from Milton Transit OnDemand to a fixed-route was identified as a preliminary quick-win action within the Council Memo - Fare and Service Adjustments effective January 2, 2024 (Appendix A).

Discussion

Supplementary service

During transit planning discussions with Conestoga College and Wilfrid Laurier University, both institutions indicated a desire for a higher level of service than the Town's current resourcing would permit.

The Town's long term growth planning had not anticipated additional transit investments to this area of the community. Without the introduction of the post-secondary campuses in these locations, the existing OnDemand service was anticipated to be sufficient to service ridership demand.

Both institutions have now forecast that they will commence operating their first academic spaces on the Milton Education Village (MEV) in 2028, but have committed to offering academic programming in Milton within these interim campus locations.

Given that both institutions have indicated that these locations are temporary in nature while they concurrently develop their MEV campus locations, a transit partnership approach whereby both academic institutions supplement existing municipal resources with a financial contribution for the enhanced level of service they would like to achieve makes sense for all parties. Both institutions have indicated that they are open to this type of partnership. It is currently anticipated that as the MEV area develops, the Town of Milton will expand its transit service to that community, with the timing and form of service subject to future transit master plan updates and Council approvals.



Discussion

Town staff continue to negotiate with both institutions, and require authority from Council to execute the resulting agreements. It is anticipated that these partnership agreements would secure funding from both partners in exchange for an enhanced level of transit service to and from these campus locations. It is further anticipated that the duration of these agreements will be until 2028 to ensure continuity of service until the Milton Education Village campus is operational.

Both institutions have demonstrated a desire to have their student bodies consider a UPass model, whereby transit fees are built into the tuition costs of every post-secondary student enrolled in Milton. This approach would need to be approved by each institutions Student Union and/or association. If successful, however, this has the potential to increase the transit revenues and may permit further investments into the overall public transit system. The timeline for consideration of the UPass model by each student body is unknown at this time. Should the student bodies vote to adopt the UPass model, this would require the negotiation of a new service level agreement which would remain in affect as both institutions transition over to the Milton Education Village campus.

Financial Impact

Execution of the negotiated agreements with Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College will provide a direct source of revenue to supplement transit service to the post-secondary campus locations. The revenue provided through the negotiated financial agreements is anticipated to fully offset the incremental cost of the supplementary level of service that is requested by the academic institutions. As such, there is no net financial impact expected to the Town as a result of this process.

If the recommendations herein are approved, following the execution of these agreements staff will also make the required updates to the service agreement with the Town's third-party transit provider, Diversified Transportation Ltd., in order to implement the enhanced serviced.

The revenues and expenditures realized in relation to the expanded service will be reported in accordance with the Town's Budget Management Policy (Policy 113).

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Scott
Senior Director, Strategic Initiatives & Business Development



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For questions, please contact: Andy Scott

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Attachments

Appendix A - Council Memo - Fare and Service Adjustments effective January 2 2024

Approved by CAO
Andrew M. Siltala
Chief Administrative Officer

Recognition of Traditional Lands

The Town of Milton resides on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The Town of Milton shares this land and the responsibility for the water, food and resources. We stand as allies with the First Nations as stewards of these lands.