

June 10, 2014

To: Members,
Community and Protective Services Committee

Re: Harbour Landing Bus Service

RECOMMENDATION

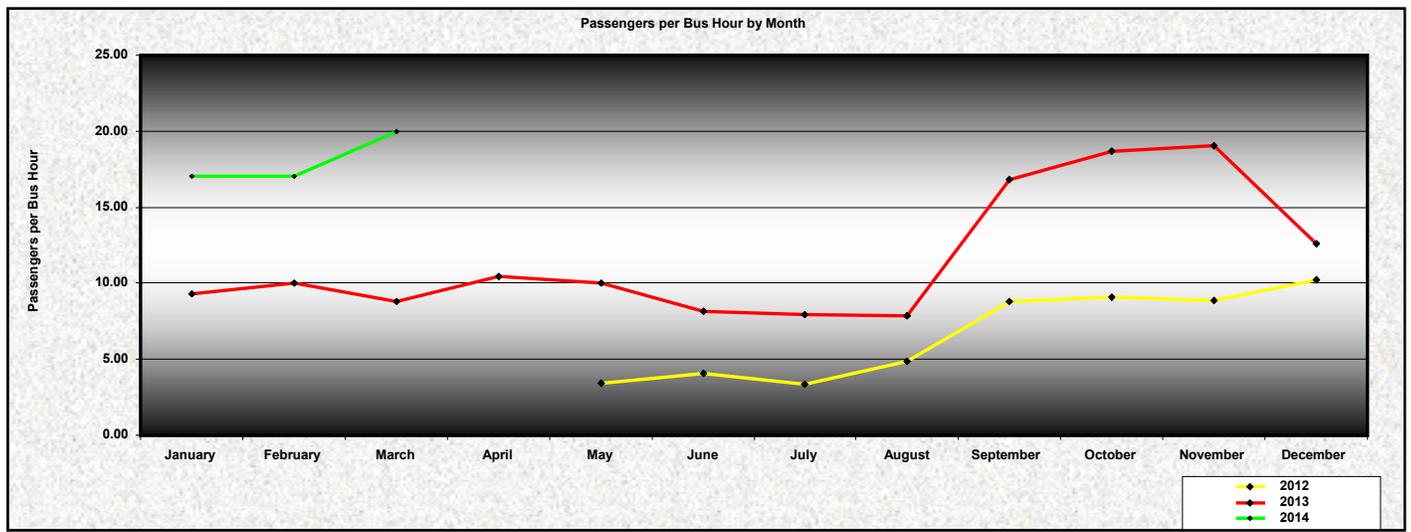
1. That the transit service for Harbour Landing (Route #18), as outlined in Appendix A, be approved and implemented effective September 8, 2014.
2. A copy of this report be forwarded to the June 23, 2014 meeting of City Council for information.

CONCLUSION

Regina Transit is able to extend the current Harbour Landing route further west into the development with existing resources once the major transit route roads are completed this summer. The proposed route will allow the residents of Harbour Landing to travel to the Golden Mile Shopping Centre, the University of Regina and SIAST. Extension of the service along James Hill Road will expand the service coverage and allow more residents access to transit service.

BACKGROUND

The introduction of bus service in Harbour Landing occurred in the spring of 2012, operating as a small feeder route. This route takes customers from Harbour Landing to the Golden Mile Shopping Centre to transfer to another bus to go downtown or to the University area. The bus service operated during peak times (6:00 am to 9:00 am and 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm) during the weekday only. During the Transit Route Review in 2013, the Harbour Landing route was extended to travel to the University and SIAST area as well. Since inception of the route in 2012, ridership has grown over 200% and has been performing well.



Graph 1 – Passengers per Bus Hour – Route #18

The Harbour Landing development continues to grow and has expanded further west. The roads designated for transit use, James Hill Road and Parliament Avenue, are scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2014. The completion of these roads will allow transit service to be expanded further west into the Harbour Landing development.

The current route (Route #18) in Harbour Landing operates on Harbour Landing Drive only. Regina Transit could expand service to James Hill Road with no further investment by utilizing a one way loop in Harbour Landing.

DISCUSSION

The current route (Route #18) in Harbour Landing is depicted in Appendix A. As James Hill Road and Parliament Avenue are expected to be completed this summer, the current transit route can serve the newest areas in west Harbour Landing. This can be done with current resources dedicated to this route as there is enough running time on the route to accommodate the extra driving required for the service extension. The proposed route is depicted in Appendix B.

On March 31, 2014, the Transit Department sent a direct mailing to all residences in Harbour Landing asking for feedback about the proposed routes. Transit collected the feedback by email and allowed customers to phone into Service Regina (306-777-7000) directly. The mail out also included an optional route design in the event that Parliament Avenue and James Hill Road were not completed in the summer of 2014 (Appendix C). In addition to asking for feedback for the proposed route change, feedback was asked about the hours of operation and general feedback on service to Harbour Landing so far.

Transit received 15 comments on the proposal. The following comments were the most prevalent:

- There were no negative comments on the new route proposal and many residents were happy to see this expansion being considered.
- There was concern about the current hours of operation of the route. Expansion of service past the peak times (6:00 am – 9:00 am and 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm) would be appreciated, with a few comments indicating even service to 10:00 am would fit needs of students that travel to the University of Regina.

Given these comments, the proposed route is recommended for approval. Although the proposed one-way loop is not the best way to serve the Harbour Landing area, it currently is the most efficient. The one-way loop allows residents to access the Golden Mile and University area, but it prevents some residents from accessing the Grasslands commercial area. For example, a customer could catch the bus at James Hill Road and Jim Cairns Boulevard to get to Grasslands, but there would not be any bus service to take them back. Future service will see Harbour Landing get another route that would travel in the opposite direction of the Route #18. This, however, requires an extra bus and operating budget which is not available at this time. The proposed route provides a basic service to the residents of Harbour Landing without investing additional resources.

Transit will be able to accommodate an hour extension in service to run to 10:00 am. This extra hour of service can be accommodated within the current budget and will not require additional

funding. Transit will be doing small adjustments to current schedules where service is being under-utilized to reallocate the additional hour service needed for this route.

If this change to Route #18 is approved, bus stops will be installed approximately every 200 metres as specified in the Transit Service Standards. Residents whose property is adjacent to a proposed bus stop will receive a letter notifying them of the location one month prior to installation. However, in most cases, bus stops will be situated next to green spaces to lessen impact on residents in the area.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

No additional budget will be needed for these route alterations as the current resources allow for the extra travel time of the bus on James Hill Road.

Environmental Implications

Including transit services early in new developments fosters early adoption and acceptance of the service. This is best proven by the Harbour Landing route itself and the dramatic increase of ridership since it started in 2012. Having transportation options, such as transit, available in new communities will allow residents to not rely solely on the private automobile to get around. A standard sized bus replaces 40 single occupant vehicles, thus reducing traffic congestion and parking issues. In addition, a full transit bus produces .7 kilograms of CO₂ emissions per every 5 kilometres per passenger compared to a large personal vehicle at 1.3 kilograms.

Policy and/or Strategic Implications

Extending transit service further into the Harbour Landing development helps achieve the Transportation goals and policies in Design Regina, the City of Regina's Official Community Plan (OCP) and specifically "Goal 2: Public Transit: Elevate the role of Public Transit" in Section D3.

Policy 5.10: Promote intensification and mixed use development along express transit corridors and at transit nodes and potential transit nodes through increased service levels, more direct routes, express services, and competitive travel times.

Policy 5.11: Enhance transit service in existing residential neighbourhoods to support continued residential and employment growth.

Policy 5.16: Provide transit service in new neighbourhoods as soon as feasible to encourage transit use and influence early adoption.

Ridership will be monitored to see if the route change has a positive impact on ridership. Currently, Route #18 (Harbour Landing/University) is achieving the service standard of having an average of 15 passengers per bus hour. If ridership grows, Administration will have to consider increasing frequency of the service or increase the bus size.

Other Implications

None with respect to this report.

Accessibility Implications

The Transit bus fleet became fully accessible in April of 2014. All buses on this route will be low-floor and wheel chair accessible.

COMMUNICATIONS

Administration shared the plans for the proposed route with residents via a direct flyer drop to residences in Harbour Landing. If the proposed route is approved, schedules will be distributed to Transit Agents. Information will also be provided through a media release, regina.ca and social media platforms indicating of the route change.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The determination of the routing of buses is within the authority of the Community & Protective Services Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Brad Bells, Director
Director of Transit

Respectfully submitted,



Neil Vandendort, Acting Executive Director
City Operations

Report prepared by:
Nathan Luhning, Manager of Business Development