

March 15, 2018

To: Members  
Community & Protective Services Committee

Re: Class Trip Program on Transit

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### RECOMMENDATION

1. That this report be forwarded to the March 26, 2018 City Council meeting for information.
2. That item MN17-7 be removed from the list of outstanding items for the Community and Protective Services Committee.

### CONCLUSION

Providing free bus service for class trips would allow schools and daycares to have greater flexibility in planning school trips. Class Trip Programs have been implemented in other municipalities and have been well used.

### BACKGROUND

Council instructed Transit Administration to consult with the School Board/City Council Liaison Committee on a Class Trip Program and report back to the Community and Protective Services Committee on the outcome of the consultation. In consultation with the School Board/City Council Liaison Committee, Transit Administration was asked to report on information about a Class Trip Program, specifically, experiences from other municipalities who have successfully implemented such a program. This report is to provide Committee with an update and information on a Class Trip Program.

### DISCUSSION

A small group of Transit properties in Canada have implemented a Class Trip Program. These Transit properties include Kelowna, Kamloops and Saskatoon. Saskatoon's Class Trip Program was running a pilot from January 2017 to June 2017 and has been approved to continue.

The Class Trip Program in each of the three cities mentioned above are similar in nature as follows:

- The program is limited to regularly scheduled transit routes;
- Travel times are limited to weekday off peak times (typically 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.);
- Paratransit or special services are not provided;
- Class sizes cannot exceed 35 people;
- The organizer must contact and apply before the actual trip; and

- The class would board with verification provided by the transit system.

Some of the issues that were identified with the programs in these communities include:

- 1) There was some misunderstanding that the service for school groups was a charter specifically for the school group. This is not the case. This is regular transit service that is already providing service. There would have to be clear communication of the program to the participating schools.
- 2) Occasionally, there may be times that the bus may not be able to accommodate all the students on the bus. As the service is available to the public, the bus may be partially full already. In that instance, students may have to stand if there are not enough seats. In the case that the bus is too full, they may be denied service on the bus.
- 3) Although not specifically stated from the municipalities, there must be clear direction on which schools/groups are eligible for the program. In some instances, some municipalities started with one school system, then expanded to others as they received requests to do so.

Overall, the Class Trip Program may increase ridership of the transit system at a less busy time and exposes other transportation options to students/children so they can make informed choices when they need to travel.

All Transit properties that were contacted indicated that Paratransit or special accessible bus services were not offered in their program. It was cited that those systems do not have capacity in their Paratransit bus system and therefore, could not be included in the program they were running.

## RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

### Financial Implications

There are no cost implications for school groups to use the current scheduled conventional transit service. Given that the proposed service would occur at off-peak times, there is capacity to offer the service on conventional transit. There would not be any extra resources/service utilized to accommodate the requests.

School classes currently use the Transit system for some school trips. These classes pay the regular fare for the service. It is estimated that there would be forgone revenue in the amount of approximately \$4,000 annually if a Class Trips Program is implemented.

### Environmental Implications

None with respect to this report.

### Policy and/or Strategic Implications

A Class Trip Program may help support the Transportation Master Plan. Specifically:

*Policy 3.28:* Use education and promotional campaigns to increase awareness of transit services, their benefits, and the value to the community.

Other Implications

None with respect to this report.

Accessibility Implications

All conventional buses are low-floor accessible. Paratransit would not be included in a Class Trips Program due to capacity.

COMMUNICATIONS

Nothing with respect to this report.

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The recommendations contained in this report requires City Council approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Brad Bells, Director  
Transit Department

Respectfully submitted,



Kim Onrait, Executive Director  
City Services

Report prepared by:  
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