

# Request for Decision City Council



Type of Decision									
Meeting Date	March 28, 2007				Report Date	March 23, 2007			
Decision Requested	X	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
	Direction Only				Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed


Report Title
Creation of Transit Committee of Council

Budget Impact / Policy Implication	Recommendation
<p>This report has been reviewed by the Finance Division and the funding source has been identified.</p>	<p>THAT a Transit Committee of Council be established to review Transit priorities, in conjunction with the Ridership Growth Strategy and Asset Management Plans prepared for the Province of Ontario</p> <p>AND THAT this Committee be comprised of Councillors _____, _____, and _____.</p>
<p>X Background Attached</p>	<p>Recommendation Continued</p>

Recommended by the Department
<p><i>Doug Nadrozny</i> Doug Nadrozny General Manager of Growth and Development</p>

Recommended by the C.A.O.
<p><i>Mark Mieto</i> Mark Mieto Chief Administrative Officer</p>

Date: March 23, 2007

Report Prepared By	Division Review
 Roger Sauvé Director of Transit Services	Name Title

## BACKGROUND

In March of 2006, the City of Greater Sudbury submitted its Ridership Growth Strategy and Asset Management Plans to the Province of Ontario as required to continue receiving its portion of Provincial Gas Tax funding.

Council requested that staff return with recommendations for approval and direction. The attached report dated April 3, 2006 set out the first strategies and initiatives staff believed would increase Transit ridership.

At its meeting held April 12, 2006, the Council of Greater Sudbury passed the following resolution:

*2006-597: THAT Council endorses the first six actions resulting from the Ridership Growth Strategy and directs staff to proceed as identified in the report dated April 3, 2006 from the General Manager of Growth & Development.*

At the same meeting, the Council of Greater Sudbury also passed the following resolution:

*2006-598: THAT a Transit Committee comprised of three Councillors be established to oversee the benefits and improvements that the implementation of the recommendations of the Ridership Growth Strategy and Asset Management Plan will achieve;*

*AND THAT this Committee be comprised of Councillors Berthiaume, Callaghan and Dupuis.*

The Committee met on several occasions and moved forward on many priorities. At the Council meeting held November 8, 2007, Ted Callaghan, Chair of the Transit Committee, together with Roger Sauvé, Director of Transit Services, provided an update to Council about the first six initiatives, five of which are outlined below:

- (1) Improvements to the Downtown Terminal
  - Maintenance / janitorial hours have been increased
  - Major cleaning has occurred
  - Security has been increased
  - Renovations are complete
- (2) Capital
  - Seven new buses have arrived, two of which with a suburban-style interior
  - Delivery of another six buses is expected in the April, 2007
  - Currently rebuild all of our own buses
  - A full rebuild which would normally cost \$120,000 is now being done in-house for \$60,000

Date: March 23, 2007

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- (3) Automatic Vehicle Location
  - Providing real time information
  - Can now track activity of all Transit buses
  - Data on location, speed, route adherence
- (4) Fareboxes
  - A new fare collection system will replace an old system which can no longer be maintained
  - Information collected from the farebox system compiled with information from the automatic vehicle location (AVL) system will provide accurate passenger counts
  - Will allow for new and innovative fare strategies such as 30 day passes, all day passes and will eliminate transfer fraud

Smart card technology

  - Will form part of the second phase of the fare collection system
  - Possibilities of integrating many municipal services and local businesses (i.e. vending machines, parking metres)
- (5) U-Pass
  - Has been very well received by students
  - 4,500 trips per day
  - Double and express buses were added to accommodate the increased ridership.

Of the initial six priorities, four have been implemented with the remaining fareboxes to be installed at the end of April 2007. Standards will then be developed using data from fareboxes and automatic vehicle location (AVL).

Funding sources for Transit include Provincial Gas Tax, Federal New Deal for Transit, Federal Gas Tax and the new Ontario Bus Replacement Program (OBRP). These funding sources have allowed the City to move forward with many capital and operational projects. If not for funding received, Transit capital would have been unfunded in the amount of \$10,000,000 over the last three years.

It is imperative that Council remains diligent and active to ensure that funding contributions from the Federal and Provincial levels continue to support anticipated growth and ridership.

Further, it is important to ensure that both the Ridership Growth and Asset Management plans are implemented such that any improvements that are made can be sustained in the long term without the Provincial and Federal contributions, should those funding plans be discontinued in the future.

The City has recently received many suggestions and recommendations through the public budget input sessions and the Constellation Report. One of the first recommendations the Committee will deal with will be the creation of a public advisory process in order to involve the public in the ongoing service improvements of Transit. This was a key recommendation of the Constellation City Report. This mechanism will be designed to ensure that a process is in place that will allow citizens and riders from all parts of the City to bring ideas forward for consideration.

Therefore based on the above, it is recommended that Council once again establish a Committee of Council to set and oversee new priorities, taking into consideration all recent recommendations, the existing transit planning documents, as well as ongoing public input.

# Request for Decision City Council



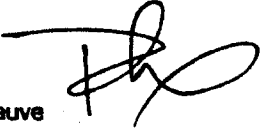
Type of Decision									
Meeting Date		April 12, 2006				Report Date		April 3, 2006	
Decision Requested		X	Yes		No	Priority		x	High
		Direction Only				Type of Meeting		x	Open
									Closed

Report Title
Ridership Growth Strategy & Asset Management Plan Recommendations

Budget Impact & Policy Implication	Recommendation
<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report has been reviewed by the Finance Division and the funding source has been identified.</p> <p>Initiatives recommended in this report will be financed through Provincial Gas Tax - Federal funding - Equipment Reserve Fund - Provincial Grants and current transit budget.</p>	<p>That Council endorses the first six actions resulting from the Growth Ridership Strategy and directs staff to proceed as identified in the report dated April 3, 2006.</p>
Background Attached	Recommendation Continued

Recommended by the Department	Recommended by the C.A.O.
 Doug Naddozny General Manager Growth & Development	 Mark Mieto Chief Administrative Officer

Date: April 3, 2006

Report Prepared By	Division Review
 Roger Sauve Director of Transit	Name Title

### **Report**

February 2006, Transit staff along with consultants from Entra consulting and the Gooderham Group presented a Ridership Growth Strategy and an Asset Management plan to council. In order to continue receiving its portion of Provincial Gas Tax the City was required to approve the two plans in principal and submit them to the Ministry by March 31, 2006.

Council requested that staff return with recommendations for approval and direction. The following are the first strategies and initiatives staff believes will increase transit ridership.

#### **1- Capital**

Replace and rebuild transit buses as detailed in the transit capital plan. Ridership growth can be stimulated by ensuring that travel is safe, comfortable, accessible and environmentally friendly. Transit fleet must also be expanded to meet continued ridership growth. This item is covered under contract GDD06-01.

#### **2- U-Pass.**

Luc Norton, Laurentian University SGA president has confirmed that students have voted in favour of a Universal Pass. Staff must now enter into an agreement with the students and the University to determine service levels, pass types and administration of the program. If an agreement can be reached in time the program could start as soon as September 2006. A U-Pass program will significantly increase transit ridership and will require additional buses. Staff recommends that council authorise the general manager to negotiate an agreement with the University and the SGA. The final agreement will be brought back to council for approval.

#### **3- Improvements to the Transit Terminal.**

Part of the Ridership Growth Strategy identifies the need to provide a safe comfortable environment for passengers to access the transit system. This issues was raised by council at an earlier date. With over 10,000 people travelling through the terminal on a daily basis it is very difficult to maintain a high level of cleanliness and security. Customers have indicated that they would more likely to use the transit system more often if improvements were made to the terminal. Staff recommends that security and maintenance be increased at the transit terminal and that cost be financed through Provincial Gas tax as improvements will increase ridership.

#### **4- Automatic Vehicle Location**

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) is an electronic system allowing transit operations to identify and track the location of each transit bus. An AVL system can provide many service enhancements such as transit signal priority, real-time information, customer information online and route reporting. Realtime information would be invaluable to transit inspectors and information staff. Data collected will allow staff to track schedule adherence, speed, stops and idle time. Staff recommend that an AVL system be purchased, installed and maintained using Provincial Gas Tax as the system will generate ridership growth. Staff will return to council for approval of the Request For Proposal when a vendor is selected

**Date:** April 3, 2006

#### **5- Fare Collection System**

After reviewing the report prepared by the Gooderham Group, staff recommends moving forward with the purchase of a new fare collection system and Smart Card Technology. However staff recommends purchasing the new system in phases with the Smart Card Technology purchased in year two. Council has approved the purchase of the New Fare collection system through the 2005 budget process. Staff will return to council for approval of the Request For Proposal when a vendor is selected. A new system will allow staff and council to implement new fare strategies which will have as a goal to increase ridership. This project will be financed using Provincial Gas Tax, Federal funding and Equipment Reserve Funds.

#### **6- Service Standards**

It is recommended that council approve service standards as presented by Entra Consultants in principal. Transit staff is not recommending making wholesale changes to the route network at this time. Although recommendations have been made staff would like to an opportunity to collect valuable data from a new fare collection system and an AVL system. With proper data staff will be able to review transit routes and apply standards or make recommendations using approved standards. Implementation of the U-Pass and the new senior rate could potentially have a drastic impact on transit ridership. Transit staff will return with route strategies once the impacts of the new initiatives are known.

As well as increasing ridership, approval of these recommendations will ensure that our transit system continues to improve providing safe, efficient and accessible transportation to residents of Greater Sudbury.