



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada


Northwest Community Council

June 12, 2008

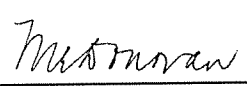
July 10

TO: Chair and Members of Northwest Community Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., Director of Transportation & Public Works



Mary Ellen Donovan, Director of Legal Services

DATE: May 27, 2008

SUBJECT: Route 86 Basinview - Standees

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Report item 10.3.1 - April 10, 2008 Northwest Community Council meeting.

BACKGROUND

At the April 10, 2008 meeting of the Northwest Community Council, it was requested by Community Council that senior staff report on the issue of having standees on route 86 Basinview buses, particularly when traveling on Highway 102. This was based on a request by the Northwest Transit Advisory Committee (NWTAC) to examine this issue.

DISCUSSION

The transportation of standing passengers on transit buses is permitted under the regulations of the Motor Carrier Act. An excerpt of the relevant regulation is noted below:

Citation: Board Public Passenger Motor Carrier Act Regulations, N.S. Reg. 283/92

Enabling Statute: Motor Carrier Act, R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 292

25 (1) No motor carrier shall permit a driver of a public passenger vehicle that provides a general service, route service or regular service to carry more than 50% more passengers than the seating capacity of the vehicle.

Source: <http://www.canlii.org/ns/laws/regu/1992r.283/20080215/whole.html>

Our service standards, and standard industry practice are consistent with this regulation. For additional clarification, this regulation does not differ based on the speed at which the bus is travelling.

Metro Transit buses are designed to safely accommodate standing passengers. To this end, they include features such as hand stanchions, slip-proof flooring, and either overhead hand-straps or seat-mounted hand rails (depending on the type of bus). As an additional safety measure, passengers are not permitted to stand ahead of the marked line at the front of the bus. Manufacturer specifications for transit buses include passenger capacities for both seated and standing passengers.

Metro Transit bus operators are professional drivers whose top priority is the safe operation of their vehicle. As part of their training, operators are taught to be aware when they are carrying standing passengers, and to exercise an appropriate level of caution as a result.

The overwhelming majority of incidents on Metro Transit buses that result in claims are at low speeds, typically in urban traffic conditions and often at intersections. The potential liability resulting from an incident is derived from various factors. The speed at which the vehicle is travelling is not one of these factors, on the condition that the bus is travelling within the posted speed limit. There is no correlation between the speed a bus is travelling and the potential liability that could result from an incident.

Operationally, it is necessary for buses on all routes to be able to carry standees. Given that service improvements are planned at least one year in advance, Metro Transit is unable to respond immediately to capacity constraints. As a result, if it was not possible to carry standing passengers on certain routes, the alternative would be for the passengers to be denied boarding.

With respect to route 86, Metro Transit is aware of several occasions in 2008 where passengers

were not able to board the route 86 bus due to an overload situation. This has prompted action and Metro Transit is currently exploring options to deal with the overload situation during the 2008-2009 budget year. It is important to note that the trigger for action in this case was the overload situation, rather than the fact that passengers were simply standing.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments to this report.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by : Dave Reage, MCIP, LPP, Planning and Project Delivery Coordinator, Metro Transit, 490-5138



Report Approved by: _____
Lori Patterson, Acting General Manager, Metro Transit, 490-6388



Report Approved by: _____
Peter Ross, Manager, Risk and Insurance Services, 490-6499