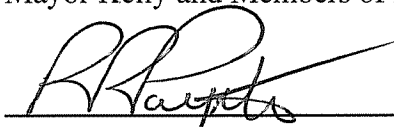


Halifax Regional Council
May 13, 2003

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:


Rick Paynter, P. Eng., Director, Public Works & Transportation

DATE: May 02, 2003

SUBJECT: **Transit Service - Halifax International Airport**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At the January 28, 2003 Halifax Regional Council meeting, a motion was passed requesting a staff report on the potential of operating public transit service to the Halifax International Airport.

BACKGROUND

The Northwest Transit Advisory Committee has also requested Metro Transit study the opportunities for bus service from the Bedford/Sackville area to the Halifax International Airport. Currently a privately operated bus service, contracted by the Halifax International Airport, travels directly to Halifax/Dartmouth and bypasses the Bedford/Sackville area. Individuals wishing to travel between the Airport and Bedford/Sackville by bus must first travel to Halifax or Dartmouth to connect with the Airport Service. Travelling into Halifax/Dartmouth takes Bedford/Sackville residents out of their way and adds significantly to their travel time to the airport. For people without access to a car, taxis are the other option to travel between Bedford/Sackville and the Halifax International Airport.

The Halifax International Airport selects the carrier providing bus service between urban HRM and, the Airport through a tender process. Proponents responding to the Halifax International Airport's "Request for Proposals" for ground transportation have some flexibility in developing the route, but economic viability is a key consideration. The Halifax International Airport advises that they are currently developing a "Request for Proposals" for a five-year ground transportation agreement commencing this fall.

In preparing this report, staff has sought input from both the Nova Scotia Utility & Review Board and the Halifax International Airport. Both groups would support public transit service to the Airport, provided a highway bus with a secure luggage area was used. Metro Transit currently does not have any suitable vehicle and a decision to provide airport service would require purchasing vehicles specifically for this use. The Halifax International Airport would support public transit for employees and to meet travel demand of future development around the airport.

DISCUSSION

Based on the Strategic Transit Study, Metro Transit recommended in the Public Works & Transportation 2003/04 Business Plan that deficiencies within the existing transit service area be addressed over the next five years. The Strategy also identified the need for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to enhance service to suburban communities like Sackville and Cole Harbour. As part of the 2003/04 Business Planning process Metro Transit has proposed increased operating and capital funding to implement this strategy. Many Suburban Communities (e.g. Lawrencetown, Sambro, Prospect Road & Tantallon) have also asked Metro Transit to explore service extensions to their communities.

Because of competing demands for municipal tax dollars, increased transit funding to address the Business Plan strategy will present challenges. At the same time suburban transit options will have to be evaluated and considered when developing future Transit Business Plans. Adding the cost to purchase and operate different vehicles for the Airport Service should only be considered if it does not impact on Metro Transit's ability to respond to these other demands.

The Halifax International Airport would have the ability to incorporate the air passenger ground travel needs to secondary destinations like Bedford/Sackville in their "Request for Proposals."

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

N/A

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.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

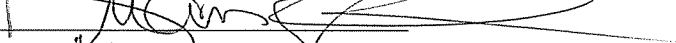
**Transit Service - Halifax International Airport
Council Report**

- 3 -

May 13, 2003

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Kenny Silver, P. Eng., Manager, Transit Planning & Development (490-6689) *KS*

Report Approved by: 
Brian R. Taylor, Director of Transit Services
(490-6608)