


TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Mike Labrecque, P.Eng., Director, Transportation & Public Works

DATE: April 16, 2008

SUBJECT: Bus Service - Stoneridge Update

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Chebucto Community Council meeting of November 6, 2006, item 4.1.4.

BACKGROUND

At the Chebucto Community Council meeting on November 6, 2006, Councillor Mosher requested the Legislative Assistant to contact the General Manager Metro Transit for an update on the previous report regarding operating regular transit service/route to the Stoneridge area.

Update provided to Chebucto Community Council on June 11, 2007, further information requested by Councillor Mosher on March 3, 2008.

DISCUSSION

The Stoneridge subdivision is located off Northwest Arm Drive and is accessed at the intersection of Northwest Arm Drive and the Bay Road and a connection via Walter Havill Drive to the Stanley Park Subdivision. There is also a walkway connection to the Stonehaven subdivision which is adjacent to this development.

Metro Transit currently operates two routes in the area; route 6 Stonehaven and route 14 Leiblin Park. Metro Transit Service Standards state ninety percent of residential development in the area served by public transit should be within 500 metres of a local bus route. The Stoneridge subdivision and surrounding development fall within this standard.

Metro Transit's Service Standards provide a tool to review the transit service to ensure residents have consistent access to public transit. Using the walkway connections, this subdivision is within accepted transit walk distances of existing transit service in the Stonehaven and Osborne Street areas.

When Metro Transit staff reported to the Chebucto Community in February (2006), the lack of a street/bus connection to the surrounding neighbourhoods was an issue that restricted Metro Transit's ability to operate service in the Stoneridge Subdivision. At this meeting, Councillor Mosher advised the Stoneridge area would be connected to Stanley Park via Walter Havill Drive. Staff advised that in addition to this connection, Kelly Street should be completed to allow the bus serving the Quarry Road area to be extended via Walter Havill Drive to Stoneridge.

Metro Transit staff has investigated two possible service options for the Route 6 Stonehaven. There are however, issues and concerns Metro Transit must take into consideration prior to implementing any service adjustments.

Option A is a large one way loop that would travel as follows: Stonehaven Road, Glenmore Avenue, Alton Drive, Kelly Street, Osborne Street, Walter Hamill Drive, Albert Walker Drive, St. Margaret's Bay Road and continue to the Armdale round about and resumes regular routing.

Option A is an additional 2.7 kilometres and the average speed of a transit vehicle is 19 kilometres per hour. Therefore, the time required to service this extension will be an additional 8.5 minutes in running time. The average travel time of a transit vehicle takes into consideration the services of bus stops for passengers, as well as the over all schedule adherence of a route.

This extension requires the removal of service on Quarry Road, the passenger counts indicate 36 passenger boardings and 11 passengers alighting on Quarry Road per weekday, as well the bus stop on Quarry Road nearside St. Margaret's Bay Road has a shelter that provides the customer with a waiting area. HRM Traffic must approve all bus stop and shelter locations. Metro Transit has investigated additional bus stop locations on St. Margaret's Bay Road near Quarry Road and unfortunately due to sight lines, HRM Traffic cannot approve these locations. At this time the only

approved locations on St. Margaret's Bay Road near Quarry Road are at civic 123 and nearside Alderwood Drive.

Further investigation is required to determine whether Glenmore Avenue or Alton Drive is suitable to manoeuvre the bus. The Transit Planning department would recommend Glenmore Avenue in order to maintain the existing stop location on Stonehaven Road nearside of Glenmore Avenue. This bus stop location also has a shelter and the passenger counts indicate 37 passenger boardings and 43 passengers alighting per day where as the bus stop prior to this (opposite civic 10) indicates 5 passenger boardings and 12 passengers alighting per day. If the route were to access Alton Drive rather than Glenmore Avenue the shelter near Glenmore Avenue would be removed all together. It is our experience that relocating a shelter in front of a residential home meets with opposition from the resident. Relocating any shelter also requires monetary resources; new concrete shelter pads are required as well as the physical relocation of the shelter(s).

Option B is a similar routing to option A. However, this possible routing would loop Walter Havill Drive to Ridgepark Lane and return. The route would travel as follows: Stonehaven Road, Glenmore Avenue, Alton Drive, Kelly Street, Osborne Street, Walter Havill Drive, Ridgepark Lane, return via Walter Havill Drive, Osborne Street, Kelly Street, Alton Drive, Glenmore Avenue, Quarry Road and resume regular routing. Option B is an additional 3 kilometres and will require an additional 9 minutes in running time.

Option A and/or option B will extend the travel time for those residents on Fenwood Drive, Stonehaven Road and Quarry Road. The passenger counts for these streets indicate more than 100 passengers per day are utilizing the route 6 per weekday.

The current route 6 running time does not allow for any extensions. The route currently has one minute recovery time at Stonehaven and two minutes recovery time at Water Street during off peak only. In order to consider extending the route 6, additional resources are required.

Through the 2008/09 fiscal budget process Metro Transit has identified the priority transit needs. Metro Transit's priority capacity issues include frequency of service, service standards and high profile development with potential high ridership, large employment base and preferred destination. Pending budget approval Metro Transit has identified priority capacity issues on the route 14, 20 and 32 for the peak service hours. Extending the route 6 Stonehaven will require additional resources and budget, with demands on the current system and competing priorities. Metro Transit's proposed 2008/09 operating budget does not include the extension of the route 6 Stonehaven. It is anticipated the route 6 extension would not be implemented in the near future as the surrounding development falls within the current service standards.

Metro Transit would be in a position to develop a plan to implement the route 6 extension, subject to funding approval through a future year's budget process.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

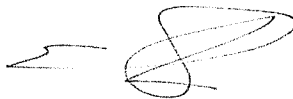
There are no budget impacts at this time as the extension of this service does not meet Metro Transits 08/09 fiscal priority plans.

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.

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

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