

TO: Chair and Members of North West Community Council



SUBMITTED BY: _____
Eddie Robar, Director, Metro Transit

DATE: August 24th, 2012

SUBJECT: Eisenhower Field Park & Ride

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

On July 5th 2012, the North West Community Council passed the following motion:

That the North West Community Council request staff to provide a report regarding Metro Transit undertaking a Pilot Project encompassing a Park-and-Ride Pilot Project at the Eisenhower Ball Field using the existing Route 33 Tantallon Express bus along Hammonds Plains Road, over the period September to December 2012. This is contingent upon lights being installed at the intersection of Hammonds Plains Road and Glen Arbour Way. Consideration should be given to extending the time frame of the Pilot Project if there is a demonstrated increase in ridership and pending funding availability for snow clearing.

BACKGROUND

Located at 2043 Hammonds Plains Road (PID 41027160), the current site is approximately 2,274m², and when fully utilized, has the capacity to park about 60 vehicles in its present configuration.

Hammonds Plains Road is served by the Metro Transit Route 33, an Urban Express route that operates on weekdays only. During the morning peak, this route makes two inbound trips from Tantallon to downtown Halifax. During the pm peak, this route makes two outbound trips from Halifax to Tantallon, and two inbound trips from Tantallon to Clayton Park.

An Information Report was presented to the North West Community Council on October 20th, 2011 regarding increasing bus service, and access to Park & Rides along sections of Hammonds Plains Road.

The Eisenhower Field parking lot was identified as the only potentially suitable Park & Ride location because of its proximity to Hammonds Plains Road, and the report indicated that further investigation would be required.

On July 5th, 2012, the North West Community Council passed a motion regarding undertaking a Park & Ride pilot project at Eisenhower Field.

DISCUSSION

The motion indicated that the pilot project was subject to traffic signals being installed at the intersection of Hammonds Plains Road and Glen Arbour Way. Although the installation of the traffic signals at this intersection is being pursued, it has not commenced to date, and the signals will not be installed with sufficient time to advance the pilot project this year.

In addition, alterations to transit schedules and routes can only take place once every three months on pre-determined dates, and must be finalized at least two months in advance of the implementation date. For this pilot project to be implemented, an additional four minutes in each direction would need to be added to the schedule of Route 33. It would also be necessary to establish a time-point at the Park & Ride site to ensure some predictability of the service from this location.

The Eisenhower Field parking lot is a gravel lot, and has no demarcated parking spaces or circulation aisles. As a result, there is no guarantee that transit vehicles would have the area to safely turn around once in they have entered the site. Before routing buses into the lot, staff would need to find a solution that would allow the buses to enter and exit safely. The parking capacity of the lot could be reduced as a result of providing dedicated bus access. The costs associated with modifying the parking lot to allow for bus access are not currently budgeted.

To consider the use of this site as a permanent Metro Transit Park & Ride in the future, a more comprehensive analysis would be required involving other HRM business units. It is anticipated

that the proposed site would need several improvements requiring allocation of capital budget, and a budget for annual maintenance. These improvements would include lighting, signage, a shelter, establishing a defined bus loop and loading area, and/or paving. This work is not currently budgeted; any request to include this work in a future capital budget would require consideration with respect to other capital budget priorities.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As this report is only to provide information to the Northwest Community Council, there has been no community engagement at this time. A survey of residents regarding transit use was prepared previously but not distributed.

ATTACHMENTS

NWTAC Request for Bus Route Improvements – HPR Corridor Report to the North West Community Council – October 20th 2012

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: David Mitchell, MCIP, LPP, Coordinator Project Planning, 490-6683



Report Approved by: Dave Reage, MCIP, LPP, Manager, Planning & Scheduling 490-5138

**North West Community Council
October 20, 2011**

TO: Councillor Harvey and Members of the North West Community Council



SUBMITTED BY: _____
Eddie Robar, Director, Metro Transit

DATE: September 22, 2011

SUBJECT: NWTAC Request for Bus Route Improvements – HPR Corridor

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

The following motion was passed during NWCC's June 23rd meeting re: NWTAC Request for Bus Route Improvements - HPR Corridor.

MOVED by Councillor Lund, seconded by Councillor Outhit that North West Community Council request:

1. A staff report on the feasibility of improving the bussing service along the Hammonds Plains Road corridor from the Tantallon Park n' Ride to Mill Cove in Bedford, including Lucasville Road; and
2. A staff report on the feasibility of implementing Park n' Rides at the subdivision access points along the Hammonds Plains Road.
3. Request that staff implement a clause in new development agreements that Park n' Rides must be built in all new subdivisions in the Greater Hammonds Plains area.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

BACKGROUND

The North West Transit Advisory Committee discussed this matter at their March 9, 2011 meeting. A report was then presented to the North West Community Council for their March 24, 2011 meeting. The report was deferred back to the North West Transit Advisory Committee for clarification on the route requested.

The item was then added to the Jun 23, 2011 agenda for the North West Community Council meeting, under 7.0 Consideration of Deferred Business, item 7.1 North West Transit Advisory Committee – Request for Bus Route Improvements – Hammonds Plains Road Corridor.

DISCUSSION

- 1. Feasibility of improving the bussing service along the Hammonds Plains Road corridor from the Tantallon Park n' Ride to Mill Cove in Bedford, including Lucasville Road**

Route Information:

The Route 33 Tantallon Express includes stops along Hammond Plains Road and the Route 89 Bedford covers a portion of Hammonds Plains Road in Bedford. The Tantallon Metro X offers express service from the Tantallon Park and Ride lot to downtown Halifax via Highway 103.

The following is a comparison of the actual per hour passenger counts versus the Ridership Performance Targets outlined in the Service Standards approved by Regional Council:

Route	Service Standard	Daytime Peak Direction (entire route)			Evening Peak Direction (entire route)		
		Target	*Actual (per hour)	% of Target	Target	*Actual (per hour)	% of Target
33	MetroLink and Urban Express	50	28	62%	n/a	n/a	n/a
89	Local Routes	25	13	72%	15	7	73%
330	Metro X Rural Express**	40	23	80%	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Note: from the 2011/12 Annual Service Plan*

***This route is subject to service standards only in the peak travel direction*

It is also worthwhile noting the Route 33 Tantallon Express average passenger counts along the Hammonds Plains Road corridor:

Kearney Lake Stop to Hubley Centre (Boarding or Alighting)	*06:20		07:10		16:57		17:57	
Description	On	Off	On	Off	On	Off	On	Off
Kearney Lake/Hammonds Plains Stop	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Combined Stops from Kearney Lake/Hammonds Plains Stop to Hubley Centre	0	0	0	3	0	17	0	12
Hubley Centre	0	0	0	2	0	8	0	6
Total	0	0	5	0	0	25	1	21

Hubley Centre to Kearney Lake Stop (Boarding or Alighting)	*06:45		07:35		17:27		18:22	
Description	On	Off	On	Off	On	Off	On	Off
Hubley Centre	6	0	8	0	2	0	1	0
Combined Stops From Hubley Centre to Hammonds Plains/Kearney Lake Stop	13	0	11	0	0	0	0	0
Hammonds Plains/Kearney Lake Stop	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	19	0	19	0	2	0	1	0

Note: All passenger counts except () were conducted after Aug 29/10 service adjustments and increases and prior to Nov 22/10 service reductions.*

**Passenger counts conducted in October of 2009.*

On a daily basis (weekdays only), there are a total of 41 passenger movements between Hubley Centre and Hammonds Plains/Kearney Lake and 52 passenger movements between Kearney Lake/Hammonds Plains and the Hubley Centre. These counts confirm that there is low usage of existing service in the area and an increase in service is not warranted at this time. In general, an area with existing low utilization would not be a priority for additional service (ie. increased frequency or a new route).

Mill Cove:

The use of Mill Cove as a terminating point is not viable as there are no feasible opportunities to turn the buses around. Metro Transit will avoid routing through parking lots whenever possible in order to minimize safety risks associated with negotiating tight turns and navigating around congested areas in an uncontrolled environment.

Also, if the Route 33 were to be rerouted further down Hammonds Plains Drive to Mill Cove, it should be considered that the Lacewood and downtown connections on the route would be lost. Further study would be needed to confirm the resulting impact on ridership.

Route 33 users currently benefit from the express service with limited stops to/from the downtown core. If this route were to be redirected to include Mill Cove, customers travelling downtown may perceive the resulting transfer required as an inconvenience. A transfer at Mill Cove and the subsequent trip on the Route 80 or 82 would result in increased travel time.

2. Feasibility of implementing Park n' Rides at the subdivision access points along the Hammonds Plains Road.

Staff reviewed potential sites on HRM land along Hammonds Plains Road. The only potentially suitable location is the parking lot at the Eisenhower Park Diamond, located off Hammonds Plains Road opposite the new Hammonds Plains Fire Department and behind the Firefighters and Scouts Hall. This location is close enough to Hammonds Plains Road (approx. 150 metres) to be potentially viable.

Metro Transit would have to consult with the various park user groups (Hammonds Plains Minor Baseball, Hammonds Plains Bedford Softball and Sackville Co-Ed Slowpitch) to ensure there are no potential usage conflicts before a transit park and ride lot could be established. The field is booked from May to October, 7 days a week; Monday to Friday from 6pm to 11pm; Saturday and Sunday, from 8am to 11pm.

Related maintenance costs and land use implications would have also to be considered. Currently, there is no snow removal at this site. As a comparison, the 2010 fiscal year snow removal costs for the Tantallon park and ride lot at the Hubley Centre totalled \$17,797. The property is currently zoned MU-1 (mixed use zone 1) which permits a mix of residential, commercial and institutional land uses. A land use bylaw amendment would be required in order to include park and ride lots as an institutional use.

Metro Transit has long term plans to build a transit terminal, including park and ride capabilities in the Bedford West area. A recent feasibility study, provided by Stantec in 2010 suggested the terminal be built on land near the new BMO Centre on Hammonds Plains Road and Gary Martin Drive. This project is not currently funded in the Metro Transit Five Year Plan.

3. Request that staff implement a clause in new development agreements that Park n' Rides must be built in all new subdivisions in the Greater Hammonds Plains area.

In accordance with the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (Policy S-20 and S-21) new subdivisions are not permitted in the "Greater Hammonds Plains area". Specifically, over the past 10 years much of the area has been subject to a Growth Management control mechanism. In 2000, residential development in the area was restricted to a maximum of 20 lots per 4 year

period per area of land. More recently, Interim Growth Management controls were established in early 2004 and then carried forward under the Regional Plan and Regional Subdivision Bylaw in 2006. The Interim Growth Management controls restrict future residential development in areas experiencing limitations and traffic capacity issues on the existing road network such as Hammonds Plains Road and Beaver Bank Road. Under the Regional Plan provisions, the only residential development occurring in the “Greater Hammonds Plains area” is from completed tentative or final subdivision filed prior to Council’s first notice of its intention to adopt the Regional Plan in 2006. Much of which is the development of the “backlands” of existing residential subdivisions such as Kingswood North, Glen Arbour and Voyageur Lakes. The implementation of a clause in new development agreements for new subdivisions for Park n’ Rides in the Greater Hammonds Plains is not necessary given Regional Plan policy does not enable new subdivision.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN


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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report was requested by members of the North West Transit Advisory Committee which is currently comprised of nine (9) citizen representatives from Districts 19, 20, 21 and 23 and one Councillor representing the North West Community Council. The Community Engagement aspect has been met as citizen members represent the residents of the North West Community Council areas including the portions of District 2 and 23 recently incorporated into the North West Community Council.

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.

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