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Halifax Regional Council
February 22, 2005

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Mike Labrecque, P. Eng., A/Director, Public Works & Transportation

DATE: February 14, 2005

SUBJECT: **Route 52 Crosstown**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Halifax Regional Council meeting of November 9, 2004, item 11.3.4.

BACKGROUND

Councillor Mosher submitted correspondence from a resident regarding passenger loading on the Route 52 Crosstown. This report is in response to that request.

DISCUSSION

Route 52 Crosstown provides service between the Burnside and Bayers Lake Business/Industrial Parks. This route was introduced in May of 2003 and provides connections to transit routes operating to most areas in the Urban Core.

Over the last two years Metro Transit's ridership has grown by almost 10 percent, creating capacity issues on several routes. Where possible, Metro Transit has added additional service to address overload situations; however during peak hours, the fleet size does restrict the options for increasing service.

Increasing ridership and the impact of the reduced seating on the new accessible low floor replacement buses have required more passengers to stand and increased the number of reported incidents of passengers being left at the stop. Because of the popularity of the Route 52 Crosstown, Metro Transit assigns the older high floor buses to the route whenever possible. These buses have 50 seats versus the 34 - 36 seats on the low floor units. The larger, articulated buses are fully assigned on trips throughout the Conventional Transit system that would otherwise require a second bus and are not available to be used exclusively on Route 52 Crosstown.

In developing the draft 2005/06 Capital Budget, staff has identified the need to purchase more articulated buses to accommodate the ridership growth and the impact of the low floor bus seat capacity. Staff propose that bus purchases for the next several years include low floor articulated vehicles. Although these vehicles cost \$650 - 700K as compared to \$400 - 450K for a standard 40 foot low floor bus, their increased capacity are required to accommodate passenger demand.

The lead time to tender, order, and take delivery of these vehicles would be 12 to 18 months after the budget is approved. There may also be an opportunity to purchase refurbished high floor articulated buses that would have a shorter delivery time. These buses would provide interim relief, but would have a shorter life and would not be equipped to transport passengers using wheel chairs.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The increased cost of purchasing articulated buses would be considered as part of the 2005/06 Capital Budget discussions. These vehicles have higher operating costs for fuel, tires, etc., but when used strategically, can be used instead of two 40 foot buses operating together.

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

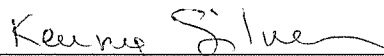
None

ATTACHMENTS

None

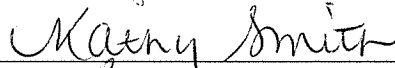
Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by:



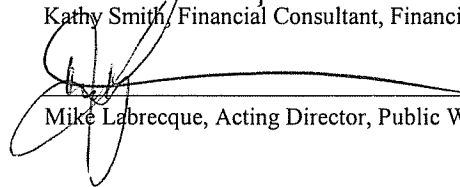
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Report Approved by:



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Report Approved by:



Mike Labrecque, Acting Director, Public Works & Transportation