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Halifax Regional Council  
August 19, 2003

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Paynter", written over a horizontal line.

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

**DATE:** July 30, 2003

**SUBJECT:** Access-A-Bus Service Boundary - Eastern Passage

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### INFORMATION REPORT

#### ORIGIN

At the July 15, 2003 Regional Council meeting a motion was passed requesting a staff report on the possibility of expanding the Access-A-Bus service boundary in the Eastern Passage area.

#### BACKGROUND

Metro Transit's criteria for the Access-A-Bus coverage area requires that the origin and destination of each trip be within six hundred ten (610) metres of fixed route transit service within the Urban Core. This criteria was developed in consultation with Access-A-Bus users and the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee. Resident living outside the coverage area may use the Access-A-Bus system provided they are a registered Access-A-Bus client and both their trip origin and destination are in this service area.

## **DISCUSSION**

The six hundred ten (610) metre distance is consistent with the fixed route walking distance standard that states ninety (90) percent of the population should be within five hundred (500) metres of a local transit route. The fixed route walking distance is based on surveys that show transit usage is much lower if passengers have to walk for more than ten minutes to reach the nearest transit service.

Despite the relation between the fixed route walking distance standard and the Access-A-Bus service area, the Access-A-Bus service area could be expanded. Because the destination of most Access-A-Bus users is to the central shopping, work, hospital and entertainment areas, extending the boundary will require longer trips. These longer trips will require more bus time and provides less options to accommodate several users on the same trip. As a result even a small extension in the service area will have a significant impact on the amount of service and number of buses required to meet passenger demand.

In the 2003/04 Public Works & Transportation Business Plan, Metro Transit discussed the need for more Access-A-Bus service and included the operation of an additional Access-A-Bus vehicle. This additional service was aimed at reducing the number of trips that had to be refused because of the lack of resources and did not consider the waiting list and possible extension of the service area.

Regardless of where the boundaries for Access-A-Bus coverage are set, there will always be situations where someone would like the service to go just a little further. Staff feel that current six hundred ten (610) metre criteria is reasonable, consistent with Metro Transit's fixed route coverage and accepted by most Access-A-Bus users. Staff will discuss the implications of extending the boundary with the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee and consider any recommended changes as part of the 2004/05 Business Planning Process.

## **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

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

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.

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