Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – July 6, 2011

Minute No. 363
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works – June 28, 2011

Item No. 3 Changes to Handi-Transit Fare Structure

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works and submits the following to Council:

1. That the regular transit post secondary monthly pass discount (approximately 20%) be applied to the Handi-Transit monthly pass for qualifying students.

2. That the regular transit senior discount for tickets and passes (50%) be applied to Handi-Transit fares when the Transit Department implements fare payment from account technology for Handi-Transit passengers, scheduled to coincide with the new fare collection system for regular transit service (estimated to be implemented in early 2013).

3. That any future changes to regular transit fares be applied to Handi-Transit fares as well.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – July 6, 2011

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works – June 28, 2011

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Vandal,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 28, 2011, the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: **Changes to Handi-Transit Fare Structure**

Critical Path: **Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works – EPC – Council**

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Caldwell	D. Wardrop	M Ruta CFO	P Sheegl CAO

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the regular transit post secondary monthly pass discount (approximately 20%) be applied to the Handi-Transit monthly pass for qualifying students.

2. That the regular transit senior discount for tickets and passes (50%) be applied to Handi-Transit fares when the Transit Department implements fare payment from account technology for Handi-Transit passengers, scheduled to coincide with the new fare collection system for regular transit service (estimated to be implemented in early 2013).

3. That any future changes to regular transit fares be applied to Handi-Transit fares as well.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

Discounted fares are not applicable to Handi-Transit service. There has been an increase in inquiries from citizens as to why the Hand-Transit fare structure is not equivalent to the regular transit system.

The Canadian Federation of Students has initiated discussions with transit management citing discrimination because the reduced monthly bus pass for students attending a post secondary school does not apply to Handi-Transit monthly passes. The Transit Department has received a Human Rights complaint initiated by a senior citizen citing discrimination because the reduced fare for senior citizens does not apply to Handi-Transit.

The Human Rights Commission may determine the practice of not permitting discounts for students and seniors qualifying for Handi-Transit as discriminatory given other jurisdictions are moving to fully equalize fares on their regular and paratransit systems. A complaint to the Human Rights Commission of Saskatchewan against the City of Regina resulted in a settlement

agreement making the variety of fares and discounts available to regular transit passengers applicable to paratransit passengers as well (effective January 1, 2008).

This report recommends changes to the Handi-Transit fare policy that requires the approval of Council.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Changes to Fare Structure for Regular Transit

Over the last decade, the City of Winnipeg has implemented significant fare reductions for post secondary students and seniors utilizing the regular transit system.

- Post secondary students receive approximately a 20% discount on the purchase of a monthly pass (Council adopted effective September 1, 2001).
- Senior citizens receive a discount on cash fares consistent with children and youth and a 50% discount on tickets and passes (Council adopted effective July 1, 2005).

These reduced fares provided for regular transit system users make it difficult to rationalize the Handi-Transit fare structure as being "reasonably equivalent" to the regular service and would likely be determined to be a discriminatory practice by the Human Rights Commission.

Other Jurisdictions

In recent years, several large transit systems in Canada have applied their student and/or senior discounted fares to their paratransit service. For example,

	Student Discount	Senior Discount
Halifax	√	√
Toronto	√	√
Ottawa	√	√
Montreal	√	√
Quebec	√	√
Calgary	√	**X**
Regina	√	√
Vancouver	**X**	**X**
Victoria	√	√

Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA/ACTUA) 2011 Fare Structure for Specialized Transit Services

Financial Implications

Providing the approximate 20% discount on a monthly pass for post-secondary students has a minimal impact on fare-generated revenue for Handi-Transit given approximately 24 registrants attend post secondary classes each year – lost fare revenue would be approximately $4,500 annually based on 2011 fares.

Equalizing the senior fare will impact fare-generated revenue for Handi-Transit. Approximately 46% of Handi-Transit rides are provided to seniors – lost fare revenue would be approximately $240,000 annually based on 2011 fares.

Implementation

Given the small number of post secondary students, it is possible for the Handi-Transit branch to manage the post-secondary pass discount by directly dealing with the small number of registrants attending post secondary schools each year (by confirmation of registration at a participating post secondary school).

Seniors comprise 73% of Handi-Transit registrants (approximately 6,800 registrants) and fare collection technology is required for the effective implementation of a fare adjustment of that magnitude. Therefore, it is recommended the senior discount be effective when the Transit Department implements fare payment from account technology for Handi-Transit passengers, which will permit electronic withdrawal of fares based on the age of the registrant. This technology enhancement is scheduled to coincide with the new fare collection system for regular transit service, estimated to be implemented in early 2013.

HISTORY

History of Handi-Transit Fare Structure

Council adopted the recommendations of a Task Force (Braid Report) commissioned to review Handi-Transit issues on September 21, 1994. This Task Force was comprised of Councillors, Transit management and representatives from the community. One of the challenges of the Task Force was to define a "reasonably equivalent" parallel public transportation service for persons with physical disabilities unable to utilize the regular transit service of the day.

It was agreed that the fare structure for Handi-Transit should be the same as the regular transit system adult cash fare, without concessionary (reduced) fares being provided. This was seen as "reasonably equivalent" for door-to-door service, that requires significantly more subsidy than the regular transit system. At the time, this was the typical fare structure for paratransit services provided by large transit systems in Canada.

This fare structure policy for Handi-Transit was reiterated in recommendations of the Handi-Transit Policy Advisory Committee, *Handi-Transit Policies and Procedures,* adopted by Council October 18, 2000.*

On April 26, 2006, Council adopted policy permitting Handi-Transit registrants with "unlimited eligibility" to obtain a Handi-Transit Photo ID pass to use regular transit service without payment of a fare.

* The Handi-Transit Policy Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities, senior citizens, Handi-Transit registrants (one ambulatory and one
who travels in a wheelchair), and Handi-Transit management.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: June 21, 2011

Project Name:
Changes to Handi-Transit Fare Structure

First Year of Program **2011**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ 2,250	$ 4,590	$ 254,381	$ 259,466	$ 264,656
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	1,125	2,295	127,190	129,733	132,328
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ 1,125	$ 2,295	$ 127,191	$ 129,733	$ 132,328
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ 1,125	$ 2,295	$ 127,191	$ 129,733	$ 132,328

Additional Comments: The direct costs are for decrease in fare revenue and includes a projected increase in fares of 2% each year. The incremental revenue represents the increase to the provincial operating grant by 50% of the decrease in fare revenue. The discount to senior fares is assumed to be effective January 1, 2013.

original signed by Tanis Yanchishyn, CA
Manager of Finance and Administration

CONSULTATION

In preparing this report there was consultation with:

Canadian Federation of Students
Handi-Transit Policy Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY

Transit Department
Client Services Division
Prepared by: Catherine Caldwell
Date: June 17, 2011
File No.