Minutes – Council – January 25, 2024

Minute No. 120
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Public Works – January 9, 2024

Item No. 1 WINNpass Fares

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works and adopted the following:

1. That the Council Motion of November 23, 2023, be received as information.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Lukes,
That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works be adopted.

Carried

Councillor Gilroy asked to be recorded as having voted against the item in accordance with Rule 47(7) of the Procedure Bylaw.

Councillors Schreyer and Wyatt were absent from the vote on the above motion.

David Grant submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 16, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 9, 2024, the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works recommended to the Executive Policy Committee and Council:

1. That the Council Motion of November 23, 2023, be received as information.

David Grant submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On November 23, 2023, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works:

Moved by Councillor Allard,
Seconded by Councillor Gilroy,

WHEREAS more people who choose riding the bus results in reductions in traffic;

AND WHEREAS Council voted to direct the transportation master plan to achieve a modal shift by 2030 of 50 percent;

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

AND WHEREAS in the May 26, 2022, Council Minutes, on page 6 of Item 1 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works dated May 4, 2022, the public service has indicated that should a reduction in fares be determined to be a policy that Council wishes to pursue, significant additional study would be needed, and it should only be undertaken in concert with the transition to the WTMP route network";

AND WHEREAS transit has identified opportunities where the transit utility could increase revenues to transit by reducing fares and require a consultant assignment in order to present a plan to Council;

AND WHEREAS this confirms that transit is losing riders to due transit fares being too high;

AND WHEREAS increases in transit fares reduce demand, to the point where transit has confirmed in an administrative report that in some cases, the utility is losing money because the rates are too high;

AND WHEREAS there is a new provincial government that has demonstrated that it is interest in making life affordable for Manitobans, and Council should be ready to ask for transit fare reductions or free transit to Provincial and Federal Governments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That effective January 1, 2024 the WINNPASS rates for both the monthly pass and e-cash users be adjusted to $0, so that they may ride the bus for free;

2. That the $1.4 million that have been freed by the former government funding for net new road expenses for the Route 90 Road widening and the Chief Peguis extension, and that in the event that spending authorizations have already been given by Council on these new funds, that the funds required for the consultant study be funded by the mill rate stabilisation reserve fund;

3. That the consultant report assignment that would assist Winnipeg Transit to consider the reduction of cash transit fares by approximately $0.25 cents annually until such time as the cash fare reaches the optimal rate for the utility referenced in the May 26, 2022 Council Minutes, on page 6 of Item 1 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works dated May 4, 2022.

4. That this consultant assignment explore the budget implications of having a free transit system.