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YORK REGION TRANSIT
MOBILITY PLUS SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council provide direction with respect to the immediate provision of cross-boundary Mobility Plus service for students travelling to and from Humber College, York University and Seneca College in the City of Toronto.

2. PURPOSE

Transit Committee at its meeting of September 16, 2004 adopted, as amended, Clause 1 of Report No. 7 from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works entitled “York Region Transit Mobility Plus Service Implementation Initiative”. This report dealt with a number of specific service delivery issues including:

- Integration with accessible conventional transit service.
- Free fare pilot project.
- Cross-boundary service into Toronto.
- Direct service to selected accessible subway stations.
- New community bus routes.
- Community partnership initiatives.

In addition to referring the report to the 2005 Business Plan and Budget process for review, Transit Committee requested staff to provide a report to the September 23, 2004 Regional Council meeting regarding the immediate implementation of cross-boundary service for students travelling to and from Humber College, York University and Seneca College, and to include a cost analysis and financial implications.

3. BACKGROUND

Currently, the only Mobility Plus cross-boundary service into Toronto is provided to Vaughan residents who are able to travel to and from the area bounded by Highway 401 to the south, Yonge Street to the east and the Peel boundary to the west. They are able to do so on a single fare and without transfers. This situation is a continuation of a policy that existed in Vaughan prior to Regional transit amalgamation. The balance of the Region is not provided with direct trips into the City of Toronto. As a result, staff are recommending a one year trial project wherein all Mobility Plus registrants are offered

cross-boundary service to selected Toronto destinations (with the southerly boundary being Highway 401). No additional fare would be required within the Toronto area. The selected destinations include hospital and medical facilities, social service agencies, and major educational facilities. As indicated above, in reviewing the report, Transit Committee requested staff to advise on the impact of introducing this service immediately in 2004 for educational trips only.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Of the three major educational facilities recommended for service, direct service is currently provided to York University for all York Region residents, and Humber College for Vaughan residents only. York University's northern boundary fronts onto the south side of Steeles Avenue (the boundary between the Region and the City of Toronto). As such, Mobility Plus directly serves the south side of Steeles Avenue and therefore currently serves York University for all trip requests. A review of travel demand for Humber College indicates that those attending this institution currently originate from the Vaughan area and therefore are already able to have a direct ride under the current operating policy.

However, those destined to Seneca College are carried only as far as Shops on Steeles and Highway 404 (the current transfer point with the Toronto Transit Commission's Wheel-Trans service). If eligible for Wheel-Trans service, the Mobility Plus registrant would transfer to Wheel-Trans to continue their ride south to the College at Don Mills Road and Finch Avenue (a distance of approximately 2.6 kilometres). Discussions have been held with the Counselling and Special Needs Department of Seneca and it has been determined that approximately 12 students during the fall semester, originating from York Region, would make use of this direct service. In addition, it is estimated there could be another 12 students that could make use of this service but who have not identified themselves to the Counselling and Special Needs Department.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost for providing direct service to and from Seneca College for the balance of 2004, commencing October 4, 2004 for a thirteen week period, is approximately \$22,000. This estimate is based on up to 24 students taking ten rides per week for the thirteen week interval at an added operating cost south of Steeles Avenue of approximately \$7.00 per trip.

The provision of direct rides south of Steeles Avenue into the City of Toronto (other than those provided from Vaughan) was not budgeted for in the 2004 Mobility Plus Business Plan and Budget. The overall YRT 2004 operating budget is comprised of costs and revenues associated with both conventional and Mobility Plus operations. It is projected that the overall transit operating budget (including the projected increase to the Mobility

Plus budget from this request) will be balanced at year end due to reduced expenditures on the conventional transit side.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There are no direct municipal impacts associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION

Regional Council direction is being sought regarding the immediate provision of cross-boundary service for students travelling to and from Humber College, York University and Seneca College.