

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** City Council  
**Report From:** Dennis Kefalas. P. Eng. Director Public Works & Engineering  
**Meeting Date:** January 7, 2022  
**Report Code:** OP-22-002  
**Subject:** Transit Service Options

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-22-002 respecting Transit Service Options, City Council directs staff to seek pricing for the following three transit service options as part of the request for proposal process:

1. To provide 16,500 hours of service annually based on the recommended option from the recently completed transit study;
2. To provide 13,500 hours of service annually based on the status quo in terms of service delivery; and
3. To provide 7,500 hours of service annually based on a one-hour service delivery model.

### Highlights:

- The transit study was presented to Operations Committee in September 2021
- The recommended transit option (Option#1) from the study has an estimated annual cost of \$1.45M

### Strategic Plan Alignment:

This report supports the delivery of a Core Service.

## **Background:**

The City of Owen Sound undertook a Transit Optimization Review process to assess the existing transit service delivery model and identify areas of improvement to optimize the current transit system.

This study analyzed and evaluated the City's existing fixed-route system, including route coverage, route ridership, schedule adherence, and infrastructure perspectives.

This process also reviewed similar transit systems, bus stop locations and distances and populations serviced, identify local issues, and data collection and analysis to quantify and qualify system operating characteristics.

Once the consultant completed the transit study the second phase of their obligations included aiding staff during the procurement process for a new transit contract.

## **Analysis:**

The transit study has been completed and presented to the Operations Committee in September 2021. A staff report was presented at the Operations Committee during the November 9, 2021, meeting. Given the amount of detail contained in the report and the financial burden the transit service places on our taxpayers Council requested a Special Meeting devoted just to transit be scheduled. The intent of the Special Council Meeting is to discuss how the City will move forward with transit and the potential level of service.

## **Financial Implications:**

The operating costs of the current existing four bus transit system is approximately \$1.275M annually. Of this amount, approximately \$1M is contractor costs and the additional \$275,000 annual cost is relating to vehicle ownership and maintenance.

The recommended transit option (Option#1) from the study has an estimated annual cost of \$1.45M for 2022 based on the current hourly rate. The additional cost is also the result of an increase in service hours by 25 per cent annually.

Given the rising net costs of providing a transit system in Owen Sound and the ever-increasing financial burden the transit system has placed on

taxpayers, staff is recommending seeking pricing for a system that creates less of a burden. In this case a system that provides one-hour service with the same area coverage as the existing system.

Staff will not know the actual costs of providing a transit system until the pricing is provided by the proponents as part of the procurement process.

### **Communication Strategy:**

Regular minutes of Council meetings.

### **Consultation:**

The Manager of Engineering Services, the Director of Public Works and Engineering and the Transit Consultant, Dennis Fletcher and Associates were consulted in the writing of this report.

### **Attachments:**

None

### **Recommended by:**

Dennis Kefalas, P. Eng. Director Public Works & Engineering

### **Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Dennis Kefalas, P. Eng. Director Public Works & Engineering at [dkefalas@owensound.ca](mailto:dkefalas@owensound.ca) or (519) 376-4440 ext. 1201.