

PEMBROKE ON-DEMAND

Considerations for a
transit pilot project





TRANSIT SERVICE DEMAND

Stakeholders in the community have highlighted the need for affordable transit in Pembroke including:

- Algonquin College
- Senior's Advisory Committee
- Pembroke Business Improvement Area
- Social service organizations
- Initial public feedback

TRANSIT BENEFITS

- As per the WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework:
 - *“The lack of affordable public transport... isolates older people who no longer drive in their homes and make participation in community life difficult, increasing the risk of isolation and loneliness. When transport is available and adapted to the needs of seniors, both in terms of scheduling and destinations, it enhances mobility and facilitates social participation and a sense of belonging in one’s community.”*
- From an economic development stand-point, transit helps people access local jobs, education, stores and services, benefitting both residents, businesses and other community stakeholders.
- From an environmental stand-point, transit (particularly electric-powered) can help reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and CO2.

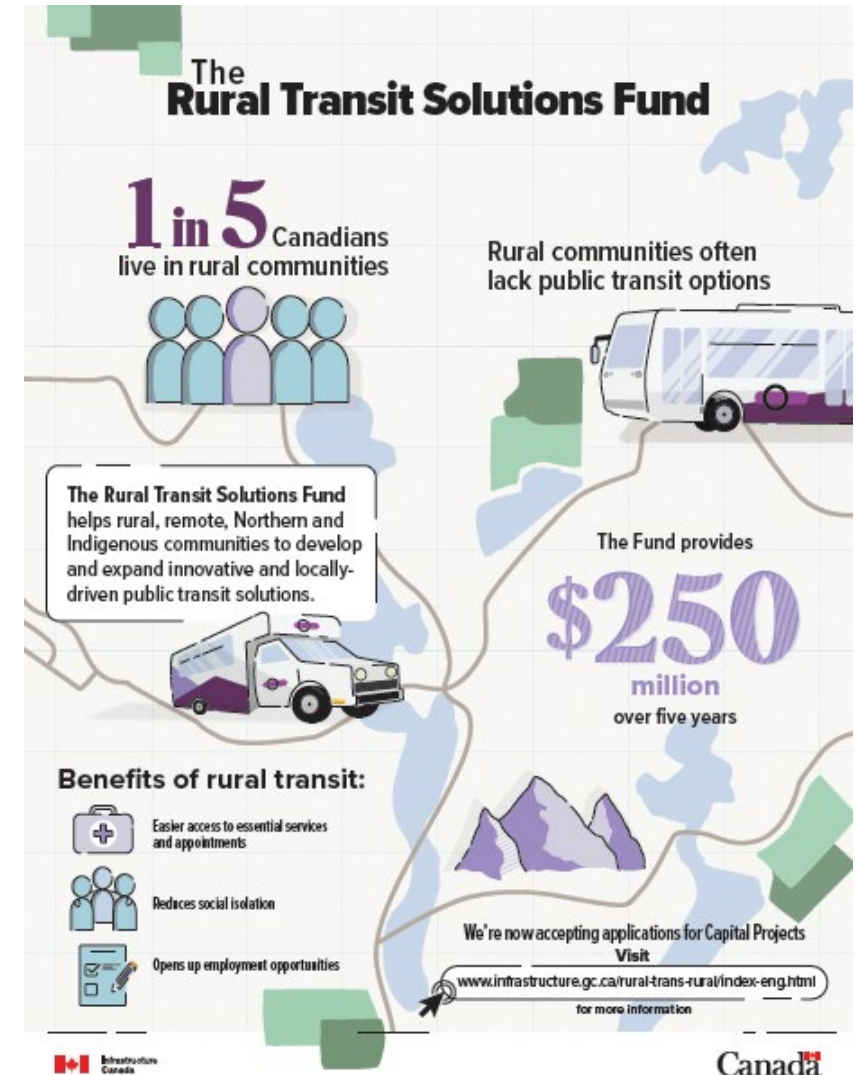


TRANSIT STUDY & FCM GRANT

- With the financial support of an FCM grant, Paradigm Transportation Solutions Ltd. finalized a transit feasibility study in 2022 which recommended a point-to-point transit system to meet transit demand in Pembroke.
- Staff submitted a pre-application to the FCM Green Municipal Fund for a possible three-year transit pilot project to determine eligibility. If successful, the City could receive up to \$500,000 of grant funding. This pre-application was approved, and the City was invited to submit a formal application to the program.
- FCM program staff have indicated that if a formal application was submitted in September this fall, the City would receive the decision sometime in January 2024.

RURAL TRANSIT SOLUTIONS FUND

- Other funding opportunities include the *Rural Transit Solutions Fund (Capital Stream)* which can fund 80% of new or expanded transit solutions requiring the purchase of:
 - Fleet vehicles;
 - Charging stations; and/or
 - Software.
- Under this program, the City must commit to a minimum 5-year investment in transit program.



2021 TRANSIT FEASIBILITY SURVEY

- As part of the transit feasibility study, a survey of residents was undertaken. With 871 respondents identifying as living in Pembroke, key feedback included:
 - 61% expected to use transit
 - 71% expect other people they know would use transit
 - 72% would support an average property tax increase of \$25/year per household



SURVEY COMMENTS

Fares must be kept down to reasonable level or even seniors will not use it.

Against

- Fix the road first before worrying about a bus system.
- Lots of other things could be improved in this city with that money that would benefit more people.
 - Absolutely no to a tax increase.
 - Already high taxes.

For

- Transit desperately needed everywhere in county given level of poverty and aged. Lack of transit a huge barrier to budget grocery, shopping, finding work, socializing, recreation, education, volunteering. Taxis costly, unreliable.
- It would be a great addition to the city for seniors and students mostly.
- We need a system that is keeping with climate change solutions.
- Transit between Pembroke and Petawawa is required as well.

TRANSIT: UPDATED COSTING

The cost of the project will ultimately depend on:

- Number of vehicles required to operate the service within parameters set by Council. Service requirements can be better estimated when transit service options, targets and goals are selected and modelled.
- Gas vs. electric-powered vehicle selection.
- Demand from the public through ridership.



Targets & Parameters

Service Area
Average Wait Time
Stop Location
Stop Type
Number of Stops
Trip Length
Trip Time
Number of Ride Requests Met

TRANSIT COST CONSIDERATIONS

- City staff prepared an overall project forecast which includes transit operator costs (buses, drivers, software, back office); project management/oversight; marketing; legal fees; stop maintenance and winter control; insurance; and banking fees.
- Net project costs assumes the City will receive:
 - Farebox revenues as per the Paradigm study
 - FCM Green Municipal Fund Grant of \$500,000
 - Additional provincial transit gas tax funding
- The actual cost of the project would not be known until time of tender and will ultimately depend on the number of buses required to meet demand and the hours of service.
- The more the service is used by residents, the higher the cost to the City.

TRANSIT COST FORECAST

The forecasted range of costs, net costs and overall levy impact are as follows:

Forecasted Pilot Project Impact at Year 3	Low (2 bus)	Medium (3 bus)	High (4 bus)	Possible (2+peak)
Forecasted Annual Cost	\$1,172,180	\$1,609,050	\$2,426,868	\$1,445,044
Forecasted Annual Net Cost	\$902,680	\$1,339,550	\$2,157,368	\$1,175,544
Net Cost of 3-yr pilot	\$2,668,490	\$3,976,150	\$6,424,121	\$3,536,034
Overall Levy Increase	+3.9%	+5.8%	+9.3%	+5.1%

POTENTIAL TAX INCREASE BY PROPERTY CLASS

Average impact per type of property

Low

High

Mid



Residential

+\$112/year

+\$269/year

\$146-\$166/year



Multi-Residential

+\$825/year

+\$1,972/year

+\$1,075-\$1,225/year



Commercial

+\$262/year

+\$627/year

+\$342-\$389/year



Industrial

+\$788/year

+\$1,883/year

+\$1,026-\$1,169/year

TRANSIT FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

- The City of Ottawa's cost to residential taxpayers for transit and para-transpo is \$199 for every \$100,000 in residential assessment in 2023.
- While transit provides an important service to the community, it is not fully funded through fees collected. When ridership increases, so do costs. If the City is interested in providing transit services, it must be prepared to fund the net cost of service through the tax base.
- Currently, even specialized transit services can experience difficulties in maintaining sustainable service levels within their financial means. Please refer to the latest article [on Renfrew's Sunshine Coach](#) and the Town of Renfrew's June 13th Council [Agenda Package](#) for further info.
- A Municipal Accommodation Tax could be introduced to help offset service costs.

OTHER FUNDING PRESSURES

Other expected pressures on the levy over the next few years include:

- Roads project funding: Over the past two years, the City has seen price increases in the 20-30%+ range while funding from taxation for capital projects was frozen in 2021 and 2022 and increased by \$27,800 to \$2,008,932 in 2023.
- General operating pressures: Over the past two years (2021-2022), CPI has increased by 11.63% whereas the tax levy has only increased by 4.17% during this same period, a gap of 7.46%.
- Aquatic Centre: The cost of this project has significantly increased post-COVID.
- Arenas: Also require significant upcoming investment due to their age and condition.

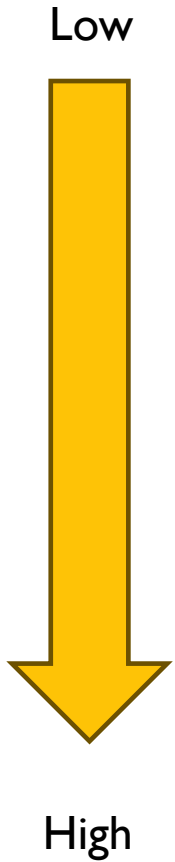
PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

- To date, \$300,000 of funding has been set aside for a transit initiative.
- Initial transit survey indicated a \$25 tax increase. Current forecast indicates that a much higher level of tax funding could be required to pay for the service.
 - Partnerships with City stakeholders could help lower the financial risk of offering this service by guaranteeing a minimum level of revenue.
 - Feedback from residents would be beneficial to ensure continued support of a local transit initiative.
- Conducting detailed modelling of a Pembroke transit service based on established service objectives could better define the number of buses required to offer a reliable service and reduce current project cost uncertainty.
 - Grant funding may not be available to fund this stage of the project. Initial feedback from the FCM Green Municipal Fund was not favourable.

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

Feedback from Council is required on possible next steps to be included in Budget 2024

Level of Commitment



More Study Needed

Grant Applications

New Survey of Residents

Options

1. In-House Survey Monkey (Free)
2. External Statistical Survey (Cost)
3. Community engagement tools (Cost, 2024 Budget)

Could be supported by a media event (2024)

Service Modelling*

- Convene a committee of stakeholders to provide input into a future service
- Engage a transit provider to define transit service model, system requirements, revised cost estimate

*May set an expectation that the City will be moving forward with a pilot project

Green Municipal Fund

- Application to GMF for a pilot project.
- An electric-powered transit option is recommended to demonstrate environmental leadership and better meet grant criteria.
 - Additional consulting required to quantify the environmental benefits, provide grant writing services.

Rural Transit Solutions Fund

- Application to acquire transit vehicles and infrastructure.
- Requires a 5-year commitment

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should Council wish to continue the evaluation of a transit pilot project, a sample motion is as follows for consideration and discussion:

- Staff direction on community engagement.

Please Note:

- City staff are exploring a larger community engagement project as part of the 2024 budget.
- The City's Communications Officer did indicate the ability to issue another poll of residents via Survey Monkey. Staff could bring back further information for discussion on this subject before end-of-year.
- Staff direction to include a transit modelling study to determine system requirements and provide an updated financial forecast as part of the 2024 budget.

FEEDBACK

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