

# CITY OF FORT SASKATCHEWAN

## Transit Task Force Report

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### **Recommendation:**

That Council receive the report of the Transit Task Force as information.

### **Purpose:**

To communicate the results of the Transit Task Force review of transit service levels.

### **Background:**

In 2015, WSP/Parsons Brinckerhoff (WSP/PB) was retained by the City of Fort Saskatchewan to undertake a review of the current Fort Saskatchewan Transit (FST) pilot. In their review, WSP/PB advised that the current routing of the FST pilot was not optimal for:

- 1) attracting new ridership;
- 2) diverting trips from the Special Transportation Services Society (STSS) system;
- 3) serving major key trip generators in the City;
- 4) providing directness of routing; and
- 5) optimizing travel speeds.

On January 26, 2016 Council authorized the formation of the Transit Task Force comprising of Councillors Hennig, Garritsen and Blizzard. The objective of the Task Force was to confirm the proposed service levels and report back to Council. The Task Force met four times and reviewed various options to maximize scheduling and routes with the ultimate goal of meeting customer needs within the current budget envelope.

WSP/PB was again retained to support the Task force in its deliberations. WSP/PB participated in the Transit Task Force where routing was again reviewed and confirmed. Through dialogue and collaboration with the Task Force and further analysis, minor amendments were made and WSP/PB recommended that the routing structure detailed in Appendix I be adopted.

Route 582 is proposed to provide counter-clockwise service through both the north and south areas of the City. Major deviations from the current alignment include increased coverage north of 94 Street with service through Sherridon and along Southfort Drive. This route will directly serve both Cornerstone shopping area and the Fort Saskatchewan Community Hospital to provide direct service to these popular destinations. The changed direction of the route (clockwise to counter-clockwise) provides more direct (faster) service for the densely populated southern zones of the City to the Dow Centennial Centre, the new park and ride, the hospital, the Cornerstone shopping area, and Ross Creek Medical Centre.

Route 583 is proposed to provide clockwise service with an extended alignment south of 94 Street. This new alignment also provides direct service to the Ross Creek Medical Centre, the Cornerstone shopping area, the hospital and the Dow Centennial Centre.

Overall, the overlapping of the two local routes creates more direct access to/from major destinations for a greater proportion of residents, an important factor for building ridership on the system and improving modal-split. With the proposed routing, average travel times to downtown Fort Saskatchewan, for example, will be 34% faster than with the current routing structure (27 minutes proposed versus 41 minutes existing) and 15% faster to Clareview LRT (48 minutes proposed versus 57 minutes existing). Lastly, the proposed routing structure offers the best

routing to attract riders from the STSS program as the proposed routing will directly service major attractions in Fort Saskatchewan, nearly to their doorstep.

The proposed routes deviate little from the original presentation in December, 2015. The routes have been adjusted to service the Ross Creek Medical Clinic and conversations are underway with Alberta Health Services and Cornerstone Properties to service the hospital, Walmart and Canadian Tire sites directly.

Work is on-going to site the local transit transfer point along 99 Ave. The final location has not been determined but will be one of two locations currently selected for final analysis.

The local and commuter transit schedules (Appendix II) have been reviewed in the context of cost of service to ridership. The review was based on a few data points and in the final analysis, the Task Force required additional data to support scheduling changes at this time. It is proposed that the system operate based on the proposed route and current schedule for one year and collect sufficient data to support any subsequent adjustment to service levels.

**Next Steps:**

1. Administration will complete the tendering process and select an operator.
2. Implementation is planned for the fall of 2016.

**Attachments:**

1. Appendix I - Proposed commuter and local transit route
2. Appendix II - Proposed commuter and local transit schedule
3. Appendix III - Transit final report executive summary

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| Submitted to: | City Council  | Date: April 26, 2016 |