



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 3
Transportation Standing Committee
May 24, 2018

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Dave Reage, MCIP, LPP, Director, Halifax Transit

Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 26, 2018

SUBJECT: Transit Service in West Bedford

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

This is a staff initiated information report.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 69(1) of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter enables the Municipality to provide a public transportation service, and section 79(1)(o) provides authority for Council to expend money to provide public transportation.

BACKGROUND

The *Moving Forward Together Plan* (MFTP) identified the need for new and extended service to and from growth areas including the community of West Bedford. This area had been previously served by the Route 89 Bedford.

The MFTP describes the following service and facilities for this community:

- West Bedford Park & Ride: Located on Innovation Drive, this Park & Ride facility is anticipated to include 350 parking spaces, a platform with shelters, and a four-bay bus terminal. It would be served by the new Routes 90, 91, and 194.
- Route 90 Larry Uteck: This new route will travel between the Water Street Terminal in downtown Halifax and the new West Bedford Park & Ride via the south end of the Halifax Peninsula, Robie Street, Windsor Street, the Bedford Highway, Larry Uteck Boulevard, Broad Street, Gary Martin Drive and Hammonds Plains Road. It is an extension and realignment of the existing Route 90, which currently terminates at Peakview Way.
- Route 91 Hemlock Ravine: This new route will travel between Mumford Terminal and the new West Bedford Park & Ride via Hammonds Plains Road, the Bedford Highway, Millview, Joseph Howe Drive, and the Bayers Road Shopping Centre. This route introduces transit service to new streets and replaces parts of the existing Route 81 and Route 89 (between Bayers Road and Starboard Drive and between Bedford Highway and Innovation Drive respectively).
- Route 194 West Bedford Express: This new peak only express route connects West Bedford to downtown Halifax via Hammonds Plains Road, Innovation Drive, and Gary Martin Drive. Limited stop service is provided between Dunbrack Street and Scotia Square, Barrington Street, Spring Garden Road to Summer Street.

The *Moving Forward Together Plan* anticipated that these new services and the new West Bedford Park & Ride would be introduced in fiscal Year 2020/2021 in conjunction with other larger network changes.

DISCUSSION

West Bedford is a rapidly developing large-scale greenfield residential and commercial development marketed as 'The Parks of West Bedford'. A large portion of the West Bedford Business Park is constructed and occupied with multi-floor office buildings, the BMO Centre sports complex, and Charles P Allen High School/Bedford-Hammonds Plains Community Centre. The business park is becoming a key economic hub in Halifax. Other parts of the development including 'Stonington Park', 'Cascades Park', and 'Waterberry Park' feature further commercial lots, multiple high-density apartment buildings and hundreds of single-unit and townhouse homes built on relatively small lots.

The development has sufficient density to generate viable ridership to support several transit routes. To encourage sustainable mode choices and to work towards mode share targets reaffirmed in the recently approved *Integrated Mobility Plan*, transit options should be provided before higher proportions of residents move in and settle into car-centric lifestyles. With this in mind, Halifax Transit introduced the Route 194 West Bedford Express in August 2017.

Although the MFTP had tentatively anticipated the implementation of all Bedford routes in 2020/21, the Route 194 West Bedford Express was advanced and introduced three years ahead of its' originally planned implementation in an effort to bring transit options to the growing community. Attributable to the density of the development, early ridership data suggests a strong uptake of demand on the route. The route was introduced to capture demand from the growing population and commercial base but it only provides four inbound trips in the morning and four outbound trips in the afternoon.

To further serve West Bedford, the MFTP identifies an extension to the existing Route 90 and a new Route 91. The Route 90 currently terminates on Larry Uteck Boulevard near the roundabout with Starboard Drive and Nine Mile Drive. The MFTP extends this further as described in the background section of this report.

The introduction of the new Routes 90 and 91 was originally planned to coincide with the opening of the new West Bedford Park & Ride. Implementation would also coincide with other larger network changes including removal the Route 89 and corresponding restructuring of Bedford and Sackville routes.

Implementation of either the Route 90 or the Route 91 is not possible in the 2018/19 fiscal year due to the physical availability of fleet. Introduction of either route would require additional buses, additional funding for operations, and would also put further pressure on transit centre storage space.

Halifax Transit has reviewed the potential to expedite the implementation of either of these routes earlier than planned. The modifications to the Route 90 are relatively independent of other route changes. As a result, and due to the aforementioned growth and development, Halifax Transit intend to include extension of the Route 90 to West Bedford in the Annual Service Plan for 2019/20 as a key priority for implementation.

The implementation of the Route 91 is highly interdependent on a number of other network changes identified for the 2020/21 fiscal year, including those along the Bedford Highway and in Sackville and cannot be implemented until these larger network changes occur. As the plan is being introduced in phases, staff are taking care to group changes appropriately to minimise any temporary gaps in service coverage or frequency and to avoid temporarily introducing higher frequencies of service to an area. Introducing the Route 91 changes ahead of other changes planned for 2020/21 would have both effects.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this information report. Financial implications associated with the upcoming modifications to the Route 90 will be incorporated into the 19/20 Halifax Transit Budget and Annual Service Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Significant engagement was undertaken as part of the creation of the *Moving Forward Together Plan*. No engagement has been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The extension of the Route 90 into West Bedford may result in an increase in transit ridership, and thus reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles and associated greenhouse gases/particulate matter.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Committee and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Jeremy Galilee, Coordinator, Project Planning, Halifax Transit, 902.490.6720
