

## Para Transit Review Update

The City of St. John's Municipal Council, during its Regular Meeting of September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009, adopted the following short-term recommendations of the iTRANS Consultants report, with some revisions related to funding and eligibility, as noted below. With regard to the mid and long-term recommendations, these have not yet been considered by Council, though the recommendations will provide guidelines for long-term strategic planning in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Specific actions flowing from these recommendations will be brought to Council for approval as appropriate. The Para Transit Review Steering Committee and the Para Transit Advisory Committee will continue to act as conduits for stakeholder consultation.

We wish to reiterate that only the short-term recommendations have officially been ratified by Council. The following is a brief synopsis of the recommendations:

### 1. Funding:

The Committee recommends that the funding model proposed by iTRANS relative to taxation options not be pursued but rather, that the City develop a cost-shared formula with the stakeholders (the City of Mount Pearl and the Provincial Government), for funding the para-transit service.

### 2. Fares:

That the Para-Transit fare of \$2.50 be reduced to \$2.25 in line with that charged by Metrobus which is the parallel system to para-transit. This change would become effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

### 3. Operations:

a) Extension of the Wheelway contract from June 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010. The contract extension would provide for the increase in trips to 100,000 trips; pay increase for Wheelway drivers and additional call-taker / medical trip coordinator / data reporting position to reduce

phone waiting times for Para-Transit clients and manage health care client bookings

#### 4. Operating Policies:

- a) Make Curb-to-Curb Service the default mode for all new and re-certified applicants, however door-to-door (that is, accessible door to accessible door) service should be provided to people whose application establishes the need for it, or whose condition changes subsequent to the application process. People who cannot travel without an attendant will be required to bring an attendant with them.

#### 5. Governance

- a) Maintain the current governance structure, but strengthen the City's ability to manage contract compliance, eligibility, and complaint processing.
- b) Create an Accessible Transit Coordinator Position with the City, responsible for monitoring the Wheelway contract, processing new applications, reviewing complaints, etc.
- c) Discontinue service provider representation on the Para-Transit Advisory Committee, in favour of having the Accessible Transit Coordinator provide liaison to and from the service provider(s) and the committee.

#### 6. Eligibility

The Committee recommended that this issue be deferred in its entirety for consideration under the mid-term recommendations for review in consultation with the proposed coordinator position.

#### 7. Software Acquisition Project

- a) The City should acquire and own modern Para-Transit management software as a means of ensuring that high-quality tools are used to plan, deliver, administer and report on the service, and that operating data is readily available in real time to the City for contract monitoring purposes.

The software would be acquired via an RFP process, which should be undertaken as soon as possible. A consultant should be retained to assist with the process.

#### 8. Accessible Taxi Demonstration Project

The Committee recommends approval of a Taxi Demonstration Project in consultation with the Taxi Industry.

We express our sincere appreciation to the general public whose feedback significantly informed the [attached draft document](#). For further information please contact us via the contact information below.

- [kchafe@stjohns.ca](mailto:kchafe@stjohns.ca)
- Fax: (709) 576-8474
- Phone: (709) 576-8619
- Mailing Address:
  - P.O. Box 908 (Attention: Karen Chafe)
  - St. John's, NL A1C 5M2

We encourage and look forward to your continued input.

Attachments:

[Para-Transit Review Study Draft.pdf](#)