

Appendix A

CM-21-20

Service Re-design Interim Program Changes and Modifications

Transit Operations – Transit Service
Transit Bus Terminal – Transit Service

Transit Operations

Transit Services

Executive Summary

This plan will highlight the key initiatives that have taken place (Phase 1) and review short term initiatives and requirements. The plan will also consider long term goals to ensure safety among staff and customer, while ensuring transit remains a viable option for residents who require mobility and transportation within the City of Burlington.

Stage 1: Transit has been operating as an essential service since the onset of the emergency declaration. In March 2020 at the start of the emergency declaration, Burlington Transit responded rapidly to changing conditions in order to ensure the safety of the transit operators. This included rear door boarding, discontinuation of fare collection, and roping off the seats behind the driver. These measures were introduced to minimize interaction between the passengers and drivers, and to ensure physical distancing. In addition, in response to decreased ridership, Burlington Transit introduced a modified service that decreased the frequency and number of buses required. Burlington Transit continued to redeploy spare operators to extensive bus cleaning which involved a thorough clean and disinfecting of high traffic areas, vacuuming and scrubbing all areas of the bus

Stage 2:

Burlington Transit continues to monitor the direction provided from the province, as well as evaluating what peers are doing in other communities. Opportunities for information sharing exist at the provincial (Ontario Public Transit Association) and national (Canadian Urban Transit Association) level.

Although the economic plans encourage people to return to work, Burlington Transit is assuming that over the next 2 months (July and August); ridership levels will stay consistent with late May/June levels. We anticipate that a 40-50% return of riders will take place. The assumptions are based on the following:

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- Many Burlington residents will continue to work from home in July/August, this impacts many of the GO Transit riders who would use Burlington Transit to get to the GO Station
- Transit usage typically declines in July/August due to vacations and fewer students using the bus
- A general fear of using transit during the pandemic still exists (Burlington Transit has issued a survey to understand the impact of COVID-19 and Transit)

Stage 3:

Resumption of fare collection on September 1, 2020 will be accompanied by the launch of a revised bus schedule. Fare collection resumption is dependent on the installation of driver shields to protect drivers during front door boardings. The revised bus schedule will increase frequency on some of the busier routes (to and from Hamilton); focus on travel within the City of Burlington; focus on corridors with historically high levels of riders; and improve travel options in the industrial areas.

It is anticipated that GO Transit will continue to have significantly decreased ridership in September, as office buildings in downtown Toronto, will limit the number of people commuting. Therefore, the goals of this service change will be to add passenger capacity on buses that are on busier routes; and rebuild ridership.

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Stage 1: On March 18, 2020 Burlington Transit closed the John Street Terminal as was directed by the City's Emergency. The terminal remains closed until fare payment commences. During the emergency closure, planned renovations occurred as there would be no impact to the customers. Renovations included the repair of the foundation and entrance door, and the repair of the exterior downspout. Other renovations are occurring over the summer months including the repair of the air conditioning unit, roof repairs and interior painting. To accommodate physical distancing for staff in, cubicle configurations will be updated at the end of July.

Stage 2: Based on Burlington Transit fare collection resuming on September 1, the terminal would need to be ready to receive customers in mid-August to support customers who will need to load PRESTO cards and obtain SPLIT passes. Access to the Terminal will be restricted to Customer Service staff and two customers at any time and be managed by signage and staff monitoring capacity within the building.

Payment for PRESTO services will be by credit or debit however, only when absolutely required, staff will accept cash. Changes to workspaces and customer areas will occur.

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Modifications to existing space include installation of plexiglass dividers between staff, and between staff and customers.

Thorough cleaning of regularly used devices (Moneris pin pads, PRESTO machine, door handles etc.), will also be in practiced.

Prior to the state of emergency, Burlington Transit offered monthly passes and ePurse Loyalty programs. Both programs provided customers with the same maximum fare costs per month. The Loyalty program allows a customer to pay less than a monthly pass if they use less and pay only the monthly pass cost if they use transit more. **The Loyalty program is the better program and the monthly pass program will be discontinued.** This is to mitigate the potential of offering refunds to monthly pass holders in the event there is another shut down due to a second wave.