

Supplementary Budget – Briefing Note

2021 Budget

Service Reduction – Seasonal Bus

Dept	Division	Business Unit	Item	Base Supp	Amount	FTE Impact
IES	Traffic/Eng	Transit	Service Reduction – Seasonal Bus	B	(\$45,586)	
IES	Traffic/Eng	Transit	Service Reduction – Seasonal Bus Fare Revenue	B	\$4,000	
				Total	(\$41,586)	

Background:

- The Seasonal Bus, or “Beach Bus”, operates 16 weeks per year beginning the Victoria Day weekend primarily to connect residents with the recreational destinations of Mitchell’s Bay and Erieau. Other communities served include Grande Pointe, Pain Court, Chatham, and Blenheim;
- This service operates Friday-Monday, with four rounds trips each day;
- Ridership in 2019 and 2018 was 1,036 and 1,110 respectively, with the vast majority of riders departing Chatham in the morning trips and Erieau in the afternoon trips;
- The service did not operate in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Comment:

- Based on an extensive public consultation process, the approved transit master plan – Driving Forward – recommended a tiered service level structure to ensure limited transit resources are sustainably allocated in a manner that satisfied the highest priorities of residents needs first. This was cited as access to employment, education, and critical needs such as medical appointments and grocery shopping;
- The Seasonal Bus, based on service design and actual usage, falls into the lowest tier of the service structure reflecting the least of residents priorities;
- This route is the second most unproductive route per service hour on the CKTransit network, requiring a greater share of tax subsidy due to the low fare recovery (9.6%);
- Driving Forward recommended a combined fare recovery target of 25% across services. Administration recommends that less productive routes inhibiting this target be reserved for services meeting higher resident priorities (ie. Inter-Urban, Specialized Service, Rural transit expansion to address critical needs);
- The service was suspended in 2020 as public health rules restricted access to municipal beaches. Administration did not receive any concerns from the public indicating they had relied on continuation of this service for other, more critical, uses.

