

Executive Summary

During the February 19, 2019 Finance and Administration Committee meeting, Council approved a new Transit Fare Policy along with a corresponding fee structure to be implemented as of July 1, 2019. This report provides an overview of the new fare structure which addresses some of Council's stated objectives in making the transit fare structure simpler and more affordable. For Council consideration, it offers a recommendation for an added User Fee for a re-designed Route Guide and pocket map to support improvements to customer information.

Fare Policy

The Transit Fare Policy is based on the following guiding principles:

- Reward frequent transit customers;
- Equitable in its offering of discounts;
- Encourage ridership growth; and
- Easy to implement, comprehend and operate.

Further to the above guiding principles, the Transit Fare Policy goals are to:

- Support a mission of providing high-quality and accessible public transportation services for the benefit of the individuals and the community that it serves.
- Apply to the family of services provided by Greater Sudbury Transit, which includes Conventional, Specialized and On-Demand services.
- Contribute to and support ridership growth strategies that result in net new ridership and revenue, and provides a social good.
- Provide discounts through concession fares, while recognizing the need to meet business objectives and affordable access to transit service.

Fare Structure

Building from this framework, the table below provides the new fare structure which was approved by Council on February 19, 2019. This new fare structure will come into effect on July 1, 2019.

Category	Fee	Fare Details
Base Cash Fare	\$ 3.50	Includes 90 minute transfer
Day Pass	\$ 10.00	1 Adult + 4 Youths Ride all day
Ticket Unit Price	\$ 2.90	Get 6 rides for the price of 5
Ticket Unit Price - Concession	\$ 2.50	Get 6 rides for the price of 5, less 15%
31 Day Monthly Pass	\$ 88.00	Pay for 25 Rides
31 Day Monthly Pass - Students	\$ 75.00	Pay for 25 Rides, less 15%
31 Day Monthly Pass - Concession	\$ 56.00	Pay for 16 Rides
Upass	\$ 200.00	8 Month Pass

Under the Miscellaneous User Fee By-Law, the following definitions are outlined:

- "Adult" means a person 18 years of age or older other than a Student or a Disability Pensioner;
- "Concession" means a reduced fare. Proper proof of eligibility must be presented;
- "Youth" means a person who is 5 to 12 years of age;
- "Student" means a person who presents a current and valid student identification card from a high school or post-secondary educational institution;
- "Senior" means a person who is 65 years of age or older;
- "Disability Pensioner" means a person who is a recipient of the Ontario Disability Support Program (O.D.S.P), Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities (A.C.S.D), Canada Pension Plan Disability (C.P.P.D), Veteran's Disability Pension or Canadian Institute for the Blind (C.N.I.B).

The Base Cash Fare applies to all those accessing Transit Services.

31 Day Monthly passes are valid for 31 days from date of activation. The Adult and Student 31 Day Monthly passes have been reduced by five (5) and nine (9) dollars respectively, while the Concession 31 Day Monthly pass is maintained at a substantially discounted price.

In addition to the above mentioned fares, transfer times will be extended to 90 minutes and offer the passenger the ability to travel in any direction.

This Fare Structure seeks to reward frequent transit customers, offer equitable discounts, encourage ridership and is easy to implement, comprehend and operate.

Supporting Programs

Supplementing the fare structure, the following programs are available:

- A Support Person Assistance Card is available to persons who require assistance while travelling on Conventional Services through an application process. The Card belongs to the cardholder and permits one support person to travel with them free of charge.
- An Employer Pass program offers an Employer the ability to purchase 100 or more Adult passes at a 10% discount, if they agree to provide an additional 10% discount to the employee. This would mean that an employee could receive an additional 20% discount and could obtain these passes through a payroll deduction through the Employer.
- Two affordable pass programs have been approved by Council on a pilot basis for an 18-month period:

- Family Travel Program enables any adult or senior travelling with a Monthly Pass to bring up to four youths age 12 and under to ride for free.
- Transferrable Adult Monthly Pass Program provides an incentive to families by issuing a photo-free adult monthly pass that allows family members to share the pass when not travelling together.

Customer Information Improvements

Throughout the public engagement phase of the Transit Action Plan, as approved by Council on February 12, 2019, feedback within online surveys and open houses, identified a desire to increase wayfinding and transit information tools in order to make it easier for new users to take transit and for all passengers to access the service. Further, within all survey responses there were common themes identified; one of which was a request for customer information improvements.

Residents consistently voiced their desire for a printed route book that lists all routes; using standard a.m./p.m. format rather than 24hr time. Many residents expressed that they would be willing to pay a nominal fee for this tool.

With an opportunity identified to refresh all customer information and consistency, to replace current individual (photocopied) pamphlets Staff will be developing a re-designed route book with maps, route times and Transit Service information as part of the transit route restructure, effective August 26, 2019. To further improve customer information, "zcard" fold-up style maps showing all routes will also be printed. This will be the first update to a printed ride guide since 2012.

To offset costs associated with production of these customer information tools, staff recommend the implementation of a \$2.00 user fee. Upon paying the fee, riders will be provided with a route guide (estimated 80+ page book) and "zcard" fold-up style map. The implementation of this nominal fee aligns with feedback received during engagement, offsets overhead costs for production and supports the guides as commodities that will be retained by users instead of being wastefully discarded. A scan of other municipal services has shown Mississauga Transit Services (Miway) charges \$2.00 for their printed route maps. Upon the approval of Council, this fee will be added to the Miscellaneous User fee By-Law.

Next Steps

Staff will prepare and distribute communication materials prior to July 1st, 2019 to ensure that both current and future passengers are informed of the incentives and new fee structure.

With Council approval, amendments will be made to the Miscellaneous User Fee Bylaw to include the \$2.00 fee for Route Book and fold up pocket map.