



To: Mayor Guthrie, City Council and City of Guelph,

Re: 2021 City of Guelph Budget – Guelph Transit

Please find below a letter from the Transit Action Alliance of Guelph regarding the 2021 City of Guelph Budget and the impacts on Transit Services.

The traditional 5 minutes of delegation cannot sufficiently allow us to cover the Capital and Operating Budgets. We encourage Council to look at ways to allow for delegations to have additional time to speak on these important matters.

Over the last 9 months, Guelph Transit and City Hall has had to reinvent everything they do. They have had to learn quickly, make rapid decisions, keep up with the fast-changing medical advice, and engineer a substantial shift in expectations. And they are accomplishing it all while falling off a cliff. While these days are dark, we must remember that dark times always contain opportunities! We can emerge from this crisis into a better and healthier world.

It appears everyone has been asked for predictions about the recovery. From transit experts and planners, transit agencies and elected officials. And like everyone who follows the issues closely, we all have no idea or clue. We are in a “Black Swan” event- This sudden and once in a lifetime swerve in the flow of history has been challenging to say the least. There have been no recent events that can give us a guide to what is on the other side of this pandemic. Predicting, with any degree of confidence, is futile.

Yet so much of what we do, what the city does, is justified by predictions. Currently Guelph Transit is trying to conduct some Route Reviews and it is expected to predict the resulting ridership. More ominously, many projects, especially roads and highways, are built on estimates of future peak travel

demand. If large numbers of people never return to the office, will all these projects still make sense? Many certainties aren't certain anymore.

So, while we don't know the future, we do have something even better: We have goals, and we have values to go along with them. These things come from the community and are expressed through you, our elected leaders and through transit planners' convictions. In the old world of 2019 and before, predictions were sometimes used to bypass a conversation about values. Perhaps you've heard the old saying "traffic projections indicate that we have to widen the highway." That kind of statement skips a crucial step: What are we trying to achieve for our community, and what important goals might this project undermine?

For us to start telling the transit narrative in this "new world" we really need to think about the goals more clearly than ever before and discuss them more openly in our city and with other levels of government.

Clearly right now, ridership is no longer the main measure of transit success. Too often this city, like some others, asks about ridership trends as though they measure "how transit is doing." But a 60% fall in ridership this year doesn't mean we are suddenly 60% less competent or successful. Ridership has always gone up and down for many reasons, and our communities have other goals that ridership does not quite measure.

Yes, it will be mathematically impossible to return to pre-crisis ridership until we no longer need physical distancing, masks and have a vaccine. Nobody knows how long that will be. Guelph Transit projects up to 4 years before ridership returns to "normal levels" but even then, that could be way off. This has also caused some cities to invest dramatically in walking and cycling infrastructure, to make sure there are still good alternatives to the car.

Now let us speculate for a moment. If more people start to work at home permanently and/or more students' study via online methods, and needed fewer trips to work or school, Transit ridership might go down, but its efficiency might go up. Transit might be able to offer a better all-day, all-week, or even all-night service that's critical for diverse trips, and especially for lower-income people. Of course, all of that is speculation, but we do know one thing: ridership alone doesn't measure all of these possibilities

What this crisis has revealed is that there is a strong new argument for transit, one that transit should deploy at anyone who wants to judge it on

ridership alone. Transit has kept running through the crisis as an essential service, supporting people who work in hospitals, grocery stores, utilities etc. These mostly low-income people would typically have been called “transit dependent.” But it is they who are right now holding civilization together, so we are all “transit dependent” in this sense.

Furthermore, this has constantly been true. Transit riders have always been part of the basic functioning of our city. Measuring that role solely with ridership levels would be like measuring the success of the Guelph Police Department by how many arrests they make. The purpose of the police is to provide a base level of security that people can count on. The purpose of transit is to do the same for urban mobility. Transit means that people can go places, and consequently do things, in a way that is not as harmful or expensive as driving a vehicle.

The future of funding will require new discussions of goals. Ridership matters, and many other things matter too, but let us never lose sight of what this crisis teaches. Without transit, cities do not work for anyone.

Transit Strategy and the Future

The world is changing and so is transit. That is why many Organizations and Groups like CUTA, transit experts and planners are telling cities that now is the time to set clear goals and visions for their transit networks.

The need for safe, cost-effective transport is more essential than ever for our local economy and beyond. The way transit agencies respond today—rethinking networks and fixed routes, keeping riders and drivers safe and exploring new modes of delivery, such as on demand transit—will ensure public transport remains viable for a new generation.

There are three recommendations *the November 10, 2020 Transit Strategy and Operations Campus Workshop*:

- A. *That staff be directed to develop an affordable long-term Transit Strategy of not more than one per cent annual net levy increase inclusive of operating and capital funding and addresses COVID ridership and revenue loss impacts*

B.

That staff be directed to renegotiate the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program c. Transit Stream project priorities with the primary focus of electrification of Transit fleet and related infrastructure.

C.

That staff be directed to develop a comprehensive performance metric framework that considers the varying services and routes within Guelph Transit.

- 1. In regard to Recommendation A and C, minus the one per cent annual net levy,** in many ways Recommendation C would be better as part of an overall Transit Strategy.

The Transit Strategy defines a long-term vision for transit service in Guelph. The elements of this Strategy will provide a framework to guide how transit service is delivered and how we invest in transit over the next decade.

It is imperative that the Transit Strategy be considered within the overall context of our vision for our city. While the foundational strategic plans like the City Strategic Plan, Transportation Master Plan and the Official Plan provide an overall direction, a Transit Strategy, built on the collective vision of the community, can provide the additional definition needed to chart a course for future success.

The Transportation Master Plan states “Transit service will provide travel times and traveler convenience at levels that are competitive with travel by car”.

A good transit strategy is usually built on integrating transit with community planning and design, establish a balanced approach to operating funding and fare policy, develop a market responsive approach to transit network design, improving the customer experience, and develop transit organizational capacity. Some of these actions are already in progress such as the Fare Strategy, a Route Review, proposed new routes, and additional buses for increased frequency in the Capital Budget.

Regular assessment and improvement of the performance of public transit systems are essential for transit service providers given limited funding and growing public needs. Performance evaluation can help transit identify underperforming services, plan for potential investments, justify investments, and communicate accomplishments and challenges. However, the evaluation of transit system performance is complex and challenging due to the diverse and competing goals, such as improving operational efficiency (Ridership), increasing service quality (Frequency), and providing equitable and just transit services (Coverage). To improve operational efficiency, transit agencies usually aim to achieve the highest ridership with the least operational costs; with the service quality goal, they are required to increase frequencies, reduce travel time, and improve reliability; whereas the equity objective mandates them to extend services to isolated neighborhoods with high concentration of minorities and low income residents.

First, operational efficiency, service quality and access equity are all critical to the well-being of a transit system. Second, these three goals are often at odds with each other as underperforming in costs/ridership may happen when transit is improving service quality, or achieving an important social goal of providing mobility to dependent populations, meaning that some intricate trade-off is needed to balance the efficiency of transit operations with service quality and equality. Third, efforts to explore trade-offs require specifically tailored modeling approaches. As a result, there is a need for techniques that can evaluate operational efficiency, service quality and equitable access holistically, providing a comprehensive assessment for transit system performance.

This pandemic has accelerated the need and Guelph to follow a recommendation from the Guelph Business Service Review (Page 21, 22, and 23) to determine where on the Utilization (Ridership) - Coverage spectrum we should be and set a target for the entire network.

As noted in the report, this should have done with the route review, however, based on the objectives of the route review report (Page 3: <https://pub-guelph.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=9236>), and looking at other documents, such as the ICIP Funding application (*“ICIP-GUE-01: Current Route structure, is 40, 30, 20 and 10 min frequency. In order to increase ridership we will be adding frequency in the form of more physical buses on routes. Over the*

course of 8 years, our current network of routes with 20 min or less frequency will increase to 90% from 30%” Source: <https://pub-quelph.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=8627>) it appears that Staff, and not Council and the Community have determined the direction of utilization (Ridership).

While this isn't a terrible thing, Council and the Community have yet to understand the trade-offs and determine where on the Ridership (Utilization)-Coverage spectrum we need to have an accessible, affordable and frequent transit system. Even the Transportation Master Plan cites we want to have a Transit service that will provide travel times and traveler convenience at levels that are competitive with travel by car.

Unfortunately, in many of the reports and documents we have seen, the “goal” has already been determined by others at City Hall – they could be placeholders or actual direction – we just do not know.

Continuing the network with minor changes may or may not necessarily be going to get us an affordable and efficient transit system. Based on direction of the Route Review and other documents like the ICIP Funding report, there is a “goal” but not one determined by Council and the Community as industry standards suggest. Without having a proper understanding of how the entire future network functions, not just individual routes, we are making the system more difficult to use.

Within the Capital Budget we see a number of routes already marked for expansion and new routes proposed. The Transit Strategy will determine future networks, but it again it appears this has been determined already through Capital Budget forecasts and a limited scope Route Review.

A comprehensive route review and ridership demand analysis is required to identify future network structure options, with routes and service frequencies.

There was confusion by some councillors at the recent Transit Workshop. Some members were saying they kept seeing empty buses, and that we should be working on getting more ridership and providing coverage.

TAAG presented this during our Transit Summit last year, **these are competing goals, and (Utilization) – Coverage spectrum and we need to be on the same page as a City and Community in understanding the trade-offs.**

So before continuing engaging on things like a route review or fare strategy, there is a need for everyone to be on the same page in understanding the Ridership (Utilization)-Coverage spectrum. Then Council can at least be able to direct staff to come back with different scenarios on this spectrum for everyone to consider.

As an aside, TAAG will be holding online webinars over the next couple weeks on this exact topic and invite Councillors to join in. Details will be on our website under taaguelph.com/events

We are concerned if this isn't done first, that when it does come time to define what we want our transit system to do, some of the work would have been already done and may not fit the goal. We are worried that there will not be an appetite to do the work again and thus we will be stuck with a goal that isn't entirely doable.

We are also concerned that continuing with these plans while over 50% of the ridership is away from the system, especially students, we will not get the feedback we need. Online is an option, however, not everyone who uses transit has access to digital and this will make the input received incomplete.

When Ridership returns, after changes have been made, some may not like that they were "not consulted" and we will end up right where we were back in 2014 – meddling with the plan and adjusting over and over again.

We do not want history to repeat, however, it is highly likely it will be based on some of the decisions being made or proposed.

What are we trying to achieve for our transit system? We look at the budget, we see that there are millions of dollars committed to transit. This is great, however, with no business plan, and no goal / vision from the Community or Council, it is a lot of moving parts but no central theme to wrap itself around, it

feels like history repeating, millions could be lost, wasted or adjusted over and over. It is time we have new discussions of goals.

Ridership matters, and many other things matter too, but let us never lose sight of what this crisis teaches. Without transit, cities do not work for anyone. At the end of the day, the objective should be to provide a transit system shaped by what Guelphites want, which will encourage more citizens to choose transit.

2. In regard to Recommendation B: *“That staff be directed to renegotiate the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program c. Transit Stream project priorities with the primary focus of electrification of Transit fleet and related infrastructure.”* **and the funding of Recommendation A:** *“That staff be directed to develop an affordable long-term Transit Strategy of not more than one per cent annual net levy increase inclusive of operating and capital funding and addresses COVID ridership and revenue loss impacts*

As we mentioned above, Predicting, with any degree of confidence, is futile. To try to determine future growth and ridership is difficult but must not shut off the pipeline to these projects.

In September, a report commissioned by the American Public Transportation Association concluded that “no direct correlation” had been found between transit use and COVID transmission. Also, “an analysis of public transit ridership in multiple cities shows no correlation with the rise or fall of local COVID-19 cases.”

While the message will gradually get out there, and in places where public transit is fantastically useful and liberating, people will gradually come back because it is the logical thing for them to do, but it could take time. A University of Toronto survey published in May found that one-quarter of local transit riders wouldn't get back on board without a vaccine.

Guelph Transit itself estimates it could take up to 4 years to restore ridership to where we were prior to March 2020.

If overall ridership remains low for the foreseeable future, that could undermine plans for some major transit projects – particularly since it remains unclear whether commuters will ultimately return.

For example Guelph is currently looking at purchasing electric buses and building a new Operations Centre, There needs to be a clear-eyed assessment of the business case for transit growth that is now in the planning stages – but TAAG doesn't believe development should stop.

These are assets that will last for many years. So, we should work hard to avoid a kind of turn-off-the-tap in the entire pipeline of projects. We feel we should slow it down and reflect, take a breath and think about it. We are convinced that people will come back to transit.

One possible effect of the coronavirus pandemic is that fewer people will commute at traditional times – if at all. That's not necessarily a bad thing for transit agencies, which have traditionally spent enormous sums to meet the peak demand of rush hour. Smoothing out those spikes and spreading service throughout the day could make it easier for transit providers to focus on making the system more useful to more citizens.

A number of agencies are already moving in that direction. Paris is building a massive subway expansion ringing the city so residents trying to access an adjacent suburb don't necessarily have to travel into the downtown core to catch an outbound train. And Metrolinx, the Toronto-region transit agency whose trains traditionally served office workers – running into downtown in the mornings and out in the evenings – has been shifting to all-day service in both directions.

There's a good argument to be made to hit pause on capital projects" primarily designed to serve commuters going downtown, according to Jarret Walker, a transit consultant. But he says city-wide transit will still need funding. "You have the everywhere-to-everywhere, all-the-time demand, especially from people who've chosen to live in the city because they don't want to depend on cars," he says. "I feel like a permanent loss of peak-of-peak demand is fantastic news for transit, because it means we have a remaining market that is so much easier to serve in terms of cost benefit."

In the end, simple geometry will help transit continue to make its case. A transit vehicle, even with physically distanced passengers, is a far more efficient use of road space than private vehicles or taxis.

With our region projected to grow to almost 200,000 people by 2031. The area is physically constrained, and we hope there is little political appetite to keep building and expanding roads. Because the laws and dynamics of highway capacity and mobility capacity are not really going to change.

We should not cap this spending, but instead try to design in around our goals and vision of a transit system. A short term delay of 6 to 12 months for some of these recommended projects can be tolerated to address COVID concerns, however, we must keep our eye on the ball to meet our Climate Targets and provide frequent, affordable, and accessible transit for all.

Microtransit

There was some initial concern voiced by members of the public regarding the Microtransit report giving to Council last month.

The report was not laid out in a way to define the differences in Microtransit and how there is a “Public” and “Private” component.

The following reports are from **Pantonium**, one of the competitors to RideCo but similar in many ways:

Microtransit vs Macrotransit

Cars still dominate transportation, especially for travel to employment. In America only 5 percent of work commuters use public transit. This statistic has largely remained unchanged for thirty years. Only in the past few years have policy makers realized that maintaining the status quo approach to transportation has not been sufficient.

Recently a new wave of technologies and commercial products have hit the global market for public transit, causing all sorts of disruption. Services like Uber and Lyft have caused concerns

of competition and declining ridership, ubiquitous smart phones, and cheap communications have contributed to the growth of a new concept called microtransit. It is already a controversial term for some public transit industry members, Jarett Walker, a public transit consultant has made several statements on microtransit including:

“To succeed, microtransit would have to help people get around cities better, not just make them feel good about hailing a ride on a phone.” – Jarret Walker, 2018

Last year, Streetsblog did a take down of microtransit, noting that microtransit consistently ended up performing only as well as paratransit service, which tends to be the most expensive and least efficient service model transit agencies provide. The Streetsblog piece highlighted one of the most spectacular failures attributed to microtransit, the dubious Kansas City pilot operated by Bridj, where the average cost was around \$1000 per trip.

This post also reviews the results seen from different potential solutions that address public transit used for employment travel. Specifically we compare the operational statistics generated by recent microtransit projects to Pantonium’s performance in Belleville, Ontario. Our technology suite can deliver reliable on-demand transportation in a way that is as efficient or even more efficient than fixed route bus services in some urban areas.

We call this macrotransit, the core aspects of this concept that differentiates it from microtransit, or mobility services such as dial-a-bus and ride-hailing are:

- 1. Use of large vehicles (40 foot buses)**
- 2. Use of existing public transit stop infrastructure**
- 3. Continuous global optimization**

This video and this blog post provide a detailed explanation of macrotransit. The application of this concept is simple once it is understood that the principle goal is to maximize vehicle productivity, while maintaining complete flexibility of routes. Everything else, as Mr. Walker put it, is just making people feel good about ordering trips on a smart phone, and does not contribute to improved efficiency for transit agencies. The relative

difference in results of this approach can be seen by comparing several prominent projects and their baseline ridership performance in low density areas.

Comparing Performance in Belleville and Austin to 2015 National Averages

There have been noticeable attempts by municipalities throughout North America to experiment with microtransit. Among those is Belleville, Ontario – powered by Pantonium and **Austin, Texas using Via. This section will review Austin’s performance and Belleville’s performance.**

Service Area:

- Belleville’s service area is 25 square km serving a population of approximately 20,540 riders
- Austin’s is 19.1 square km servicing a population of 24,643 riders

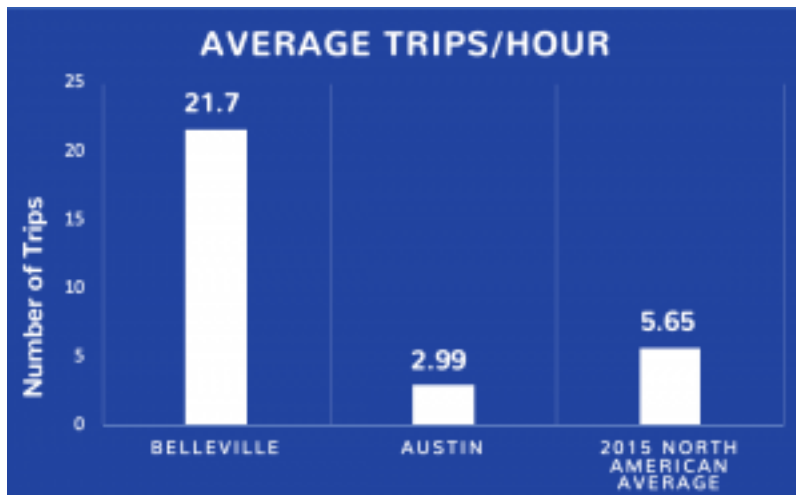
Service Hours:

- Belleville operating for 45.5 hours per week
- **Austin operating for 67 hours per week**

Cost per Trip:

- **\$21 per trip in Austin**
- **\$4.60 per trip in Belleville**
- **Austin: \$5135/week**
- **Belleville: \$3,735/week**
- **Belleville is spending on average \$1400 less per week than Austin while completing nearly three times as many rides per week**

Average Ridership



Belleville is completing an average of 812.6 rides per week compared to Austin’s 244.55

rides per week. On average, Belleville is completing roughly three times the amount of trips/week as Austin despite operating 21.5 fewer hours per week.

- Belleville: 3134.4 trips/month (peak = 4375 Jan 2019)
- Austin: 1850 trips/month (peak = 3209 June 2018) *note this is reported data from 5 operational months in Belleville vs. 11 operational months in Austin

Other Approaches to Microtransit

Results		
	2017 (May 15-Dec)	2018 (Jan-Dec)
Trips	26,688	85,943 ↑
Subsidy	\$150K	\$640K ↑
Riders	3,493	5,749 ↑
Drivers	1,393	2,203 ↑
Match Rate	17%	31% ↑
Wait Time	9:10 mins	6:10 mins ↓

See Innisfil STAFF REPORT NO: DSR-038-19 DATE: March 13, 2019

Presented here is some relevant data from the Innisfil, Ontario pilot partnership with Uber. The data presented by Innisfil and Uber jointly demonstrates what most public transit officials already know: using transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft to deliver public transit is not much different than using a taxi service, since global optimization is not achieved. The most telling statistic here is the “Match Rate” – the actual percentage of trips that were shared between two separate riders. Despite using UberPool’s algorithm, only 31 percent of trips were shared. Ironically, this outcome of 69 percent of riders taking solo trips is very similar to the overall percentage of people who drive alone during their commute in North America, which hovers around 70 percent. Essentially, Innisfil is paying Uber to maintain the status quo. Unfortunately we cannot find information on the actual hours of driver time, which would show Uber’s true productivity as they attempt to provide public transit in Innisfil. The fact that driver hours is not made publicly available suggests that Uber simply does not care about how long drivers work for, as neither Uber nor Innisfil pay for driver time (their shareholders bare this burden). What we do know is the per trip cost in Innisfil is still higher than Pantonium’s

macrotransit service in Belleville, which should be considered by any other city considering a taxi model for public transit.

The key takeaway here is that transit planners have been correct in their skepticism of a technological panacea based on the results of the four years of microtransit projects throughout North America. We have not found evidence of any project performing better than average paratransit services – except our project in Belleville. We believe that Pantonium has developed and deployed the world’s most productive and cost effective on-demand transit service. If any public or private transit operation is currently using fixed routes or microtransit services that fall below 18-30 riders per hour contact us at info@pantonium.com to find out about macrotransit.

Sources:

<https://www.apta.com/resources/statistics/Documents/FactBook/2017-APTA-Fact-Book.pdf> (1)

<https://www.surtc.org/transitfactbook/downloads/2017-rural-transit-fact-book.pdf> (2)

Austin RFP Attachments (3)

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/ntd/66011/2016-ntst.pdf> (4)

Microtransit Won’t Deliver Efficiency to Ontario Cities

Transit agencies across Ontario, still reeling from ridership that hasn’t bounced back even as cities have reopened, recently got hit with stiff news from the provincial government.

While the federal and provincial governments have earmarked some \$2 billion in funding for transit agencies to help fill their budget shortfalls, the second phase of funding due in 2021 will come with conditions.

In a letter dated August 12, Ontario Transportation Minister Caroline Mulroney has suggested that cities will have to evaluate low-performing bus routes and think about replacing them with microtransit services.

Microtransit generally refers to transportation delivered by vans or minibuses that riders book trips on via mobile apps. Operating similar to UberPool or a taxi service, but riders are sometimes matched onto the same shared vehicle to complete their respective trips.

Why is the Government Suggesting Microtransit?

The provincial government says it is imposing these conditions to ensure the sustainability of public transit beyond the current term for emergency funding, due to expire March 31, 2021. Christina Salituro, spokesperson for the Ministry of Transportation, told Daily Hive that “Microtransit, or providing right-sized transit, could be a more sustainable way to provide transit service to unserved and underserved areas across the province, hence its being a key provincial interest.”

The province seems to believe that by shifting transit riders onto smaller vehicles running on-demand, transit agencies will be able to provide adequate service while reducing operating costs. Trying to achieve those outcomes with microtransit, which some tout to provide service more cost-effectively than fixed routes, may be a fool’s errand.

Microtransit Often Has Key Shortcomings

While the province hopes transit service can be delivered more efficiently and cost-effectively through microtransit, projects operating in other cities point to those goals being met in very specific applications.

In North America, the least productive fixed route buses achieve about 10-15 rides per service hour. In comparison, a microtransit pilot launched in Calgary, AB last year, which claimed to achieve “industry best vehicle productivity”, reported 6 rides per service hour.

This service covered a neighbourhood that had no existing public transit and dropped riders to only two transit hubs in an adjoining area, which connected riders with the wider transit system. It operates as a first-mile/last-mile service for a small rider base and covers a limited geographic area. Microtransit works in specific situations like this, but struggles to find more broad application and provide long term usefulness.

As ridership rises, microtransit would require more and more vehicles to service demand and thereby erode any previous efficiencies. If ridership recovers to sufficient levels, fixed route buses will deliver better productivity and municipalities will wisely switch back. Of all the levels of ridership that a fixed route doesn't service efficiently, microtransit is only productive on the lower end.

Looking at other microtransit services pre-COVID19, one launched in Sacramento, CA which was deemed a "success", was generating only 3.24 rides per service hour in May and June of 2018. Newark, CA which switched their fixed-route service in favour of microtransit in 2017, saw overall ridership decrease by 20%.

Whether handling ridership at current pandemic levels or ordinary volumes, when fixed routes aren't productive, there is an alternative on-demand service that delivers better productivity broadly across different ridership levels. It's called Macrotransit.

Taking up Macrotransit Brings Better Results

Macrotransit is also an on-demand service, but crucial differences from microtransit allow it to deliver better productivity and performance in a larger number of circumstances.

The essential distinction of Macrotransit is its self-adjusting system that dynamically routes buses in real-time based on rider demand. Because the entire fleet's routing is continuously being optimized for efficiency, it results in productivity levels far higher than microtransit.

Macrotransit service deployed by Pantonium in Belleville, ON achieved 30 riders per service hour, an increase in ridership of 300%, and service area expansion by 70%.

While microtransit usually requires transit agencies to use small vans or shuttles, Macrotransit delivers on-demand service using the transit agency's current bus fleet. By using full sized vehicles, Macrotransit can match fleet capacity to fluctuating ridership, and still drive efficiency across a broader spectrum of ridership.

Pre-COVID19, Belleville produced positive operational and social results (a survey indicated increased social inclusion), but when the pandemic hit, Macrotransit delivered

remarkable utility. Belleville lost most of its ridership, but, unlike other cities, it had the tools to swiftly adapt its entire transit system to go on-demand. They continued to provide ample service for essential travel, yet did so cost-effectively.

SERVICE	CITY / TOWN	RIDES / HOUR	COST PER RIDE
Pantonium	Belleville, ON	30	\$4.25 CAD
Competing Microtransit	Arlington, TX	5	\$21
Competing Microtransit	Cochrane, AB	6-7	\$13 CAD
Fixed Route Service	New York City MTA	33	\$3.60

Put plainly, Macrotransit delivers to cities performance that optimally uses their transit resources while equipping them with the versatility to provide great service in a whole array of circumstances.

The province wanting cities to pursue more sustainable methods of delivering public transit is understandable, especially in light of ongoing economic and social uncertainty. However, it is vital that civic leaders pursue solutions that allow them to do more with less. Now more than ever, cities must build transit systems that are productive, adaptable, and resilient.

TAAG Recommendation

TAAG recommends utilizing the “On Demand Bus” option using existing infrastructure and potentially purchasing half size buses. If we do need to use the “One Demand App” services or Taxis, we would recommend that Transit and

Council have an exit plan to allow for a orderly transition from this model to a Public Transit “On Demand Bus” model.

In Conclusion

There is no hard, fast and singular solution to recovery. But solutions across industries and across the country will get us where we need to be — and public transportation has a critical role to play. To emerge from the economic crisis facing our nation during this pandemic, we must focus on restoring and expanding the bus and rail networks that supports and connect us and provide access to opportunities for all. Until then, our public transportation systems are continuously readying themselves to be the better, safer and greener transportation provider of the future.

Thank you for reading our submission. Please feel free to contact us if you have any additional questions at taaguelph@gmail.com or at taaguelph.com

Regards,

Steven Petric
Chair
Transit Action Alliance of Guelph
www.taaguelph.com

