

CITY OF WHITEHORSE
SPECIAL Council Meeting #2020-06
PIONEER HERITAGE ROOM at City Hall

DATE: March 21, 2020
TIME: 10:00 a.m.

Mayor Dan Curtis
Deputy Mayor Dan Boyd
Reserve Deputy Mayor Laura Cabott

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER 10:00 a.m.

AGENDA Adoption

NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Temporarily Waive Transit Fares
2. Temporarily Suspend Parking Meter Enforcement

ADJOURNMENT

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Administration
DATE: March 21, 2020
RE: Waive Transit Fares

ISSUE

Waiving transit cash fare, monthly pass and ticket strip fees.

REFERENCE

Bylaw 2014-36 Fees and Charges Appendix A – Schedule 11

HISTORY

In an effort to help mitigate the potential spread of COVID-19, Transit Services implemented several “social distancing” measures on conventional buses.

Passengers are now boarding buses through the rear door, with the front door only being used by drivers and for accessible boarding.

Additionally, “side-by-side seating” has been eliminated by “reserving” alternating seats with signage stating “Reserved for Social Distancing – Thank you for Respecting Each Other’s Space.” This measure serves to remind passengers to use extra caution when boarding and to find an open space.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Temporarily suspend cash fare, monthly pass and ticket strip fees set out in the Fees and Charges Bylaw and authorize a grant to the public of the lost revenues be included in the 2020 Umbrella Grants Bylaw.
2. Status quo – Collect all transit fares as usual. Bus drivers would try their best to confirm payment by observing the passengers entering from the rear doors.

ANALYSIS

Waiving the requirement for transit riders to pay for the service by temporarily suspending cash fare, monthly pass and ticket strip fees would serve a number of purposes:

- It would eliminate the requirement for passengers entering a bus through the rear door to then walk up the aisle of the bus to deposit a cash fare, thereby better enabling social distancing on buses.
- It would eliminate the potential requirement to fully or partially refund any new advance sales of passes or strips should transit service levels need to be adjusted; and
- It would support individuals whose incomes are at risk as a consequence of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

April 2020 transit passes and ticket strips that have already been sold would be honored once the City resumes collecting fares.

Ridership is down to approximately 30% of normal rates. Based on that, an estimate of the lost revenues that would result from waiving fares is \$17,000.

There are other municipalities that have waived fare collection: Saint John, Victoria, Nanaimo and Ottawa have waived transit fares, and Montreal has adopted an honour system.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Administration be authorized to temporarily suspend the collection of fees for Bus Fares pursuant to Schedule 11 of Bylaw 2014-36 until April 13th, 2020; and

THAT a grant to the public of the lost revenues for this initiative be authorized for inclusion in the 2020 Umbrella Grants Bylaw.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Administration
DATE: March 21, 2020
RE: Temporarily Suspend Parking Meter Enforcement

ISSUE

Temporarily suspending parking meter enforcement.

REFERENCE

Traffic Bylaw 2013-34 (as amended)

HISTORY

The week of March 16th has seen a drastic reduction in downtown parking as citizens and businesses have adapted their normal routines in response to the COVID-19 situation. As of Friday March 20th, many metered parking stalls in the downtown core are going unoccupied. Reduced parking pressure in the downtown core has coincided with some citizens inquiring whether, and suggesting that, the City suspend parking meter enforcement given the circumstances.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Suspend parking enforcement at metered stalls until April 13th and authorize a grant of the lost revenues to the public to be included in the 2020 Umbrella Grants Bylaw.
2. Continue with enforcement.

ANALYSIS

Although social distancing practices can be respected as Bylaw Services staff enforce parking meters, there is some concern with the contact of surfaces that occurs when coins are placed into meters. While citizens are able to pay parking fines online, those who elect to pay their parking tickets in person at City Hall create another point of person-to-person contact.

Under normal circumstances parking meter revenue and the collection of fines over a three-week period would generate revenue of \$37,362 (based on actual revenues received in 2017). However, lost revenue attributable to temporarily suspending parking meter enforcement given current downtown parking demands would be significantly less.

Temporarily suspending enforcement of metered parking stalls would not impact the enforcement of Traffic Bylaw parking provisions set out for other non-metered parking stalls in the community (accessible stalls, commercial delivery stalls, etc.) or the enforcement of illegal parking in front of a yellow curb.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Administration be authorized to suspend the enforcement of metered parking stalls until April 13th, 2020; and

THAT a grant to the public of the lost revenues for this initiative be authorized for inclusion in the 2020 Umbrella Grants Bylaw.