

Staff Report 2019-84

Meeting Date: Tuesday, June 18, 2019

Subject: Metrolinx Discontinuance of Bolton GO Bus routes

Submitted By: Eric Chan, Manager, Transportation Services, Finance & Infrastructure Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayor send correspondence to the Minister of Transportation requesting that the cancellation of Bolton GO Bus services be delayed and re-examined; and

That staff be directed to work with Ministry of Transportation and Metrolinx to assist in the re-examination.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- On June 4, 2019, Metrolinx informed the Town that the GO Bus Routes 38 and 38A in Bolton would discontinued effective June 29, 2019.
- This transit service cancellation will significantly impact the residents of Bolton/Caledon.
- This transit service cancellation is contrary to the provincial, regional and Town's plans.
- It is requested that the service cancellation be delayed and re-examined.

DISCUSSION

On June 4, 2019, the Town of Caledon received a notice from Metrolinx announcing the discontinuance of the following Bolton GO Bus Routes effective June 29, 2019:

- 38 (Bolton→Malton); and
- 38A (Bolton→Nobleton→Woodbridge→North York)

In the announcement, it was stated that the reason for the discontinuance was “due to low demand”. Furthermore, alternative options were provided for commuters from Nobleton and from Woodbridge/Kleinburg using York Region Transit, GO Train, and Toronto Transit Commission services.

On June 5, 2019, the Town of Caledon's Chief Administrative Officer sent a letter to the Metrolinx President and Chief Executive Officer, expressing the Town's concerns and requesting a meeting with Town and Metrolinx staff to develop a solution for residents in need of transit and that the bus service cancellation be delayed until after this meeting. A copy of the June 5th letter is attached as **Schedule A** to this report.

The discontinuance announcement brings many challenges and significant impacts for the Town of Caledon residents, including:

- Both the GO Bus Routes 38 and 38A are essential to the commuters in Bolton/Caledon
- The announcement came at less than a month of advance notification
- The announcement did not provide alternative options for commuters from Bolton/Caledon

The Town of Caledon's recent Transit Feasibility Study identified that the GO Bus Routes 38 and 38A serve 45,000 riders per year (with 15,000 per year from Bolton). To encourage more transit usage, the Transit Feasibility Study recommends new transit services in Caledon, including Bolton, that would complement the existing GO Bus services. As outlined in the Town's recent Transit Feasibility Report, a request for proposal to procure a transit provider in Bolton to complement the existing Bolton GO Bus services will be released shortly. The goal is to have the local Bolton transit service operational in 2019. These new transit options should promote a transit culture in the Town. Combined with the projected population growth in Caledon, GO Transit usage in Caledon is expected to increase.

Furthermore, the proposed cancellation of these GO Bus services in Bolton is contrary to the common visions of the:

- Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (2018),
- Growth Plan (2017),
- Region of Peel's Long-Range Transportation Plan (2012),
- Caledon Transportation Master Plan (2017),
- Bolton Transportation Master Plan (2015), and the
- Caledon Transit Feasibility Study (2019).

Transit provision aligns with the healthy community objectives and well-being of residents, visitors and businesses.

The less-than-a-month notice and no alternate transit options for Bolton/Caledon residents will leave many GO Bus transit riders scrambling to find other modes of transportation to go to work, school, and appointments.

As of the writing of this report (June 10, 2019), there has been no formal response yet from Metrolinx related to the Town of Caledon's CAO letter. Staff recommend that the Mayor communicate the Town's concerns, in writing, to the Minister of Transportation and request the Minister's assistance to delay and re-examine the cancellation of the much-needed Bolton GO bus services. Town staff are ready to work with the Ministry of

Staff Report 2019-84

Transportation and/or Metrolinx and other agencies to develop a collaborative solution for the residents in need of transit.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications associated with this staff report.

COUNCIL WORK PLAN

Retaining transit services aligns with the Council Work Plan 2018-2022 under the pillars of Sustainable Growth and Connected Community.

ATTACHMENTS

Schedule A – Letter from Town of Caledon Chief Administrative Officer to Metrolinx Chief Executive Officer regarding the discontinuance of GO Bus Routes 38 and 38A.