

MINUTES

TRANSIT SERVICES COMMITTEE

OTTAWA-CARLETON REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

WEDNESDAY, 24 MARCH 1999

8:45 A.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Loney

Members: M. Bellemare, W. Byrne, C. Doucet, L. Davis, H. Kreling, J. Legendre

Regrets: D. Holmes

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Transit Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the meeting of 3 February 1999, and 17 February 1999.

CARRIED

REGULAR ITEMS

1. ANNUAL REPORT - ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- General Manager's report dated 8 Mar 99

The Committee heard from Mr. Jeffrey Alguire, Chair, Accessible Transit Advisory Committee, who presented ATAC's sixth Annual Report for the period November 1997 to October 1998. Mr. Alguire began by saying that, on the whole, ATAC's involvement with the KPMG/IBI Group's Comprehensive Review had been positive, except for a comment which appeared in a draft of the report about the refusal rate for Para Transpo being acceptable.

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- Notes:
1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by Committee.
 2. Reports requiring consideration will be forwarded to the Commission at its meeting of 28 April 1999 in Transit Services Report No. 99-12.

Mr. Alguire stated that the refusal rate was not acceptable to Para Transpo customers in general. He stressed the importance of accessibility issues remaining in the forefront during the light rail pilot project, adding that ATAC was available for consultation in this regard. He noted that a fair bit of work still needs to be done with on the matter of eligibility and on the cancellation of Para Transpo trips.

Commissioner W. Byrne thanked Mr. Alguire for all the work done by ATAC, noting there has been impressive progress to date. The General Manager, M. Sheflin, commented on ATAC's positive approach. He commended Mr. Pat Larkin, Manager, Para Transpo, for his work during the recent labour relations negotiations with the service provider, Laidlaw.

Commission Chair A. Loney informed the Committee that Laidlaw had considered approaching the labour relations tribunal with a request to classify Para Transpo as an essential service, however this was averted because a settlement was reached. Chair Loney posited the Commission may have to look at this issue, in fairness to all of Para Transpo's clients. Mr. Alguire spoke about the importance of Para Transpo clients not finding themselves in the same situation again, as there are few other alternatives available to them. He indicated this matter would be the focus of discussion at an upcoming ATAC meeting, and he offered to be of assistance to the Commission in this regard.

That the Transit Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

2. POLICY ON ANIMALS ON BUSES
- General Manager's report dated 22 Feb 99

Commissioner M. Bellemare posited that the basic objection to allowing animals on buses stems from the fear of lawsuits from allergy and asthma sufferers. Directing his questions to the Medical Officer of Health, Commissioner Bellemare asked whether Dr. Cushman could confirm that, no matter how strictly hygiene is observed, citizens are regularly bombarded, on a molecular level, with allergens from dogs, cats, rodents, and other biological matter. Dr. Cushman confirmed there are currently more allergies and asthma sufferers in the community, noting this is partly because of better documentation. The main issue is the dander that many animals leave behind for as long as a month after they leave the premises. A number of people with allergies would be adversely affected by the dander: approximately 50% of them are asthmatics, and a small sub-set could, and would, end up in emergency rooms because of exposure.

Commissioner Bellemare asked whether the Health Department has consulted with those transit properties that allow animals on buses (the STO, the TTC, Hamilton, Montreal, Calgary, and Winnipeg) to alert them about potential health problems. Dr. Cushman replied this would be the responsibility of the medical community. Speaking in reference to those transit authorities that allow animals on buses, Dr. Cushman pointed out that many others do not, and approval is subject to change and in response to situations arising. He added that, based on consultation with local experts from the Children's Hospital, chest physicians, immunologists and others, the Health Department believes this could create public health problems and could be life-threatening for certain individuals.

Commissioner J. Legendre pointed out that the Commission is not imposing a total ban, as seeing eye/hearing ear dogs will still be allowed on buses. He posited they will continue to pose the same hazard as animals brought on board in cages. Dr. Cushman agreed that many seeing eye dogs are long-haired breeds, and continue to pose a problem with dander, however he opined that, in this instance, it is a matter of assessing the benefits against the risks and the number of times passengers are exposed to assistance animals on buses.

Commissioner Legendre asked about liability, noting the Legal Department indicates no instances have been found in Canada or the United States. Mr. Paul Hughes, Manager, Civil Litigation, confirmed this was the case and the one instance identified in Australia had to do with smoking during airline flights. Mr. Hughes noted there are reported cases arising from being startled by an animal (a dog) and falling off the steps thereby sustaining injury.

Commissioner Legendre asked whether OC Transpo staff could elaborate on their concerns, since these are not identified in the report. The General Manager, M. Sheflin, responded by saying concerns focus principally on matters of convenience and inconvenience and on whether or not changing the existing policy would be a positive move. Dr. Cushman posited the Committee, in trying to provide access for pet owners, may be discouraging access for people who suffer from allergies and/or asthma. He added that, while a review of the literature may not have revealed any cases, it was his "gut feeling" affected persons may be avoiding buses and the Committee may be pushing the gradient further in the wrong direction.

Commissioner Legendre pointed out only a very small, sub-group of individuals will react to animals, and this is illustrated by the fact there have been no liability cases in North America. Dr. Cushman indicated that, even at 5% of the population, 1 in 20 persons have problems with animal dander. They may be discouraged from using public transit if they are going to be affected.

He spoke about some asthmatics who end up in emergency rooms within one-half hour of coming into contact with a cat, in a house. Dr. Cushman said he was only trying to clarify the risks without going into the legal domain.

Commissioner Legendre said he found the tone of the report very heavy, citing as example the comment about children having to be prevented from placing their fingers inside or near a carrier. Paul Hugues indicated the basis for this comment was that a child on a bus may be attracted by seeing a pet in a cage, and be injured trying to touch the caged animal.

Commissioner W. Byrne asked about allowing guide dogs and whether this would include all service dogs, specifically animals that were trained to assist people in wheelchairs. Dr. Gault indicated that all service dogs would be allowed on buses. Commissioner Byrne wanted to know whether asthma can be caused by irritants other than dander. Dr. Cushman indicated that smoke, and also perfumes and scents, can be triggers. As to whether asthma can be life-threatening, Dr. Cushman replied in the affirmative, reiterating that asthmatics can end up in emergency situations from exposure to irritants. He added that, for many people, the effect could be more of an inconvenience, such as runny noses, watery eyes and coughing. Commissioner Byrne inquired whether there have been deaths from asthma. Dr. Cushman said there were two forms of death from asthma, one through lack of medical care and a worsening condition over a period of time and the second through anaphylactic shock.

Commissioner L. Davis pointed out the report is silent about persons who are afraid of animals. She also alluded to the fact that many persons now have exotic pets. She asked whether there was anything to preclude someone from getting on a bus with a de-scented skunk in a cage. Dr. Cushman responded by saying operators would need to make judgement calls in such instances. He spoke about children being unpredictable and tending to annoy pets, and about pets tending to be very territorial and protective of their owners. There is also the possibility an animal will be startled and react aggressively. Commissioner Davis said that many seniors are also afraid of animals, and would not want to see them on buses. There is also the concern about animals fouling their cages while on a bus, inconveniencing the other passengers around them. She mentioned there already are problems with people who want to bring baby strollers on board and who get no consideration from other passengers. She wondered what will happen if people are now permitted to have caged animals on their laps.

Commissioner Davis said no one knows about the onset of anaphylactic shock. The fact that there will be no way to control the number of animals on a bus at any given time will mean the increased possibility of anaphylactic shock for those persons who are severely asthmatic.

She pointed out that doctors at the Children's Hospital (CHEO) state asthma in children is the largest growing segment of the population that comes to CHEO. She asked if Dr. Cushman could confirm this observation. He responded by saying that the vast majority of admissions, at night, in the emergency room, are asthma admissions. Councillor Davis expressed the hope that Commission members will not put the citizenry in this kind of jeopardy, given all the facts that have come to light in the discussion.

Commissioner Byrne said that, like Commissioner Davis, she is fairly impassioned about this issue. She expressed her amazement at the fact the recommendations were brought forward, given that there are so many reasons not to proceed, whereas there is only one reason for proceeding, that is to allow individuals to bring their pets on buses. She spoke in support of retaining the existing policy, as it confirms her position on the issue.

Councillor Byrne said that, in the 12 years she has owned a pet, there has been a proliferation of veterinarians and animal hospitals throughout Ottawa-Carleton, many of them in residential neighbourhoods. Because of this, individuals might have to expend a small amount to take a taxi for their pets' appointments, considering that the benefit to them far outweighs the health risks to others. Councillor Byrne posited animals don't have a right to public transportation but people do and allowing animals that can cause a health reaction on buses infringes on this right. She posited this would be counter to the goal of increasing ridership because a lot more people with allergic reactions will not take the bus in comparison to pet owners who won't take the bus because their pets are not to travel with them. There are social and a health responsibilities that go beyond any legal liability. As well, it is unreasonable to expect a two-year-old child to keep from inserting his/her hands into a cage to try to pet an animal. Putting someone at risk of harm is an abdication of Commissioners' responsibility to act in the best interest of the population they represent.

Commissioner Byrne felt a distinction had to be made for service animals, regardless of their genus. These animals are generally at the front of the vehicle and fairly visible, and under the control of their owners. Persons with allergies or who fear animals have the option of either boarding or not boarding the vehicle. Service animals are not a nicety but a necessity and this is the rationale for allowing them on buses as opposed to other animals. Commissioner Byrne expressed the hope Commission members will do the responsible thing and keep in mind the health concerns of their constituents and approve the staff recommendation.

Chair Loney pointed out that staff have been consistent in their approach of allowing on the buses animals that assist people. He reminded members that the initiative for change came from the Committee, not from staff, and they should not be made to feel guilty for changes in policy.

Commissioner Bellemare expressed the view the Commission should be careful when looking at the United States to try to establish the potential for liability in Ottawa-Carleton. He pointed out that the US is the most litigious country in the world, where the costs of litigation have been described as being akin to a tax imposed on anything that is produced, bought, sold or used therein. Commissioner Bellemare said there are not as many incentives to sue in Canada, there is more control over the size of settlements, stricter rules governing class actions suits, and losing parties often have to pay the other party's legal costs. He posited what is important is that staff have ascertained there were no reported lawsuits in Canada with respect to animals on buses. Other transit properties such as the STO, the TTC, Montreal and Calgary among others, permit animals on buses and it is unlikely that the general population in Ottawa-Carleton is more sensitive to allergens than the population in those urban centres.

Commissioner Bellemare continued by saying the public is exposed to dander and to other allergens in the environment, as well as in confined loci such as mass transit vehicles. Someone susceptible to a reaction is just as likely to get it from someone who has held a cat, or petted a dog, earlier in the day as from sitting beside that animal in a cage on a bus. The policy developed by staff appears to cover all the bases, as it envisions an animal, contained in a secure, leak-proof, closed container: this animal is not running wild in the aisles of a bus. He said he did not believe such a policy would open the floodgates, that there would be animals every hour of every day on the 850 vehicles owned by the Commission. Furthermore, these animals would be confined to cages and pose no threat to other passengers.

Commissioner Bellemare made reference to the mandatory policy in Ottawa-Carleton calling for all dogs and cats to be vaccinated against rabies. He speculated the compliance rate on this is almost at 100% and the Region should be making it as easy as possible for people satisfy this mandatory requirement. Commissioner Bellemare put forward a Motion calling for the draft policy to be amended, specifically that no fee be charged for caged animals and that only cats or small dogs be permitted on buses. The rationale for allowing only the animals named is to negate the impact on persons who suffer from phobias to rodents or reptiles, the most common phobias, as indicated in an earlier report. Commissioner Bellemare pointed out that the Commission needs to be as flexible as it can with its policies and to give operators as much discretion as it can to determine whether, in accordance with the draft policy outlined, a person who is carrying a disruptive animal should be put off the vehicle. He posited that the only criteria needed was reasonableness and not a policy which turns on a small and potential number of riders.

Commissioner Legendre put forward the view the report before the Committee was “balderdash”, as were many of the comments expressed around the table. He said the idea was to provide a service for the convenience of people who own animals. He wondered, in terms of frequency, how many times a pet owner will actually want to take a bus and will actually find it convenient to cage the pet, carry the cage, and board the bus. Commissioner Legendre said that indications from the STO, which allows the practice, are that there are no problems and no complaints. In Europe, the entire continent uses mass transit considerably more than North America does, and animals are allowed on buses without having to be caged. The Commission is not proposing this be the case. Commissioner Legendre posited this is a matter of live and let live. The situations described are imaginary, and staff, through extensive research, have found no documented cases of liability. Regardless of this fact, the recommendation is to maintain the existing policy, something Commissioner Legendre said he found amazing. He expressed support for the amendments proposed by Commissioner Bellemare, reserving his right to propose further modifications if it is approved.

Commissioner H. Kreling mentioned the need for continuity of policies around the Commission table and throughout the RMOC. He recalled that, not long ago, the Commission was asked to impose restrictions on wearing perfumes and colognes on buses, in recognition of other persons’ sensitivities to these products. In another instance, at another Committee meeting, an environmental advisory group was created to address the needs of persons with environmental sensitivities. Commissioner Kreling said that, in light of these initiatives, it would make no sense to go in the opposite direction by allowing cats and dogs on buses. In order to continue to address emerging issues, the Commission should continue to operate the bus system as it has before. He suggested that the staff recommendation be approved and that OC Transpo get on with the business of moving people

Speaking in response to Commissioner Bellemare’s amending Motion, and to Commissioner Legendre’s comment about having to “live and let live”, Commissioner Davis posited it really is a matter of life for persons who are allergic and who travel by bus. Allowing animals on buses will unnecessarily create a dangerous situation, and will show that the Commission is not listening to the public. Several Commission members have spoken eloquently about the impact of allergens on family members: the Medical Officer of Health has also expressed his opinion, all of which have been negative. The only positive aspect was that some persons would be spared taxi fare to take their pets to the veterinarian. Commissioner Davis asked that the Committee not support the amendment.

The Committee heard from Commissioner R. Cantin, who reinforced the idea that humans have a right to public transit but not animals. He asked whether animal rights should be put before the rights of humans. The Commission has taken decisions to increase the use of public transit and to try to limit the numbers of cars on roadways. Allowing animals on buses will increase the number of persons who won't get on a bus because it is possible someone with an animal is on board. Commissioner Cantin agreed an exception must be made for service animals, even in restaurants, but the Commission should not go from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Chair Loney spoke about having mixed feelings because many of the comments made by Commissioners overstate the case on either side of the argument. He said he felt the issue was simply whether persons with allergies would be sufficiently inconvenienced, making the policy more of a deterrent to increased transit ridership, or whether it would enhance the number of persons using public transit. Chair Loney said his inclination was to side with persons with medical conditions, and although this is a small minority of the potential passenger load, it is an element that must be considered.

Chair Loney shared with the Committee his experience of having seen a variety of animals on buses in Europe. He added it is not uncommon to find, in very nice restaurants, dogs under their owners' tables. Generally, these animals are well-behaved, and perhaps are treated as a member of the family. With regard to animals on public transit, their owner pays the child fare, and the animal has to be under control or both can be forced off the vehicle. Chair Loney expressed the view North Americans are not yet at this stage. He said the fact that there are no public speakers on this matter indicates strong public support for maintaining the existing policy. Chair Loney said he agreed that the existing policy should be maintained.

Moved by M. Bellemare

That the Draft Policy at Appendix A be adopted, with the following amendments:

1. that no fare be charged for small animals on buses
2. that only cats or small dogs be permitted on a Commission vehicle.

LOST

YEAS: M. Bellemare, J. Legendre 2

NAYS: W. Byrne, L. Davis, C. Doucet, H. Kreling, A. Loney.....5

Moved by C. Doucet

That the Transit Services Committee recommend the Commission make no change in the current by-law which restricts animals on buses to seeing eye and hearing ear dogs.

CARRIED

YEAS: W. Byrne, L. Davis, C. Doucet, H. Kreling, A. Loney.....5

NAYS: : M. Bellemare, J. Legendre 2

3. 1999 FARES
- General Manager's report dated 10 Mar 99

Commissioner M. Bellemare began by congratulating staff for the recommendation on seniors' passes as a way of acknowledging 1999, the Year of the Older Person. He asked about his specific inquiry related to allowing seniors on buses outside peak hours for one ticket instead of two, and whether there would be other initiatives for the Year of the Older Person, including further price reductions. Dr. Helen Gault, Manager, Planning and Development, indicated there has been no examination of the revenue implications of ticket prices. The hope is that the reduced price of the Seniors Pass will mean increased sales, making the price of tickets a little less relevant. She added that there may be other initiatives associated with service but the reduced Seniors' Pass will be the big initiative for 1999.

Commissioner J. Legendre expressed his concern about the way "Family" is defined in Recommendation 2, and he asked staff to explain the rationale behind the definition. Dr. Gault indicated this has been done to be consistent with the current policy regarding children under 12 years of age, who travel on buses for \$1.25 or one ticket. Councillor Legendre pointed out that many families have more than two children, and he asked whether every additional child would have to pay the regular fare. Dr. Gault confirmed this would be the case.

Committee discussion focused on the definition of family, several members indicating they favoured a more flexible approach. Commissioner Legendre presented a Motion, asking that "family unit", as defined as an attending adult, also be eligible for the family pass. Commissioner W. Byrne put forward a Motion to increase to 6 the number of persons that can take advantage of the Family Pass.

Commissioner L. Davis pointed out that, since her arrival at the Region in 1994, she has been pressing for initiatives such as the ones recommended by staff, and she was pleased to see these come forward. She asked whether staff had any indication of the numbers these new initiatives would generate. Dr. Gault responded by saying that the Toronto Transit Commission statistics are available, but staff would like to do a survey and report back to Committee when the programs have been in operation for a few months. She added that the intent is to launch the family pass initiative in time for Canada Day, a time when many families might be coming into downtown Ottawa to participate in the celebrations.

Commissioner Davis asked that the record show her sincere appreciation to Dr. Gault for all the work accomplished over the years. Commissioner Davis expressed the view this is going in the right direction and will encourage increased ridership by getting kids on the bus and keeping them as riders.

Mr. Jeffrey Alguire, Chair, Accessible Transit Advisory Committee (ATAC), expressed the view that, while it is perfectly valid to encourage increased ridership on the conventional system, this is diametrically opposed to what needs to be done on Paratranspo, where already many requests for service are being refused. He said ATAC will bring forward a proposal that involves the withdrawal of all “concession fares” on the parallel system, based on the premise that everyone using Paratranspo has a disability. Mr. Alguire made reference to the KPMG/IBI Report recommendations calling for the provision of incentives and disincentives that make clear and prevalent the option of conventional transit whenever possible.

Mr. Alguire focused on the recommendation for a reduction to seniors’ passes. He noted that, from Paratranspo’s perspective, this will encourage more demand as opposed to more ridership and will take revenues away from the system. This dual effect is not acceptable and a way must be found to control it. Mr. Alguire spoke about other recommendations which have yet to come forward from ATAC, but whose fundamental concern deals with the removal of concession fares entirely. He expressed the hope that the Committee’s decisions will not have a negative impact on the Paratranspo system. Replying to a question from Chair Loney, Mr. Alguire said he wanted to enforce two points: first, it is ATAC’s preference that its proposals be brought forward and considered. Secondly, although the staff proposal attempts to accomplish some of the same aims, they should be considered as a minimum requirement.

Commissioner Legendre asked whether the reduction in the cost of seniors’ passes would not encourage those persons that currently use Paratranspo, but who are ambulatory enough, to use low-floor buses on the regular service, thereby alleviating some of the pressure from the parallel service.

Mr. Alguire reiterated it is still ATAC's preference that a unified approach to concession fares be adopted and that the OC Transpo proposal be considered the minimum acceptable standard. This does not mean the proposal has the support of ATAC.

Commissioner Byrne said she interpreted the recommendation about the "family pass" as being more flexible than just being restricted to families, and several examples have been given by previous speakers (an uncle, a grandparent, an older sibling taking a group of children on an outing). These individuals would not have to prove they are a family in a restricted sense, and that the children accompanying them are their children. As well, increasing to six the number of persons eligible for the pass would at least accommodate a family of four, which is more likely to be considered a large family than it once was. Having to pay an additional .80 cents per child would still be fairly reasonable for a day pass and would not be considered prohibitive.

Commissioner Legendre wanted to clarify his Motion was meant to be in addition to that in recommendation 2 of the report..

At this point, Chair Loney called for a vote on the Motions presented.

Moved by J. Legendre

RESOLVED THAT a "family unit" as defined by an attending adult, also be accepted as eligible for a Family Pass.

LOST

YEAS: M. Bellemare, C. Doucet, J. Legendre.....3

NAYS: W. Byrne, L. Davis, H. Kreling, A. Loney 4

Moved by W. Byrne

That recommendation 2 of the staff report be amended to read: "...allowing groups of up to six persons..."

CARRIED

The Committee then approved the staff recommendations as follows:

That the Transit Services Committee recommend the Commission approve the following:

- 1. That the annual post-secondary student pass program be extended to secondary school students, offering a pass valid from mid-August 1999 to 31**

August 2000 at the existing price of \$450 for a Transpass and \$545 for a Unipass. The policies for payment, refunds and replacement in place for the pilot project, would remain in place.

- 2. That a Family Pass be introduced on 1 July 1999. The Day Pass would be used as a Family Pass on Sundays and statutory holidays, allowing groups of up to six people with a maximum of two of whom are 12 or older, to travel all day for \$5 if pre-purchased or \$6 if purchased on the bus.**
- 3. That a \$19.99 Seniors Pass be introduced on 1 June 1999 to the end of the year to celebrate the International Year of the Older Person.**

CARRIED, as amended

4. AGENCY OF RECORD FOR ADVERTISING SERVICES
- General Manager's report dated 10 Mar 99

That the Transit Services Committee recommend to the Commission the appointment of Acart Communications as OC Transpo's Advertising Agency of Record to provide assistance with the development and execution of OC Transpo's promotional strategy, for a twelve-month term with provision for two twelve-month extensions, subject to satisfactory performance.

CARRIED

5. BIKE RACKS ON BUSES PILOT PROJECT
- General Manager's report dated 9 Mar 99

That the Transit Services Committee recommend to the Transportation Committee the expenditure of \$50,000 for a pilot project of bike racks on buses, to be introduced on route 97 as soon as possible, to the end of October 1999, as part of the Transportation Demand Management program.

CARRIED, as amended

6. INTERPROVINCIAL FARE ARRANGEMENTS
- General Manager's report dated 5 Mar 99

That the Transit Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

7. CHRISTMAS / NEW YEAR'S 1998-99 SERVICE
- General Manager's report dated 10 Mar 99

That the Transit Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

8. TRANSIT SERVICE OUTSIDE THE URBAN TRANSIT AREA-
FALLOWFIELD VILLAGE
- General Manager's report dated 9 Mar 99

That the Transit Services Committee receive this report for information.

RECEIVED

INFORMATION PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED

1. PURCHASING INFORMATION ITEMS
- General Manager's memorandum dated 15 Feb 99

INQUIRIES

1. Commissioner L. Davis, speaking in reference to the Transplan public meetings, asked whether OC Transpo should not be providing sign-in or comment sheets so that participants can submit their comments directly, rather than have OC Transpo staff paraphrase what the public said. Dr. H. Gault responded that this could be instituted in the future. Councillor Davis said it would be useful for Commission members to know the dates of public meetings ahead of time, so they can arrange their schedule to attend meetings in their wards if they so desire.
Dr. Gault indicated that efforts would be made to improve communications between OC Transpo and Commissioners in this area. Responding to ancillary questions from Commissioner Davis, Dr. Gault said the Transplan process is almost completed, noting

that the deadline for comments is April 16th: a report will be presented to Committee in May. Chair Loney suggested that Commissioner's be circulated with a list of proposed meeting dates as early as possible to assist with their scheduling. He added that, while it might be difficult to accommodate all concerned, every effort would be made to do so.

2. Commissioner J. Legendre asked what progress has been made with respect to testing employees in their language of choice for positions at OC Transpo, even if the positions are classified as unilingual. The Manager, Human Resources, Elizabeth Cameron, indicated a full review of the existing policy is underway, with the assistance of the Region's Human Resources Department. Commissioner Legendre expressed interest in hearing about developments in this area at the earliest opportunity.
3. Commissioner C. Doucet asked that information be provided on the cost implications of an universal student pass, to be implemented in connection with the Light Rail Pilot Project. He also asked that staff review changes to Route 40, as he has received many complaints about students finding it difficult to access the Voyageur Colonial bus station now that Route 40 goes down Bronson to Slater. Chair Loney indicated this will be reviewed as part of the Transplan report alluded to in an earlier inquiry, however staff will look at the issue in the interim.
4. Chair A. Loney made reference to the recent, successful launch of a transit hub on the Nortel Campus at Carling Avenue/Moodie Drive, in order to promote transit ridership by the 4,000 people who work at the location. Service to this area has almost been doubled since the new year, and OC Transpo has given out free passes to encourage people to use the system. The Manager, Marketing and Communications, Oxana Sawka, replying to a question from Chair Loney, indicated that 400 April passes have been sold to-date. M. Sheflin, the Interim General Manager, said it was impressive to see the efforts Nortel has put into this initiative. Chair Loney indicated staff will work on whether similar initiatives can be realized with other large employers in the Region.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Committee Chair A. Loney noted there have been many improvements at OC Transpo thanks to the efforts the Interim General Manager, M. Sheflin and all his staff. Chair Loney said he is seeing signs of progress and his office is receiving calls from the public indicating they also see change and believe the Commission is on the mend. He thanked all OC staff for their continued efforts on behalf of the company.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

CHAIR

CO-ORDINATOR