

November 05, 2014

Seangillis78@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Gillis,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for *It's More Than Buses'* continued engagement in the Moving Forward Together Plan, and for staying in touch with Halifax Transit staff throughout the *It's More Than Buses'* network development. The hard work of volunteer organizations like yours goes a long way towards increasing the awareness of Halifax Transit's *Moving Forward Together Plan*, and in initiating meaningful conversations about transit's role in the municipality.

While I am unable to comment on the details of the plan at this point, I would like to address some of the concerns and questions outlined in the October 6, 2014 post on the *It's More Than Buses* blog:

Are high frequency, all day transit lines a key part of your network, if so, what type of transit corridors do you envision?

High frequency transit routes that operate from early morning to late evening will be a component of the draft transit network. As the plan is still in the drafting process, we are unable at this time to identify what these transit corridors would be, or what the span of service could look like.

Can a high-frequency grid work? If so, where?

High frequency grid networks are effective when there are many activity centres across a region, as they provide a reasonably direct path for many people to many destinations through the use of one or more transfers. This type of model works very well in cities which already have roadways laid out in a grid pattern across the region (for example Vancouver, Calgary or

Toronto). In regions where a grid road network is not the norm, or where the street pattern is radial, irregularly spaced, or interrupted, a grid network may not always be the best alternative as pedestrian access to transit service could be limited.

Outside of the historic peninsula, Halifax's roadways are not entirely parallel or evenly spaced, generally having been laid out to avoid topographic challenges. As I'm sure you experienced through drafting the It's More than Buses Transit Network, superimposing a transit network which is a grid onto a regional road network which is at many points anything but grid-like has its challenges, and in many areas of HRM, would increase walking distances to access transit, and increase the number of transfers required to complete an average trip beyond what is typically found in a grid network.

What percentage of service will be used for high-frequency and other high ridership services? How have high-ridership services been defined? Our proposal devotes 75% of operating resources to high-ridership services.

As we are still in the process of developing and refining the draft transit network, at this time, I am unable to say what percentage of resources will be allocated to high frequency or high ridership services, or how high frequency will be defined.

How did Halifax Transit weigh travel time trade-offs?

As we analyze and refine the draft network, we look at factors that influence the customer experience such as the access and egress to the transit stop, the total number of transfers to complete a trip, transfer location (on street versus at a terminal), frequency between connecting services, and total travel time, to estimate the attractiveness of the proposed service.

How much overlap are you planning on removing from the system?

As we are still in the process of developing and refining the draft transit network, at this time, I am unable to say to what degree overlap will be removed from the transit network. However, as you are aware, Halifax Transit has committed to reducing network complexity by providing a simplified, transfer based system (Moving Forward Principle # 2).

Are timed transfers planned to connect lower frequency routes to high-frequency services? If so, where?

Timed transfers are one of the tools that we are considering as part of the MFTP, and are most valuable when connecting medium and low frequency routes. We look forward to more discussion about where they are most useful once the draft plan is released.

What level of involvement will stakeholders and the public have on evaluating and creating this new network? What can we expect during consultations in January 2015?

Halifax Transit is very excited about the upcoming round of public and stakeholder consultation. You can expect a wide and inclusive consultation process that lasts at least ten weeks, as Halifax Transit will be seeking feedback from stakeholders, transit users, and the general public about routing, levels of service, and service types. The input and insight provided will be critical to informing the changes required to the draft network.

Thank you once again for *It's More than Buses'* passion for building a better transit network for Halifax, and I look forward to your participation in the consultation in January.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eddie Robar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eddie Robar,
Director, Halifax Transit

