

# Municipality of Lakeshore – Report to Council

Chief Administrative Officer

Economic and Intergovernmental Affairs



**To:** Mayor & Members of Council  
**From:** Ryan Donally, Division Leader, Economic Development  
**Date:** November 17, 2023  
**Subject:** Municipal Transit Next Steps

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## Recommendation

Direct Administration to defer consideration of future transit services for the Municipality until the next iteration of the Transportation Master Plan, as presented at the December 12, 2023 Council meeting.

## Background

At the October 12, 2021 Regular Meeting of Council motion 325-10-2021 was passed:

Direct Administration to prepare a business case for implementation of an integrated regional Lakeshore transit/mobility system to include operating permissions, delivery options, feeder services, financial implications, funding sources and a plan for a launch date of 2024 with engagement of the private sector and other regional transit authorities, as further described in the October 12, 2021 Council report; and

Endorse the primary regional route outlined as Option 1a of the Lakeshore Mobility Options Study prepared by Stantec, October 2021.

The primary regional route identified at Option 1a of the Lakeshore Mobility Options Study was the route proposed from Tecumseh Mall to Belle River along the County Road 22 corridor.

## Comments

Following Council direction, Administration engaged with potential service providers to understand the magnitude of cost to deliver any or all of the options presented in the Lakeshore Mobility Options Study. These potential costs will remain confidential to not skew any potential RFP bidding process into the future.

Although the Mobility Options Study did identify that there was some demand for transit service offerings, the response rate was far from representative of the entire population

(approximately 100 residential respondents). Further, neither Council, nor Administration has heard from many residents requesting a transit service within the Municipality. Furthermore, Council did not identify transit as a priority project within their 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

Due to the limited implied demand and lack of strategic priority, Administration did not conduct a full business case analysis for a transit system to service the residential populations of Lakeshore.

Conversely, Administration had received feedback that there was demand for a transit system to support the Patillo Road industrial area. The Mobility Options Study did conduct specific outreach to businesses. Businesses were asked, “Do you think a public transit system would be beneficial for your business and employees?” Response was roughly an even split with 39 businesses identifying “no” and 36 businesses identifying “yes”. Administration took further action to review the viability of at Patillo Road industrial area service.

### **Patillo Industrial Area Service**

Primary and secondary data was collected to review the viability of transit service offerings to support the Patillo Industrial area.

Administration engaged with several industrial area companies. The responding companies represent approximately 1/3 of the estimated 6000 employees. The companies provided non-identifiable employee data, shift schedules, and volume of employees per shift for administration to analyze. In total, data for 1924 employees was captured.

Of the 1924 employees, 33 distinct locations of residences were collected. These were then corresponded to one of the regional municipalities. Results indicated that 65% of the employees resided in Windsor, 12% resided in the Belle River Area Code, 6% from Tecumseh, and 3% or less for the other municipalities, including the remainder of Lakeshore.

The employee data was analyzed in parallel with secondary data including drive-time analysis, integration points with regional transit systems, potential transit connection points, routing analysis, and potential transit stops.

A number of base-case assumptions were made based off secondary data sources to determine the implied demand to the industrial area, as follows:

- 3.5%: Commuters in the Windsor CMA (2021 Census).
- 0.4%: Transit ridership in Tecumseh (Tecumseh statistics)
- 6000: Total employee count in Patillo Road industrial area
- Connections would exist only to Tecumseh Transit and/or Transit Windsor services.

Based on known location data extrapolated to the full employee pool, Administration estimates 51 to 177 employees that *may* consider using transit. The table below provides additional detail.

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Percentage of Labour Pool</b>	<b>Total Potential Employees (assume 6000 ee's)</b>	<b>Potential Ridership (1% - 3.5%)</b>
Windsor	65%	3,900	39 - 137
Lakeshore	13%	780	8 – 27* Location Dependent
Tecumseh	6%	360	4 – 13
Other	16%	960	No proposed service connections
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>51 - 177</b>

With an understanding of the proposed upper-limit of transit ridership to the Patillo Road industrial area, Administration next explored potential timing and connectivity to existing regional transit service offerings.

### **Time Analysis and Viability**

The primary intersection point between Tecumseh Transit and Transit Windsor is Tecumseh Mall. Any rider who wishes to connect between the transit systems needs to connect at this location. As such, this transit hub was identified as a primary initiation point for Lakeshore transit planning.

To fully capture all businesses within the Patillo Road industrial area, six stops were proposed. This six-stop loop would take an estimated 30 minutes to complete. To ensure there is both the ability to drop off employees pre-shift, and pick-up employees post shift, a gap must be considered. A suggestion of looping the bus twice was recommended to have a “drop off” loop, followed by a “pick-up loop”.

Tecumseh Mall is approximately 30 minutes headway from Patillo road. Therefore, in order to reach the final drop off of the Patillo, the bus would need to leave Tecumseh Mall approximately one-hour and fifteen minutes before the shift start time at the final drop off location.

The majority of shift start and end times in the industrial (as identified by the survey) are either 6:00 AM or 7:00 AM. There is another spike of start/end times at 4:00 PM, 6:00 PM and midnight.

For a 6:00 AM start time (the peak time identified) this would require a pick-up of 4:45 AM from Tecumseh Mall. For a 7:00 AM start time, this requires a 5:45 AM pick up.

The required start time from Tecumseh Mall to Patillo on a proposed Lakeshore Transit route creates a major issue. Neither Tecumseh Transit nor Transit Windsor offer service at the required time. Further, the 4:45 / 5:45 AM pick up does not consider the headway to get from the employees home stop to the Tecumseh Mall hub. For an employee with a start time of 6:00 AM they would likely need to catch their first bus on either Transit Windsor or Tecumseh Transit in the late 3:00 AM hour or early 4:00 AM hour. For an employee starting at 7:00 AM, they would need to catch the first bus in the late 4:00 AM hour or early 5:00 AM hour. Unless shift schedules can be adjusted by the employers, start schedules for multiple transit routes would need to be adjusted by upwards of two hours.

Administration has also considered a “direct route” whereby three primary transit stop locations tied into a route that primarily uses the E.C. Row Expressway and County Road 22 to access the Patillo Road industrial area (University of Windsor, Devonshire Mall, Tecumseh Mall). This route requires approximately one hour of drive time without considering any stops. This also does not rectify the issue of riders arriving at one of the transit stops.

In summation, unless businesses in the Patillo industrial area are willing to adjust start and end times, a transit system will not aid in moving employees to Patillo.

## **Options**

Option 1 (recommended): defer further work on a Lakeshore transit system until it is considered by the Lakeshore Transportation Master Plan (2025-2026). This Master Plan will be preceded by County of Essex Master Transportation Plan and County of Essex Official Plan which will likely have commentary about regional transit system offerings.

Option 2: Direct administration to conduct primary interviews with Patillo Road industrial area businesses for greater understanding of transit demand, potential cost sharing, and shift scheduling to allow for more flexible start/end times. Upon completion, this report would be brought back to Council in 2024 to explore next steps.

## **Others Consulted**

Town of Tecumseh

Transit Windsor

## **Financial Impacts**

There are no financial impacts at this time.

**Attachments**

Appendix A – Transit Update, November 2023.

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	Transit Next Steps .docx
Attachments:	- Appendix A – Transit Update, November 2023.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Dec 6, 2023

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Prepared by Ryan Donally

Approved by Justin Rousseau and Truper McBride