



**City of Kingston  
Report to Council  
Report Number 22-227**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works  
**Resource Staff:** Jeremy DaCosta, Director, Transit Services  
**Date of Meeting:** August 9, 2022  
**Subject:** Kingston Transit - High School Transit Pass Program

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**Council Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Theme: Corporate business

Goal: See above

**Executive Summary:**

The City of Kingston (Kingston Transit) provides complimentary transit access to all Grade 9–12 students attending a secondary school, a private secondary school, or being home educated in the City of Kingston. The objective of the program has been to provide high school students with the opportunity to use the Kingston Transit system to increase the potential for students to continue as committed public transit users when they are no longer eligible for the program. The Limestone District School Board (LDSB) and Algonquin Lakeshore District Catholic School Board (ALDSCB) each provide a financial contribution to the program on an annual basis.

The high school transit program started in 2012. In August 2019, Council approved the continuation of the program for an additional 3-year period (September 2019 to August 2022) [Report Number 19-225](#). This report recommends that the high school transit program be established as a permanent, ongoing program, subject to LDSB and ALDCSB continuing to provide a combined minimum financial contribution of \$60,000 annually. Representatives of LDSB and ALDCSB have confirmed their ongoing support of the program.

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**Recommendation:**

**That** the Grade 9 to Grade 12 high school transit program be established permanently for students attending public, separate, or private schools, or students receiving a home-based education in the City of Kingston, subject to the City receiving a combined annual financial contribution of no less than \$60,000 from the Limestone District School Board and Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic District School Board in support of the program, with future annual contributions subject to a negotiated escalation.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

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**Brad Joyce, Commissioner,  
Transportation & Public Works**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**Lanie Hurdle, Chief  
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Community Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Business, Environment & Projects	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

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**Options/Discussion:****Background:**

In June 2012, Council approved a pilot program to provide complimentary access to Kingston Transit for all Grade 9 students attending public and separate secondary schools within the City of Kingston. In each of the next 3 academic years, an additional grade was added until the program was expanded to include all high school students (Grades 9–12) in the 2015/2016 academic year. The program was also expanded to include students attending private schools or receiving a home-based education based on feedback from the community.

The high school transit program provides students with access to Kingston Transit for a 12-month period from September of the current year to August of the following year. Each September, transit staff collaborate with school board representatives to attend each high school to issue Kingston Transit passes to incoming Grade 9 students and conduct transit orientation sessions. The Limestone District School Board (LDSB) and Algonquin Lakeshore District Catholic School Board (ALDSCB) each provide a financial contribution to support the program. In August 2019, Council approved the continuation of the program for an additional 3-year period (August 2019 – September 2022).

**Program Success:**

In 2018, the City was recognized by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) with a Sustainable Community Award in transportation for the high school transit program.

The City also received FCM's inaugural Inspire Award for a project that best demonstrates creativity and innovation. Information about the City's awards is profiled on the FCM's website at: <https://fcm.ca/en/resources/gmf/case-study-kingston-gets-more-youth-riding-public-transit>

In addition to receiving these awards, the City also partnered with the FCM and LDSB to create a comprehensive guidebook to assist other communities with launching their own high school transit programs. The guidebook is available on FCM's website at:

<https://fcm.ca/sites/default/files/documents/resources/guide/guidebook-engaging-students-to-increase-public-transit-ridership-gmf.pdf> .

In 2016, the City entered into a partnership with the University of Waterloo, to conduct formalized research around the high school transit program. In addition to examining ridership, the research included a series of in-person and online surveys distributed to students and parents to assess the impacts of the program. The research concluded that the high school program is an important stimulant for travel independence for high school students and that access to a transit pass does influence a student's travel behaviour. The research report entitled *Impact of Free Transit Passes on Youth Travel Behaviour* was completed in 2017. A full copy of the research can be accessed from the University of Waterloo's online repository:

<https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/handle/10012/12199>

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**Program Permanence:**

The high school transit program has been in place for 10 years. The program has been subject to periodic Council approval over the 10-year period as the program evolved and continued to be reviewed. Given the success of the program it is being recommended that the program be established permanently, subject to LDSB and ALDCSB continuing to provide a minimum financial contribution of \$60,000 annually. Representatives of LDSB and ALDCSB have confirmed their ongoing financial support of the program.

**Existing Policy/By-Law:**

None

**Notice Provisions:**

None

**Accessibility Considerations:**

None

**Financial Considerations:**

The 2022 Kingston Transit approved operating budget accounted for the high school transit program. Future operating budgets will recognize the high school program continuing on a permanent basis.

**Contacts:**

Jeremy DaCosta, Director, Transit Services, 613-546-4291 extension 1310

**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

None

**Exhibits Attached:**

None