



## TRANSIT AND PARKING STRATEGY MEMORANDUM

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**TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: B. FORSYTH, DIRECTOR OF TRANSIT AND PARKING STRATEGY**

**NOTED: R. JAMES-REID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ACCESS BARRIE**

**RE: EXTENSION OF FREE TRANSIT TO JULY 2, 2020**

**DATE: MAY 25, 2020**

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At the beginning and throughout the COVID pandemic, transit agencies around the country put various precautionary measures in place to maintain service for essential travel. This included rear door boarding and the temporary suspension of paid transit services to allow proper physical distancing between the operators and passengers.

The purpose of this memo is to inform members of Council of our intention to extend free transit until July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Currently free transit has been offered to June 1<sup>st</sup>, however as further guidance has been provided by all levels of government, some transit agencies are making plans to return to paid service in various forms and timelines. We believe the extension to July 2<sup>nd</sup> for Barrie Transit is appropriate and realistic for the following reasons:

- As recently communicated, we are in the process of testing protective barriers for our bus operators that will help ensure their safety against COVID and allow us to return to front door boarding. This is a critical step to reintroduce paid service. Staff are working diligently to outfit the entire fleet with these protective barriers with the goal to have them in place by July 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Another key consideration of reintroducing paid service is to have sales agents available at the transit terminal for riders to purchase fare products ahead of reintroducing paid service. The extension to July 2<sup>nd</sup> will provide adequate time to confirm the viability of reopening the bus terminal to the public which includes; reviewing and introducing safety measures for staff and the public; rehiring and scheduling staff; and ensuring we have our systems, equipment, and fare products ready and available to serve the community.
- An extension to July 2<sup>nd</sup> will allow for adequate time to communicate our plans and key information to the community. This can include informing riders of our intention to return to paid service, required safety measures within our terminal facility, and any potential fare adjustments we may need to put in place (such as temporarily suspending the use of ride cards as a way to reduce driver-passenger contact).
- Allowing for adequate time to properly consider other logistical changes required in our new environment such as resting and washroom facilities for staff and our patrons.

With recent guidance from Ministry of Health, where they recommended to encourage the use of face coverings for patrons, particularly when physical distancing is not feasible, the City of Barrie is undertaking an educational campaign to encourage passengers to use face coverings on transit (**Appendix A**).

We believe July 2<sup>nd</sup> is a realistic target for returning to paid service however we will continue to remain flexible amidst new information and commit to updating members of Council as we finalize details and move closer to this target date.

Appendix A:

## Protect Yourself. Protect Others.

To assist in protecting transit staff and riders, the Ministry of Health is recommending the use of face coverings, particularly when physical distancing is not feasible.



**For everyone's safety, please wear a mask while riding Barrie Transit.**

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[barrie.ca/COVID19](http://barrie.ca/COVID19)

## Protect Yourself. Protect Others.



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## Protect Yourself. Protect Others.

To assist in protecting transit staff and riders, the Ministry of Health is recommending the following measures be put in place:

-  Skip a seat
-  Wear a mask
-  Avoid touching surfaces.
-  Wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly and often.

Please remember to stay home when you are sick.

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[barrie.ca/COVID19](http://barrie.ca/COVID19)