

Buses will roll

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It won't be just school buses adding to the traffic on Waterdown roads Tuesday, September 2. City bus service from Waterdown's urban core to the Aldershot GO Station will return after a hiatus of more than a decade.

Initially, the new route will operate only on weekdays during peak periods, from 6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. But once the service "gets traction" and city officials get an idea of how well it is being used, it could be expanded, said Jim Dahms, manager of transit planning for the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR).

After the first month of operation, officials will review counts on ridership, conduct a survey and talk to Flamborough councillor Margaret McCarthy about the possibility of increasing the service, Dahms explained. "If ridership seems to pick up, we'll look to expanding the service, either by providing more frequency or making the route go further," he said.

The new route will have some limitations because it is basically a one-way loop through town, beginning and ending at the Aldershot GO Station. From the station, the route will travel north along Waterdown Road and Mill Street, west on Dundas Street (Highway 5), north on Highway 6, east on Parkside Drive, south on Evans Road, west on Dundas Street and finally, south on Mill Street on its return to the Aldershot station. Service will be provided at 30-minute intervals.

The bus schedule for the Waterdown Route #18 will coincide with the GO train schedule and the entrance and dismissal times of local schools.

BUS STOP LOCATIONS

About three weeks ago, HSR staff did a test run of the route with Councillor McCarthy aboard a city bus to determine the best locations for bus stops. Stops will be located on both sides of Mill Street south of Dundas Street, as well as on Dundas, Parkside Drive and Evans Road. All stops will be marked with a yellow, white and blue HSR stop marker.

In recent weeks, staff has been busy fine-tuning details of the route's start-up. Tickets can be purchased at the Flamborough Municipal Service Centre or Langford's IDA for \$1.85 each or \$9.25 for a book of five. Alternatively, riders can pay a cash fare of \$2.40. Exact fare is required.

Residents living in east Waterdown wishing to travel to points west of Mill Street will have the option of leaving the bus on Mill and crossing to the other side of the street to transfer to a second bus that will take them to their destination without having to travel down Waterdown Road to the GO station. The schedule has been designed to allow customers to make the transfer with a minimum of delay.

Riders traveling to the GO station can also use an HSR transfer to board a Burlington Transit bus and continue to Burlington destinations, or they can pay the HSR fare and then pay full GO fare upon arriving at the Aldershot station, unless they have a GO monthly pass with an HSR sticker purchased and applied to it, in which case they ride HSR for free.

"We hope people will take advantage of the new route and visit the mall (at Clappison's Corners) and the GO station," Dahms said.

Additional information can be obtained online at www.hamilton.ca/hsr or by calling 905-527-4441. Timetables and route maps for the Waterdown route are available at the Flamborough Municipal Service Centre, Langford's IDA and the Aldershot GO Station.