

Region of Waterloo
Transportation Services
Transit Services

To: Planning and Works Committee
Meeting Date: February 6, 2024
Report Title: Grand River Transit Bus Stop Design Guidelines

1. Recommendation

For information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To update Council on the adoption of Grand River Transit's Bus Stop Design Guidelines, which will be used to plan and design on-street transit stops and amenities in Waterloo Region.

3. Strategic Plan:

The Bus Stop Design Guidelines supports strategic priorities Climate Aligned Growth, Equitable Services and Opportunities, and Resilient and Future Ready Organization in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. The guidelines would help ensure GRT's bus stops are accessible, inclusive and foster car-alternative options through integration with active transportation network.

4. Report Highlights:

Grand River Transit's Bus Stop Design Guidelines provide technical guidance for those involved in the planning and design of on-street transit stops and amenities in Waterloo Region. The Guidelines:

- Provide directions to Grand River Transit and other Regional staff, as well as area municipal staff, contractors, and utility providers who regularly work with bus stops.
- Reflect current and emerging conditions in Canadian transit and transportation more broadly and aim to help the Region's transit network function more effectively. The Guideline will be continuously updated on an as-needed basis to adapt to emerging customer and service needs.
- Encourages consistent standards to be applied in the design, construction, and operation of bus stops.

- Serve as a toolkit for decision-making that balances the needs and expectations of transit customers, bus operations, and other road users.
- Provide methodology for categorizing stop classes and prioritization of amenities based on inputs including but not limited to usage levels, proximity to senior homes/medical facilities/lower-income populations, service changes, and customer/operator requests.
- Provide clear, consistent, and contextual guidance for a variety of stop types with reference to accessibility, physical constraints, and supporting land uses. Certain stop contexts may warrant a deviation from the recommendations outlined in the Guidelines (i.e. limited curb space and other unique circumstances).

5. Background:

Grand River Transit currently designs and manages all transit stops within the Region of Waterloo in collaboration with other Regional staff and area municipalities. Annual bus stop upgrades, including new shelters and concrete landing pads, are prioritized and implemented based on various factors including stop ridership. Between 2020 and 2023, GRT has upgraded 95 bus stops with accessible landing pads and installed 50 new shelters to improve customer waiting experience. The Guidelines will formalize existing specifications and processes to provide consistent guidance for all internal and external groups involved in the planning and construction of bus stops.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities:

An internal technical stakeholder group including area municipality staff from Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, Woolwich and Wilmot was formed to provide expertise, advice and review the Guidelines. Two workshops were held, with the first one in fall 2021 discussing principles of bus stop design with input on key issues, processes and opportunities. A second workshop was held in winter 2022 discussing draft guidelines and input were received on stop classification, locations and amenities.

Public:

Members of the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC) were engaged at the start of the process in 2021 and had an opportunity to review the final version of the Guidelines in November 2023.

7. Financial Implications:

Nil.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

Grand River Transit's Bus Stop Design Guidelines would guide Transit Development staff in planning new transit stops as well as evaluating, prioritizing, and upgrading current stops to minimum standards for improved customer accessibility. It would also guide Regional staff, area municipal staff and contractors during construction of transit stops and amenities. The Guidelines will be continuously updated on an as-needed basis to adapt to emerging customer and service needs.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: GRT Bus Stop Design Guidelines

Appendix B: GRT Bus Stop Upgrades Completed Between 2020 and 2023

Appendix C: Bus Stop Amenity Costs – Examples

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