



Subject: Orangeville Transit Route Changes

Department: Infrastructure Services

Division: Transportation and Development

Report #: INS-2025-001

Meeting Date: 2025-04-14

Recommendations

That report INS-2025-001, Orangeville Transit Route Changes, be received; and

That Council approve the route changes and direct staff to implement the changes as shown and outlined in Attachment 3 (Concept No. 2).

Overview

Orangeville Transit currently services Orangeville residents with 3 routes that provide service to approximately 67% of the Municipality. The changes to the routes being proposed by this report outline an option (Concept No.2) that will increase the service area and overall system efficiency.

Routing changes are consistent with an earlier submission to Council outlining some of the future upgrades to Transit including larger buses (40 ft buses) capable of carrying more passengers and having those buses remain on public roadways under the control of the Municipality.

There are 3 attachments in this report that outline the current transit routes, route concept 1 and route concept 2. Staff recommend implementing route concept 2.

Highlights of the proposed changes include:

- Two routes split into four distinct route areas. Service frequency at a given stop will decrease from approximately 30 minutes to 45 minutes.
- Increased service west of Riddell Road, west of Blind Line and Amelia Street.
- Service to significant destinations identified by transit users such as Alder REC. Centre, Tony Rose REC Centre, Westside Market Village, 43 Bythia (from Bythia Street), local high schools, Headwaters Health Centre and various shopping and grocery destinations.

- Only two transit buses are required to operate the recommended route concept, and it is expandable to more service upon completion of the Hansen Boulevard construction.

Background and Analysis

The Town of Orangeville's transit system currently operates with three routes: Blue route servicing the southern areas (west of Dawson and south of Broadway), Green route servicing the north and eastern areas (north of Broadway and east of Highway 10) and Orange Route servicing the central and western areas of Town (north of Broadway, Broadway and west of C-Line).

The current routing system was designed to operate as a "loop system" where the bus leaves the Transit Hub (TH) on Centre Street and returns within a set time frame; in Orangeville's case, traditionally, 30 minutes. Although the core components and driving directions have remained constant, route efficiency has dwindled as the Town grows and more service areas are necessarily added. The current system has operated in Orangeville for over 20 years. Over that period, transit stops and locations have been added to accommodate specific demographics and, in some cases, leading to the addition of new stops that have become redundant over the years. These stops are no longer needed as demand is "zero" in some cases and have led to increased driving times. This exercise has reviewed those locations and, with input (data) from the operator, has identified the redundancies that will be adjusted, subject to Council.

The current transit routes, as shown in Attachment 1, operate at such tight timelines that they constantly run late and arrive late to the TH resulting in constant delays and customers missing transfers to other buses. Over the course of the day, it is not uncommon for a bus to miss a complete cycle resulting in inefficiencies and customer dissatisfaction. There are a number of reasons why the buses run late including:

- Multiple stops that are in close proximity to each other (stops added in time resulting in more stops for buses).
- Buses travelling on narrow roads resulting in long wait times to manoeuvre through certain areas.
- Servicing private roads where the municipality has limited control over surfaces, parked cars, pedestrians, winter maintenance like those at The Fairgrounds Shopping Centre, West Side Market Village and 43 Bythia.
- Buses running longer routes within the same timing windows.

The following demonstrates the current operating distances travelled and times for transit on the respective routes and includes the percentage of punctuality on an average operating day.

Table 1: Current Transit Routes Data

Current Transit Routes			
Route	Blue	Green	Orange
Driving Time (min)	29	26	27
Route Distance (km)	12.2	11.3	12.7
Total Route Driving Distance	36.2		

Notes:

1. The route driving time represents the total time to depart and return to the Transfer Hub for each route. This time does not include traffic, weather or other delays. Historically, route times greater than 22 minutes (for a 30-minute loop) may lead to transfer delays. Current scheduling does not allow for unexpected delays.
2. Transit currently runs 27-to-29-minute cycles and as time delays increase, leads to tardiness and loss of cycles. The route distance shown is the total distance for each transit route. The total route driving distance is the sum of distances from all three routes (blue, orange and green).
3. The bus must leave the transfer Hub, complete one full cycle and return to the hub in under 30 minutes to be considered ahead of schedule.

Orangeville Transit staff have the capability to track performance of transit routes by checking punctuality. Punctuality is measured by the percentage of time in each 30-minute period (or loop) where the bus is on time or ahead of schedule. Time periods are chosen randomly to check performance. September 18-25, 2024, was the most recent time frame chosen to check the performance of the routes. The percentages listed in Table 2 represent the bus being on or ahead of schedule.

Table 2: Current Punctuality of Transit Routes

Punctuality Reports – September 18-25, 2024 **Punctuality Rates – Percentage of times the bus is on or ahead of schedule		
Blue Route	Orange Route	Green Route
7.6%	7.1%	20.1%

Notes:

1. Table 2 indicates that the blue route and orange route have very low punctuality rates and are constantly late, while the green route does have a higher punctuality rate it is still below industry standards (85-90%).
2. To relate these percentages to how many times these buses are on time for a regular transit day, the blue and orange routes are on time roughly 2 out of 27 route cycles and the green is on time roughly 5 out of 27 route cycles. This is not a reflection of operator performance but rather the design of the system that causes the buses to be late this often.

As part of an on-going improvement process, Staff continuously explore ways to improve transit operations including making transit services more dependable and efficient for all users. The process includes the following:

- Reviewing current route timing.
- Reviewing current coverage area.
- Establishing reasonable and attainable route times.
- Removing redundant stops based on data provided by the Town’s transit operator and customer feedback.
- Street proofing to determine best practices.

Based on that review, Staff developed several options that used the current system as a base line with the plan and goal of expanding service areas while attempting to maintain timing and transfers. The design process involved location analysis to establish all major destinations and timing analysis to ensure all designs met timing thresholds. The final results yielded concepts that include:

- Two, 30-minute route options and two, 45-minute route designs that would provide customers with what staff determined to be “good discussion options”.

Public Engagement

On November 4, 2024, Staff hosted a Public Information Centre (PIC) in the Town Hall Atrium. This was an open event to receive feedback on the route concepts. In

conjunction with this event, the Communications team launched a public survey to gather data and feedback online.

The PIC and on-line survey netted some good discussion and suggestions for improving the transit system and route design and allowed Staff to narrow the options to the top two concepts. It also yielded a good overview of transit user destinations and reinforced the major destinations that include:

- Shopping centres.
- Arenas.
- Community Centres.
- Banks.
- Hospitals.
- Schools.
- Medical Buildings (Doctor's Appointments)

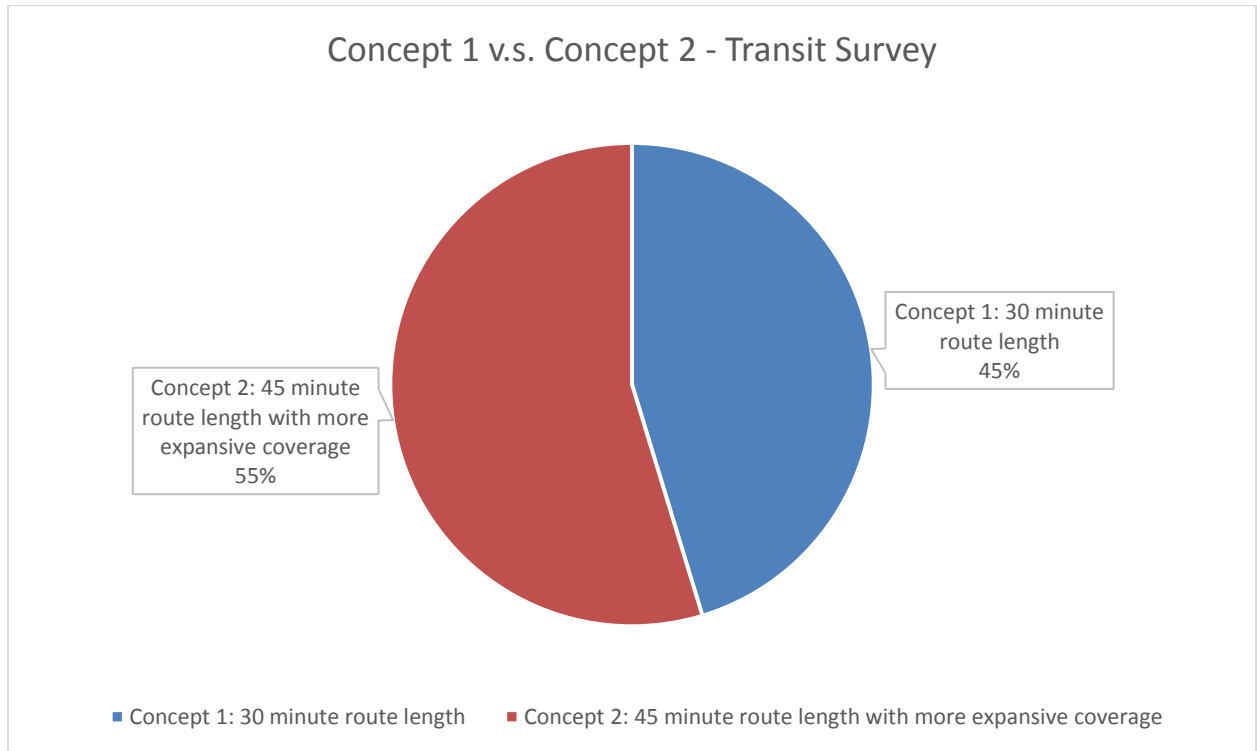
One of the significant challenges Staff faced was designing routes that traveled to all major destinations while remaining on time to facilitate transfers.

In January and February of 2025, a second online survey was published to receive feedback on the top 2 Concepts presented for consideration or options. The results of the feedback received are summarized in Figure 1. Based on the results, Concept 2 was the most desired option. See Figure 1

The highlights include:

- 45-minute route time.
- Made up of two shorter routes.
- The use of two buses rather than the three that are currently used.
- All transit buses will remain on public roads where the Town has direct control of the routes, maintenance, parking, and traffic areas.
- Room for growth and future expansion when Hansen Boulevard is extended to the west.

Figure 1: Transit Survey Comparison (January – February 2025)

**Notes:**

1. The data from the final public survey held in January/February 2025 shows that concept 2 was favored by 55% of recipients compared to 45% with the other design concept 1.
2. 85 responses received in the first survey and 215 responses received in the second survey. Percentages in Figure 1 based on the second survey results.

Proposed Route Changes

Based on the feedback received and Staff's analysis, the most efficient way to offer transit to Orangeville is outlined by Concept 2, which operates on a 45-minute cycle with four different routes, combined into two overall routes and summarized as follows:

- The Green route runs into and turns into the Pink route at Amelia Street and College Avenue; and
- The Orange route runs into and turns into the Blue route at Dawson Road and Centennial Road.

The proposed route change design allows for maximum coverage and reduces the number of buses in active service at any given time.

Concept 2 can be seen in Attachment 3 of this report. Displayed on this attachment are the main highlights:

- Two routes, split into four distinct route areas
- Orange and Blue routes create full route trip
- Green and Pink routes create full route trip
- Adds service to the west end of Orangeville
- Services Alder Recreation Centre
- Services Westside Market Village
- Services 43 Bythia Street (from the roadway, Bythia Street)
- Close proximity to Senior Centre
- Services Headwaters Healthcare Centre
- Services Orangeville Fairgrounds Shopping Centre
- Services Orangeville Mall on both the north and south sides of Hansen Boulevard
- Adds Service to Amelia Street and College Avenue
- Services both high schools
- Service time from Tony Rose Memorial Sports Centre to Alder Recreation Centre: 15 minutes
- Expandable when Hansen Blvd. is constructed.

These highlights were all recognized as key locations and features during the design phase.

Table 3: Concept #2 (Proposed) Transit Routes Data

Concept #2 Transit Routes				
	Green	Pink	Orange	Blue
Route Driving Time (min)	20	13	15	17
Route Distance (km)	9.5	6.3	9.5	8.8
Total Route Driving Distance	34.1			

Notes:

1. Concept 2 was designed with a few of the following principles in mind: expanding coverage to areas not currently serviced, accommodating the Hansen boulevard extension and other future developments, maintaining coverage to major destinations, and efficient design with ample buffer time to maintain on time performance.
2. Table 3 shows the same information but for Concept 2 and all four routes.

Service Buses

On March 10, 2025, Council received and approved the recommendations outlined in Infrastructure Services report INS-2025-016 directing Staff to enter into an agreement with New Flyer (NFI) for the purchase of two new 40-foot buses. Staff have provided NFI with a letter of understanding to purchase the buses. The buses are expected to take approximately 18 months to receive and begin servicing Orangeville Transit Routes.

The replacement of the 30-ft buses with more robust, heavier duty and larger capacity transit vehicles aligns with Orangeville Transit future readiness planning to offer affordable transportation to residents of all abilities.

Although receipt of the buses will take a considerable amount of time to receive and put into service, the new bus route concept will:

- Reduce the number of buses required to operate the system from three to two.
- Realign the route driving time so the route coverage for the buses will be shorter with more room for unexpected delays.
- Help establish consistency.
- Restore accurate timing.
- Restore confidence and efficiency.
- Allow for future expansion when Hansen Boulevard is constructed and introduced to the Town's Road network.

while maintaining key identified destinations such as 43 Bythia Street (serviced from the roadway), Alder Street Recreation Centre, Westside Market Village, Headwaters Health Centre, Orangeville Fairgrounds Shopping Centre, Orangeville Mall and expanding transit coverage to areas such as Amelia Street and nearby areas, neighbourhoods west of Riddell Road, closer stops for residents west of Blind Line. Concept 2 will also be designed so that transit service is further expanded when Hansen Blvd. is completed in the near future.

Table 4 outlines the operating parameters of the proposed route changes.

Table 4: Current Routes versus Concept #2 Routes

	Current Transit Routes	Concept #2 (Proposed) Transit Routes
No. of route cycles per day assuming a 13.5-hour transit day	27 route trips	18 route trips
Total route driving distance. Sum of all route distances.	36.2 kilometers	34.1 kilometers
Total operating distance covered by buses in a single transit day	977.4 kilometers	613.8 kilometers
Total operating time covered by buses in a single transit day	40.5 hours	27 hours

Notes:

1. Total operating distance covered by buses in a regular transit day is calculated by multiplying the number of route cycles per day by the total route driving distance.
2. The total operating distance for all routes is decreasing mainly due to the reduction in the number of buses and less overlap.

Corporate Implications

The 2025-2034 capital program includes a budget of \$105,000 funded from ICIP (\$60,000), Development Charges (\$21,000), and tax supported capital reserves (\$24,000) for transit stop infrastructure including stop pads and shelters. Additionally as part of the 2024-year end reconciliations, Finance staff will determine the amount ICIP grant funding that is required to close out the Transfer Hub project and any unspent grant funding will be recommended to be redirected towards the transit stop infrastructure upgrades and the two new 40-foot buses.

Based on costs to complete similar work in 2024, staff estimate the cost for a new concrete pad and shelter to be \$26,000 (\$12,000 for shelter and \$14,000 for concrete work). AODA compliant concrete bus pads and transit shelters will be important to add to destinations like 43 Bythia. Should the cost of additional shelters exceed approved budgets, staff will bring back an expenditure request to Council through the budget process or a Council report.

The transition to concept 2 will result in 364 kilometers less driven per day. This equates to 107,000 less kilometers driven per year. While these changes are anticipated to result in some decreases in operating costs, the service has experienced modest deficits over the past few years and as such, it is unlikely that the 2026 operating budget will see a decrease.

Changing the transit routes will involve the following departments: Transportation & Development, IT, Communications, Public Works and Customer Service. These departments will be involved in the roll-out process to ensure that the information is communicated correctly and that we have the physical and electronic infrastructure in place to support the changeover.

The Town will also rely on the help of third parties such as First Student and CONSAT Canada. First Student will run test routes to establish timing between stops when developing the schedule and final stop locations. CONSAT Canada will assist the Town with uploading transit feed software data to build the route for its electronic programs. OT already has existing contracts in place with these companies and does not expect the price for these services to be increase substantially.

Conclusion

The Town currently has 4-30-foot transit buses operating 3 routes. The current routes cover approximately 67% of the municipality with Transit's ultimate goal being 100% coverage. Concept 2 route plan is estimated to result in approximately 80-85% coverage.

Growing demand, increased coverage areas and a growing municipality have resulted in delays to service and other unexpected issues with transit operations.

Through Public Information Centres and on-line survey engagements, Staff determine that current transit users take transit to access a number of destinations including shopping centres, schools, medical building, the hospital and places of employment.

This report recommends that Council endorse and approve the recommended route changes as outlined by Concept 2 (Attachment 3) to this report. The highlights of that concept include the use of new 40-foot transit buses mainly running on main roads and avoiding private property where the Town has minimal control and is subject to delays, conflicts with parked vehicles and other unexpected circumstance.

Solidifying Transit routes, setting attainable destination times and schedules restores confidence and makes for a reliable transit system. The routes being proposed allow for future expansion into the west and northwest area of Town.

Strategic Alignment

Strategic Plan

Strategic Goal: Municipal Services

Objective: Optimize transit system for efficiency and greater coverage

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

Theme: Transportation System

Strategy: Promote more sustainable and efficient transportation options

Notice Provisions

Not Applicable.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s):

1. Current Orangeville Transit Routes
2. Proposed Transit Route Revision – Concept #1
3. Proposed Transit Route Revision – Concept #2