

HSR Policy Resolution

Submitted by the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce - Airport Transit Service (HSR)

Issue:

HSR service should be considered as a permanent transportation service improvement connecting the John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport and downtown Hamilton.

Background:

In 2002 an Airport Transit Service Pilot was implemented and dropped within 6 months. The project was turned down due to financial restrictions of Council to meet budget obligations, with no relevance to the implications of removing the service and a disregard for future growth of Economic Business Development.

During the pilot project, the HSR shuttle service showed a stable yet modest passenger ridership largely due to a lack of promotion and a restriction of availability for a large number of employees working off-hours.

The existing Transcab service to the Upper James terminal is unreliable. It is an inefficient solution to providing expanded options for both employees and visitors to the airport.

Recent announcements retaining to Airport expansion and additional flights are encouraging. Consistent growth of Westjet traffic, the addition of Air Canada Jazz and the May 2007 introduction of overseas flights to the U.K. give the cost-conscious consumer further transportation options out to the airport.

35% of employees are within the demographics of part-time, seasonal and young employees who fall into a salary range that limits the ability to afford a vehicle and the cost associated.

Staffing levels at the airport are well over 3,000 employees working for over 31 companies, placing the airport in the top 5 largest private sector employers in Hamilton.

Service provided to employees and visitors of the Hamilton International Airport would benefit greatly from service that can give the customer a competitive alternative to existing forms of transportation. By providing a direct service to downtown, there are opportunities to connect to inter-city modes of transportation including GO Transit, VIA, and Greyhound. The benefits of inter-modal routing are substantial with regards to the increased commuter traffic and strain on the large highways and corridors.

Implementation of a permanent Transit service to the Airport has been identified as an important component of the Economic Development strategic initiatives and is supportive of the GRIDS movement and SMART GROWTH initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce urges the City of Hamilton, working with the Province of Ontario, as may be appropriate, establish, as soon as is reasonably possible, a permanent service that would provide reliable public transit to the Hamilton International Airport and surrounding employment lands.