

**Council/Commission Member Inquiry Form**  
**Demande de renseignement d'un membre du Conseil/de la Commission**

**Subject: Feasibility of Implementing Ottawa Seniors' Transportation Committee Proposal: "Senior Pick Your Ride-Free Day"**

**Objet : Faisabilité de la mise en œuvre d'une proposition du Comité du transport des aînés d'Ottawa : « Sélection de la journée de gratuité du transport en commun pour les personnes âgées »**

**Submitted at:** Transit Commission

**Présenté à :** Commission du transport en commun

**From/Exp.:**

**Date:** November 20, 2019

**File/Dossier :**

Commissioner/  
Commissionaire:  
T. Kavanagh

**Date :** le  
20 novembre 2019

**TTC 10-19**

**To/Destinataire:**

General Manager, Transportation Services Department / Directeur général, Direction générale des transports

**Inquiry:**

That staff review the Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee (OSTC) proposal\* to Transit Commission entitled "Senior Pick Your Ride-Free Day" and report back to the Transit Commission with information on the feasibility of implementing this proposal in the future.

\* *OSTC Proposal attached as Document 1.*

**Demande de renseignement:**

Que le personnel examine la proposition\* faite par le Comité du transport des aînés d'Ottawa à la Commission du transport en commun intitulée « Sélection de la journée de gratuité du transport en commun pour les personnes âgées » et remette ensuite à la Commission un rapport contenant les renseignements sur la faisabilité de la mise en œuvre future de cette proposition.

\* *Proposition du Comité du transport des aînés d'Ottawa ci-jointe à titre de Document 1.*

**Response** (Date: 2019-Nov-27)

As discussed at the November 20 Transit Commission meeting, OC Transpo's current fare system technology, comprised of the Presto smartcard supplied by Metrolinx and the fare control system supplied by Scheidt & Bachmann, does not allow for the implementation of a program that would provide seniors an option to pick their no-charge day. Therefore, at this time, the suggestion of the Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee is not feasible.

OC Transpo will continue to engage with Metrolinx and Scheidt & Bachmann on this issue, to see whether an initiative like this could be implemented with software upgrades in the future.

**Réponse** (Date: le 27 novembre 2019)

Comme mentionné lors de la réunion de la Commission du transport en commun du 20 novembre, la technologie actuelle du système tarifaire d'OC Transpo, qui comprend la carte à puce Presto fournie par Metrolinx et le système de perception des tarifs fourni par Scheidt & Bachmann, ne permet pas la mise en œuvre d'un programme qui fournirait aux personnes âgées l'option de choisir leur journée de service gratuit. Par conséquent, actuellement, la suggestion du Comité du transport des aînés d'Ottawa n'est pas réalisable.

OC Transpo continuera de consulter Metrolinx et Scheidt & Bachmann sur cette question, pour voir si une initiative comme celle-ci pourrait être mise en œuvre au moyen de mises à niveau logicielles à l'avenir.

**Standing Committees / Commission Inquiries:**

**Demande de renseignements des Comités permanents / Commission :**

*Response to be listed on the Transit Commission Agenda of February 19, 2020*

*La réponse devrait être inscrite à l'ordre du jour de la réunion du Commission du transport en commun prévue le 19 février 2020*



Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee  
of The Council on Aging of Ottawa,

SUBMISSION TO TRANSIT COMMISSION  
November 20, 2019

### **Seniors Pick Your Ride Free Day**

I am appearing as chair of the Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee (OSTC), a committee of The Council on Aging of Ottawa (COA). The COA is a planning and advocacy organization which has served as a leading community voice for Ottawa's seniors for forty-five years. ([www.coaottawa.ca](http://www.coaottawa.ca))

The COA is most appreciative of the leadership, policies and concerns shown for seniors' transit needs by Ottawa City Council, the Transportation Committee, the Transit Commission and OCTranspo.

The OSTC provides City of Ottawa seniors with information about public transit options as it relates to OCTranspo's conventional and Para Transpo service and identifies gaps that exist and pursues solutions for achieving their needs.

Our Committee (OSTC) thanks the City for maintaining the Ride Free Wednesday Program and expanding the program to include Sundays. However, there are issues regarding the popularity of the Ride Free Wednesday Program that need to be addressed. Unfortunately it has led to overcrowding on the bus system on the Wednesdays, problems

for seniors seeking seating on those busy days, and overcrowding in terms of seniors programming and appointments on that day.

You will recall we came before you last year to ask for a more flexible approach regarding this program. We had proposed a Seniors Pick-Your-Ride-Free Day, i.e. allowing seniors to choose one of the 5 days of the week – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday – instead of being restricted to only the Wednesday. We had canvassed seniors organizations and service providers and found wide-spread support for this proposal. Unfortunately the Commission Last year wasn't prepared to investigate our proposal. However, the problem of overcrowding on Wednesdays still exists.

Undeterred, we took the opportunity to meet with OC Transpo staff recently to examine the problem, and I am pleased to be able to tell you that OC Transpo staff have indicated to us their willingness to work with us to resolve the overcrowding problem on Seniors Ride Free Wednesdays, and have identified some possible solutions to explore. We are asking today that you direct staff to examine this issue and report back to you with possible strategies in order to help seniors travel safely in our bus system. In our view this would help make Ottawa a leader as an Age-Friendly City for transportation and mobility.

We thank Transit Commission for the opportunity to appear today. We look forward to continued collaboration on transportation needs of seniors.