



Council Report

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Date: January 20, 2026
To: Anthony Haddad, City Manager
From: Kristen Dixon, GM of Infrastructure

Subject: Transit – Night Route Extension of Hours

Staff Recommendation

THAT Council approve an additional trip on the night route, at an estimated 0.75 service hours per day, at an estimated annual cost of \$7,000, to be funded by General Surplus;

AND THAT Council direct staff to amend the 2026-2030 Financial Plan accordingly.

Strategic priority objective

Mission: Penticton will serve its residents, businesses and visitors through organizational excellence, partnership and the provision of effective and community focused services.

Livable & Accessible: The City of Penticton will proactively plan for deliberate growth, focusing on creating an inclusive, healthy, and vibrant community.

Background

Over the past few years, the City has made concerted efforts to improve transit service in Penticton. This has included adopting a Network Restructure Plan in 2023, the South Okanagan Transit Future Action Plan, and committing to the actions in these documents through the three-year expansion planning and approval process.

On September 16, 2025, Council received proposed expansion plans for the years 2026-2028, and passed the following resolution:

234/2025 It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council support the following Transit Service Additions as part of the City's Three-Year Transit Expansion Plan:

- Conventional Transit System
 - 2026/2027 - Phase 1 of network restructure plan – modify routing and introduce 15-min service on route 5 Main Street;
 - 2026/2027 – Introduce evening service on all local routes, replacing the route 15 Night Route;
 - 2027/2028 – Phase 2 of network restructure plan – modify routes 1, 2, 3 and 4 and increase frequency Monday through Saturday.

AND THAT the financial costs associated with the service additions be incorporated into the 2026-2030 Financial Plan with funding to be determined through the budget process.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The implementation of the approved expansion plans are contingent on new funding becoming available from the Province, and prioritized by BC Transit. BC Transit typically announces approved expansion plans in the spring, following the Provincial budget process.

Currently, primary routes are serviced from 6:30am until 6pm, Monday to Saturday. Evening service is provided by one route, Route 15, from 6:50 to 10pm. Through the Network Restructure Plan process and engagement, one of the key themes that was heard was the need for extended service hours in the evening, and along all routes (rather than the one circuitous route intended to cover the entire City). The second portion of the approved expansion plans would do exactly that, by introducing evening service on all routes and eliminating the current route 15.

On September 26, 2025 the Penticton Vees held their first home game in the WHL. In anticipation of record attendance, the City quickly worked with BC Transit to promote transit service to the event a few days before the event. However, given the current hours of transit operation, the last trip on the night route was not quite late enough to support those leaving the game. As a result, staff and BC transit authorized a one-hour extension to the route, on that night only, to ensure transit was a viable option for attendees. This last-minute decision resulted in four people taking advantage of the extended service. Feedback from the transit operator, Berry and Smith, and from residents generally, was that the service would be used if provided more consistently, and with more notice.

On October 21, 2025, Councillor Stewart introduced a notice of motion to extend transit service hours to support all of the 2025/2026 evening Penticton Vees home hockey games. BC Transit confirmed that the extended transit hours could be provided at an estimated cost of \$2,000, and staff confirmed that this could be funded through existing operating budget. At the November 4, 2025 meeting, Council passed the following resolution:

Notice of Motion introduced by Councillor Stewart on October 21, 2025 for consideration:

291/2025 It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council extend transit hours to support the 2025/2026 evening Penticton Veas hockey games at an estimated cost of \$2,000 to be funded by existing operating budgets.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

During the discussion for the notice of motion, Council inquired if a similar model could be explored to support other evening events happening at the PTCC and SOEC, beyond just the Veas games. Staff confirmed that a more detailed analysis would need to be completed to determine the number of events/frequency to determine feasibility and associated costs, and this report follows up on that inquiry.

Staff have identified two options to better support events at the PTCC and the SOEC while the City awaits approval of its longer-term expansion plans. The first is to extend service on an event by event basis, while the second is to extend the service hours of the night route across the board.

Option 1: Event by Event – While this is feasible, using a similar model as is being used for the Veas games, the number of events varies and would require ongoing coordination/communication with the SOEC/PTCC to ensure consistent service provision. Communication about transit service levels would also be important, as one-time service changes are communicated differently than regular service. This additional coverage would also only benefit the events specifically, as others who may desire to use the extended evening service would not be able to regularly depend on the service.

Option 2: Extension of Night Route - As an alternative, staff worked with BC Transit to explore the option to extend the regular night route service, by roughly 45min (one more loop of the entire route). This would not only support evening events at the SOEC and PTCC, but would provide consistent extended night service for all transit users who may wish to take advantage of the service to attend other evening entertainment activities in the downtown, including workers in associated industries. Staff believe this predictability in service will also result in much higher utilization, and are recommending this option instead of the event specific expansion.

Financial implication

The total service hours required for the recommended option is roughly 235 hours. BC Transit has confirmed there are roughly 130 hours available for special events that can be repurposed without displacing other events. The remaining 105 hours would be billed fully to the City through the Special Service Request process (as is currently being done for the extended service on Veas game nights). The estimated cost of this is roughly \$7,000, of which \$2,000 was previously approved for the Veas

games specifically. If this further change is approved, the additional transit costs will be funded by General Surplus as needed.

Climate Impact

The City endorsed its Community Climate Action Plan on Nov. 16, 2021, with a goal of reducing emissions by a projected 40 per cent below 2007 levels by 2030. The plan identified that approximately 54% of our community emissions are from vehicles, and to reach the emissions targets, outlined six areas of focus. One of these six is to “Shift Beyond the Car” by encouraging active transportation and transit usage. The proposed expansion supports this goal.

Analysis

Since the introduction of the extended service for Veas games nights only, there has been limited usage of the additional service. Staff believe this is due to the inconsistency in service, and the relative newness of this service offering. Staff recommend extending the night route on all service days, which will provide consistent and reliable service not only for those attending Veas games or events at the PTCC and SOEC, but that will also support other members of the community who may be seeking later transit options around the City. For the incremental cost of approximately \$5,000, staff believe this will provide better overall value to the community.

Alternatively, the City will continue to offer extended service on late Veas game days only, and monitor if additional promotion/communication efforts increase utilization.

Alternate recommendations

Should Council wish to monitor the existing expansion (during evening Veas games only) for a longer period before considering changes, Council can simply receive this report for information.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Dixon, P.Eng, MBA

GM of Infrastructure

Concurrence

General Manager of Corporate Services <i>AMC</i>	City Manager <i>SH</i>
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