



## **The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh**

Planning & Building Services

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Brian Hillman, Director Planning & Building Services

**Date to Council:** February 11, 2020

**Report Number:** PBS-2020-05

**Subject:** Annual Status Report on the Tecumseh Transit Service for 2019  
OUR FILE: T03 TTS

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### **Recommendations**

It is recommended:

**That PBS-2020-05, Annual Status Report on the Tecumseh Transit Service for 2019, be received.**

### **Executive Summary**

After three years of lower than usual ridership, the Tecumseh Transit Service (TTS) ridership levels for 2019 increased to pre-2016 levels at well over 28,000. This increase may be attributed to route revisions implemented in mid-2018 to make the service more reliable along with the purchase of a second kneeling bus to improve accessibility, safety and comfort for the ridership. The 2019 total revenue also increased by 4.1% over the 2018 levels going from \$24,002 to \$24,974. Revenue from TTS bus passes continued to increase overall and constituted a greater share of the total revenue than in previous years. The purpose of this Report is to provide Council with a statistical overview of the TTS for the 2019 calendar year and to provide an outlook of initiatives anticipated for 2020.

### **Background**

The Tecumseh Transit Service (TTS) has now completed its tenth year of operation after being introduced to the northerly urban area of the Town in December of 2009. The TTS operates on a recently revised circuitous route with a one-hour headway covering 30 kilometres and 43 stops. This revised route was introduced in May of 2018 after an extensive public consultation

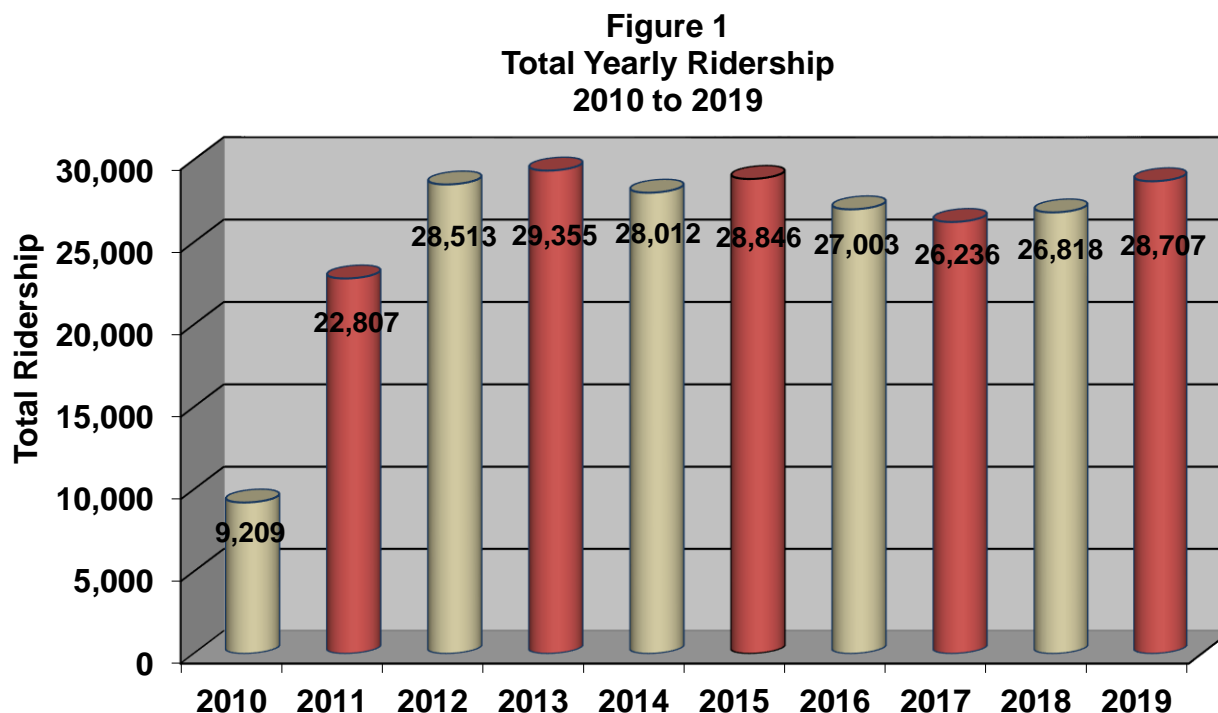
process that resulted in some bus stop locations being removed and others added in an attempt to minimize delays in service. The Town manages the service but contracts the operation and maintenance of the two Town-owned buses to First Student Canada (FSC). This contract expires at the end of 2020 but includes an option to extend for another term.

## Comments

### Ridership Use Analysis

The current route is conveniently accessible to 65 percent of the population of Tecumseh with accessibility being based on a 400-metre walking distance to a bus stop. Within the northerly settlement area of the Town, 72% of the population have reasonable access to the service. When only the urban area north of County Road 22 is considered, the route is accessible to nearly 90% of the population. Over the past ten years, the TTS has served approximately 252,000 riders and, in the past eight years, has maintained an annual ridership of between 26,000 and 29,000.

Total ridership in 2019 was 28,707 (see Figure 1 below) which represents an increase of 1,889 passengers and a 7% increase from the 2018 total ridership of 26,818. This increase cannot be attributed to any particular stop as increases were experienced throughout the TTS system. The 2019 total ridership is the third highest achieved since the TTS's inception in 2010.



The average daily ridership by month for 2019 was consistently higher when compared against the 2018 monthly averages (see Figure 2 below). In 2019, the TTS reached a monthly average daily ridership peak of 107 passengers in May. The second highest average daily

ridership month was September with 104 passengers. The 2019 overall average annual daily ridership was 95 passengers compared to an average of 88 passengers per day in 2018.

**Figure 2**  
**Average Daily Ridership by Month**  
**2018 and 2019**

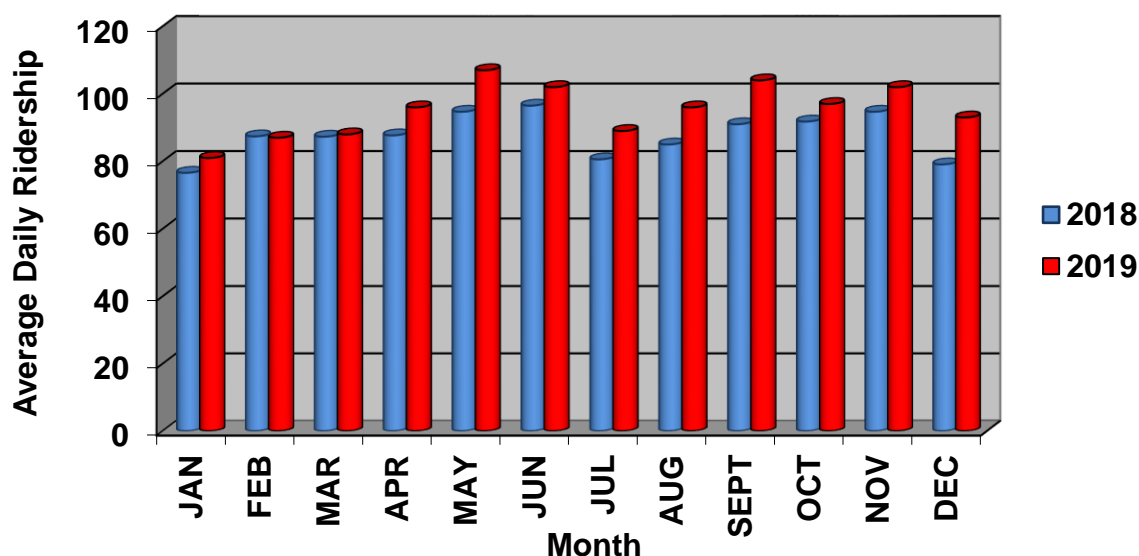


Figure 3 below provides a comparison of total monthly ridership for 2018 and 2019. The 2019 total monthly ridership high of 2,879 occurred in May. This is higher than the 2018 monthly high of 2,511, which occurred in June of 2018.

**Figure 3**  
**Total Monthly Ridership**  
**2018 and 2019**

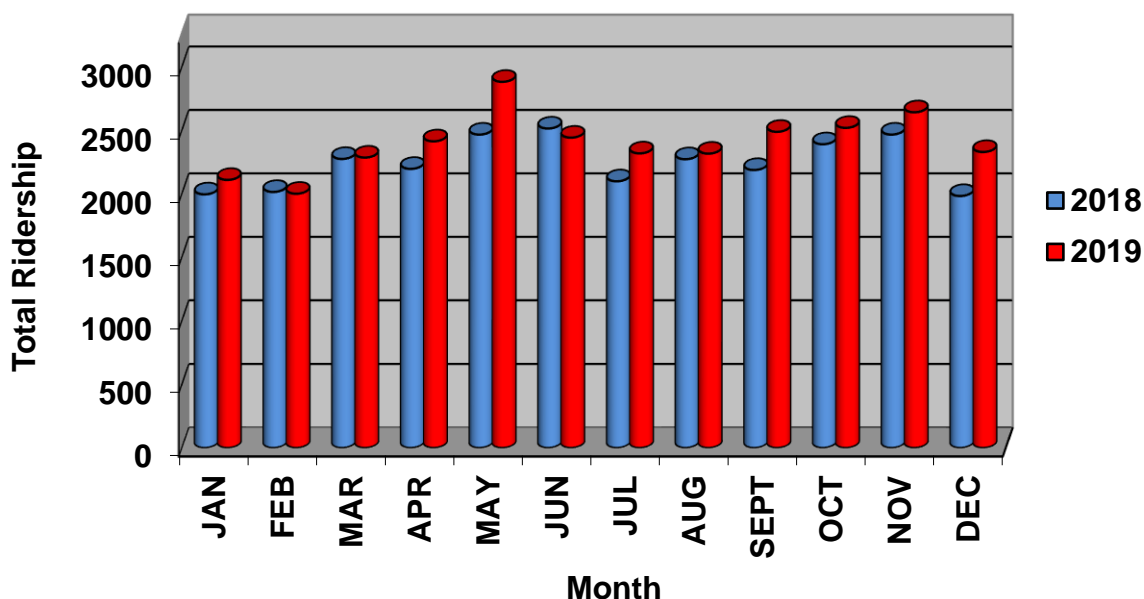
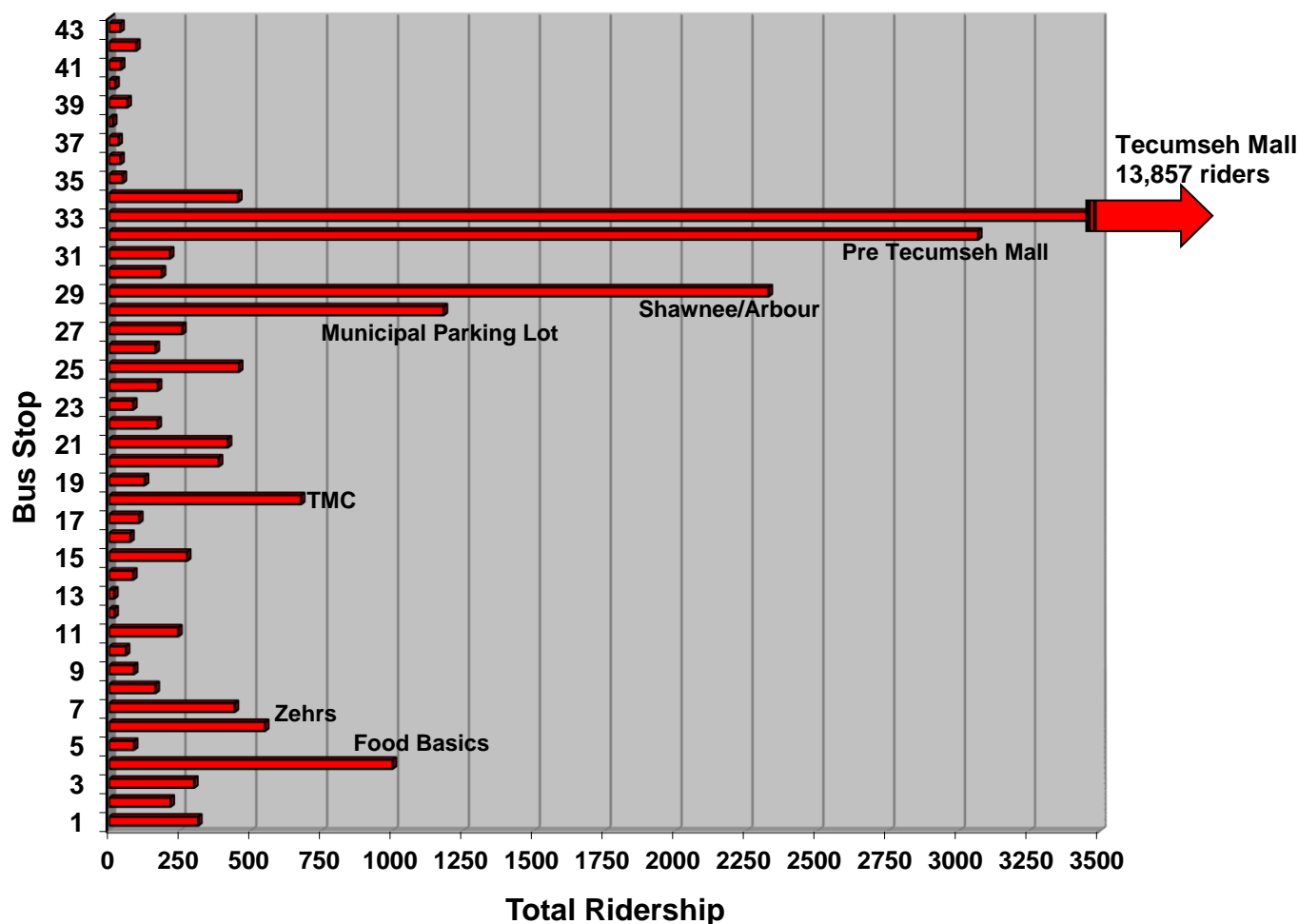


Figure 4 below and Attachment 1 illustrate ridership levels by bus stop for 2019. As anticipated, stop 33 at Tecumseh Mall was the most popular stop/destination with 48.3% of all passengers boarding the TTS bus at this location. This total is slightly higher than the 46.9% of all passengers who boarded the TTS bus at this location in 2018.

The next most popular stops in 2019 were 32 (10.7% of riders), 29 (8.1% of riders), 28 (4.1% of riders) and 4 (3.5% of riders). Respectively, these stops are: the stop immediately preceding the Tecumseh Mall at Southfield Drive; the northwest corner of Shawnee/Arbour; the municipal parking lot on Tecumseh Rd (at St. Anne's Street); and the Food Basics grocery store. Other popular bus stops during 2019 included stops 6 (Zehrs Plaza) and 18 (Tecumseh Medical Centre plaza). The July 2019 relocation of the former TTS bus stop at the Sobeys' grocery store on the west side of Manning Road in Lakeshore to the new Food Basics grocery store on the east side of Manning Road in Tecumseh, resulted in an increase in monthly ridership from 54 to 112 – a 107% increase. This revision has also helped to alleviate delays due to the congestion experienced along Amy Croft Drive in Lakeshore.

**Figure 4**  
**Total Ridership by Bus Stop**  
**2019**



As shown in Figure 5 below, the TTS was in highest demand during the afternoon peak period between 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. accounting for 21.8% of the total ridership. The demand during this time period is largely attributed to student ridership. The next highest ridership levels are experienced during the morning peak hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., the mid-day hours of 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and the post-work afternoon peak hour of 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ridership is at its lowest during the early morning (6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.) and early evening hours (5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.) at the beginning and end of the daily schedule.

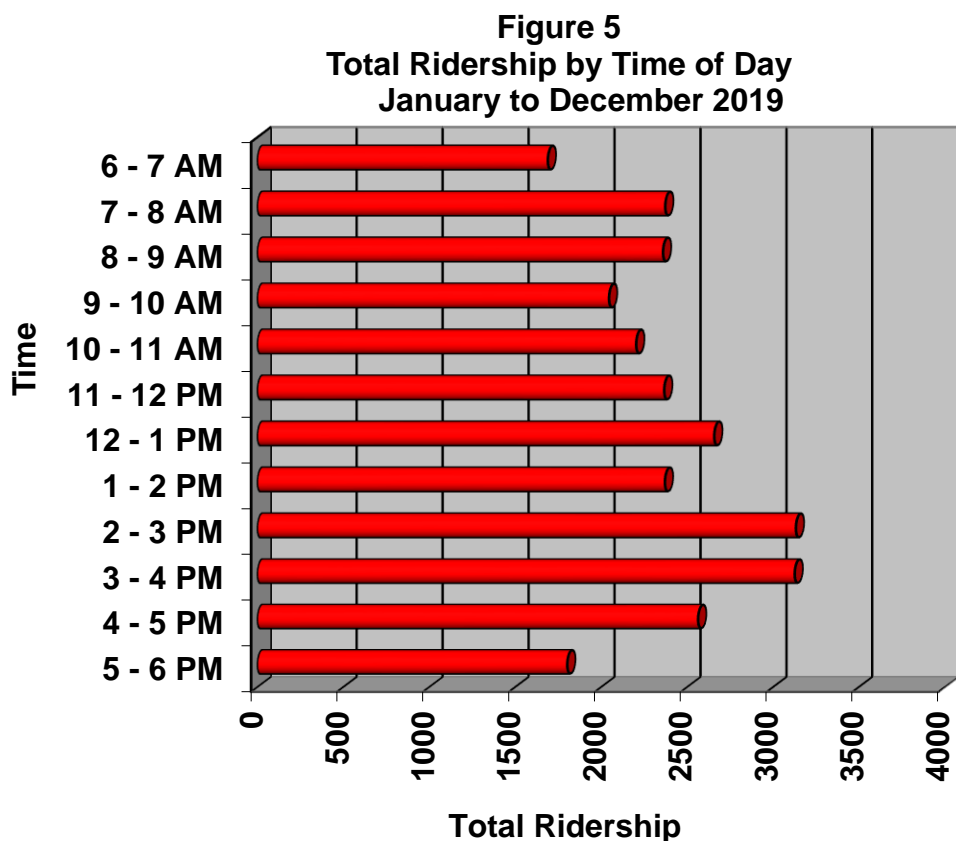
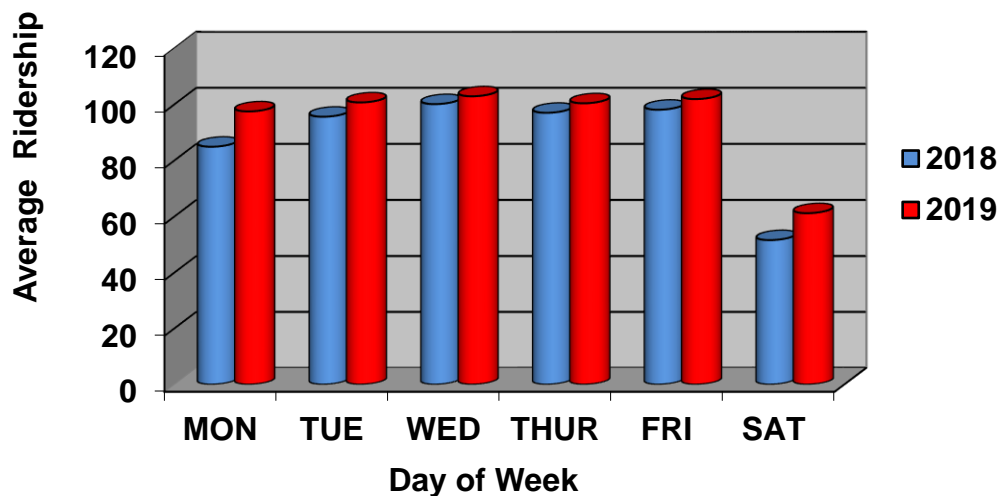


Figure 6 below illustrates that, with the exception of Saturday, there does not seem to be any significant difference amongst the days of the week on which people are using the transit system. Lower ridership on Saturdays can be attributed to fewer students using the service on this day and fewer places of employment being open.

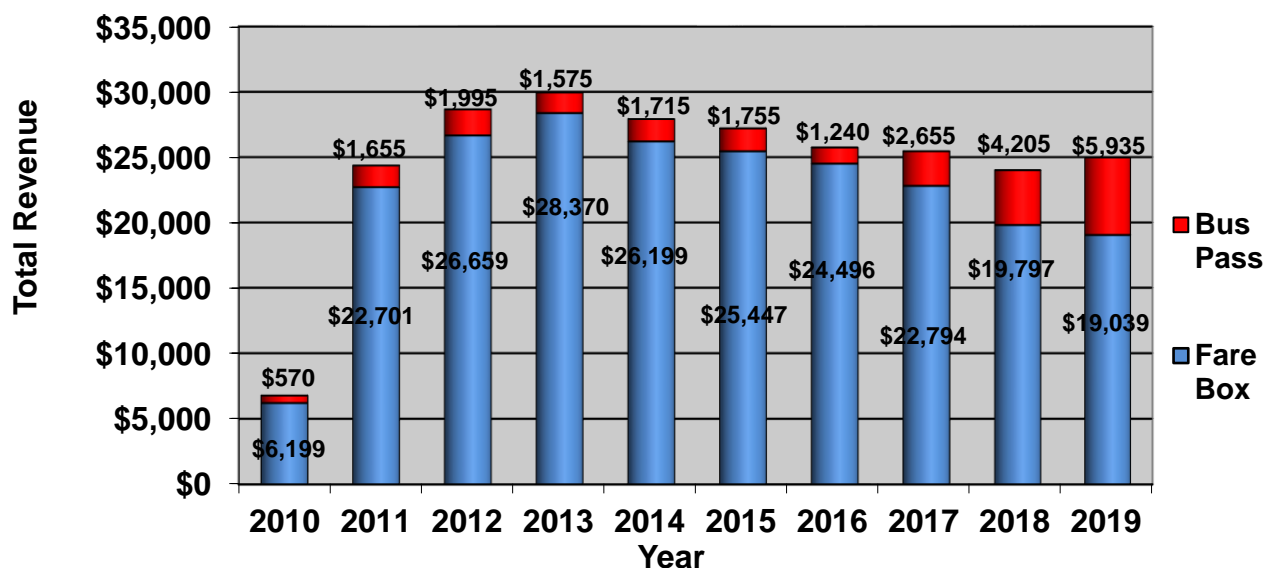
**Figure 6**  
**Average Daily Ridership by Day of the Week**  
**2018 and 2019**



## Ridership Revenue Analysis

Figure 7 depicts total annual fare box and bus pass revenues generated by the TTS from 2010 to 2019. The 2019 total annual fare box revenues were \$19,039 (compared to \$19,797 for 2018) representing a 3.8% decrease in fare box revenue over the previous year.

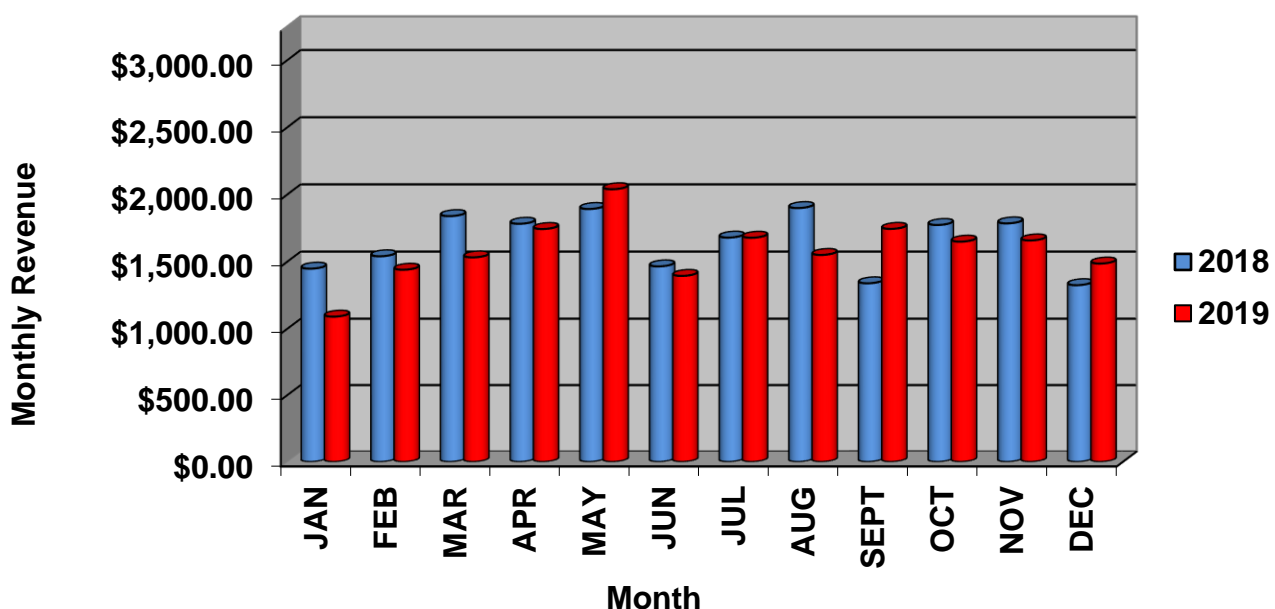
**Figure 7**  
**Annual Revenues**  
**2010 to 2019**



Part of this downward trend in fare box revenue over the past few years is a result of the increase in the sales of monthly bus passes. A total of \$5,935 was generated through the sale of bus passes in 2019 (compared to \$2,655 in 2017 and \$4,205 in 2018) bringing total revenues generated for 2019 to \$24,974 (compared to \$24,002 for 2018) amounting to a 4.1% increase in total overall annual revenues for 2019. It is anticipated that TTS revenues for 2020 will continue to increase, particularly given that the fares have been increased by \$0.25 with corresponding relative increases to bus passes.

Figure 8 depicts a comparison of monthly total fare box revenues generated by the TTS for 2018 and 2019. The highest total monthly revenue for 2019 (\$2,042) occurred in May. It should be noted that revenues in June were relatively low due to the Seniors Ride for Free promotion.

**Figure 8**  
**Total Monthly Fare Box Revenues**  
**2018 and 2019**

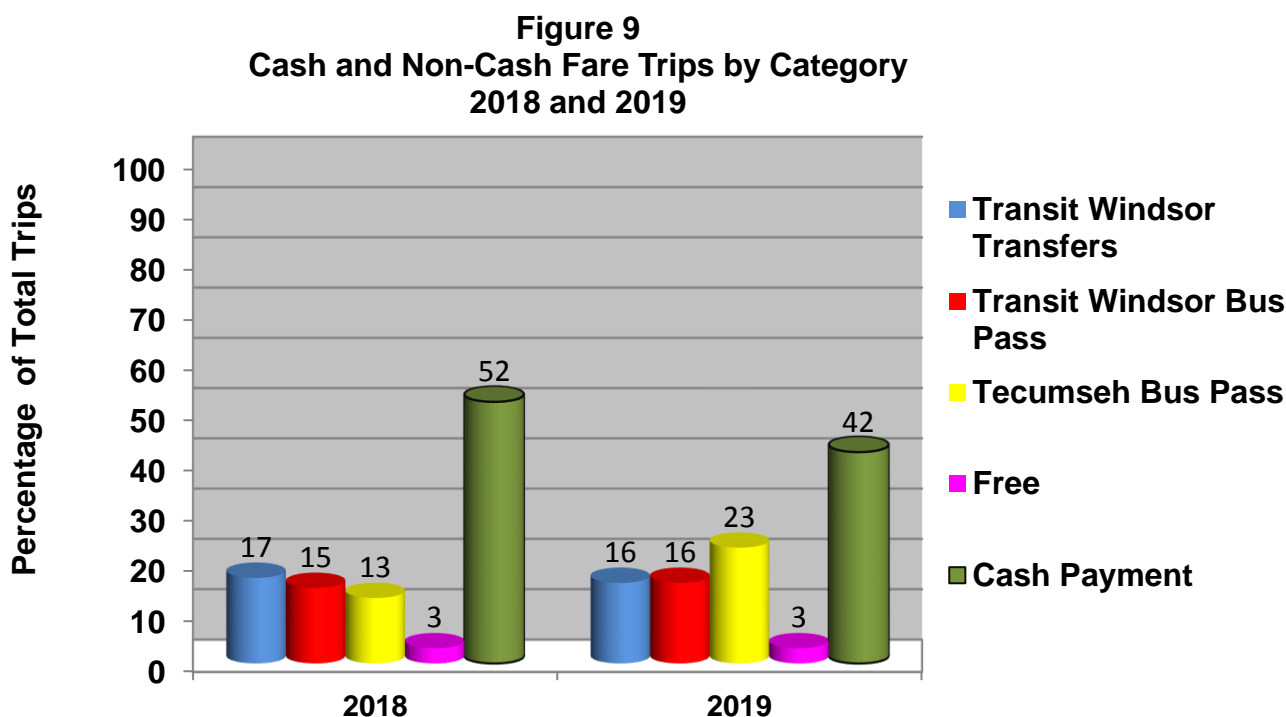


Two general boarding options exist for passengers using the bus: cash fare and non-cash fare payment. Non-cash fare includes the following categories:

- Transit Windsor transfer (at Tecumseh Mall only);
- Transit Windsor bus pass (at Tecumseh Mall only);
- Tecumseh Transit bus pass; or
- free riders (i.e. child under the age of five, blind persons, veterans and persons assisting a person with a disability)

Figure 9 below identifies the distribution of passengers based on category of fare payment. For 2019, Transit Windsor transfers accounted for 28% of all non-cash fare trips (compared to 36% in 2018) and 16% of total trips (compared to 17% in 2018). These trips are primarily Tecumseh residents who pay an outbound fare (to Tecumseh Mall), continue into Windsor by using the Transit Windsor system, then return to Tecumseh by using the aforementioned transfer stub.

In 2019, riders using a Transit Windsor bus pass when boarding the bus at Tecumseh Mall accounted for 27% of all non-cash fare trips (compared to 32% in 2018) and 16% of total trips (compared to 15% in 2018). These users are those who board the bus at Tecumseh Mall from the Transit Windsor system and take the bus into Tecumseh. These riders then pay the required fare when returning to Tecumseh Mall on the outbound trip back into the City of Windsor.



Passengers using a Tecumseh Transit bus pass, providing access to the system at any stop, accounted for 40% of all non-cash fare trips (compared to 27% in 2018) and 23% of total trips (compared to 13% in 2018). These riders have purchased a monthly bus pass at the Town Municipal Office. Free riders accounted for 3% of all trips in 2019, the same as in 2018.

A total of 90 Tecumseh Transit bus passes were purchased in 2019, up from the 60 purchased in 2018. Students accounted for 36, Adults for 29 and Seniors for 25 of these passes. Of the 90 passes, 53 were one-month and 37 were multi-month passes.



## **Initiatives Planned for 2020**

### **Seniors Ride for Free Month**

As in 2018, the TTS will provide a promotion for the Town's seniors in 2019, allowing them to ride the TTS for free for the entire month of June (Seniors' Month in Ontario). In keeping with Council's direction to better promote the service to seniors, Administration is once again recommending this program for 2020. The principle objective of this initiative will be to help seniors gain a better understanding and appreciation for the TTS and transit in general in the hope that they would feel comfortable using the service on a regular basis. To assist with this objective, Administration is planning to hold a TTS orientation session with both seniors and students during this month to help better familiarize these ridership groups with the TTS system.

### **Fleet Management Services - GPS Units and Counters on the Buses**

In accordance with the 2019 Council-approved budget, Fleet Management Services were installed in both low floor accessible buses. These services included the installation of GPS units on the two buses, thereby enabling staff to track the bus location in real time. This has proven very useful in dealing with inquiries/complaints regarding the TTS, particularly with respect to perceived speeding of the bus and its timing at stops as the software maintains a log of this type of bus activity. Administration continues to work toward a solution that would allow riders to access this real time information. The ability to do this is subject to an agreement being finalized between our Fleet Management Services provider and ESRI with respect to GIS Real-time mapping software integration.

This service has also enabled the bus drivers to use electronic counters to track riders boarding and departing the bus. Subject to some additional refinements, it is hoped that the service will ultimately reduce the time and effort by staff involved in tabulating and reporting the requisite transit statistics to the Ministry of Transportation and the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA).

### **Continued Dialogue with Transit Windsor Regarding Cross Boundary Service Opportunities**

In accordance with the direction of Council, Administration continues to meet with Transit Windsor representatives to discuss potential areas of mutual interest related to the two transit systems. Transit Windsor recently completed a review of its transit service through the "More than Transit" initiative. Through this initiative, it was discovered that many trips on the Transit Windsor system originate in the east end of the City, and in Tecumseh, with their destination being in the west end of the City – particularly at St. Clair College. Accordingly, Transit Windsor is implementing changes recommended through the study that it believes will greatly benefit those travelling from the east end of the City and Tecumseh to the west end.

In addition to the foregoing revision, the study also identified significant opportunities for enhanced transit in the Oldcastle Hamlet. To address this potential demand, Transit Windsor is considering introducing a pilot program to extend the current Transit Windsor route servicing the Oldcastle Hamlet to cover a greater area through a hybrid of conventional fixed-route

service and on-demand service. The on-demand service would be available during peak hours and would involve the use of smart technology, either through the use of a phone app or hotline, to identify real time demand for the service and establish corresponding custom routing during these times. Discussions with Transit Windsor regarding this service will continue to take place in 2020. Further detailed reporting to Council will be provided as these discussions advance.

## **Summary**

TTS ridership levels for 2019 increased marginally over the 2018 levels. In addition, riders purchasing TTS bus passes continues to increase, along with also providing a greater share of the TTS overall yearly revenue. These increases may be attributed to route revisions implemented in mid-2018 to make the service more reliable and the purchase of new, kneeling buses to improve accessibility, safety and comfort for the ridership. The kneeling buses also provided for more efficient loading of wheelchair riders and negates the need for the external lowering of a ramp on the rear of the older bus, which takes more time. It is believed that these improvements assisted with increasing ridership numbers while providing a more effective and reliable transit service.

## **Consultations**

First Student Canada

## **Financial Implications**

None

## Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2019-22 Strategic Priorities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Make the Town of Tecumseh an even better place to live, work and invest through a shared vision for our residents and newcomers.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that Tecumseh's current and future growth is built upon the principles of sustainability and strategic decision-making.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrate the principles of health and wellness into all of Tecumseh's plans and priorities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steward the Town's "continuous improvement" approach to municipal service delivery to residents and businesses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate the Town's leadership role in the community by promoting good governance and community engagement, by bringing together organizations serving the Town and the region to pursue common goals.

## Communications

Not applicable ☒

Website ☐      Social Media ☐      News Release ☐      Local Newspaper ☐

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

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Chief Administrative Officer

**Attachment  
Number**

**Attachment  
Name**

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2019 Ridership Totals by Bus Stop Map