This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Fri Oct 30 7:03:14 2026 / +0000 GMT

Shelburne Council decides to cut weekend transit service amid concerns around cost

Written By **Paula Brown**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Town of Shelburne is looking to end its weekend transit service by the end of the year due to a lack of ridership and high financial costs.

During their meeting on Monday (Oct. 16), Shelburne council received a report from chief administrative officer Denyse Morrissey regarding the ridership and costs of the weekend transit service.

?As we have the budget framework report tonight and given the financial cost associated with the program, we wanted to make sure council has all information with respect to that deliverable to ensure you're making strategic financial decisions on the directions we have doing forward,? said Morrissey.

According to the report, from April to October, the weekend service saw a total of 81 riders and had an operating cost of about $40,000 for the seven-month period.

?The unfortunate reality is that that cost is in the range of $40,000, which means that the operating subsidy is about $494 per ride. When we did it in 2022 the average subsidy was in the $90 range,? explained Morrissey.

The transit service in Shelburne initially launched in 2020 as a weekday service funded by a $2.3 million grant received by Grey County and Southgate Township from the provincial government. The funding was used to implement service from Dundalk to Orangeville, also known as Route 2, Monday through Friday. The Town of Shelburne does not fund or contribute any cost to the weekday service.

In July of 2021, a five-month pilot project to expand the transit service to include weekends was launched with four stops. In April, the Town of Shelburne increased the number of bus service stops to 14, with the service consisting of ten runs for five hours on Saturday and Sunday.

The report to the council noted that the most active months for the weekend transit service were June and August, with 54 and 20 riders. The other months of weekend transit service saw between zero to six riders total throughout the entire month period.

?I'm disappointed to see it wasn't utilized as we thought it would be. I can't support continuing going forward with it at this point; we tried and it doesn't work,? said Benotto.

During their regular meeting on Monday, council also received a report on the budget framework for 2024, which included a recommended six per cent increase in the tax rate.

The 2024 draft budget included $91,000 for the weekend transit service based on 12 months at $7,583 per month. The report states that a one per cent change in the budget equals about $99,876.

This means that the weekend transit service could contribute to almost one per cent of the 2024 budget, and its exclusion from the 2024 budget could see the recommended tax rate decrease to 5 per cent.

?There's a lot of other services that can be provided for that kind of money,? said Mills.

Council directed staff to advise Grey County of their intent to discontinue the weekend transit service as of Dec. 31.