



## REPORT

**TO:** Mayor Avis & Council  
**FROM:** Jason Kabel, Manager of Community Services  
**DATE:** March 17, 2016  
**RE:** **Dial-a-ride Agreement**

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### Background

The Community Services Division undertook a Request For Proposals process (RFP #17-CS-02) that closed on Tuesday, February 28, 2017 for the 'provision of door to door bus-type transportation services in the Town of Fort Frances known as Dial-a-ride (3 year term).

There were 3 RFP packages picked up at Town Hall with 1 submission received by the deadline. There were 10 items, as a minimum, that needed to be included in the proposal; particulars of the submitted RFP by the incumbent, North-Air Services are detailed below.

#### 1. Experience-

North-Air is a transportation company based out of Fort Frances in which has been operating taxi services for over 40 years. Henry Bock started the company as a taxi service in the 60's. His son Paul took over in 1988 and in that time it had expanded into not only taxi services but provided the town with a bus depot as an agent for Greyhound and Caribou Coach, an AVIS car rental agent as well as UHAUL services. In the year 2000 Paul went into an agreement with the Town of Fort Frances to provide a transit type service to the community, known as dial-a-ride. It provides door to door affordable transportation 7 days a week and currently still operates under virtually the same schedule, pattern and prices as it did 17 years ago when it started.

In 2009 Bock's sold the business to Kevin and Lisa Pocock, who are the current owners today. With them they brought 20 years of experience in their ground transportation business, Pokey's Vans. Pokey's was a highway transportation company providing services for companies like CN Rail and MNR. They amalgamated the companies in 2010 and operate as North-Air Services.

#### 2. Employees-

**Margaret Silk:** Maggie has been employed with North-Air since October 2013. She was hired as a full-time taxi driver and occasional dispatcher. In April of 2016 she started as the primary dial-a-ride driver, working Monday to Friday. Since then she has developed a faithful following of clients who all adore her and the sales have increased 17% over the last 10 months. Maggie has experience with the processing of the dial-a-ride paperwork as a dispatcher well as having to record and total the statistics daily as the primary dial-a-ride driver.

**James Dobie:** James has been employed with North-Air since February 1997. He was hired as a taxi driver, dispatcher and Limo Driver. He has been the primary dispatcher for the last 18 years. He has assisted with the dial-a-ride service since it started in 2000 and is currently the primary dial-a-ride driver on Saturday's, a position he has held for the last 10 years. James also has experience processing the dial-

a-ride paperwork during his 5 day work week as the dispatcher as well as having to record and total the statistics for his Saturday shifts.

**Richard Peachey:** Peach has been employed with North-Air since August 1980. He was hired as a full-time taxi driver and has held that position for 36 years. Peach has experience with all aspects of the dial-a-ride. He assists with services during his 4 day a week work schedule and is the primary handi-van operator. He also has experience recording and totalling the dial-a-ride statistics daily.

**Kathy Johnson:** Kathy has been employed with North-Air since March 2016. She was hired as a full-time taxi driver, part-time dispatcher and highway driver. She currently is the primary dial-a-ride driver on Sunday's and assists with dial-a-ride during the week. Kathy has experience processing the daily dial-a-ride paperwork as a dispatcher as well as recording and totalling the statistics for her Sunday shift.

**Kyle Baldwin:** Kyle has been employed with North-Air since February 2015 as a full-time taxi driver. He has experience in assisting with dial-a-ride during his 4 day work schedule as well as being the handi-van operator.

**Debbie Barnard:** Debbie has been employed with North-Air since October 2011 as a full-time taxi driver. She occasionally assists with dial-a-ride services when needed and has experience with handi-van services during her 4 day work schedule.

**Rick Chambers:** Rick has been employed with North-Air since January 2014 as a full-time driver, part-time dispatcher and highway driver and he also fills in for dial-a-ride services during vacation/sick days. He has experience with handi van services and with recording/totalling the statistical paperwork as the dial-a-ride driver and with processing the paperwork as a dispatcher as well.

**Richard Piotrowski:** Richard has been employed with North-Air since October 2015 as a part-time dispatcher and taxi driver. Richard has experience with the handi-van services that North-Air provides.

**John Galusha:** John has been employed with North-Air since August 2010 as a full-time driver and evening dispatcher. He has experience with the handi-van services and has assisted in dial-a-ride services during his 4 day work schedule.

3. **Vehicles:**

North-Air currently has 13 vehicles in its fleet.

Primary Dial-A-Ride vehicle is unit # 58 2009 Dodge Grand Caravan.

Handicap accessible vehicle is unit # 6 2004 Dodge Caravan with rear wheelchair ramp.

We regularly use Unit #54 2002 Chevrolet Malibu for dial-a-ride customers who have trouble getting into the van.

When the primary dial-a-ride vehicle is down for maintenance it is often replaced with unit #96 2004 Chevy Express for the day or Unit #55 2004 Pontiac Montana.

4. **Statistics:**

Enclosed are examples of the current paperwork that is used to document and keep track of the daily stats as well as end of month reporting required for billing to the Town of Fort Frances. These same spreadsheets have been used to record ridership since dial-a-ride started in 2000.

**Example A** is the drivers worksheet used by the dial-a-ride driver to write down the times and locations of clients, their destination (according to area of town; East, West or downtown),

A is for adult and ½ is for Child, which means ½ fare, this is where the driver will record the number of occupants picked up at that location. Then there is the breakdown of whether or not the passenger is a child, a senior, low income, wheelchair or other. The driver submits this sheet along with any tokens collected during their daily shift and the back office completes the rest of the paperwork.

**Example B** is an excel spreadsheet used by the back office to record the data that was submitted by the driver. Each cell is formulated to calculate the information gathered from the driver's worksheet.

**Example C** is the summary of statistical information gathered that is included with the monthly invoice to the Town of Fort Frances.

5. **Token Program:**

Dial-A-Ride tokens are small, coloured poker chip type tokens used as a form of payment by clients specifically designed for dial-a-ride users. This method has proven to be key allowing various programs in the community to purchase in bulk from North-Air and provide to their clients free transportation. For Example: Canadian Mental Health will purchase 100 dial-a-ride tokens from North-Air and when needed, they will provide their clients with a token that they can use to pay for dial-a-ride transportation. North-Air currently has 15 community programs that purchase tokens for their clients and 2500 tokens in circulation. This is a very important part of what dial-a-ride is and we want to make sure that we are giving our clients the best possible option for transportation. Each of the drivers at North-Air is familiar with the dial-a-ride tokens, as they often assist in accommodating all of our customer's needs. There is a variety of colours and certain colours are often assigned to certain programs so we can keep track of who is using the service. We have designated yellow tokens as "child tokens" so programs can also have the option of purchasing the tokens for children riders as well. Included is a dial a ride token for your reference.

**6. Reservations:**

Dial-a-ride drivers carry a cell phone that connected to wireless ear piece through Bluetooth which enables them to answer calls and make reservations on the fly. The phone number associated with dial-a-ride has been the same since it started in 2000. To make a reservation you call 275-9741 which is the direct line to the driver. Clients are welcome to call the office at North-Air as well. The dispatcher can radio the dial-a-ride van and provide instructions. **Example D** is a copy of the current Dial-A-Ride services which shows the reservation procedures, rules & regulations, operating hours and cost outline for customers.

**7. Schedule:**

The Dial-a-Ride schedule has had minimal changes over the last 17 years. Times have been tweaked here and there to provide the best possible service and we feel that it is perfect the way that it is structured at this time.

Please refer to Example D for reference to the schedule.

Service operating times are as follows:

7:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday.

Customers can start calling dial-a-ride at 7:30, 20 minutes before the first scheduled pick-up begins.

8:30 am to 2:00 pm Saturday & Sunday.

Customers can start calling dial-a-ride at 8:30, 20 minutes before the first scheduled pick up at 8:50.

**8. Rules & Regulations:**

As outlined in Example D of the current schedule, the rules and regulations are as follows:

- A. Customers are asked to phone the driver a minimum of 20 minutes ahead of scheduled pick-up time.
- B. Customers should be prepared to tell the driver/dispatcher which address they want to be picked up at, what area of town they are going to and how many passengers they have in their group. The customer will then be informed roughly when the driver will pick them up give or take 5 minutes.
- C. Customers are asked to be ready to go when the vehicle gets there. The dial-a-ride is patterned after the transit service and if you are not ready to go when the bus is leaving, you are not on the bus.

## 9. Fee Structure:

	2017 (Apr-Dec)	2018 (Jan-Dec)	2019 (Jan-Dec)	2020 (Jan-Mar)
Town Subsidy for Adult	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
Adult user fare	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50
Town subsidy for Child	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50
Child fare	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25
Additional Child	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50
Age details for children(# of children per adult)	Age 4 & under are free. 1 Child per adult. Each additional child pays adult fare.	Age 4 & under are free. 1 Child per adult. Each additional child pays adult fare.	Age 4 & under are free. 1 Child per adult. Each additional child pays adult fare.	Age 4 & under are free. 1 Child per adult. Each additional child pays adult fare.
Town subsidy for wheelchairs	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.00
Wheelchair user fare	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$8.50	\$8.50

### Cost:

Adults are \$2.50

Children 5-11 are \$1.25

12 & over pay adult fare

Children under the age of 4 are free

Every additional child must pay adult fare

1 child per adult


## 10. Miscellaneous:

Also included with the proposal is a petition signed and commented on by over 100 dial-a-ride customers.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Community Services Executive Committee recommends to Mayor & Council to sanction the attached Agreement with 539989 ON LTD (North-Air Services) to provide Dial-a-ride services for a (3) year term with an option to renew for additional three (3) year terms, as may be negotiated to the satisfaction of both parties and further that an authorizing by-law be enacted.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jason Kabel

**Council approval of this report will sanction** the attached Agreement with 539989 ON LTD (North-Air Services) to provide Dial-a-ride services for a (3) year term with an option to renew for additional three (3) year terms, as may be negotiated to the satisfaction of both parties and further that an authorizing by-law be enacted.