Date August 13. 2019

To Chair and Members
Committee of the Whole – Operations and Administration

From E. (Beth) Goodger
General Manager Public Works Commission

1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item [ ]
Item For Consideration [X]

2.0 Topic Universal Transit Pass Agreement with Wilfrid Laurier University and Wilfrid Laurier University Students’ Union
[Financial Implications - $10,000 annual revenue]

3.0 Recommendation

A. THAT Report 2019-452 “Universal Transit Pass Agreement with Wilfred Laurier University and Wilfred Laurier University Students’ Union” BE RECEIVED; and

B. THAT the Clerk BE DIRECTED to place the five year Agreement between The Corporation of the City of Brantford and Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) and Wilfrid Laurier University Students’ Union (WLUSU) for provision of the Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass) from April 30, 2019 to April 29, 2024 on the Signing By-law.

4.0 Purpose and Overview

To obtain approval from Council to enter into an agreement with Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) and the Students' Union representing Wilfrid Laurier University
(Brantford) full-time students for a Universal Transit Pass for another five years beginning on April 30, 2019.

5.0 Background

In April 2009 Council approved the first five year agreement for a Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass) with Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) and Wilfrid Laurier University Students’ Union (WLUSU). The second five year agreement expired on April 30, 2019.

Brantford Transit staff, in the Summer of 2018, began negotiating a new five year agreement with the Students’ Union and the Administration of Wilfrid Laurier University.

6.0 Corporate Policy Context

Managed Growth and Environmental Leadership Goal, which will lead to the following long term desired outcome:

- Brantford will be well served by quality local and inter-regional public transportation systems.
- Brantford will be supported by well-developed and maintained transportation and servicing infrastructure.

The new five year agreement of the Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass) for full-time students enrolled at Wilfrid Laurier University will continue to encourage more environmentally friendly travel modes, reduce parking demands and improve the quality of the downtown area.

The 2014 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and 2016 Comprehensive Transit Operational Review both recommended increasing ridership by continue to work with the university and college institutions to provide affordable transportation and an ongoing commitment to the Transit U-Pass.

7.0 Input From Other Sources

The City’s Legal & Real Estate Department has reviewed and provided comments on the Agreement.

8.0 Analysis
Many universities in Canada have a U-Pass Program including a number of Ontario universities such as Western, McMaster, Guelph, Brock, Trent, Wilfrid Laurier (Waterloo) and Queen’s. Each has their own unique agreement, policies and procedures with varying lengths of duration. In most programs already in place, all full-time undergraduate students (and sometimes graduate) students pay the fee. It is usually a non-refundable fee and few, if any, exemptions are generally permitted.

The benefits of the U-Pass include:

- Unlimited use of transit at a very affordable price for students
- Increased student transit ridership and reduced student auto use contribute to achieving the City’s Transportation Master Plan modal shift objectives
- Reduced student parking demand facilitates downtown campus intensification and limits the need for expanding parking facilities in the downtown area.

Post-secondary students are highly valued, important customers of the Brantford Transit system. Students make a large number of trips each day, both to the university and to other locations throughout the City of Brantford for shopping and other personal errands, entertainment, etc. In 2018 university students made up 7.1% of Brantford Transit ridership (total ridership 1,616,584, university student ridership 114,246) and contribute $340,970 in fare revenues.

In the Fall term of 2018 Conestoga College entered into agreement with Laurier to participate in the U-Pass. Conestoga will also be part of the new 5 year agreement as they are considered an affiliated college with WLU. A significant increase in the student ridership has been due to Conestoga College’s participation.

### 9.0 Financial Implications

The revenue generated by the U-Pass Agreement over the next five years will be dependent on the growth in student activity at the University campus in Brantford. This five-year agreement includes a provision to increase the fees by 2% per annum. The Base Fee per semester as of September 1, 2019 is $50.78.

A pilot program started in the summer of 2014 term allowing students to opt-in for the months May to August. This program has been included in the new Agreement at a rate of $100.00 plus a one-time card administration fee of $5.50 and will also increase at 2% annually. This program will be examined on a year to year basis until such time that the summer term will become an automatic fee as the Fall and Winter terms.

Based on the updated fees in the new Agreement, this will have a positive impact on the Brantford Transit Operating Budget. The estimated increase in revenue
for 2019 will be $65,000 and an additional $10,000 in 2020, which will be reflected in the 2020 Budget submission. The additional $65,000 for 2019 takes into account the addition of Conestoga College and the additional $10,000 in 2020 reflects the 2% increase and a slight increase for additional enrollment.

10.0 Conclusion

The current U-Pass program with WLU / WLUSU, which was originally initiated in the Fall of 2009, has been very successful. Brantford Transit, Wilfrid Laurier University and the Wilfrid Laurier University Student Union have agreed to continue the agreement for the next five-year period beginning on April 30, 2019 through to April 29, 2024.

Mike Bradley  
Director of Fleet & Transit Services

E. (Beth) Goodger  
General Manager, Public Works Commission

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required [X] yes  [ ] no

Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk [X] yes  [ ] no

Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council? [X] yes  [ ] no