



The Corporation of the City of Cornwall

Regular Meeting of Council

By-law 2026-33

Department: Legal Services
Division: Transit
By-law Number: 2026-33
Report Number 2026-03-Council Members
Meeting Date: March 23, 2026
Subject: By-law 2026-33 to authorize Sunday Transit Service

WHEREAS:

- A. Strong mayor powers in Ontario represent a significant shift in municipal governance, moving from a traditional “**one member, one vote**” system where the head of council demonstrates leadership, to a municipal governance model where the head of council exercises “**additional executive authority**” or “clout” in certain areas, designed to accelerate provincial priorities, such as housing and infrastructure development;
- B. The ***Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022***, S.O. 2022, c. 18 (Bill 3) initially granted strong mayor powers and came into force on November 23, 2022;
- C. The ***Better Municipal Governance Act, 2022***, S.O. 2022, c. 24 (Bill 39, hereinafter referred to the “***Better Municipal Governance Act***”) further enabled strong mayor powers in the Province of Ontario and came into force on December 8, 2022;
- D. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing expanded strong mayor jurisdiction to the municipal government of the Corporation of the City of Cornwall as of April 9, 2025;
- E. As of the date of this By-law, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing has expanded strong mayor powers to over one-hundred and sixty-nine (169) of Ontario’s four-hundred and forty-four (444) municipalities across Ontario;
- F. Section 8 of the ***Better Municipal Governance Act*** amended Schedule 3 of the ***Municipal Act, 2001***, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended or replaced (hereinafter, the “***Municipal Act***”) by adding subsection 284.11.1 to the ***Municipal Act*** concerning a strong mayor’s power over certain by-laws;



G. Subsections 284.11.1 (2), (4), and (5), of the *Municipal Act* provide as follows:

- a. 284.11.1(2) Despite any procedure by-law passed by the municipality under subsection 238(2) and subject to any prescribed requirements, if the head of council is of the opinion that a by-law could potentially advance a prescribed provincial priority, the head of council may propose the by-law to the council and require the council to consider and vote on the proposed by-law at a meeting;
- b. 284.11.1(4) Despite any procedure by-law passed by the municipality under subsection 238(2) and despite section 245, a by-law described in subsection (2) is passed if more than one third of the members of council vote in favour of the by-law;
- c. 284.11.1(5) For greater certainty, the head of council may vote as a member of council in a vote to pass a by-law described in subsection (2);

H. The above-mentioned *Better Municipal Governance Act* amendments to the *Municipal Act* has created what is known as the "**Minority Rule** (1/3 vote)", allowing a strong mayor to propose by-laws where in their respective opinion, could potentially relate to "**Prescribed Provincial Priorities**", which can pass with one-third vote (rather than upon a majority) of council approval, and the strong mayor can participate in the applicable vote;

I. Prescribed Provincial Priorities are established in **Regulation 580/22** under the *Municipal Act*;

J. Section 1. 2. i. of *Regulation 580/22*, which provides that a municipality's maintenance of infrastructure to support housing, including transit, is a provincial priority;

K. Since around 2014, the need for Sunday Transit Service has been identified by residents and local business owners in the City of Cornwall;

L. The City of Cornwall's budget approved on January 31, 2024 included a Transit Master Plan proposed capital project, which was to include the maintenance of Sunday Transit Service in the City of Cornwall;

M. Mayor Justin Towndale ("**Mayor Towndale**") is of the opinion that:

- a. The Transit Master Plan has met delays and it has taken too long for Sunday Transit Service to be maintained in the City of Cornwall;
- b. Sunday Transit Service in the City of Cornwall is infrastructure that is critical for the City to maintain, in order to support housing in the City by providing connectivity from the City's housing to areas which residents need to work, shop, recreate, attend entertainment, and otherwise positively navigate their lives;
- c. In 2025, the need for Sunday Transit Service has been further identified by residents and local business owners and the need is even greater under 2025 conditions that it was in 2014;



- d. The consultant retained on the Transit Master Plan has confirmed that from a fleet perspective, there will be no requirement for additional buses to introduce Sunday Transit Service;
- e. Without the maintenance of Sunday Transit Service by the City, positive housing growth will not be achieved in the City; and
- f. It is necessary and responsible for the City's Mayor to use the strong mayor powers afforded to the head of council to further maintain a schedule of Sunday Transit Services to assist City housing;

N. Mayor Towndale is proposing this By-law to council using strong mayor powers and is of the opinion that this By-law could potentially advance a Prescribed Provincial Priority.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Corporation of the City of Cornwall does hereby enact as follows (having achieved more than a 1/3rd vote):

- 1. THAT the above recitals are incorporated by reference to and form an integral part of this By-law.
- ~~2. THAT City Staff immediately take steps to implement the successful operation of Sunday Transit Service in the City of Cornwall in as cost effective manner as reasonably possible.~~
- 3. THAT City Staff report back to Council on the progress and particulars of the steps being put in place to ensure the successful operation of Sunday Transit Service in the Cornwall as soon as possible, including but not limited to hiring of operators, establishment of bus schedules, review of fares and any other particulars, including without limitation, any cost impacts ~~as soon as possible.~~
- 4. THAT City Staff report back to Council on how it would recommend for the 2026 budget to be adjusted to achieve the immediate successful operation of Sunday Transit Service, as soon as possible.
- 5. That City Staff consider how immediate successful operation of Sunday Transit Service will impact budgetary needs for the 2027 budget and report that information back to Council, in due course.
- ~~6. The Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized and may take all actions necessary on behalf of the Corporation of the City of Cornwall to implement the successful operation of Sunday Transit Service in the City of Cornwall, including the execution of an agreements and other associated documentations, where required.~~

Passed in open Council as amended with more than a 1/3rd of Council vote, this 23rd day of March, 2026.

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Denise Labelle-Gélinas".

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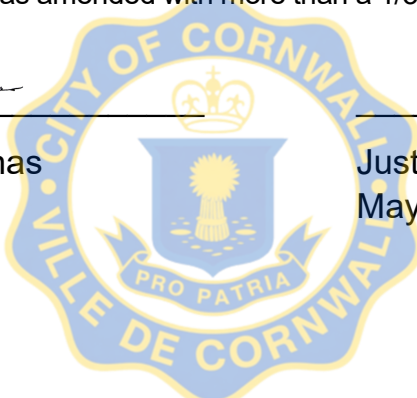
Denise Labelle-Gélinas
Interim City Clerk

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Justin Towndale".

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Justin Towndale
Mayor





Report Approval Details

Document Title:	By-law 2026-33 authorizing Sunday Transit Service - 2026-03-Council Members.docx
Attachments:	- Better Municipal Governance Act, 2022.pdf - Ontario Regulation 580-22.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Mar 18, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Matthew Stephenson - Mar 18, 2026 - 4:16 PM

Tim Mills - Mar 18, 2026 - 4:25 PM