



# City of Peterborough

## Media Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2005  
Peterborough, ON --

### **TRANSIT SERVICE UPDATE WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2005 - 4:30 PM**

Further to the work stoppage by the members of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1320, please see the attached Message to the Citizens of Peterborough Concerning the Transit Strike from Mayor Sylvia Sutherland, on behalf of Council.

Also, a reminder that the Public Inquiry Line is now in service to answer questions from the public pertaining to Transit service and strike-related issues. The Public Inquiry Line number is 876-4636 and will be operating during the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday.

More information on Transit service will be released as it becomes available and we will be issuing media releases and publishing notices on the City of Peterborough website ([www.city.peterborough.on.ca](http://www.city.peterborough.on.ca)) on the main page under "Media Releases" and also on the City Transit website ([www.city.peterborough.on.ca/transit/](http://www.city.peterborough.on.ca/transit/)). The city will update media releases with up-to-date information on a regular basis as it becomes available.

This information and an archive of media releases is also available on our City of Peterborough website at [www.city.peterborough.on.ca](http://www.city.peterborough.on.ca).

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## **MESSAGE TO THE CITIZENS OF PETERBOROUGH CONCERNING THE TRANSIT STRIKE**

### **Was There a Deal?**

No, the language in the tentative settlement signed by both negotiating teams on July 21<sup>st</sup> was clear. Before the tentative settlement could become binding it had to be ratified by both the City and the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU). While the ATU membership ratified the tentative settlement, City Council did not. As a result, no final deal was ever reached between the City and the ATU.

### **So then what happened?**

Following City Council's decision not to ratify the tentative settlement, ATU sought and received a legal strike date from the Ministry of Labour.

### **What is the Main Issue?**

The City believes the main issue is the timing of a wage adjustment, not the size of the wage adjustment. ATU's position is that their membership won't accept any settlement unless there is a \$0.90/hour wage adjustment in place at the beginning of the first year of any new collective agreement. The City is proposing to phase in this wage adjustment over a 16-month period. This shows how close the City believes the parties are to a settlement.

The City's new proposal, rejected by the ATU, includes a general wage increase in addition to the \$0.90/hour wage adjustment and would see the base wage for a full-time driver increase from \$19.53/hour to \$21.69/hour.

### **Have there been any negotiations?**

Yes. Leading up to the tentative settlement there were full and frank negotiations between the City and the ATU. Since August 31<sup>st</sup>, the City has repeatedly invited the ATU Executive to meet and discuss the City's current proposal. ATU has repeatedly declined to enter into meaningful negotiations with the City. On Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday the City invited ATU back to the negotiating table. On Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, ATU refused to negotiate on the basis of the City's new proposal. From August 8<sup>th</sup> until they went on strike on September 26<sup>th</sup>, in the City's opinion, ATU has not engaged in any meaningful negotiations.

On September 17<sup>th</sup> the City presented ATU with a new proposal and obtained the assistance of the Ministry of Labour to mediate a settlement. The ATU refused to participate in any meaningful negotiations. During the week of September 19<sup>th</sup>, the ATU again refused to consider any proposal from the City, except the original proposal, which Council had already chosen not to ratify.

### **Is City Council committed to Public Transit?**

Yes. The 2005 budget provides for substantial improvements to the public transit system. The new Transportation Plan includes a significant investment in new buses, hiring new full-time and part-time employees and creating new bus routes. City Council recognizes that these improvements need to be sustainable and so Council requires some certainty over controlling the cost of operating the public transit system.

To that end, City Council wants to enter into a partnership with ATU concerning a wage increase in exchange for a substantial reduction in the City's over-time costs. City Council recognizes that a \$0.90 wage adjustment for full-time drivers is reasonable, provided that the wage adjustment is off-set by verifiable reductions in the cost of operating public transit. We think ATU recognizes the validity of the City's position, but doesn't agree with the City's proposal to phase in the wage adjustment over 16-months.

### **What are the next steps?**

Strikes are resolved at the negotiating table. Until the ATU is prepared to return to the negotiating table there can be no settlement of this strike. On September 26<sup>th</sup>, the City again asked for assistance from the Ministry of Labour to mediate an end to this dispute. The City is hopeful that ATU will respond in a meaningful way to this round of mediation and will agree to meet later this week.

The City remains committed to continuing negotiations, refining the details of a workable collective agreement, welcoming back our drivers, and – most importantly – the people who use public transit.

### **Quick Facts**

- There was no deal ratified by both parties.
- This dispute is over the timing of a \$0.90/hour wage adjustment, not over the size of the wage adjustment.
- The City has invited ATU to continue negotiations 10 times and 10 times ATU has refused to continue negotiations.

Submitted by Sylvia Sutherland, Mayor, on behalf of City Council