

## Keith area will get a bus route at last

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Imagine you're a single mother on a fixed income living in Hamilton's Keith neighbourhood. On a winter day you need groceries. The bus stop is 1,000 metres away.

After your long and chilly journey, you need to take a taxi home from the store because it's too difficult to carry all your bags. A train stops traffic, so your \$5 cab ride costs \$7.

Brenda Johnson of Environment Hamilton asked councillors to envision that scenario yesterday as she joined Keith residents to fight for a bus route through their North End neighbourhood.

After hearing several passionate speeches about the desperate need for public transit in the low-income pocket, councillors agreed to add buses on Victoria Avenue and Wentworth Street North.

"What's best for my community is this bus," said Barb Teichmann, part of a local moms' group. "We're asking you to take a chance on us."

Environment Hamilton completed an extensive survey in the neighbourhood to demonstrate the need for the bus route that will start next year. The city aims to have transit routes within 400 metres of all homes.

Council approved the Keith enhancement in addition to two other new routes yesterday.

For the first time, Waterdown residents will have access to city buses.

A new route will travel from the village's core down to the Aldershot GO station and link riders to buses headed into Hamilton and downtown Burlington.

The city also added service to Rymal Road between Glancaster and Pritchard roads during peak weekday periods.

Transit staff expect any lost ridership because of a proposed fare increase, approved yesterday, to be offset by new users gained because of the new routes.

The city saw a slight increase in ridership this year despite an earlier fare increase.

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