

(5)

()

To: The Mayor and Council
West Vancouver

July 16/09.

3294-01

Dear Madam Mayor,

I am writing in support of the Seniors Shuttle Bus currently operating from the Seniors Centre to Park Royal, Dunderave in an hourly circuit from Monday to Friday.

I feel it is vital to the well-being of frail and elderly seniors in West Vancouver that this continues to operate and would like to ask for Council's support of the project.

It provides a vital link for seniors who are not on the public transit route to go to their doctors, dentists, drug store, Senior Centre and shopping. Although West Vancouver may have the highest per capita income in Canada, there are many, many seniors, particularly women, living alone, who cannot afford taxis to go to these places and who yet do not qualify for assisted fares. There are many women who fall into the gap of having too much income for subsidies but not enough to

afford taxis.

We all know that the senior population will increase rapidly as the "baby boomers" move into the age group, putting strains on all medical facilities and services. It is to everyone's advantage that seniors stay healthy and active so that they can remain in their own homes. The shuttle enables seniors who have difficulty walking to a transit bus stop, have walkers etc., to do their shopping and keep appointments. It also provides an outlet for those seniors who are isolated in their homes with little social stimulus. The bus becomes a locus of social interaction as regular riders get to know one another and some seniors take the bus just for the ride and conversation with other riders who have become friends. This is an enormous boost to their mental health & well-being.

I myself was recovering from hip surgery ~~and the two~~ last-winter and like many other seniors would have been unable to get out during those dreadful snowy weeks without the shuttle bus service. Most of the success of the bus is due to the two compassionate and caring women, Megra & Janet, who drive the bus. They park walkers and groceries onto

3

the bus help seniors aboard, and drop riders as close to their destinations as possible.

Although ridership is by donation and the Centre is raising money to keep the bus in operation, we need to make sure that the service is secure.

I would like to point out that in the United Kingdom all seniors ride free on their local public transport. In West Vancouver Seniors pay 70% of the regular fare & I feel that as the highest municipality in Canada the subsidizing of the shuttle bus would be well received by the growing number of its seniors. It would also be beneficial to the environment, as seniors with cars could leave them at home & take the bus also.

We must all remember that we are aging and we never know when we might be in the position of needing this service, however remote the possibility may seem today.

Sincerely

()

cc: Supervisor,
Seniors Activity Centre

This page intentionally left blank



This page intentionally left blank

