



Addendum to the Transit Executive Committee

Agenda

Council Chambers
Regional Headquarters Building
605 Rossland Road East, Whitby

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

1:30 PM

Note: Additional agenda items are shown in bold

1. Roll Call
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Adoption of Minutes
 - A) Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting – April 7, 2021
4. Delegations
5. Presentations
6. **Correspondence**
 - A) **E-mail correspondence received from A. Swalm dated May 3, 2021, re: concerns regarding social distancing on Specialized Transit Services**
Staff Recommendation: Receive for Information
7. Reports
 - A) General Manager's Report – May 5, 2021 (2021-DRT-10)
 - B) Zero Fare Transit – Experience and Implications (2021-DRT-11)
 - C) Sole Source Purchase of Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) bus parts and farebox collection system parts, warranty and service (2021-DRT-12)

New

D) Sole Source Purchase for supplemental washroom facilities to support daily operations (2021-DRT-13)

E) Sole Source Purchase for software to operate On Demand transit (2021-DRT-14)

8. Advisory Committee

8.1 Durham Region Transit Advisory Committee Minutes

A) Transit Advisory Committee meeting – March 23, 2021

9. Confidential Matters

There are no confidential matters to be considered

10. Other Business

11. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, June 2, 2021 at 1:30 PM

12. Adjournment

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From: Ashley S [REDACTED]

Sent: May 3, 2021 2:18 PM

To: Shaun Collier <shaun.collier@ajax.ca>; premier@ontario.ca; DRTHelps <DRTHelps@durham.ca>; Shaun Collier <shaun.collier@townofajax.com>; chair <chair@durham.ca>; Clerks <Clerks@durham.ca>; MPP Ajax Rod Phillips <rod.phillipsco@pc.ola.org>

Cc: Joanne Dies <joanne.dies@ajax.ca>; Janet Traer <Janet.Traer@Durham.ca>; Joanne Dies <joanne.dies@townofajax.com>; Marilyn Crawford <marilyn.crawford@ajax.ca>; Sterling Lee <sterling.lee@ajax.ca>; rob.tylermorin@ajax.ca; lisa.bower@ajax.ca

Subject: Health and Social services committee Durham Region Transit committee

Please share with Health and Social service Committee and Durham Region Transit Committee

Dear Mayor Collier, DRT, Premier Ford, Chair Henry, DRT executive board and health social services committee, Honourable Rod Phillips

I am writing to you today concerning specialized transit. I know COVID has brought many challenges for everyone including your transit system. The people who ride your system are some of the most vulnerable I worry that me speaking up could cause me to lose my access to transit or to face a review of my services :(I live with immunosuppressive issues and other issues that affect every aspect of my daily life. I have taken very few trips compared to normal over the last year which now it seems will be even less than that given what is going on.

For the last year the number one message we have heard from public health, our premier, the head of your executive chair board the mayor of Ajax Shaun Collier and EVERYONE ELSE is to stay home, stay six feet apart and only get close to those who are in your own household or bubble. Everyone should have the right to be transported in a safe manner that does not put your rider at high risk of contracting COVID from another passenger but unfortunately this is not the case for specialized service riders. We have to respect people's right not to wear a mask if they are medically exempt which can be the case for some on specialized transit and I totally respect their rights but then you might have someone who is immunocompromised who might have to sit on the same seat beside this person or in the same taxi less than six feet apart? Does this make sense to you? Why are you putting those most at risk in your community at risk of getting COVID by not respecting the public health guidelines??

I do have a question why is it acceptable according to Facebook post of April 12th to ask people to stay six feet apart, wash hands and wear a mask but when it comes to your most vulnerable citizens you are not willing to honour this and ask for us to sit next to each other on the same seat shoulder to shoulder? Please see your own image below..it is a contradiction to what you are having those who are the most vulnerable doing isn't it??

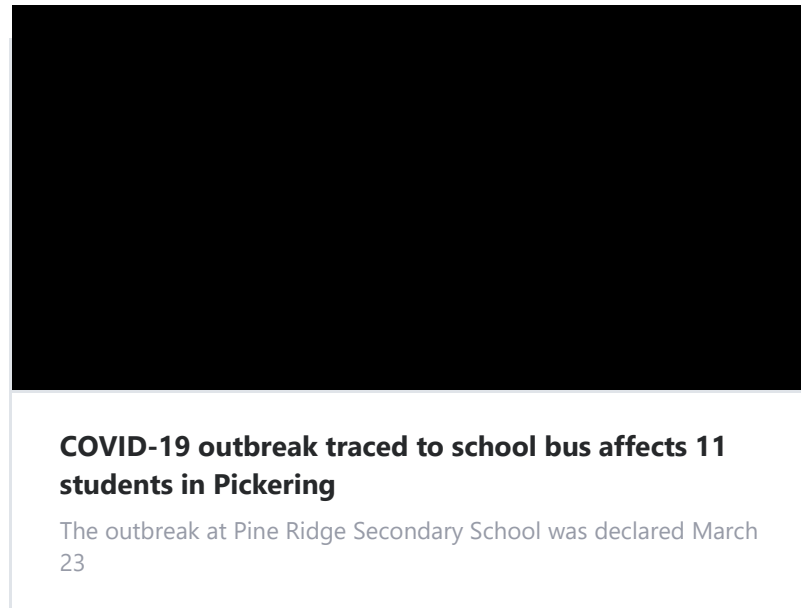
I have had conversation with Bill about all this I was told all transit are doing the same but I got differing depending who I spoke to.

Since my conversation with Bill I have reached out to a number of sources including the following,

TTC- was informed they are doing one person per person per trip. In which I understand this would not be feasible for DRT

Small School Buses - Are doing every other seat and one per seat unless they live in the same household after there was an outbreak on school bus please see article below

[COVID-19 outbreak traced to school bus affects 11 students in Pickering](#)



As per our many different sources below the number one recommendation is maintaining a distance of at least two metres for others which would be achieved if people were in their own seats. Please see the information below for public transportation;

On Public Health Ontario Website

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/covid-wwksf/2020/12/what-we-know-covid-public-transport.pdf?la=en>

Physical distancing of both passengers and workers (**i.e., maintaining a distance of at least two metres from others**); preventing crowding in boarding and off-boarding areas; installing physical barriers for both passengers and workers where physical distancing cannot be established; reducing the capacity of riders on vehicles to ensure space between passengers; and restricting passenger flow on vehicles that include front vehicle on-boarding and back of vehicle off- boarding).

CDC states the following on public transit

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/using-transportation.html>

[Practice physical distancing.](#)

- When possible, consider traveling during non-peak hours when there are likely to be fewer people.
- **Follow physical distancing guidelines by staying at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from people who are not from your household.** For example:
 - Avoid gathering in groups, and stay out of crowded spaces when possible, especially at transit stations and stops.
 - Consider skipping a row of seats between yourself and other riders if possible.
 - Enter and exit buses through rear entry doors if possible.
 - **Look for [physical distancing](#) instructions or physical guides offered by transit authorities (for example, floor decals or signs indicating where to stand or sit to remain at least 6 feet or about 2 arm lengths apart from others).**

Ontario Government

<https://files.ontario.ca/mto-guidance-public-transit-agencies-and-passengers-covid-19-en-2020-11-26-v2.pdf>

Physical distancing

Whenever possible, a minimum of 2-metres (6 feet) of distancing between people should be maintained at work all day.

Wherever possible, any physical contact should be discouraged between people at work.

Physical Barriers

Where a 2-metre physical distance cannot be established between workstations, consider installing physical barriers (e.g., plexiglass barrier, full partition) between them

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I am being told that I can take a different trip if I will be seated beside someone but sometimes this does not work for example if I have an appointment for blood work or the dentist. I can not always depend on those around me to drive me around. I would like to know if this was your family or loved one would you be okay with putting people beside each other on the same seat ?

Unfountley with the new varriants coming out and now that the variant from India has touched Canadian soil and is in ontario I think this is a major concern. As the variants seem to be hitting in Canada its time we take a look at whats going on and how you are handling this ?

I have been informed by the health department they can not force the transit to do anything about it because it not in the legestration from the Ontario government but morally I think its wrong what you are doing. Most of the people who are taking your specialized transit fit under the highest risk and high risk categories for vaccine but not all of us will be able to build immunity even after vaccine. Would you not think you would want to protect this population more ? I have brought this up to Premier Ford office concerning what is going on.

Not everyone who rides Transit is able to wear a mask due to medical reason which is their right so there a chance I could end up sitting beside someone or in a taxi with someone who can not wear a mask which puts me larger risk ?

Please see the list below

Health conditions (includes 1 essential caregiver for Highest Risk** and High-Risk*** individuals)

- **Proof of eligibility requirements: Verbally attest to having one of the below health conditions:**

Highest-Risk** (refer to dosing intervals; [some conditions are eligible for 21 and 28 day dosing](#))

- Organ transplant recipients
- Hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients
- Neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised (e.g., motor neuron disease, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis)
- Blood cancer diagnosed less than 1 year
- Kidney disease with eGFR less than 30
- [See definitions](#)

High-Risk***

- Obesity (BMI greater than 40)
- Other treatments causing immunosuppression (e.g., chemotherapy, immunity weakening medications)
- Intellectual or developmental disabilities (e.g. Down Syndrome)
- [See definitions](#)

This list is most of your speclized services then you have some who are seniors who also are listed at risk. Why would you put this group at risk ? Why would this be acceptable to you to put them at risk ? If this was your family how would you feel about them being seated beside each other when they are more at risk for this deadly virus and more at risk for mortality ? I am not even including those in the AT RISK categories which would spell out many other people. Are we waiting for an outbreak to happen before anything will be done about it ? Are we waiting for someone to get sick or an outbreak before its figured out this not a good idea ?

There has to be another solution that does not put your most vulnerable at risk of catching covid and risking mortality. Please think of this if this was your loved one would you put them at risk ? I doubt it...I was informed to try to get other rides from another source at one point through this because I don't want to put myself at risk which is unacceptable. All I am asking is stop to think if this was your family would you put them at risk or would you go wait this makes no sense and we need to use a bit of common sense here ?

Through conversation I have found out that it is the executive committee of transit who deals with this and makes it clear the rules over this which is why I am bringing it up to you

Thank you for your time and I hope this helps to change this situation. I hope this doesn't make me loose my service I need badly to get around. It is a major concern.

Ashley