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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

November 16, 2021

A meeting of the Transit Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 in the Council Chambers, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:00 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Barton, Chair
C. Antram, Ajax
R. Claxton-Oldfield, Clarington
H. Hall, AAC
J. Hollingsworth, Member at Large
J. Layne, Oshawa
A. Macci, Pickering
M. Roche, AAC, left the meeting at 8 PM
J. Sankarlal, Student Association representative, Ontario Tech University,
Durham College and Trent University
***all members of the Committee participated electronically**

Absent: I. Liang, Scugog
K. Ginter, Member at Large
J. Martin, Brock
G. Weddel, Uxbridge

Staff

Present: M. Binetti, Supervisor, Transportation Service Design, Durham Region
Transit
B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
A. McKinley, Deputy General Manager, Maintenance, Durham Region
Transit
N. Prasad, Assistant Secretary to Council, Corporate Services – Legislative
Services
***all staff except R. Inacio participated electronically**

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by C. Antram, Seconded by R. Claxton-Oldfield,
That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Advisory
Committee meeting held on Tuesday, September 21, 2021, be
adopted.

CARRIED

4. Presentations

4.1 Bill Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, re: Transition to an amalgamated Demand Responsive Service (2021-DRT-25)

B. Holmes, General Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Transition to an Amalgamated Demand Responsive Service. A copy of the presentation was provided to members in advance of the meeting.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Demand Responsive Transit Study
- Findings
- Recommendations

B. Holmes advised that the Demand Responsive Transit Study was funded through the Audit and Accountability Fund of the province with the objective of providing findings and recommendations to help DRT with the following:

- ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements specific to Specialized Services;
- reorder demand responsive services as required to be client centric and outcome focused;
- ensure the equity of access of Specialized Transit is comparable to scheduled and On Demand service models;
- recalibrate the roles and responsibilities of parties throughout the transit system;
- identify opportunities for efficiencies and values; and
- ensure the service model aligns with the strategic priorities of the Region and Durham Region Transit.

B. Holmes provided an overview of the findings with regards to service delivery and operations; culture and collaboration; technology and analytics; external communications and education; strategy and key partnerships; specialized services processes/practices and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) considerations.

B. Holmes also provided a detailed overview of the following recommendations: further integrate Specialized Services and On Demand services in compliance with the AODA; examine existing workforce communication channels and tools to drive ongoing dialogue and improvements; consider and plan for investments in technologies; engage stakeholders; and establish a “one DRT” strategy.

Staff responded to questions with regards to whether the fleet would also merge with the integrating of specialized services and on-demand; whether any services would be taken away from customers; clarification as to what it means to position DRT services to reflect one DRT vision and customer charter and what it entails; the consolidation of the phone number and whether it would be queue-based; and with regards to specialized services, whether changes will be made to who will be delivering the service, wait times and timelines.

M. Roche asked for clarification with regards to what happened to the customers who did not resubmit their application for specialized services and what number of people were reached out to submit an updated application. B. Holmes advised that more information will be provided at the next meeting.

4.2 Michael Binetti, Supervisor, Service Design, Durham Region Transit re: Fall 2021 Service Update

Michael Binetti, Supervisor, Service Design, Durham Region Transit provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Fall 2021 Service Update. A copy of the presentation was provided to members in advance of the meeting.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Fall Service Update
- September Service
- Principles – The Route Ahead
- Scheduled Service Expansion
- Ridership
- Scheduled and OnDemand boardings
- Scheduled service weekly demand
- Activity at Terminals and Stations
- Travel markets – September 2021
- Specialized Transit travel market

M. Binetti advised that the Route Ahead Plan is the service plan that will guide the recovery out of COVID for the next three years. He advised that the principles of the plan are based on availability; safety; reliability; growth and innovation.

M. Binetti provided an overview of the service changes implemented in September and October of 2021. He stated that ridership since August, 2021 has increased from about 20,000 weekday riders on scheduled service to between 28,000 and 29,000. He advised that on demand service has seen approximately 500 riders per weekday. He provided an overview of boardings per hour for 2019, 2020 and 2021 as well as activity at Terminals and Stations.

M. Binetti stated that with regards to travel markets, the high school market is about 40 per cent of 2019 ridership with about 600 customer trips made to or from high schools; the post secondary market is 21 per cent of 2019 ridership with about 3,215 customer trips made to or from post secondary institutions; and GO Transit is 30 per cent with 4,500 customer trips made to or from a GO Station. He advised that the specialized transit travel market did not decline during the pandemic.

Staff responded to questions with regards to the 915 route and whether is it now a Pulse route; the 411 reconfiguration in Courtice and whether anything more is being planned to improve service reliability; whether more service is planned to McCowan Station; and whether the 910 and 915 routes will be returning to the north campus of Ontario Tech University.

Staff also responded to questions with regards to the vaccination rate amongst DRT employees and drivers and if low, whether it would affect service; the Region's policy for contract employees who supply services to the Region and whether they are bound by the Region's vaccination policy.

It was mentioned that there are outdated schedules located at the following locations: Pickering Parkway Terminal; Oshawa Centre Terminal; Durham College Whitby Campus; and Durham College North Campus. Staff was requested to look into this.

5. Correspondence Items

There were no communication items to be considered.

6. Information Items

6.1 General Manager's Report – October 6, 2021 (2021-DRT-24)

Report #2021-DRT-24 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was provided as part of the Agenda.

Moved by C. Antram, Seconded by J. Hollingsworth,
That Information Item 6.1 be received for information.
CARRIED

- 6.2 Demand Responsive Services (2021-DRT-25)
Report #2021-DRT-25 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was provided as part of the Agenda.
Moved by M. Roche, Seconded by A. Macci,
That Information Item 6.2 be received for information.
CARRIED
- 6.3 Social Equity in Transit Planning (2021-DRT-26)
Report #2021-DRT-26 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was provided as part of the Agenda.
Moved by J. Layne, Seconded by J. Hollingsworth,
That Information Item 6.3 be received for information.
CARRIED
- 6.4 General Manager’s Report – November 3, 2021 (2021-DRT-27)
Report #2021-DRT-27 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was provided as part of the Agenda.
Staff responded to questions regarding how the data collected from the pilot of the Whitby autonomous vehicle will help with future services, as well as the implementation date of the PRESTO open payment.
Moved by J. Hollingsworth, Seconded by M. Roche,
That Information Item 6.4 be received for information.
CARRIED
- 6.5 E-Mission Zero: Durham Region Transit Battery Electric Bus and Charging Infrastructure Demonstration Pilot Update (2021-DRT-28)
Report #2021-DRT-28 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was provided as part of the Agenda.
Moved by A. Macci, Seconded by J. Sankarlal,
That Information Item 6.5 be received for information.
CARRIED
7. **Discussion Items**
- 7.1 Access to Information for Transit Advisory Committee Members
A. McKinley advised that the General Managers Reports will no longer be included as part of the TAC Agendas. She advised that members are encouraged to subscribe through the Region’s website to be notified when the reports become available. She advised that a step by step guide on how to subscribe to the email will be provided to members.

Moved by C. Antram, Seconded by J. Hollingsworth,
That the Transit Advisory Committee supports the removal of the
General Managers Reports from the TAC Agenda packages and
subsequently placing the General Managers Reports as an Agenda
item on the Agenda for discussion; and

That instructions be provided to committee members on the
procedure to subscribe through the Region's website for the email
notifications.

CARRIED

7.2 Meeting Presentation Guidelines

A. McKinley proposed that future TAC presentations be kept to a maximum of two presentations per meeting, with 10 minutes allotted for each presentation, followed by a 10-minute question and answer period. She advised that this would provide the opportunity for other business items to be discussed in greater detail at future meetings.

Discussion ensued and it was the consensus of the committee that the number of presentations per meeting be kept to a maximum of two but if it is necessary to have more than two presentations, that staff be requested to keep the presentations to 5 minutes and keep it high level. It was suggested that while the presentation be kept high level, detailed presentation material may be sent out if required.

8. **Other Business**

There was no other business to be considered.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, January 18, 2021 at 7:00 PM

10. **Adjournment**

Moved by M. Roche, Seconded by J. Layne,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM.

D. Barton, Chair, Transit Advisory Committee

N. Prasad, Assistant Secretary to Council