

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2097.

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

A meeting of the Transit Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 in the Council Chambers, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:02 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Barton, Chair
C. Antram, Ajax
J. Beaton, Whitby
R. Claxton-Oldfield, Clarington
K. Ginter, Member at Large
J. Hollingsworth, Member at Large
J. Layne, Oshawa
I. Liang, Scugog
A. Macci, Pickering
M. Roche, AAC
G. Weddel, Uxbridge attended the meeting at 7:11 PM

***all members of Committee, except Chair Barton and B. Holmes, participated electronically**

Absent: A. Desai, Student Association representative, Ontario Tech, Durham College and Trent University
J. Martin, Brock

Staff

Present: B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit*
J. Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, Durham Region Transit
M. Binetti, Service Design, Durham Region Transit
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
C. Norris, Deputy General Manager (Temp), Operations, Durham Region Transit
N. Prasad, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
C. Tennesco, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by J. Hollingsworth, Seconded by R. Claxton-Oldfield,
That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Advisory
Committee meeting held on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Introduction of new Committee Members who use Public Transit

Chair Barton welcomed Juliette Layne and Ivy Liang as the City of Oshawa and the Township of Scugog's representatives, respectively, and invited them to introduce themselves.

5. Presentations

A) Michael Binetti, Service Design, and Christopher Norris, Deputy General Manager (Temp), Operations, Durham Region Transit, re: Transforming the Transit Network – Ridership Recovery

M. Binetti and C. Norris, Durham Region Transit, provided a PowerPoint presentation on Transforming the Transit Network Ridership Recovery. A copy of the presentation was provided in the Agenda.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Service levels during pandemic
 - Level 1 Service Reduction
 - Level 2 Service Reduction
 - Phase A Service Plan
- Current Situation - Ridership
 - Graph: April to June 2019 and 2020 weekday boardings by hour
 - Ridership Projection - assumptions
 - Ridership Projection - approach
- Updating the Transit Network - Principles
 - Provide flexibility in trip making
 - Service Delivery
- Transforming the Transit Network – service delivery
- Clarifying On Demand Service
 - Phase A Map: Frequent, Grid, Limited and On Demand Routes
 - Rural Area
 - Phase B Map: Frequent, Grid, Limited, Local and On Demand Routes
 - Phase C Map: Frequent, Grid, Limited, Local and On Demand Routes

M. Binetti responded to questions regarding the triggers for the next Phases of the ridership recovery network services; how will staff inform the public of the next Phase network services being implemented; the estimated service frequency for the local transit network routes once they are operational; and

how would DRT manage a potential decline in ridership due to the recent increase of COVID-19 cases.

Discussion ensued regarding the decline of the local transit network services east of Townline Road in the Municipality of Clarington, and, the Grandview and Adelaide routes in the City of Oshawa. An issue was raised regarding the On Demand model efficiencies potentially creating a hardship for customers getting to where they need to go, on time, particularly during the rush hour times, and turning to alternative transportation methods including carsharing services. It was questioned whether DRT intends to re-implement the fixed transit network services. M. Binetti advised that staff is monitoring the ridership and he explained that when increased ridership supports a scheduled route, particularly during peak hours, these fixed routes would be implemented.

M. Binetti also responded to questions regarding why the Route 905 bus does not enter the loop at the Durham College North Campus; and whether staff will post notifications on the DRT website detailing the upcoming route changes. It was also questioned whether staff could provide a video or a sponsored Facebook post demonstrating the Trip Planning and On Demand Applications. C. Norris advised that a video is underway and should be available publicly within the next few weeks.

B) Michael Binetti, Service Design; and Jamie Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, Durham Region Transit, re: Customer Applications: Trip Planning and On Demand Applications

M. Binetti and J. Austin, Durham Region Transit, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the DRT Trip Planning and On Demand Applications. A copy of the presentation was provided in the Agenda.

M. Binetti provided an overview of the Trip Planning and On Demand applications. Key highlights included:

- Trip planning and On Demand applications
 - Transit application
 - Homepage – nearby routes
 - Real-time information
 - Trip Information
 - Trip planning – trip options/results/confirmation/vehicle arrival

J. Austin outlined the PRESTO E-Ticketing applications. He advised that mobile ticketing improves the customer experience, reinforces physical distancing and eliminates the COVID-19 transmission risks. Key highlights included:

- E-Ticket application

- Introducing PRESTO E-Tickets
- Purchasing an E-Ticket
- Riding with an E-Ticket
- Video: Visual Verification Features
- The PRESTO E-Ticket customer experience
- Two options for paying your fare: PRESTO Card and PRESTO E-Tickets
- Towards an integrated customer experience

Staff responded to questions regarding how DRT will communicate the new transit app to the public, particularly to seniors and customers who have no or limited internet services, On Demand services; the PRESTO Card and E-tickets; and, the One-Fare Agreement.

Discussion ensued regarding the elimination of the paper transfers and passes. J. Austin advised that the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the need to support customers to shift to contactless fare payment options to mitigate the risk of viral transmission for the safety of the public and DRT staff. He explained that DRT also made available 4,000 PRESTO cards at no cost to the customers, and that DRT has maintained the paper ticket for ODSP and community agency clients.

J. Austin responded to questions regarding what percentage of contracted taxis that do not have the PRESTO devices on board; and, the timeline for the PRESTO device installations on the contracted services.

6. Correspondence Items

There were no items of correspondence to be considered.

7. Information Items

7.1 General Manager's Report – February 2020 (2020-DRT-04)

Report #2020-DRT-04 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.2 General Manager's Report – March 2020 (2020-DRT-06)

Report #2020-DRT-06 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by J. Beaton, Seconded by C. Antram,
That Information Items 7.1 and 7.2 be received for information.
CARRIED

7.3 Durham Region Transit Automated Shuttle Pilot (2020-DRT-07)

Report #2020-DRT-07 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

At the request of the Committee, J. Austin provided an update on the launch of the Automated Shuttle Pilot. He advised that the Pilot project includes partnerships with the Town of Whitby, SmartCone Technologies Inc., Pacific Western Transportation and Metrolinx; and it incorporates a Smart infrastructure to align with the Region's Vision Zero objectives. He explained that the COVID-19 pandemic border closures and travel restrictions have impacted vehicle preparations and the new targeted date for launching the Pilot is early 2121.

Discussion ensued on reintroducing the fares and whether DRT will need to increase fares to make up for lost revenue. B. Holmes advised the fares remain as approved by Council during the 2020 budget deliberations.

Moved by R. Claxton-Oldfield, Seconded by J. Hollingsworth,
That Information Item 7.3 be received for information.
CARRIED

7.4 DRT Stop Guidelines (2020-DRT-08)

Report #2020-DRT-08 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.5 General Manager's Update – June 2020 (2020-DRT-09)

Report #2020-DRT-09 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.6 Resumption of Fare Collection (2020-DRT-11)

Report #2020-DRT-11 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.7 Review of Transit Services in Rural Durham (2020-DRT-12)

Report #2020-DRT-12 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.8 General Manager's Report – July 2020 (2020-DRT-13)

Report #2020-DRT-13 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.9 Durham Region Transit U-Pass Agreement update (2020-DRT-15)

Report #2020-DRT-15 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.10 General Manager's Report – September 2020 (2020-DRT-16)

Report #2020-DRT-16 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

B. Holmes responded to questions regarding opportunities to expediate the 16 Mini-Bus replacements approved in the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) projects; and the \$8.4 million in Provincial funding under the Safe Restart Agreement to implement a Service Restoration Plan.

7.11 Durham Region Transit Advertising Policy (2020-DRT-17)

Report #2020-DRT-17 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

7.12 PRESTO Card Incentive (2020-DRT-18)

Report #2020-DRT-18 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by J. Beaton, Seconded by C. Antram,
That Information Items 7.4 to 7.12, inclusive, be received for
information.

CARRIED

8. Discussion Items

8.1 Social Equity in Transit Planning

M. Binetti, Durham Region Transit, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the draft Social Equity Guidelines for Transit Planning. Key highlights included:

- Draft – Equity Priorities in Durham Region
 - Nine Population Groups
- Draft – Communities of Focus Urban Area
 - Seven Priority Neighbourhoods
 - Where are they?
 - Rural Areas
 - Equity Concerns
- Guidelines & Goals
 - Shelter Placement

- Accessibility
- Service Coverage
- Service Availability and Frequency
- Transit Serving Employment Uses

It was questioned whether Durham Region Transit (DRT) intends to increase the number of spots available for people with disabilities on the articulated buses. C. Norris advised that currently two spots have been designated for those with mobility devices along with courtesy seating, and that staff continue to ensure that DRT complies with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requirements.

9. Other Business

A) PULSE Bus Allocation

C. Norris provided an update on the issues raised at the January 21, 2020 Transit Advisory Committee meeting regarding the street requirements impacting the deployment of buses on the DRT network. He advised that as of September 7, 2020 DRT deployed six new articulated transit buses; and that these buses will be used along the PULSE Highway 2 route corridor between Scarborough and downtown Oshawa.

C. Norris announced that on September 28, 2020 DRT launched the new PULSE Simcoe 901 corridor service and noted it replaces the Route 401 service. It was questioned whether the PULSE branded vehicles will be deployed on the various routes within the DRT network. C. Norris advised that the PULSE branded vehicles will only service the Route 900 and Route 901 corridors.

Chair Barton thanked the Durham Region Transit team for their efforts to keep the public and staff safe throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. B. Holmes advised that staff are working on a phased strategy to ensure stability and consistent services in the months ahead.

B) Booking On Demand Trips

An issue was raised regarding booking a trip through the On Demand Application (App). J. Hollingsworth noted the App fails to consider any crosswalks a customer may use to reach the pick-up destination. He explained that to go from the Town of Newcastle westbound into Bowmanville, the App asks the customer to cross Highway 2 in areas with four lanes of traffic and no traffic lights. C. Norris advised that staff will take the comments back to see how this experience can be improved.

J. Hollingsworth inquired whether the On Demand ratings and feedback provided by the customers is reviewed by DRT staff rather than the DRT operators. B. Holmes advised that staff would confirm the review of the On Demand ratings and feedback is an administrative matter.

C. Norris responded to questions regarding how DRT intends to utilize the existing bus stops that have a pad located along routes that have been discontinued or suspended, and if they will be used for On Demand services.

B. Holmes announced that on September 28, 2020 the DRT ridership increased by 2 per cent, while operating with 45 per cent less routes.

10. Date of Next Meetings

Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 7:00 PM

11. Adjournment

Moved by J. Hollingsworth, Seconded by R. Claxton-Oldfield,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.

D. Barton, Chair, Transit Advisory Committee

C. Tennisco, Committee Clerk