



Transit Executive Committee Agenda

Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

Regional Council Chambers

Regional Headquarters Building

605 Rossland Road East, Whitby

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

Note: This meeting will be held in a hybrid meeting format with electronic and in-person participation. Committee meetings may be [viewed via live streaming](#).

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5.2 Ian Sinnott, Chair, Unifor Local 222 Re: Transit Long-Term Service and Financing Strategy	
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8. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There are no advisory committee resolutions to be considered

9. Confidential Matters

There are no confidential matters to be considered

10. Other Business

11. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 1:30 PM

12. Adjournment

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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 2:01 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

Commissioner Schummer, Vice-Chair, assumed the Chair.

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Crawford, Chair
Commissioner Schummer, Vice Chair
Commissioner Anderson
Commissioner Carter*
Commissioner Garrod
Commissioner Roy*
Commissioner Wotten*
Regional Chair Henry
***denotes Commissioners participating electronically**

Absent: Commissioner Brenner

Also

Present: Commissioner Mulcahy
Commissioner Jubb*
***denotes visiting Commissioners participating electronically**

Present: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
S. Ciani, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
J. Gilles, Manager, Operations, Conventional West, Durham Region Transit
W. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit
K. Hornburg, Deputy General Manager, Business Services
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
J. Kilgour, Acting Deputy General Manager, Maintenance, Durham Region Transit
N. Lysaght, Manager, Policy and Planning, Durham Region Transit
D. Margiotta, Manager, Operations, Conventional East, Durham Region Transit*
A. Naeem, Solicitor, Legal Services*
C. Norris, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit

Z. Osime-Fakolade, Program Manager, Community Engagement and Change Management, Durham Region Transit
S. Rodgers, Assistant, Planning, Durham Region Transit
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
N. Taylor, Treasurer, Durham Region Transit, and Commissioner of Finance

* **denotes staff participating electronically**

2. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. **Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by Commissioner Crawford, Seconded by Commissioner Garrod, (49) That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. **Presentations**

4.1 Bill Holmes, General Manager, Transit, Re: General Manager's Verbal Update

B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit (DRT) provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the General Manager's update to the Committee.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- December GM Information Highlights
 - Monthly metrics for October
- Updates
 - Presto in Google Wallet launch
 - Seasonal Service Change
 - Fare free service New Year's Eve (7 pm December 31, 2023 through to 4 am January 1, 2024)
 - Details of Service Changes
 - Service Model Transition status
- New 121 Route - Pickering
- New 227 Route - Ajax
- Enterprise Risk Assessment
- Performance of the Transit Network- Fall 2023
- Durham Region Transit (DRT) Thank You 2023 (Video)

5. **Delegations**

5.1 Haadhi Faizal Re: General Manager's Report - December 2023 as it relates to the New Route 921 (2023-DRT-28) [Item 7.1]

Haadhi Faizal withdrew their request to speak.

6. Correspondence

There were no communication items considered.

7. Reports

A) General Manager's Report – December 2023 (2023-DRT-28)

Report #2023-DRT-28 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson, (50) That Report 2023-DRT-28 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

B) Enterprise Risk Management Action Plan (2023-DRT-29)

Report #2023-DRT-29 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson, (51) That Report 2023-DRT-29 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

C) Transit Network Status Update (2023-DRT-30)

Report #2023-DRT-30 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson, (52) That Report 2023-DRT-30 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

8. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions considered.

9. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters considered.

10. Other Business

10.1 Waiving Durham Region Transit (DRT) Collection Fees for December 25, 2023

Moved by Commissioner Roy, Seconded by Commissioner Carter,
(53) That the Transit Executive Committee through its delegated authority referenced in Article 40 F. of the Durham Region Transit By-law, waive the Durham Region Transit (DRT) fare fees for the December 25, 2023, service day, and that forgone fare revenue be funded from the 2023 fare promotion budget.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY ON THE
FOLLOWING RECORDED VOTE:

Yes

No

Commissioner Anderson

None

Commissioner Carter

Commissioner Garrod

Regional Chair Henry

Commissioner Roy

Commissioner Schummer, Vice Chair

Commissioner Wotten

Commissioner Crawford, Chair

Members Absent: Commissioner Brenner

Declarations of Interest: None

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 1:30 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Crawford,
(54) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:21 PM

Respectfully submitted,

W. Schummer, Vice-Chair

S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 3702



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2024-DRT-01
Date: February 7, 2024

Subject:

General Manager's Report – February 2024

Recommendation:

That the Transit Executive Committee recommends

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 This report is submitted at each Transit Executive Committee (TEC), for information.

2. Background

2.1 The General Manager Report provides regular updates on key performance measures and summaries of current activities and transit issues in Attachment #1.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

3.1 Not applicable

4. Financial

4.1 There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Service Excellence

6. Conclusion

6.1 For additional information, contact: Bill Holmes, General Manager, at 905-668-7711, extension 3700.

7. Attachments

Attachment #1: General Manager's Report – February 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Original Signed by

Bill Holmes
General Manager, DRT

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original Signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer



General Manager's Report
February 7, 2024
TEC
Attachment #1

Performance Measures Dashboard	<u>2</u>
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Performance Measures Dashboard

Safety

Key performance indicator	Description	Latest Measure	Current	Target ¹	Current Variance to Target (per cent)	YTD Status ² (per cent)
Collisions	Number preventable collisions per 100,000 km	December	0.36	0.77	✓ -53.1	✓ -25.6

Ridership

Scheduled						
Ridership (x1,000)	Number passengers	December	910	668	✓ 36.2	✓ 47.9
PRESTO Ridership	Customers paying using PRESTO (per cent)	December	92.3	87.6	✓ 5.8	✓ 8.0
Bus full occurrences	Number operator reported occurrences	December	342	72	✗ 383	✗ 285
Demand Responsive						
Ridership - Specialized	Number customer trips	December	9,429	8,002	✓ 17.8	✓ 32.7
Unaccommodated Rate - Specialized	Trip requests not scheduled (per cent)	December	NA ³	NA ³		
Ridership – On Demand	Number customer trips	December	10,360	8,110	✓ 27.7	✓ 6.0

Service Delivery

Scheduled						
On time performance	On-time departures from all stops (per cent)	Service Period 5 ⁴	68.4	69.2	🚩 -0.8	✗ -3.0
Service availability	Scheduled service delivered (per cent)	Service Period 5 ⁴	97.9	96.1	✓ 1.8	✓ 0.6

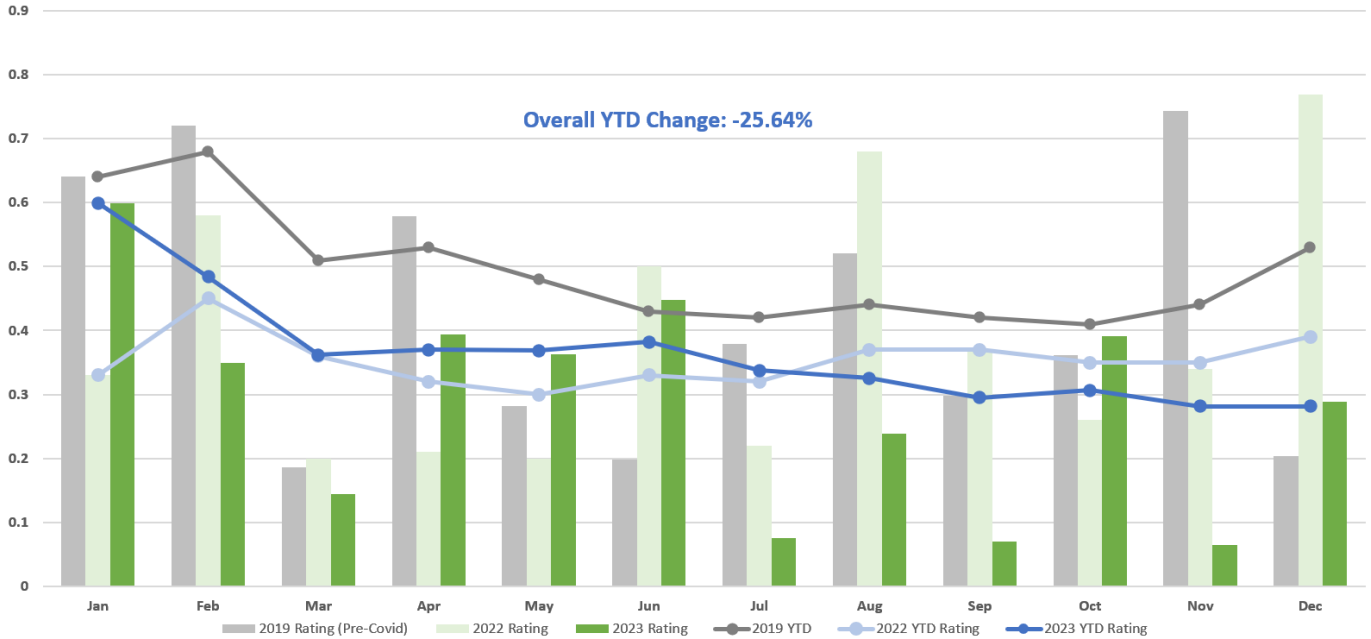
¹Target is 2022 measure for the same period

²Year to Date (YTD) compared to previous year

³Unaccommodated rate to be reported starting March 2024

⁴December 4, 2023 through January 1, 2024

Preventable collisions rate per 100,000 km



Definition: A preventable collision is one in which the driver failed to do everything reasonable to avoid the collision. The preventable collision rate is the number of preventable collisions per 100,000 kilometres of travel for all Durham Region Transit (DRT) vehicles.

A collision may not be reportable to police based on the Highway Traffic Act, but for DRT purposes all collisions are documented and investigated. DRT's objective is to reduce annual preventable collisions by ten per cent relative to the previous year.

Analysis

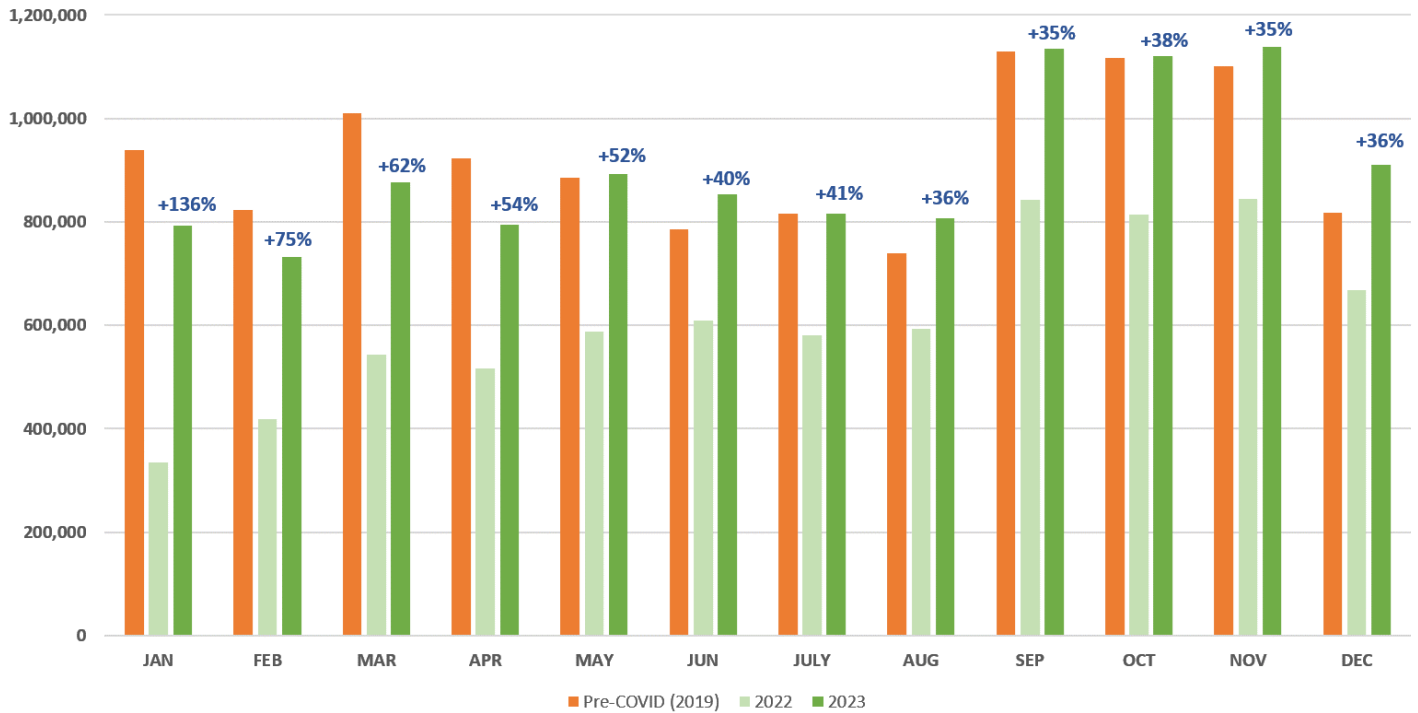
The December preventable collision rate was 0.36 per cent compared to 0.77 per cent for the same period in 2022. The 2023 collision rate of 0.29, which is 26 per cent lower than the 2022 rate of 0.39, exceeded DRT's performance objective.

Action Plan

Operations continue to implement their safety management system including promotion and communication, managing employee performance, and requiring remedial training for all employees involved in a preventable collision.

Ridership

Scheduled transit



Definition: Ridership is the sum of all passenger trips. A passenger trip is a one-way trip from origin to destination regardless of the number of transfers that may be required. Ridership data is calculated from fare box data and data from PRESTO and demand response.

Results

December ridership on scheduled service was approximately 37 per cent higher than the same month in 2022. More significantly, December ridership exceeded 2019 pre-pandemic levels by approximately 12 per cent.

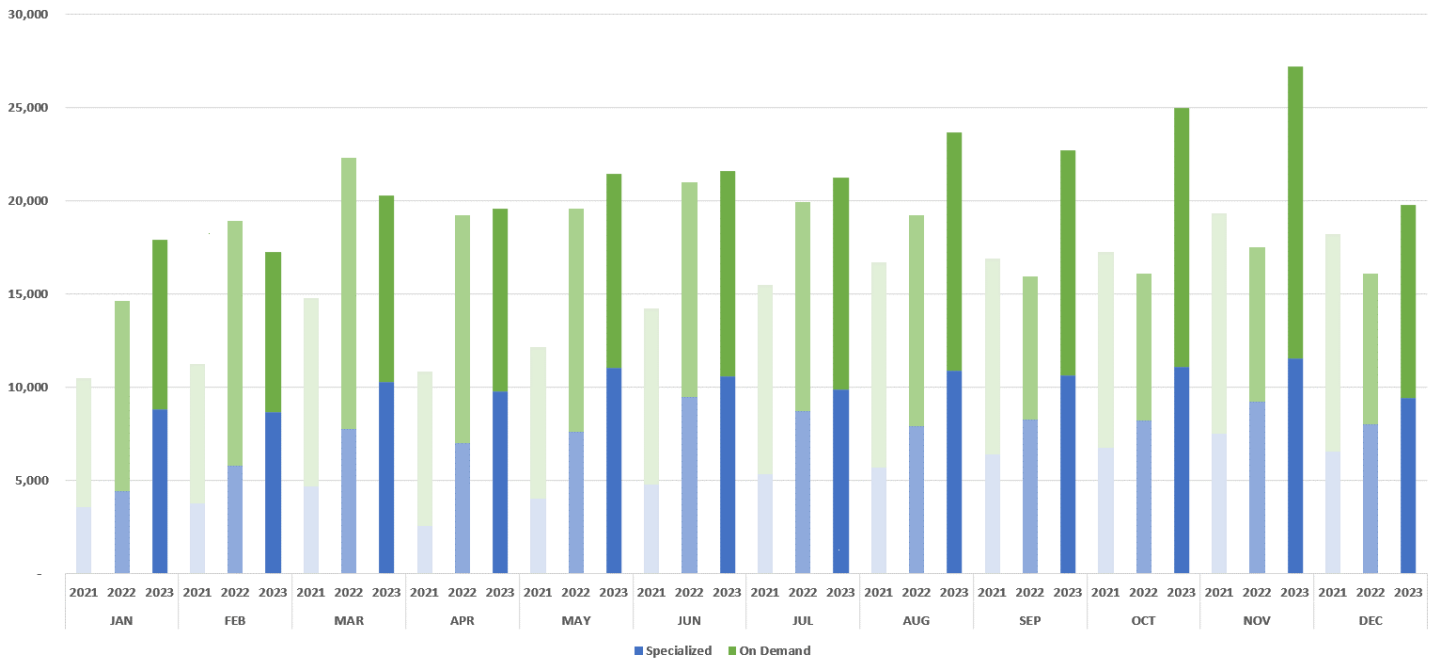
2023 annual scheduled ridership increased by 48 per cent compared to 2022, reaching 10,589,799. While monthly ridership has exceeded 2019 pre-pandemic levels since September, overall 2023 ridership was approximately 98 per cent of 2019 levels.

Action Plan

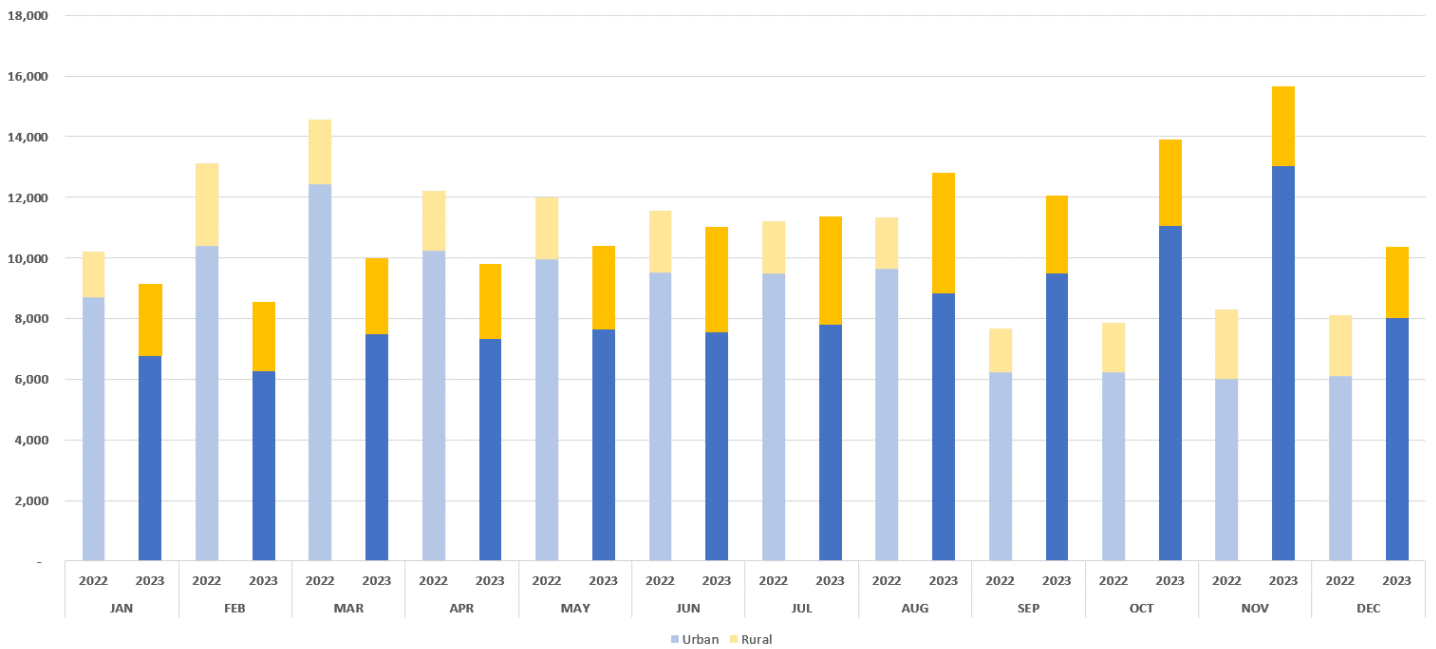
Ridership and transit demand have reached record levels across the Region. For January 2024, DRT was required to optimize resources within existing service guidelines. Resources were reallocated from lowest performing routes and trips to areas of highest pressure and inadequate capacity to meet ridership demand on the busiest corridors. Some routes were restructured to remove service duplication, improve network reliability, and mitigate requirements for additional resources. Ridership pressures and network performance continue to be monitored.

Demand Response Transit

Demand Responsive Trips



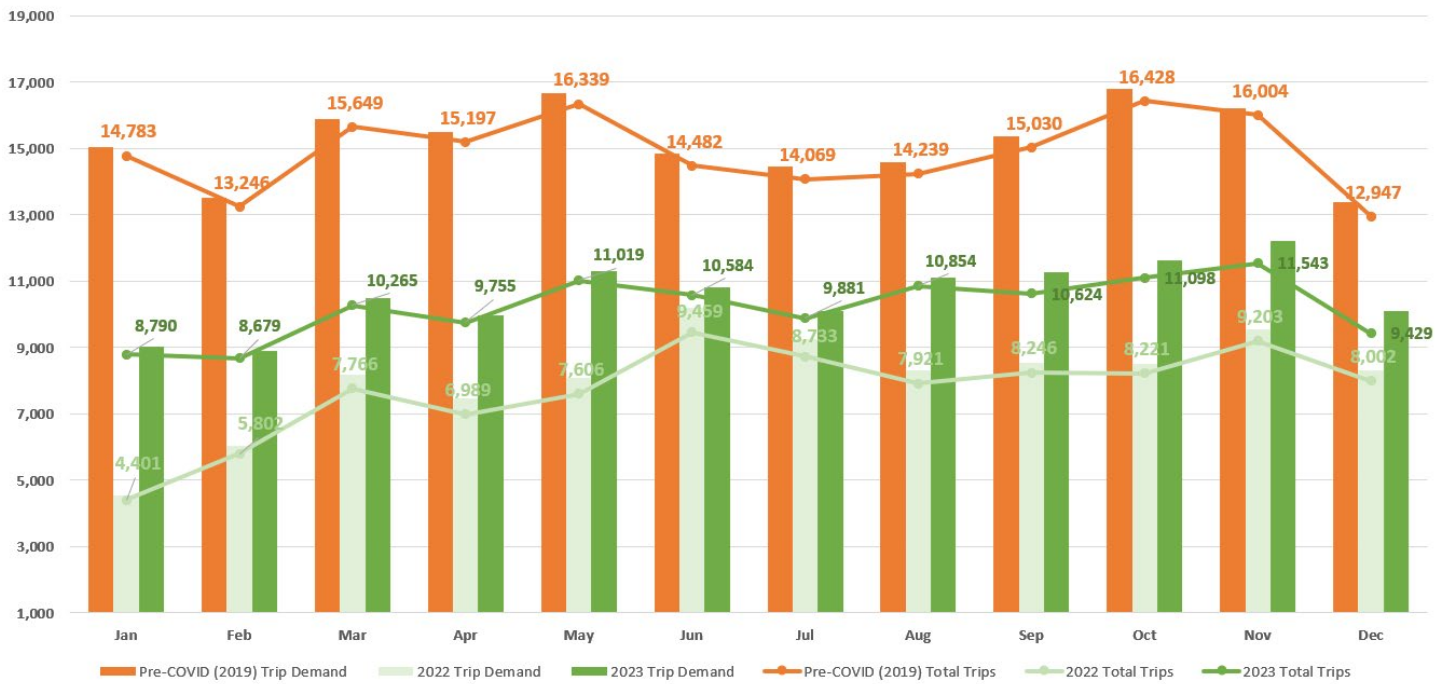
On Demand Trips



		DEC 2023	YTD 2023
R U R A L	Uxbridge	236	9,756
	Brock	885	7,378
	Scugog	627	10,731
	Pickering	258	2,670
	Ajax	-	16
	Whitby	21	915
	Oshawa	4	18
	Clarington	586	20,711

		DEC 2023	YTD 2023
U R B A N	Uxbridge	1,081	3,800
	Scugog	686	2,794
	Pickering	868	12,222
	Ajax	688	11,361
	Whitby	1,671	26,881
	Oshawa	1,320	14,022
	Clarington	1,717	11,688

Specialized Transit Trips



Definitions:

Trips: A trip is considered a one-way passenger trip from origin to destination, regardless of the number of transfers that may be required.

Unaccommodated Rate (Specialized): An unaccommodated Specialized transit trip is one where DRT is unable to schedule a trip for the specific requirement requested by the customer, the customer declined to accept the trip option provided by the booking agent, or DRT did not have available capacity to accommodate the trip request.

Results

On Demand delivered a total of 19,789 trips in December 2023, including 9,429 trips for customers registered with Specialized transit. Total On Demand trips delivered in December 2023 were 23 per cent higher than December 2022, including an 18 per cent increase in Specialized transit trips. Consistent with scheduled service trends over Fall 2023, demand for On Demand and Specialized transit trips regularly exceeded DRT capacity.

2023 annual On Demand ridership increased 23 per cent compared to 2022 with a total of 276,838 trips delivered, including a 46 per cent increase in trips for customers registered with Specialized transit with a total of 141,808 trips delivered.

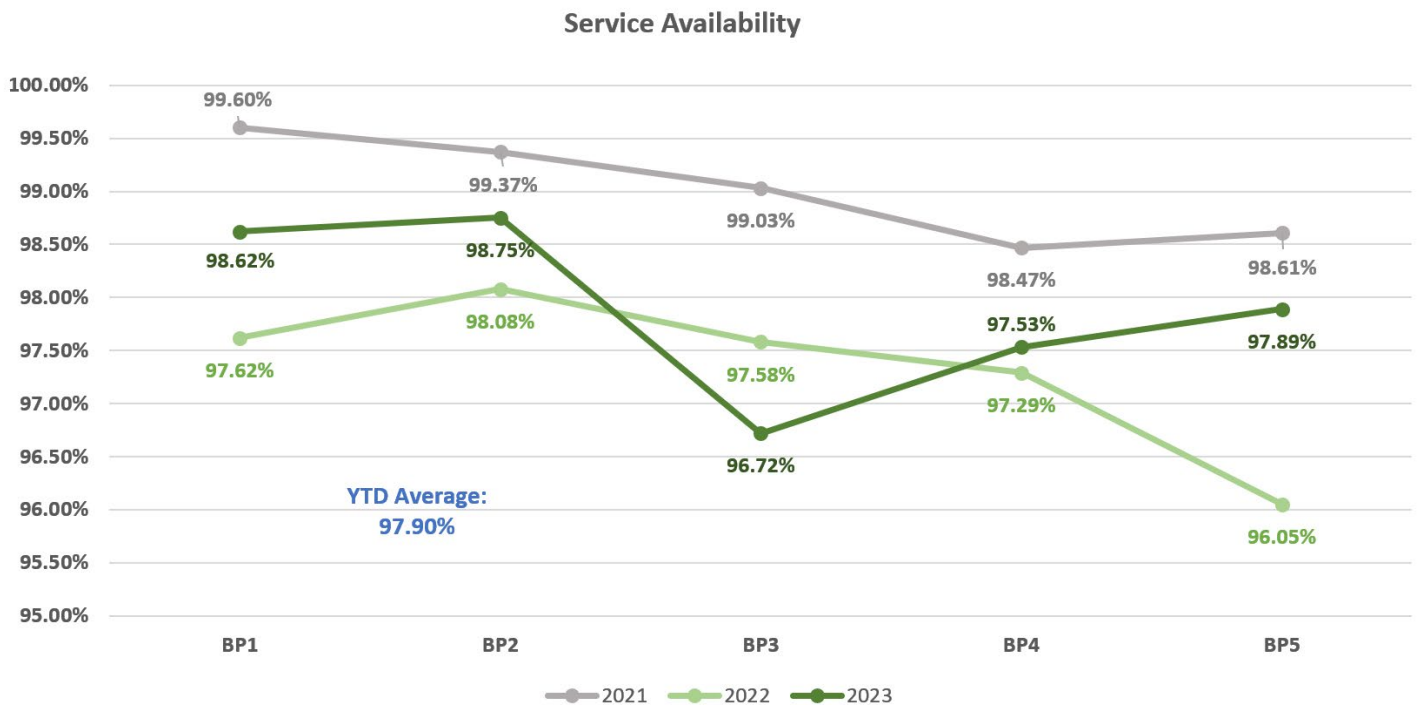
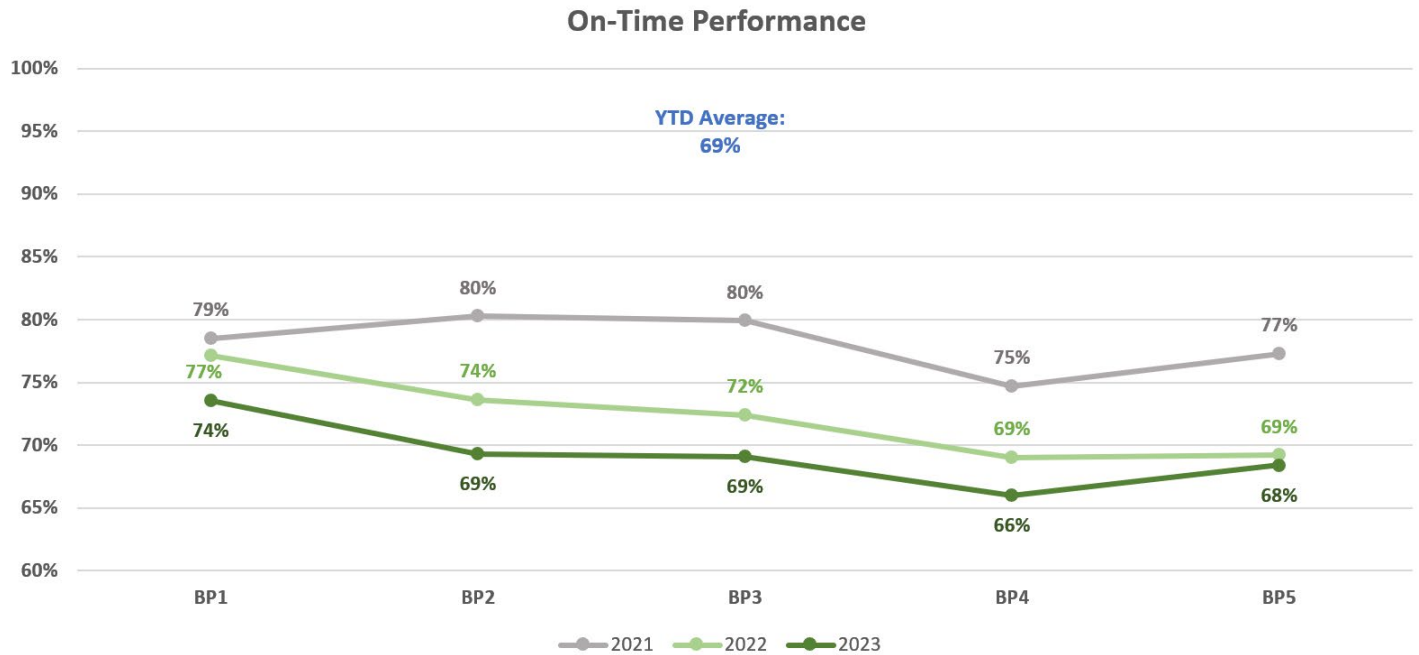
Report DRT-2023-18 highlighted that Specialized transit trips by active customers now exceed pre-pandemic levels, with active customers completing an average of 14.6 trips in April 2023 compared to 14.3 trips in 2019. Active customers completed an average of 14.7 trips in November 2023 and November 2019.

Action Plan

As part of the service model transition program, DRT expedited the transition of On Demand services to the third-party vendor to increase capacity. Effective September 5, 2023, all On Demand trips were delivered by DRT's third-party contractor (Voyago). Throughout the Fall 2023, DRT maximized capacity within existing resources to meet increasing trip demands.

Service Delivery

On Time Performance and Availability (conventional)



Definition

On Time Performance (OTP) is a measure of the per centage of buses departing a bus stop no more than zero minutes early and five minutes late. The annual OTP target is 80 per cent. OTP is reported for each service period.

Service availability is a measure of the actual service delivered by DRT as a per centage of scheduled revenue service. The service availability target is 99.5 per cent. Service availability is reported for each service period.

Results

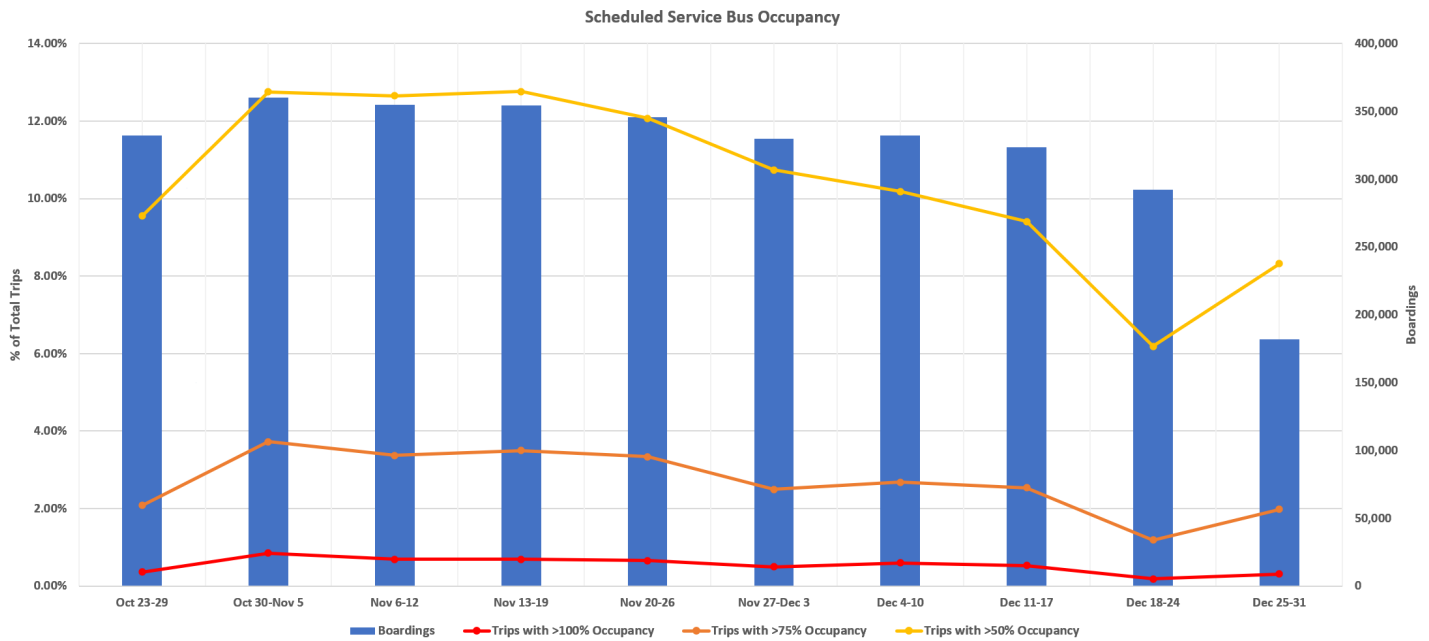
OTP for board period five (December 4 through January 1, 2024) was 68.4 per cent; 0.8 per cent lower than the same period in 2022. OTP recovered slightly in December from the record low OTP of 66 per cent during board period four (September through November).

Service availability for board period five improved to 97.9 per cent from 96.7 per cent during board period three, which was impacted by the emergency service changes required in response to the fire on August 16, 2023.

Action Plan

OTP continues to be impacted by increasing delays due to congestion experienced across major roads in the Region. The record low service availability during board period three (summer) resulted from the emergency service plan implemented following the fire at the Oshawa garage on August 16, 2023. DRT continue to experience service impacts from congestion and construction projects. Some planned trips are cancelled when a route is operating excessively late to enable subsequent planned trips to remain on schedule. Trip cancellations, which reduces service availability, impacts customers through less route capacity, longer wait times, and longer travel times due to missed connections. Staff have identified draft budget requirements to ensure service reliability for routes in areas of known and significant congestion and 2024 construction across the Region. When implemented, these investments will improve service reliability resulting in improved OTP and service availability for customers.

Scheduled Service Maximum Bus Occupancy



Definition

Maximum bus occupancy is a measure of the maximum number of riders on a scheduled service vehicle at any point of a trip, currently expressed as a per centage of the overall vehicle capacity. The data accounts for the differences in capacity for regular and articulated buses.

Results

Throughout December, approximately one per cent of all trips exceeded maximum occupancy, with approximately 3.5 per cent of trips exceeding 75 per cent maximum occupancy, and ten per cent of trips exceeding 50 per cent bus capacity. Operators reported approximately 342 incidents of bus full occurrences where customers waiting at stops were by-passed.

Action Plan

Significant service enhancements were implemented September 5, 2023, in anticipation of ridership reaching pre-pandemic levels. Where trips experience capacity limits, Transit Control continue to assign supplemental service, when available, to mitigate impacts to customers. Network optimization implemented in January reassigned capacity to routes experiencing the greatest ridership and/or reliability pressures.

Updates

1. Fare Integration – Removal of Double Fares Program (Ontario’s One-Fare Program)

The fare integration agreement recently signed with Metrolinx will save customers money when transferring between DRT and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC). Through the Province’s One-Fare Program, customers will not be required to pay a second fare when transferring between the TTC and 905 transit agencies when using an eligible PRESTO fare payment solution.

The One-Fare Program, funded by the Ministry of Transportation and delivered through Metrolinx, will reimburse transit agencies for their respective foregone farebox revenue. The program applies to fares paid through the PRESTO fare payment system. Fares paid using PRESTO E-Ticket or cash are not eligible for the One-Fare Program and customers will continue to pay the second fare when transferring between transit agencies.

For example, an adult customer boarding an eastbound Pulse 900 or 920 in Durham will pay \$3.35 when boarding and paying with PRESTO e-Purse or Open Payment, or they will simply tap on the PRESTO reader with their PRESTO DRT monthly pass. When transferring to the TTC within the two-hour transfer window, the customer will tap on the TTC PRESTO reader, but they will not be charged the TTC fare. Metrolinx will reimburse TTC \$3.30 for the foregone revenue from the transfer. Similarly, for the reverse of the preceding travel example, when connecting to DRT from the TTC, the customers will not pay a fare to DRT and Metrolinx will reimburse DRT \$3.35 for the foregone fare revenue from the transfer.

In partnership with participating transit agencies, Metrolinx will implement an extensive communication campaign following announcement of the program implementation date by the Province.

2. Service model transition project

DRT’s service model transition program included the contracting out of On Demand service and internal delivery of scheduled services by DRT staff.

Effective September 2023, delivery of On Demand services transitioned to the current contracted service provider, Voyago. DRT continue to be responsible for the overall management and administration of On Demand services. The DRT contract for supplemental scheduled service, most recently delivered by Pacific Western Transit (PWT), expired December 31, 2023. Since December 25, 2023, DRT staff have delivered all scheduled services.

The project will be successfully completed by January 31, 2024.

3. Network performance following January service change

At the November 2023 meeting, TEC was advised of unprecedented pressures on the transit network as weekday and weekend ridership reached record levels, and service experienced increasing delays due to higher loading and increased traffic congestion. To mitigate network pressures and minimize ridership impacts, the current transit network was planned to be optimized

to reallocate the required number of buses and service hours. Reallocating resources to areas experiencing the greatest pressure would assist to mitigate ridership impacts by improving service availability and reliability. Further, network optimization would result in changes, including restructuring of several routes, suspension of service on the lowest performing routes, new or replacement service, and a reduction in some route frequencies. Optimization was planned to be implemented for January 2024 to improve reliability and increased capacity on key routes that are critical to sustaining ridership and the transit network.

DRT's on-time performance in November reached an all-time low of 66 per cent (target is 80 per cent), and service availability of 97.5 per cent (target is 99.5 per cent). Customers were experiencing unacceptable levels of buses being at capacity and uncomfortable, full buses by-passing them at stops, trips being cancelled at the last minute because of excessive late, and longer travel times because of missed connections and excessive time waiting at bus stops.

Optimization of scheduled services for January 2024 was completed through data driven decisions and adhering to established transit service guidelines. The objective was to provide service to the greatest number of transit riders within the allocated service hours and resources. Below is a summary of key elements of [DRT's Service Guidelines](#) which are balanced during the planning and design of the transit network.

Service deployment All Durham residents have access to transit, with service varying by time of day and day of the week to ensure that services are sustainable and implemented in an efficient and fair manner. Routes operate at a minimum 30-minute frequency for a minimum of three hours. Span and level of service are adjusted based on customer demand.

Ridership Productivity Ridership productivity guideline provide a measure of the effectiveness of a transit route. Each service type (PULSE, Base, GO Transit Connector and rural) contribute differently to the DRT transit network and each have unique minimum productivity targets. Route productivity varies based on the varying built environments in which each route operates. Route ridership minimums based on service type.

Frequency/Span DRT provides 24-hour transit service seven days a week in urban areas, and service from 06:00 to 24:00 on weekdays and 07:00 to 21:00 on weekends in rural areas. The span of service and service level varies based on customer demand.

For scheduled routes, minimum 30 minutes service frequency in urban areas, 90 minutes in rural areas.

Vehicle Capacity Vehicle capacity considers the average number of passengers that can be accommodated on a bus during its busiest hour, and most popular point on the route.

Service Proximity Service proximity means the walking distance between dwellings and the nearest bus stop. In the urban area, DRT aims to have:

- Dwellings within a 500-metre walk of a bus stop: 80 per cent.
- Dwellings within an 800-metre walk of a bus stop: 95 per cent.

In the rural area, 100 per cent of dwellings will be served by Demand Response at the curb (such as the entrance to a property).

DRT received significant feedback from residents regarding the January 2024 Service Changes, mainly focussed on three issues:

Issue: Residents are now required to walk farther to access a scheduled route.
DRT comments: Issues expressed by residents included a longer walk to a bus stop, they have mobility limitations and experience difficulty or are unable to get to the bus stop, lack of lighting, lack of pedestrian infrastructure to walk to the bus stop, and additional travel time required when using public transit.

Optimization of the network for January 2 was required to reallocate existing transit resources (service hours and buses) from lowest performing routes and trips to areas of insufficient capacity and reliability to meet record level ridership demand. The changes, such as suspending or restructuring a route, were made within DRT's service guidelines and resulted in less convenient access to scheduled service for some customers. As new resources become available, the recently suspended services are expected to be reintroduced, and service enhancements are planned as part of DRT's 10-year service strategy to provide more convenient access for residents.

Issue: Residents no longer have access to scheduled service because the route has been suspended, realigned, or some trips have been suspended.
DRT Comments: Consistent with the service guidelines, where appropriate On Demand replaced schedule service in several areas where scheduled routes/trips were suspended.

Specific to the distance between a dwelling and the nearest bus stop, the DRT network continues to meet the proximity guideline of 95 per cent within an 800 metre walk.

Issue: Route reliability and capacity has improved in areas of pressure, but routes and trips continue to experience capacity and reliability challenges
DRT Comments: DRT reallocated the equivalent of approximately 20,000 annual service hours (approximately 4 per cent), from lowest performing routes to areas of reliability and capacity pressure on the transit network. The objective

was to increase service on routes where buses were exceeding customer capacity with customers regularly being by-passed by full buses, and to enhance reliability and availability of service on routes impacted by delays.

Staff will be evaluating network performance over the coming months but did provide some preliminary data for January 2024 (see below).

Reliability

- Average 23 per cent improvement in departures/arrivals from terminals for route 902 (highest performing route on the DRT network).
- Up to five per cent improvement in late departures for all stops on cross-regional routes 900, 915, 916, 917, 920.

Capacity

- 13 per cent improvement for route 920, and 6 per cent improvement for route 901, in over-capacity buses on networks busiest routes.
- Enhanced On Demand capacity with over 50 daily trips by customers to Amazon Fulfillment centre now serviced with route 920, and 50 daily trips by customers within Uxbridge accommodated through route 605.

DRT also received feedback claiming that the service changes implemented in January 2024 are in contravention of the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

In their report “Human rights and public transit services in Ontario”, the Ontario Human Rights Commission stated the following.

“The OHRC recognizes the multiple roles and obligations facing transit providers, the complexity of the system that they operate, and the severity of the financial constraints that they are experiencing. It is unrealistic to expect that transit providers will, without some outside assistance, be able to rapidly achieve maximally accessible, dignified transit options for all.”

The report was approved by the OHRC in 2002, and this comment remains relevant in 2024.

The Integrated Accessibility Standard (IAS) of the AODA includes the transportation standards that apply to public service providers, for which DRT is compliant. The IAS mandates requirements for scheduled services, otherwise referred to as conventional services, and specialized transportation services.

The challenge facing transit in Durham today is that annual revenue service hours and capacity are not sufficient to meet the demand of residents and visitors who are choosing transit, or who

don't have a choice but to use transit, for their travel needs. The January service change also highlighted challenges faced by residents in accessing transit stops, including incomplete or missing pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, and seasonal snow clearing concerns.

DRT has been required to optimize the network regularly over the past number of years to maximize service in areas of greatest ridership demand. While transit in Durham Region remains last amongst comparators in several metrics, such as revenue hours per capita, DRT has been taken steps towards a mature transit network including higher-frequency Pulse routes, 24/7 service, and service to all residents in the region. However, as the transit network has matured, there remains limited capacity to optimize services without impacting traditional local services.

In response to unprecedented growth across the Region and known pressures on the transit network, the Region has planned significant investments in annual revenue service increases as part of DRT's 10-year service and financing strategy.



Durham Region Transit Report

To: The Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2024-DRT-02
Date: February 07, 2024

Subject:

Revisions to Terms of Reference for the Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process

Recommendations:

That the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Durham Region Transit Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process, as set out in Attachment 2 to this report.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 This report proposes revisions to the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Durham Region Transit (DRT) Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process. These proposed changes respond to recent experiences in administering the Appeal Panel process, updates to language, and format preferences.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Integrated Accessibility Standards (IAS), O. Reg 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), requires transit providers to establish an independent appeal process to review decisions respecting eligibility for specialized transit services.
- 2.2 The appeal process ensures that applications for eligibility are dealt with in an objective and unbiased manner, adhering to the process and timeframes established in the IAS.
- 2.3 The DRT eligibility appeal panel was established in January 2015. The Terms of

Reference was updated in 2018 to incorporate best practices from transit agencies in Ontario.

3. Discussion

- 3.1 Based on the experience in administering appeal panel hearings since 2018, DRT is proposing a change to the composition of the appeal panel. DRT proposes to replace the community member with staff from the Accessibility team of the Region's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Division (DEI).
- 3.2 DRT has experienced significant challenges administering the appeal panel process resulting in impacts to appellants because of last minute cancellations and delays in scheduling appeal hearings. Staff from the Accessibility team bring to the panel and their related discussions and decision, a breadth of knowledge and experience across the spectrum of accessibility issues. In addition to their work to support accessibility at the Region, these individuals are engaged with accessibility coordinators from the local municipalities, ensuring awareness of local accessibility issues across the Region.
- 3.3 This change continues to support an appeal process which is independent from the DRT eligibility office.
- 3.4 Proposed revisions to the current Terms of Reference are noted in Attachment #1, with the recommended Terms of Reference included as Attachment #2.

4. Previous Reports

- 4.1 Report 2014-DRT-05 Appeal Process for Specialized Services Eligibility, established the original Terms of Reference for the eligibility appeal process.
- 4.2 Report 2015-DRT-19 Revised Durham Region Transit Specialized Services Appeal Panel Terms of Reference, which provided the flexibility for panel membership to include Durham Region employee's who work with persons with disabilities and experienced in issues of accessibility and the AODA.
- 4.3 Report 2018-DRT-17 Revised Terms of Reference for the Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process, revised the eligibility appeal process to be consistent with best practices in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

5. Financial Summary

- 5.1 There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

6. Relationship to Strategic Plan

6.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

A) Service Excellence: Optimize resources and partnerships to deliver exceptional quality services and value.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The proposed revision to the Terms of Reference for the Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process will ensure appeals of DRT eligibility decisions continue to be administered independent of the eligibility office, that the appeal panel maintains the requisite knowledge to make informed eligibility decisions, and that DRT can mitigate scheduling challenges and delays for appellants.

8. Attachment

Attachment #1: Proposed revisions to current Terms of Reference

Attachment #2: Revised Terms of Reference, Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process, effective February 7, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

William Holmes

General Manager, DRT

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair

Chief Administrative Officer



REVISED
Durham Region Transit
Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process
Terms of Reference

1. **Mandate**

- 1.1 The Durham Region Transit (DRT) **Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process (Eligibility Appeal Process)** shall provide for an appeal panel to hear an appeal from an individual and/or their representative requesting review of a decision made by DRT Specialized Services that denied eligibility to receive specialized transit services or assigned a category of eligibility that they dispute. The appeal process is intended to ensure that applications are dealt with in a fair and independent manner, and decisions are made in accordance with established criteria.
- 1.2 The appeal panel, appointed by DRT but operating independently, shall have final authority on decisions regarding eligibility for specialized transit services provided by DRT.
- 1.3 The Eligibility Appeal Process shall comply with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA), adhering to the process and timeframes established within the AODA and its regulations, specifically with respect to eligibility appeals.
- ~~1.4 The primary responsibility of the Eligibility Appeal Process is to ensure the appropriate matching of transit service delivery options with the abilities of the appellant.~~
- 1.5 The appeal panel in hearing appeals will base its decision upon either new information provided by the appellant and/or a claim of misinterpretation of previously submitted information. Appeals based solely on compassionate grounds shall not be considered.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 “abilities” means: physical and cognitive abilities to use conventional transit services by a person with a disability.
- 2.2 “appeal” means: to apply in writing under the prescribed form for review through the DRT Eligibility Appeal Process of a decision made by DRT establishing eligibility of an applicant for specialized transit services. The appeal must concern a decision regarding eligibility, category of eligibility, or type of assistance required. Four conditions must be met for the appeal application to be deemed complete and the appeal acceptable for review:
- a) The appeal must be made within 30 days following receipt of the initial decision;
 - b) The appeal must be made by the applicant or **their** his/her representative;
 - c) The decision contested must be based on and be a continuation of the original application; and
 - d) The appellant must, if required, provide additional medical information not considered during the original assessment and submit to an independent assessment.
- 2.3 “conventional transit services” means: ~~transit services provided along fixed routes by buses that may or may not be low floor, accessible, and for which passengers must be able to get themselves to and from the bus stop.~~ **Fixed route scheduled transit service**
- 2.4 ~~“Disability as per the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Region of Durham Corporate Services Policy and Procedures Manual, any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement, a condition of mental impairment, a developmental or learning disability or a mental disorder, or an injury.~~ **for the purpose of this policy is defined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).**
- 2.4 “shared ride” means: the concurrent transportation of two or more passengers on board a single vehicle, meaning that other passengers may be on board during the trip, that the route of travel may be altered so other passengers may be accommodated and that the vehicle may stop and pick up other passengers on its way to a destination, all within the parameters set by the Region.

2.5 ~~“specialized transit services” means: pre-booked, shared-ride, door-to-door transit services provided by DRT to individuals who, due to a disability, are unable to use conventional transit services, and may include the issuance of a Support Person card.~~
Durham Region Transit On Demand transit service for eligible persons registered with Specialized Transit.

3. **Composition**

3.1 At any hearing, the appeal panel shall be comprised of three members: ~~an Occupational Therapist~~ **a health care professional**, a DRT ~~conventional transit professional~~, and a representative of the **Region of Durham Accessibility team** ~~community with a disability who uses DRT conventional transit services.~~

3.2 Appeal panel members will be expected to carry out their duties in an objective **and unbiased** manner and must declare any personal interests or potential conflicts when carrying out their duties.

3.3 Staff support for the Eligibility Appeal Process, including the appeal panel, shall be provided by DRT, which shall maintain a record of all hearings and support reporting responsibilities.

~~3.4 Individuals willing to volunteer as DRT Eligibility Appeal Panel members representing the community will be selected by an Appeal Panel recruitment team formed by DRT and Durham Region Human Resources. Such individuals will be invited to submit a letter of interest to be evaluated based on the following criteria:~~

- ~~a) Knowledge of disabilities~~
- ~~b) Knowledge of public transit~~
- ~~c) Familiarity with AODA legislation~~
- ~~d) Effective interview skills~~
- ~~e) Ability to make unbiased and objective decisions~~
- ~~f) Knowledge of DRT conventional and specialized transit services policies~~

~~Interested individuals will be required to meet the following eligibility criteria. They must be:~~

- a) ~~at least 18 years of age;~~
- b) ~~residents of The Regional Municipality of Durham;~~
- c) ~~not elected officials of Regional Council or of the Council of any of the local area municipalities;~~
- d) ~~not members of the AAC/ATAC committee of The Regional Municipality of Durham or of any of the local area municipalities;~~
- e) ~~not employees of The Regional Municipality of Durham or of any of the local area municipalities; and~~
- f) ~~available to attend appeal panel meetings once per month during business hours.~~

3.5 The appeal panel shall ~~report to the DRT Deputy General Manager, Business Services.~~ **be administered by the office of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit.**

4. **Appeal Submissions**

- 4.1 Any individual wishing to appeal through the Eligibility Appeal Process must apply in writing under the prescribed form to the DRT offices at 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby or by email to drtspecialized@durham.ca and meet the conditions.
- 4.2 Any individual having submitted a complete appeal application shall be advised in writing of the date and time ~~by regular mail, and by e-mail if provided, of the date and time during normal business hours~~ of the appeal hearing.

5. **Hearings**

- 5.1 Eligibility Appeal Process hearings shall be conducted at the Regional Headquarters located at 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, **or virtually through Teams, at the discretion of the appellant. The appellant is responsible for all equipment, devices, and associated costs for participating virtually at the meeting.** Hearings shall be called on an as- needed basis following the receipt of appeals.
- 5.2 Eligibility Appeal Process hearings are not legal proceedings and are open to the public.
- 5.3 Confidentiality of personal information shall be strictly maintained. Accordingly, supporting documents and discussion shall not be made public and shall remain confidential. However, appellants may bring anyone with them to their hearing for

support or representation.

- 5.4 DRT staff may be asked to attend hearings and assist in presenting the initial evaluation results and the basis for same, interpreting relevant legislation and regulations and providing clarifications relating to specific business rules, the *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA) or any other query. Other Regional departments shall be consulted on an as-needed basis.
- 5.5 In a circumstance where an appellant was unable to attend the appeal hearing and provides within two business days a reasonable explanation for not having attended, one further appeal hearing shall be scheduled.
- 5.6 An appellant and/or their representative must not unreasonably delay the appeal process and the rendering of a final eligibility decision by the appeal panel. DRT reserves the right to make a final eligibility decision in the event the appellant and/or their representative delay the appeal process.

6. **Eligibility Appeal Process Decisions**

- 6.1 A hearing shall be held and a decision on an appeal with respect to eligibility shall be made within 30 calendar days after receiving the complete appeal application. If a final decision is not made within the 30 days, the appellant shall be granted temporary eligibility until a final decision is made.
- 6.2 The appeal panel shall issue a final eligibility decision based on:
 - a) information provided in the eligibility application, including any supporting documentation submitted with it;
 - b) information provided in the appeal form, including any supporting documentation submitted with it;
 - c) the results of any functional assessment that the appellant may have attended (either as part of the application or of the appeal process);
 - d) any information and statements presented by the appellant and/or their representative at the hearing (if they attended); and
 - e) any relevant observations made by the appeal panel during the hearing (if the appellant attended).
- 6.3 The appeal panel can make the following final eligibility decisions:
 - a) uphold the original DRT eligibility decision; or

- b) change the original DRT eligibility decision, including deny eligibility.
- 6.4 The decisions shall be based on a majority vote of the appeal panel. The appellant and/or their representative may re-apply for DRT specialized transit services by completing a new application if/when there has been a material change in medical status that may affect the individual's eligibility.
- 6.5 Appeal panel members shall take notes at the hearings of all information presented. Appeal panel members shall meet in private after the hearing to make a decision. The decision, a summary of the reasons for the decision and the notes of the information presented shall be signed and dated by all appeal panel members. Appellants shall be given detailed written notice of the outcome of the appeal including the reasons for the decision. All information shall be contained in a confidential client file for seven years following the hearing.
- 6.6 Upon the request of any individual requesting specialized transit services, DRT shall make available to that requester all of **their** his/her eligibility application and decision information in accessible format.
- 6.7 The Eligibility Appeal Process **outcomes** decisions shall be reported to Transit Executive Committee from time to time.



REVISED
Durham Region Transit
Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process
Terms of Reference

1. Mandate

- 1.1 The Durham Region Transit (DRT) Specialized Services Eligibility Appeal Process (Eligibility Appeal Process) shall provide for an appeal panel to hear an appeal from an individual and/or their representative requesting review of a decision made by DRT Specialized Services that denied eligibility to receive specialized transit services or assigned a category of eligibility that they dispute. The appeal process is intended to ensure that applications are dealt with in a fair and independent manner, and decisions are made in accordance with established criteria.
- 1.2 The appeal panel, appointed by DRT but operating independently, shall have final authority on decisions regarding eligibility for specialized transit services provided by DRT.
- 1.3 The Eligibility Appeal Process shall comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), adhering to the process and timeframes established within the AODA and its regulations, specifically with respect to eligibility appeals.
- 1.4 The appeal panel in hearing appeals will base its decision upon either new information provided by the appellant and/or a claim of misinterpretation of previously submitted information. Appeals based solely on compassionate grounds shall not be considered.

2. **Definitions**

- 2.1 “abilities” means: physical and cognitive abilities to use conventional transit services by a person with a disability.
- 2.2 “appeal” means: to apply in writing under the prescribed form for review through the DRT Eligibility Appeal Process of a decision made by DRT establishing eligibility of an applicant for specialized transit services. The appeal must concern a decision regarding eligibility, category of eligibility, or type of assistance required. Four conditions must be met for the appeal application to be deemed complete and the appeal acceptable for review:
- a) The appeal must be made within 30 days following receipt of the initial decision;
 - b) The appeal must be made by the applicant or their representative;
 - c) The decision contested must be based on and be a continuation of the original application; and
 - d) The appellant must, if required, provide additional medical information not considered during the original assessment and submit to an independent assessment.
- 2.3 “conventional transit services” means: Fixed route scheduled transit service.
- 2.4 “Disability” for the purpose of this policy is defined in the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#);
- 2.4 “shared ride” means: the concurrent transportation of two or more passengers on board a single vehicle, meaning that other passengers may be on board during the trip, that the route of travel may be altered so other passengers may be accommodated and that the vehicle may stop and pick up other passengers on its way to a destination, all within the parameters set by the Region.
- 2.5 “specialized transit services” means: Durham Region Transit On Demand transit service for eligible persons registered with Specialized Transit.

3. **Composition**

- 3.1 At any hearing, the appeal panel shall be comprised of three members: a health care professional, a DRT transit professional, and a representative of the Region of Durham’s Accessibility team.

- 3.2 Appeal panel members will be expected to carry out their duties in an objective and unbiased manner and must declare any personal interests or potential conflicts when carrying out their duties.
- 3.3 Staff support for the Eligibility Appeal Process, including the appeal panel, shall be provided by DRT, which shall maintain a record of all hearings and support reporting responsibilities.
- 3.4 The appeal panel process shall be administered by the office of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit.

4. **Appeal Submissions**

- 4.1 Any individual wishing to appeal through the Eligibility Appeal Process must apply in writing under the prescribed form to the DRT offices at 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby or by email to drtspecialized@durham.ca and meet the conditions.
- 4.2 Any individual having submitted a complete appeal application shall be advised in writing of the date and time of the appeal hearing.

5. **Hearings**

- 5.1 Eligibility Appeal Process hearings shall be conducted at the Regional Headquarters located at 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, or virtually through Teams, at the discretion of the appellant. The appellant is responsible for all equipment, devices, and associated costs for participating virtually at the meeting. Hearings shall be called on an as-needed basis following the receipt of appeals.
- 5.2 Eligibility Appeal Process hearings are not legal proceedings and are open to the public.
- 5.3 Confidentiality of personal information shall be strictly maintained. Accordingly, supporting documents and discussion shall not be made public and shall remain confidential. However, appellants may bring anyone with them to their hearing for support or representation.
- 5.4 DRT staff may be asked to attend hearings and assist in presenting the initial evaluation results and the basis for same, interpreting relevant legislation and regulations and providing clarifications relating to specific business rules, the *Highway*

Traffic Act (HTA) or any other query. Other Regional departments shall be consulted on an as-needed basis.

5.5 In a circumstance where an appellant was unable to attend the appeal hearing and provides within two business days a reasonable explanation for not having attended, one further appeal hearing shall be scheduled.

5.6 An appellant and/or their representative must not unreasonably delay the appeal process and the rendering of a final eligibility decision by the appeal panel. DRT reserves the right to make a final eligibility decision in the event the appellant and/or their representative delay the appeal process.

6. Eligibility Appeal Process Decisions

6.1 A hearing shall be held and a decision on an appeal with respect to eligibility shall be made within 30 calendar days after receiving the complete appeal application. If a final decision is not made within the 30 days, the appellant shall be granted temporary eligibility until a final decision is made.

6.2 The appeal panel shall issue a final eligibility decision based on:

- a) information provided in the eligibility application, including any supporting documentation submitted with it;
- b) information provided in the appeal form, including any supporting documentation submitted with it;
- c) the results of any functional assessment that the appellant may have attended (either as part of the application or of the appeal process);
- d) any information and statements presented by the appellant and/or their representative at the hearing (if they attended); and
- e) Any relevant observations made by the appeal panel during the hearing (if the appellant attended).

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- a) uphold the original DRT eligibility decision; or
- b) change the original DRT eligibility decision, including deny eligibility.

6.4 The decisions shall be based on a majority vote of the appeal panel. The appellant and/or their representative may re-apply for DRT specialized transit services by

completing a new application if/when there has been a material change in medical status that may affect the individual's eligibility.

- 6.5 Appeal panel members shall take notes at the hearings of all information presented. Appeal panel members shall meet in private after the hearing to make a decision. The decision, a summary of the reasons for the decision, and the notes of the information presented shall be signed and dated by all appeal panel members. Appellants shall be given detailed written notice of the outcome of the appeal including the reasons for the decision. All information shall be contained in a confidential client file for seven years following the hearing.
- 6.6 Upon the request of any individual requesting specialized transit services, DRT shall make available to that requester all their eligibility application and decision information in accessible format.
- 6.7 Eligibility Appeal Process outcomes shall be reported to Transit Executive Committee from time to time.



Durham Region Transit Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit and Treasurer Durham Region Transit
Report: #2024-DRT-03
Date: February 7, 2024

Subject:

2024 transit fares

Recommendations:

That the Transit Executive Committee recommends to Regional Council that the proposed transit fares (Attachment 1) be approved and implemented July 1, 2024;

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain approval from TEC and Council for proposed fare increases to be included in the 2024 DRT Business Plans and Budget.

2. Background

2.1 DRT's long-term fare strategy was approved by the Transit Executive Committee in December 2019 based on a number of key principles, including:

- Recognizing fare pricing influences service use
- Applying fare increases to the standard (adult) single-ride fare and translating increases to other fare concessions and products
- Providing choice for customers through incentives offering value for frequent use
- Incentivizing and prioritizing electronic fare payment
- Minimizing oversight of fares by bus operators
- Ensuring sustainability of discounted fare programs

2.2 Since 2019, DRT has made significant advancements in the modernization of its fare products, such as the discontinuation of paper period passes and expansion of electronic payment options. This includes more than doubling the use of PRESTO

electronic fare payment system by customers from less than 40 per cent in 2019 to more than 90 per cent in 2023. For customers paying fares in November 2023 using PRESTO, 37 per cent paid each trip through the electronic purse on their PRESTO card, 22 per cent loaded a monthly period pass onto their PRESTO card, 37 per cent used the PRESTO electronic ticket app on their smartphone (the majority of which are comprised of post-secondary students whose U-Pass is made available through the app), and 4 per cent paid each trip using PRESTO Open Payment.

- 2.3 DRT also continues to offer discounted fares and incentives to attract and encourage more frequent transit use among key market groups. This includes seniors who benefit from reduced cost fares providing discounts of up to 60 per cent in the case of monthly passes, all children aged 12 years and under who continue to ride DRT services at no cost, and youth for whom regular fares and passes are already reduced compared to standard adult fares. Additional options for youth provide further savings to incentivize more regular use, including the Youth Summer 2-for-1 pass and the Y10 Youth Loyalty Pass providing an additional savings of more than \$180 over the ten-month school year (based on the current fees) when a pass is purchased for each month. DRT's bulk purchase program for school boards in Durham was introduced in 2022 offering further savings on already reduced youth passes to encourage more secondary school students in Durham to access public transit for travel to and from school. In addition, DRT is currently exploring a new employer pass program to further incentivize transit use across the Region.
- 2.4 The Transit Assistance Program (TAP), now a permanent pass product, was introduced by DRT in late 2019 as a pilot program making reduced cost transit available to all social assistance clients in Durham, including Ontario Works clients who had been ineligible for the existing Access Pass. TAP uses the PRESTO electronic fare payment system card, removing the stigma of having a separate, identifiable fare product, while providing a 61 per cent reduction on standard monthly fare costs. TAP also leverages the benefits of the PRESTO electronic fare card in providing protection for lost cards and the flexibility for customers to pay-as-they-go and carry-over unused funds to the next month or opt for the simplicity of a pay-up-front monthly pass.
- 2.5 In February 2023, Council approved the DRT fare structure where annual fare adjustments are linked to changes to the base fare on a proportional or trip equivalent basis. This approach ensures that fare adjustments are applied on a consistent basis across fare categories and maintain established discount rates.
- 2.6 DRT's best value fare product is the Universal Pass (or U-Pass) provided to all full-

time post-secondary students at Durham College, Ontario Tech University and Trent University (Durham campus). Under the U-Pass agreement with the post-secondary institutions, all full-time students pay a fee as part of their mandatory ancillary fees and are provided with a transit pass for the semester. The approved U-Pass rate for the period September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025, is \$152.85 per four month semester. The cost of a U-Pass is equivalent monthly to a nearly 70 per cent discount on a standard adult pass and is \$9.40 less per month than DRT's TAP pass, and the discount would increase to \$12.19 less per month under the proposed fare increase. DRT staff will begin negotiating a new multi-year U-Pass agreement with the post-secondary institutions in 2024 and will be seeking Council approval in advance of the 2025 Business Plan and Budget.

3. Discussion

- 3.1 Financing of the DRT 2023 approved budget included \$29.2 million from transit fares, or 14.5 per cent of the \$199.2 million gross transit budget. Transit fares were budgeted to include \$21.9 million (75 per cent) from PRESTO and cash fares, \$6.9 million (24 per cent) from the U-Pass program and \$0.4 million (1 per cent) in recoveries for ODSP passes. Transit Fares fund approximately 26 per cent of budgeted gross operating expenses. As reported in the consolidated budget status report through November 30, 2023 (#2024-INFO-01), fare revenues are expected to be in a \$1.7 million surplus position for 2023, mainly attributed to higher than anticipated ridership and enrolment at post-secondary institutions.
- 3.2 DRT's operating revenue/cost ratio (R/C ratio) is projected to be approximately 32 per cent for 2023, compared to an R/C ratio of 37 per cent for 2019 and 2018. The lower R/C ratio in 2023 can be attributed to several factors.
- a. While monthly transit ridership throughout Fall 2023 exceeded 2019 levels, 2023 annual ridership is expected to be 2 per cent below 2019 levels.
 - b. 124 per cent increase in free rides since 2019 that coincides with adopting a fare free child concession for customers 12 years of age and younger.
 - c. U-Pass rate lower than required to ensure U-Pass revenue proportionally funds DRT service levels across the Region to meet ridership demand.
 - d. Fare revenue has not kept pace with increasing operating costs. DRT's budgeted gross operating expenditures have increased 18.4 per cent from 2019 to 2023, while fare revenue has decreased 1.3 per cent since 2019.
- 3.3 The approved 10-year Transit Service and Financing Strategy included a 13 per cent increase in planned transit service levels for 2024, or 69,882 service hours, to respond to ridership pressures, reliability challenges, and service enhancements for existing and growing communities across the Region. The annual service level

investments highlighted in the 10-year strategy are planned to increase DRT services by 127 per cent by 2032 and improve Durham Region's Revenue Hours Per Capita investment to 1.4 from the current 0.9. Importantly though, these forecasted service levels require senior government funding and subject to annual investment approvals through the Region's business planning and budget process.

- 3.4 To minimize impacts on the property tax levy, and in response to continued inflationary pressures, service growth planned within the approved 2023-2032 Service and Financing Strategy, and the need to restore services suspended in January 2023, DRT proposes an adjustment of \$0.25, or 7.5 per cent, on the base fare with corresponding adjustments to the other fare categories based on the approved fare structure. The fare adjustment will result in an estimated \$0.95 million increase in fare revenue in 2024, with an annualized revenue increase of approximately \$1.9 million.
- 3.5 The proposed 2024 DRT fare increase will result in fares consistent with transit agencies in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) as summarized in Table 1. While they are not increasing fares in 2024, the Toronto Transit Commission is generally not used as a comparator to DRT. Ridership across other GTHA transit agencies now surpasses pre-pandemic levels and additional service levels are required to accommodate increasing transit ridership.
- 3.6 Based on the five transit agencies listed in Table 1, DRT ranks as the fourth lowest cost monthly pass, second lowest cost single ride PRESTO fare, and the highest cash fare. DRT cash fare revenues continue to decline annually as residents transition to the PRESTO fare payment system and its associated benefits, including paying a lower fare.

Table 1: 2024 fares for transit agencies in the GTHA

Transit Agency	PRESTO (Adult)		Cash Single Ride (Adult)
	Single Ride	Monthly Pass	
Durham Region Transit (proposed July 1, 2024)	\$3.60	\$129.60	\$4.60
MiWay (April 1, 2024)	\$3.40	\$141.00	\$4.25
Brampton (2023) ¹	\$3.40	\$141.25	\$4.50
Hamilton (proposed 2024)	\$2.80	\$123.20	\$3.50
York Region Transit (January 1, 2024)	\$3.88	\$155.20 ²	\$4.25

¹ Brampton transit increased fares 10 per cent in 2023, no increase in 2024

² Fare capping introduced January 1, 2024 where travelers can ride YRT for free after 40 trips when using PRESTO

3.7 The full proposed DRT fare table is included as Attachment 1.

4. Previous Reports

4.1 2019-DRT-25 Durham Region Transit Fare Strategy

4.2 2019-DRT-16 Update on DRT Kids Ride Free Incentive Pilot Program

4.3 2022-DRT-07 Youth monthly pass incentives for the 2022/23 secondary school term

4.4 2023-F-5 Transit Service and Finance Strategy, approved by Council on March 1, 2023

4.5 2023-DRT-26 U-Pass Agreement Extension, approved by Council on November 28, 2023

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Goal 1 - Environmental Sustainability

The proposed fare increase will support DRT's expansion of sustainable and active transportation through service enhancements. DRT will enhance capacity of the route network, which will increase service availability, as well as to support fleet electrification through adoption of zero emission technologies.

b. Goal 3 - Economic Prosperity

The proposed fare increase will enable DRT to enhance services in key growth areas, which will position Durham Region as the location of choice for businesses, and connecting people to employment, education and tourism opportunities.

c. Goal 4 – Social Investment

The proposed fare increase will ensure all residents receive access to essential services through an equitable fare structure. DRT will also continue to offer fare incentive programs for children, youth, seniors, and persons receiving social assistance benefits, in addition to U-pass and bulk purchase program for school boards.

d. Goal 5 – Service Excellence

The proposed fare increase will enable DRT to continue to invest in service enhancements that will reduce wait times, reduce reliance on personal vehicles, and to meet Durham's rapidly growing population. As customer expectations for public transit continue to rise, service enhancements will be planned around exceeding these expectations to ensure that public transit remain the top travel option for many riders across the network.

6. Financial Summary

- 6.1 The proposed fare adjustment of \$0.25, or 7.5 per cent on the base fare with corresponding adjustments to the other fare categories based on the approved fare structure, will assist in offsetting a portion of the inflationary pressures and increases in service levels service planned for the 2024 budget.
- 6.2 The proposed fare increase is estimated to generate an additional \$0.95 million in fare revenues in 2024 (based on a July 1, 2024, effective date), with an annualized revenue increase estimated at \$1.9 million.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 DRT continues to face increasing cost pressures to sustain a transit network to meet the demands for public transit in one of Ontario's most rapidly growing municipalities. The proposed fare increases and associated additional revenues will partially mitigate increasing cost pressures and enable DRT to maximize services and

progress towards planned service levels of the 10-year transit service and financing strategy.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

William Holmes
General Manager, DRT

Original signed by

Nancy Taylor
Treasurer, DRT

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer



Attachment #1: 2024 Proposed Fares Table

Fare Category		Current Fare	DRT Fare Structure	Proposed Fare effective July 1, 2024	Per cent Change
Adult	Single Ride (Presto Card and E-Ticket)	\$3.35	Base Fare	\$3.60	7.5%
	Single Ride (Cash and Open Payment)	\$4.35	\$1.00 over base	\$4.60	5.7%
	Monthly Pass	\$120.60	36 trips at base fare	\$129.60	7.5%
Child (aged 12 years and under)	All Rides	Free	NA	NA	NA
Youth (aged 13-19 years)	Single Ride (Presto Card and E-Ticket)	\$3.00	90 per cent of base fare	\$3.24	8.0%
	Single Ride (Cash and Open Payment)	\$4.35	Equivalent to Adult cash fare	\$4.60	5.7%
	Monthly Pass	\$96.50	80 per cent of Adult pass	\$103.68	7.4%
	2-for-1 Youth Summer pass	\$96.50	80 per cent of Adult pass	\$103.68	7.4%
	Y10 (10 month loyalty pass)	\$78.40	65 per cent of Adult pass	\$84.24	7.4%

Fare Category		Current Fare	DRT Fare Structure	Proposed Fare effective July 1, 2024 ¹	Per cent Change
Senior (aged 65 years and over)	Single Ride (Presto Card and E-Ticket)	\$2.20	66 per cent of base fare	\$2.38	8.0%
	Single Ride (Cash and Open Payment)	\$3.20	\$1.00 over single ride senior PRESTO	\$3.38	5.5%
	Monthly Pass	\$48.25	40 per cent of Adult pass	\$51.84	7.4%
School Board Bulk Purchase Program	Fewer than 125 passes per month	\$96.50	80 per cent of Adult pass	\$103.68	7.4%
	125-250 passes per month	\$90.45	75 per cent of Adult pass	\$97.20	7.5%
	More than 250 passes per month	\$78.40	65 per cent of Adult pass	\$84.24	7.4%
Transit Assistance Program (TAP)	TAP PRESTO E-Purse	\$46.90	14 trips at base fare	\$50.40	7.5%
	TAP PRESTO Monthly Pass	\$46.90	14 trips at base fare	\$50.40	7.5%
Universal Semester Pass (post-secondary students) ²	PRESTO E-Ticket 4 month semester pass	\$150	NA	\$152.85	1.9%

Notes

¹ Customers not required to pay a fare during the December 25 service day, and between 7 PM December 31 through 8 AM January 1.

²Council approved U-Pass rate (report 2023-DRT-26) for period September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025. Equivalent monthly rate is \$38.21, or 31 per cent of base fare.