



Transit Executive Committee Revised Agenda

Wednesday, June 5, 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](#).

	Pages
1. Roll Call	
2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest	
3. Adoption of Minutes	
3.1 Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting - May 8, 2024	3
4. Presentations	
There are no presentations	
5. Delegations	
There are no delegations	
6. Correspondence	
6.1 Correspondence received from Martin Gallagher, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Safety Officer, Metrolinx, dated March 19, 2024 Re: Resolution from the Transit Executive Committee requesting to Reinststate Weekday January 2020 Levels of Service on the Lakeshore East Line Recommendation: Receive for information	8
6.2 Correspondence received from Joell Vanderwagen (Resident), dated May 27, 2024 Re: Need for Continuous Service on Arterial Roads Recommendation: Receive for information	10
*6.3 Correspondence received from Noah Edwards (Resident), dated June 3, 2024	14

Re: Report #2024-DRT-10: General Manager's Report - June 2024

Recommendation: Refer to Consideration of Report #2024-DRT-10:
General Manager's Report - June 2024

- *6.4 Correspondence received from Noah Edwards (Resident), dated June 3, 2024 15

Re: Report #2024-DRT-12: U-Pass Negotiation Framework

Recommendation: Refer to Consideration of Report #2024-DRT-12: U-
Pass Negotiation Framework

7. Reports

- 7.1 Report #2024-DRT-10 17
General Manager's Report - June 2024

- 7.2 Report #2024-DRT-11 38
Specialized Transit: Resumption of Integrated Trips

- 7.3 Report #2024-DRT-12 44
U-Pass Negotiation Framework

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, September 4, 2024 at 1:30 PM

12. Adjournment

Notice regarding collection, use and disclosure of personal information:

Written information (either paper or electronic) that you send to Durham Regional Council or Committees, including home address, phone numbers and email addresses, will become part of the public record. This also includes oral submissions at meetings. If you have any questions about the collection of information, please contact the Regional Clerk/Director of Legislative Services.

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

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, May 8, 2024 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Crawford, Chair
Commissioner Schummer*, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Anderson
Commissioner Brenner
Commissioner Garrod
Commissioner Roy*
Commissioner Wotten*
Regional Chair Henry

***denotes Commissioners participating electronically**

Absent: Commissioner Carter

Also

Present: Commissioner Jubb
Commissioner Kerr
Commissioner Pickles

***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
D. Dunn, Manager, Rapid Transit
L. Fleury, Deputy Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
IW. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit
K. Hornburg, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, Durham Region Transit
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
K. Islam, Project Manager, Rapid Transit
J. Kilgour*, Acting Deputy General Manager, Maintenance, Durham Region Transit
A. Mak, Supervisor, Financial, Durham Region Transit
D. Margiotta*, Manager, Operations Conventional East, Durham Region Transit

- A. Naeem*, Solicitor, Legal Services
 - A. Pezzetti, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit
 - Z. Osime-Fakolade, Program Manager, Community Engagement and Change Management, Durham Region Transit
- * **denotes staff participating electronically**

2. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. **Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Garrod, (22) That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, April 3, 2024, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. **Presentations**

4.1 Bill Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region 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.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- March General Information Highlights
- Unaccommodated rate by municipality
- On Demand vendor monthly performance scorecard
- Updates
 - 2024 Public Information Centres Series
 - Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Fare and Service Integration Collaboration Table
 - 2024 Ontario Transportation Expo

B. Holmes responded to questions from the Committee regarding providing a summary of specialized transit; the duration of specialized transit trips, the designated drop-off locations and whether there have been any recent changes to this service; transit needs and support to new large warehouses and their employees; the capabilities of On Demand transit services to accommodate all customers; the capacity of accessible transportation service providers, including taxi cab services and DRT, in meeting the accessible transportation needs of residents; the timeline for implementing the additional service hours approved in the 2024 Business Plan and Budget; the public transit service in Brock following Metrolinx removing the former GO Bus Route 81; and reliability concerns of On Demand services in the Township of Brock.

4.2 David Dunn, Manager, Rapid Transit and Kamrul Islam, Project Manager, Rapid Transit, re: Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, Rapid Transit Update

D. Dunn, Manager, Rapid Transit and K. Islam, Project Manager, Rapid Transit provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding a Rapid Transit update for projects funded through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP).

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit (DSBRT)
- Median Shelter Design
- Pickering Section Status
- Ajax and Whitby Sections Status
- Simcoe Street Rapid Transit Study (RT)
 - Visioning and Initial Business Case Study
 - Why Simcoe Street?
- Rapid Transit Benefits
 - Ridership
 - Economic
 - Cleveland Healthline
 - Waterloo Ion Light Rail Transit (LRT) Phase One
 - Portland Aerial Tram
- Transit Infrastructure Options
 - PIC#3 Options
 - Current Preferred Options
 - At-Grade Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
 - Aerial Cable Car
 - Existing Urban Cable Cars
 - Future Urban Cable Cars
- Simcoe Street RT Next Steps

D. Dunn and K. Islam responded to questions from the Committee regarding the anticipated timelines for the DSBRT Pickering, Ajax and Whitby sections funded through ICIP and the strategies for managing traffic during construction; whether a monorail option had been explored for DSBRT; the status of the Oshawa sections of DSBRT and the potential timeline for its implementation; the timeline for sharing with the Transit Executive Committee the Metrolinx approved final design of the remaining sections that will be funded by the Province; and the reasoning behind the involvement of both the Region of Durham and Metrolinx in the BRT project.

5. Delegations

5.1 Joell Vanderwagen, Oshawa Resident (In-Person Attendance), re: Oshawa Centre Transit Terminal

J. Vanderwagen, Oshawa resident, appeared before the Committee with respect to an Oshawa Centre Transit Terminal.

J. Vanderwagen expressed concerns regarding the transit bus terminal located on the southeast side of the Oshawa Centre mall, specifically the limited facilities and access into the Oshawa Centre mall; signage for bus schedules and mall entrances; information availability for Presto card machines; customer service contact details; transit routes maps; and the location of amenities like the food court and washrooms relative to the bus terminal.

Moved by Commissioner Anderson, Seconded by Commissioner Brenner, (23) That the rules of procedure be suspended to extend the time for the delegation by two minutes.

CARRIED ON A 2/3rds VOTE

J. Vanderwagen expressed concerns regarding challenges faced by customers who do not use technology and are unable to find alternative ways to view transit routes and scheduling information.

J. Vanderwagen provided the Committee with strategies to enhance the customer service experience at the transit bus terminal located at the Oshawa Centre mall.

J. Vanderwagen responded to questions for the Committee.

6. Correspondence

6.1 Correspondence dated April 24, 2024 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, re: Durham Region Transit Stop at Harmony Taunton Smart Centres

Moved by Commissioner Anderson, Seconded by Commissioner Brenner, (24) That correspondence dated April 24, 2024 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, re: Durham Transit Stop at Harmony Taunton Smart Centres, be received for information.

CARRIED

7. Reports

A) General Manager's Report – April 2024 (2024-DRT-09)

Report #2024-DRT-09 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Garrod, (25) That Report #2024-DRT-09 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

There was no other business considered.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at 1:30 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner Anderson, Seconded by Commissioner Brenner,
(26) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 PM

Respectfully submitted,

M. Crawford, Chair

S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk

From: [Martin Gallagher](#)
To: [Sarah Dessureault](#)
Cc: [Karla Avis-Birch](#)
Subject: Request to Reinstate Weekday January 2020 Levels of Service on the Metrolinx
Date: March 19, 2024 12:29:16 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

You don't often get email from martin.gallagher@metrolinx.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Councillor Crawford,

Firstly, I apologize for the delay in getting back to you.

Thank you for sharing the Transit Executive Committee's October 4, 2023 resolution to increase GO Train service on the Lakeshore East (LSE) line to 2020 levels.

Metrolinx is constantly reviewing ridership levels to ensure we are providing the most effective service to our customers and we increase service when demand warrants and if the infrastructure is available. We are seeing some positive increases in ridership recovery on the LSE and will continue to monitor our data closely. We are also increasing construction along the LSE corridor to advance GO expansion, which will bring long-term high frequency service to Durham Region in the future.

Currently, 15-minute service is in place during the morning and evening rush hours on the Lakeshore East line, however, ridership volumes are not yet at a level to warrant all-day 15-minute service.

Recent ridership statistics show an average of only 16.5% of seats were occupied during the midday on the Lakeshore East. Within Durham Region GO stations, midday ridership activity is less than 50 passengers per trip.

Metrolinx and the province value Durham Region Transit's (DRT) partnership to help make it easier and more convenient to choose transit first. With free transfers between GO Transit and DRT, the Lakeshore East line current schedule provides frequent opportunities for easy connections between our transit services.

We remain committed to monitoring ridership to seek opportunities to improve and expand our service in Durham. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Martin Gallagher

Chief Operating Officer (GO Transit and UP Express) & Chief Safety Officer

Metrolinx | 97 Front Street West | M5J 1E6
C: 647-205-0871

TO: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee June 5, 2024
FROM: Joell Vanderwagen
RE: Need For Continuous Service On Arterial Roads Plus Story Of Joell's Recent Trip Experience

INTRODUCTION

On March 6th I came before your Committee to recommend that DRT have continuous transit service on the grid of major roads—east/west and north/south—as the best possible framework for the entire system.

Today I want to continue that topic and focus on two routes:

Wilson Road in Oshawa and the **Bloor/Victoria/Bayly** corridor across the south of Durham.

We can look at the **system map of the DRT** that I have included on the last page of this submission.

WILSON ROAD

From Conlin, the **Wilson #405** bus travels **south on Wilson** past Taunton, past Rossland to Adelaide where, for some reason, it **turns westward and goes along Adelaide** all the way to Thornton Road. There it turns south and heads down to Gibb. Then it turns east on Gibb and heads to the Oshawa Centre terminal. On the return trip to Wilson it does that in reverse.

My husband knows this route well because once a week he goes to a site on Wilson where he has some management duties. He is 76 and gave up his car two years ago. He catches the #403 bus to the Oshawa Centre and then rides the **#405** up to Wilson, first having to travel well out of his way west along Thornton.

Luckily, he can reach his destination. But, if he needed to go to a location further south, he would be out of luck. **South of Adelaide, there is no transit service on this long stretch of Wilson**, down to Bloor Street and Wentworth. Yet the route is bordered by continuous residential, commercial, and industrial properties.

BLOOR/VICTORIA/BAYLY

On this **major arterial across the south part of the city**, there is **no continuous service** from Bloor in the east to Brock Road in the west. Yet, the stretch of Bloor west of Park Road, for example, is continuously bordered by commercial and industrial businesses, including a car-rental place and two hotels, and finally, the Oshawa GO station. West from there the name changes to Victoria and reaches the **Thickson Ridge Power Centre**, which contains **39 major businesses** such as Home Depot, Canada Computers, Winners, etc.—with **no transit service to this major shopping location**.

When I moved from Toronto to Oshawa in 2016, I lived at 408 Bloor East. Next to my building was a bus stop. Great. Uh-Oh, it was **rush-hour-only**, being useless if I wanted to go to the shopping plaza at Thickson. I would have to go in the morning, wait for the stores to open. Shop, then wait around until the evening rush hour to return home. The same was true of using the GO train. That was when I realized I needed to purchase **MY FIRST CAR**.

Rush-hour-only service may not even be good for many kinds of work-trips. For example, young man in my building, at that time, worked at the Loblaws food terminal at 500 Bayly Street East. He couldn't use rush-hour-only transit because he was on a **shift work schedule**. Thus, a friend had to drive him there.

TEST RUN

On May 22, 2024, I undertook to do a test run on DRT to try to go from a bus stop on Bloor near Simcoe, west to Vandermeer's nursery on Victoria at Lakeridge Road—the **southernmost east-west corridor** that I have described. If you look at the **system map** on the last page you will see the tangle of routes that are involved.

On the next page I have described **my actual experience** in detail, step-by-step. **In summary**, it was awful. What should have taken an hour's round trip, if it were direct service, instead took three hours, involving a lot of confusion, long waits, and a needless detour. Please take the trouble to read through the on-the-ground details of my **rider's experience**.

BUS DRIVERS SHOULD BE INCLUDED

On this trip I took **four different buses**. On each one of them I **talked with the driver** and asked about their experiences with the system and what suggestions they might have. They all said that **no one in transit operations or management is interested in feedback from the drivers**.

The drivers are the ones **on the front lines**: they work with the routes and schedules and passengers. They not only have to try to keep to a schedule while managing traffic and boarding passengers, they are also the most immediate **source of trip information** for the passengers, in spite of unexpected changes in schedules and routes. Another driver volunteered that the top priority would be to have **direct routes** across all the main roads, N/S and E/W. All of the complicated tangents are confusing to riders. The drivers all thanked me for my interest and for speaking to your committee, encouraging me to continue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Bloor/Victoria/Bayly** should have the **same kind of 900 Pulse Service** that is on Taunton, Rossland, and King.
2. **Wilson Road** should have continuous north-south service.
3. **Rush-hour-only** service is useless, even to workers.
4. Ridership on rush-hour-only routes is not an indication of potential travel demand on those routes.
5. **Bus drivers should be included** in planning and decision-making about transit operations. They should be encouraged to call, email, speak to staff, and attend meetings.

JOELL'S TRANSIT TRIP, MAY 22, 2024

I decided to take a trial run to **test one part of the system**: service along Bloor/Victoria/Bayly. I wanted to go **from Bloor and Simcoe to Vandermeer Nursery at Victoria and Lakeridge Rd.**

I went to the DRT website and looked at the **system map of transit routes** for Durham.

If you look at the **system map** (below) you will see on Bloor only gaps in a **patchwork of routes** that dip south or turn north. Please have a look at the crazy service patterns on Bloor.

On the map, I saw that the #411 Westbound would go from Ritson up to the Oshawa Centre, where I would have to transfer to take the **#917 Westbound** to Vandermeer's.

I called Customer Service to confirm my plan. They said that during the day, I would have to take **#421 Westbound** up to the Oshawa Centre (unlike what I saw on the system map). I asked about the discrepancy with the System map and he said he doesn't look at the map.

I looked up the **schedule** for #421 and the next one leaving Bloor at Simcoe was at 3:10 pm.

I arrived at the stop at 3:00pm. **No bus at 3:10.** At 3:20 I called Customer Service and they said it was running late and would arrive at 3:30. OK, I got on after standing at the stop for half-an-hour. Happily the bus was full of young people.

We arrived at the **Oshawa Centre terminal.**

I asked my bus driver (when I had come back to the terminal from my trip to Ajax) if I would find that same bus to go the other way—a **#421 Eastbound**, to the stop on Bloor at Simcoe. The driver said the #421 Eastbound would be in the same place.

Then, I transferred to the **#917 Westbound**, which went along Champlain Ave. and Consumers Drive to the Whitby GO station, turned south to Victoria Street and then continued westward past Lakeridge. I got off in front of Vandermeer nursery. Luckily there was an eastbound transit stop on the opposite side of the road. I asked the driver what the service frequency was and he said "**every 15 minutes.**" Great, I wouldn't have to worry about the schedule.

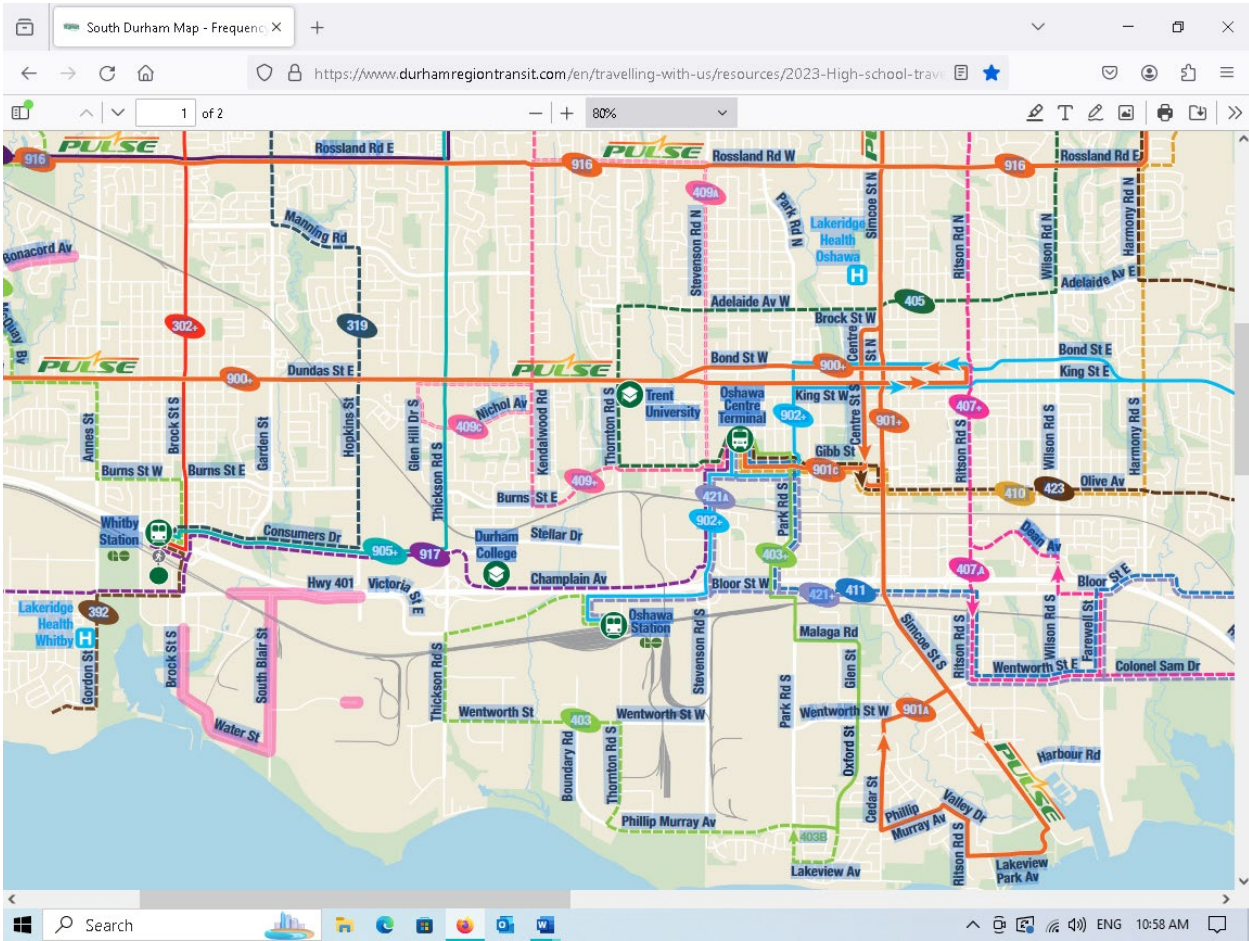
I went to Vandermeer's and bought seeds.

Then I went to stand at the east bound stop. After 15 minutes I finally **saw the #917 pass, in the opposite direction** toward Pickering. So, I had to wait until it went past Ajax to the Pickering GO station, and finally made its way back eastward. I probably stood at the stop for 45 minutes.

Finally, after a lot of tortuous twists and turns and bumps and grinds, we arrived at the **Oshawa Centre terminal.**

So, I looked for my **#421 Eastbound**. No such thing. I asked another driver and he said the #421 doesn't operate from here at this hour. I asked him how I was to get back to Bloor and Simcoe? He said I would have to **go to the Oshawa GO station** to pick up the #421—and he was going to the GO station. So, I rode with him to the GO station and he said to **wait at Stop #7**. So, I waited awhile and #421 showed up and it took me along Bloor to my stop at Simcoe. Total travel time: three hours + the half-hour at the nursery.

If we had gone in a straight line the round trip would have been one hour. Hence, the need for direct, continuous service—a **Pulse 900**.



RE: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee Report #2024-DRT-10, General Manager's Report – June 2024

To Durham Region Transit Executive Committee Commissioners,

I want to specially talk about on-time performance which is currently at 68.5%. On-time performance has been a challenge for DRT. As the report states, oftentimes buses have to be cancelled because of accumulative delays due to congestion. On the street, a bus that is supposed to run every 15 minutes might have two buses show up within minutes of each other and then a long gap, this is called bunching. All of this is frustrating for passengers. You have to leave earlier to ensure you will be on time and hope the bus trip goes smoothly.

The report does state that the new revenue service hours will help improve on-time performance. This will be done by adding extra running time to the routes. Effectively making the schedule slower ("padding" the schedule). These extra service hours are essentially wasted as they are not providing additional capacity, only covering for the slower speed of service because of congestion. This is a band-aid solution, and I am sure staff are aware of this.

The real solution to on-time performance is transit priority measures. In The Route Ahead - Service Strategy 2022 - 2025 deployment plan (Attachment #2 2021-DRT-20), a Transit Priority Measures Strategy was identified to start in 2022. I asked the staff if this study was underway or if there were any timelines for completing it. The customer service staff (who are excellent!) said that the strategy has not commenced yet, but DRT staff have been working with municipalities to have queue jump lanes where possible. It is disappointing that this strategy has not been commenced yet (likely for understandable reasons) but there still haven't been any new transit priority measures built yet that I am aware of.

What DRT needs to do is strategically identify and prioritize locations that need transit priority, like the strategy. Solutions like queue jump lanes, but also transit signal priority. Even removing bus stops that are too close together would help. I am hopeful that these things will be done, but I think a plan is crucial to guiding the investment.

Transit priority measures help everyone, it keeps the buses moving, which means lower operating times for routes and more efficient use of resources. It can also make transit more attractive.

Durham Region and the local municipalities need to make transit priority measures a priority. If Councillors would like to see a better, more efficient transit service, they need to push for transit priority measures on their roads. DRT is at the will of road authorities.

Let's all work together to ensure DRT vehicles aren't wasting money stuck in traffic.

Kind regards,

Noah Edwards

Oshawa Resident

RE: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee Report #2024-DRT-12, U-Pass
Negotiation Framework

To Durham Region Transit Executive Committee Commissioners,

I wanted to provide my input regarding the U-Pass framework. In Peterborough, I was a student at Trent University Peterborough for the last four years and benefited from the U-Pass in Peterborough. Being a student I have insight into how students feel about universal transit passes and how best to move forward that is fair to everyone.

The current U-Passes at Durham College, Ontario Tech, and Trent Durham provide an amazing deal on transit passes for students as stated in the staff report. Important to note **the U-Pass is mandatory for full-time students with no opt-out provision**. This means that all students must pay even if they do not regularly use transit. I think this is a good thing – it allows for lower fees for all students, encourages students to use transit, and can even provide those who regularly drive a way home from a night out. However, an implication for negotiations is that students might not accept a sudden increase in the fee, especially those who do not regularly use the pass. You have to convince not only transit riders but also students who don't use the service. A key question would be what percentage of students currently use the U-Pass to better understand the makeup of students who will be voting in a possible student referendum.

Next, I want to turn to Table 1, the referendum thresholds. The threshold for Durham College is too low at 2% as that will not even cover inflation these days. **Durham Region Transit should make agreements with Durham College and Ontario Tech conditional on the referendum threshold being at least a 5% increase**. This should be agreeable to everyone and be able to cover inflation under normal circumstances. At Trent University Peterborough a referendum was passed this year to have the transit fee be increased by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) instead of a maximum of 3% annually. The vote was close at 52% in support, highlighting how students are not too keen on increased fees.

Looking now at student support, DRT may have difficulty with any referendums that may be required to implement these agreements. Despite the wonderful improvements that the staff report highlights, students likely still hold negative opinions about DRT due to crowding, unreliability, and route changes. Thinking back to the delegations made to the Transit Executive Committee by representatives from the Ontario Tech Student Union. **It will be critical that DRT engage with students at all three campuses in advance of any referendum**. Grand River Transit in Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge seemingly made a wonderful effort to engage with students at various institutions when there was a referendum, and I would encourage DRT to reach out to see what worked well there.

One idea that could gather more support for the U-Pass is allowing students to use their U-Pass in the summertime, even if they are not taking summer courses. There is variation between universities, but some charge for the whole year and some charge by

term. **This could take the form of charging by the year instead of term or having an optional summer extension for those not in summer courses, possibly even at an increased fee (but still discounted).** This could be an idea to take to students to determine support and add some additional benefit to their U-Pass as a concession to increasing the fees.

One piece of information from the report that was missing was what other U-Pass frameworks in Ontario cost and how they work (opt-in provisions, coverage, etc.). This will be key as student unions will look to get similar deals that are in other municipalities. Here are some I was able to quickly gather.

University	City	Cost as Charged	Cost/Semester	Opt-Out?
Ontario Tech	Oshawa	\$150/term	\$150	No
Trent University (UG)	Peterborough	\$324.26/year	\$108.09	No
U Waterloo	Waterloo	\$118.97/term	\$118.97	Limited
McMaster (UG)	Hamilton	\$241.79/year	\$80.60	No
Carleton	Ottawa	\$223.48/term	\$223.48	Limited
Queen's	Kingston	\$122/year	\$40.67	No
Western (UG)	London	\$288.25/year?	\$96.08	No

Fees for the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

UG = Undergraduate

Finally, it would be greatly helpful for the U-Passes to be a Presto Mobile Wallet Solution as the E-Ticket Solution requires scanning a QR code to the Presto reading instead of simply tapping, adding additional time and frustration for all.

There is a benefit for both DRT and the students to the U-Pass agreement and this should be emphasized. I strongly support DRT staff negotiating with the student unions to have a fair deal for DRT, students, and transit riders. Recommendation C means that DRT is serious about wanting additional money and that students know the pass will go away if increases are not supported.

I thank the DRT staff for their work.

Kind regards,

Noah Edwards

Oshawa Resident

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-10
Date: June 5, 2024

Subject:

General Manager's Report – June 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 – June 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
June 5, 2024
TEC
Attachment #1

Performance Measures Dashboard	<u>2</u>
Safety	<u>3</u>
Ridership	<u>4</u>
Service Delivery	<u>7</u>
Updates	<u>11</u>
General	<u>18</u>

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	April	0.13	0.39	✓ -68.0	✗ 13.6

Ridership

Demand Responsive						
Ridership (x1,000)	Number passengers	April	1,071	794	✓ 34.8	✓ 33.4
PRESTO Ridership	Customers paying using PRESTO (per cent)	April	92.8	90.6	✓ 2.2	✓ 2.0
Bus full occurrences	Number operator reported occurrences	April	170	107	✗ 58.9	✗ 45.9
Demand Responsive						
Ridership - Specialized	Number customer trips	April	12,778	9,755	✓ 31.0	✓ 28.0
Unaccommodated Rate - Specialized	Trip requests not scheduled (per cent)	April	6.6	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ridership – On Demand	Number customer trips	April	9,815	9,811	⚠ 0	✓ 1.7
Unaccommodated Rate – On Demand	Trip requests not scheduled (per cent)	April	41.7	N/A	N/A	N/A

Service Delivery

Scheduled						
On time performance	On-time departures from all stops (per cent)	Service Period 1 ⁴	68.5	73.6	✗ -5.1	✗ -5.1
Service availability	Scheduled service delivered (per cent)	Service Period 1 ⁴	98.0	98.6	✗ -0.6	✗ -0.6
Mean Distance Between Failure (MDBF)	Average number of revenue service kilometres between occurrences of vehicle defects impacting service (revenue service kilometers)	April	10,147	20,780	✓ -51.2	✓ -39.1

Demand Responsive						
Service Availability – Demand Response	Planned Service Delivered (per cent)	April	95.8	N/A	N/A	N/A
On time performance – Specialized	On-time customer pickups (per cent)	April	81.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
On time performance – On Demand	On-time customer pickups (per cent)	April	90.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service availability – Specialized	Average difference in requested trip time vs. booked trip time (minutes)	April	16:11	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service availability – On Demand	Average difference in requested trip time vs. booked trip time (minutes)	April	11:02	N/A	N/A	N/A

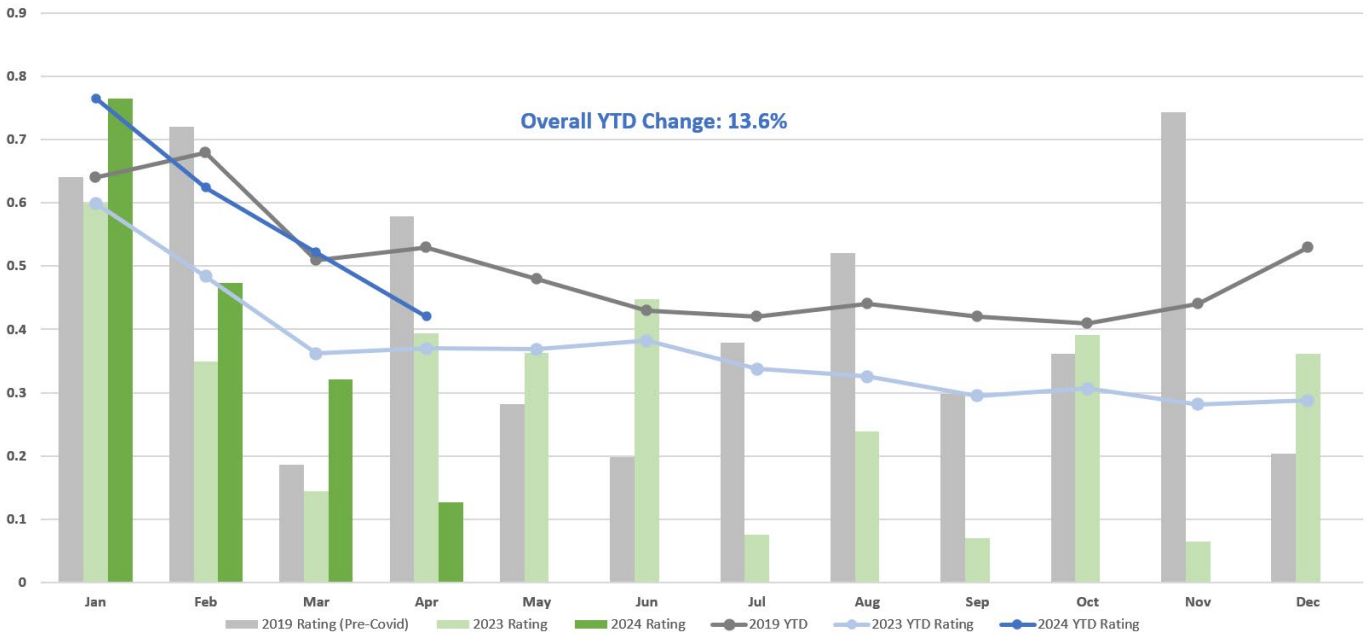
¹Target is 2023 measure for the same period

²Year to Date (YTD) compared to previous year

⁴January 2, 2024 through April 7, 2024

Safety

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

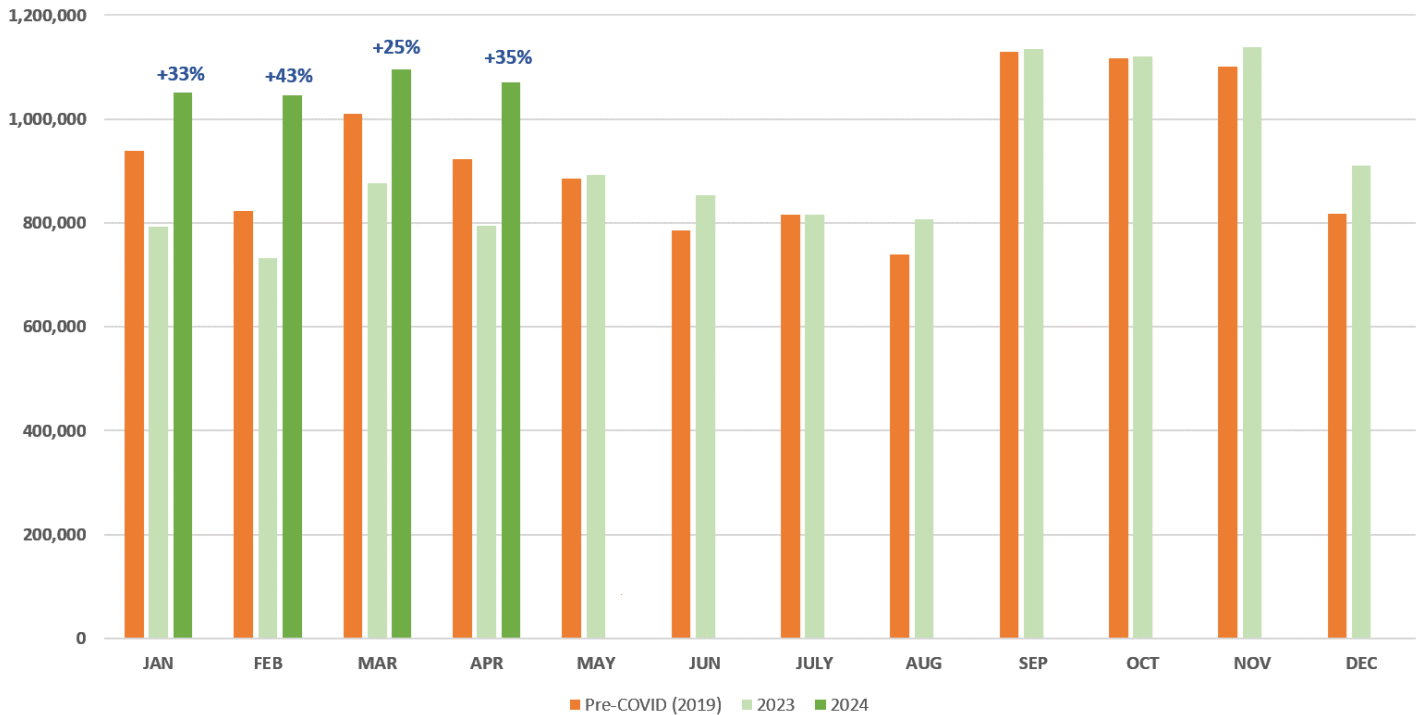
The April preventable collision rate was 0.13 compared to 0.39 for the same month in 2023. Year to date remains higher than last year by 13.6 per cent.

Action Plan

The Safety and Training group and Occupational Health and Safety Committee continue to investigate root causes of preventable collisions and implement the appropriate mitigation measures.

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.

Results

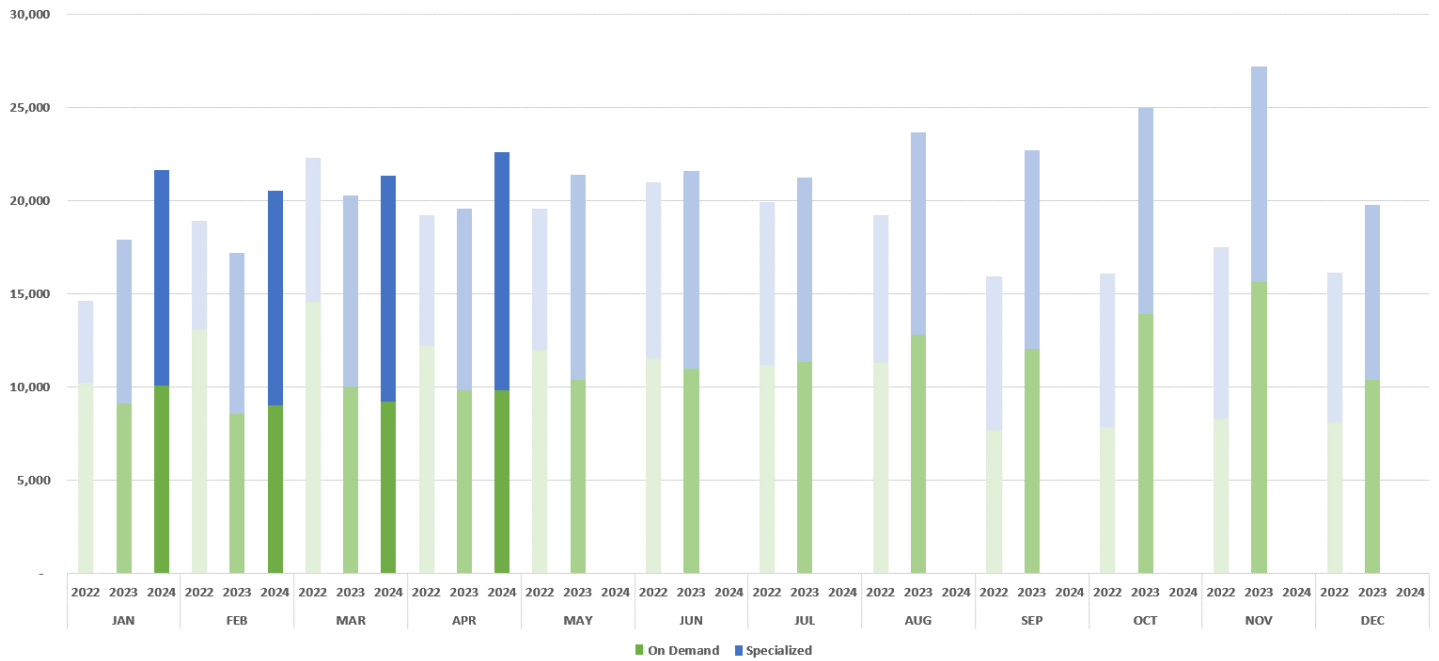
April ridership on scheduled service was approximately 1.1 million, 34.8 per cent higher than the same month in 2023, and approximately 22 per cent higher than the pre-pandemic period.

Action Plan

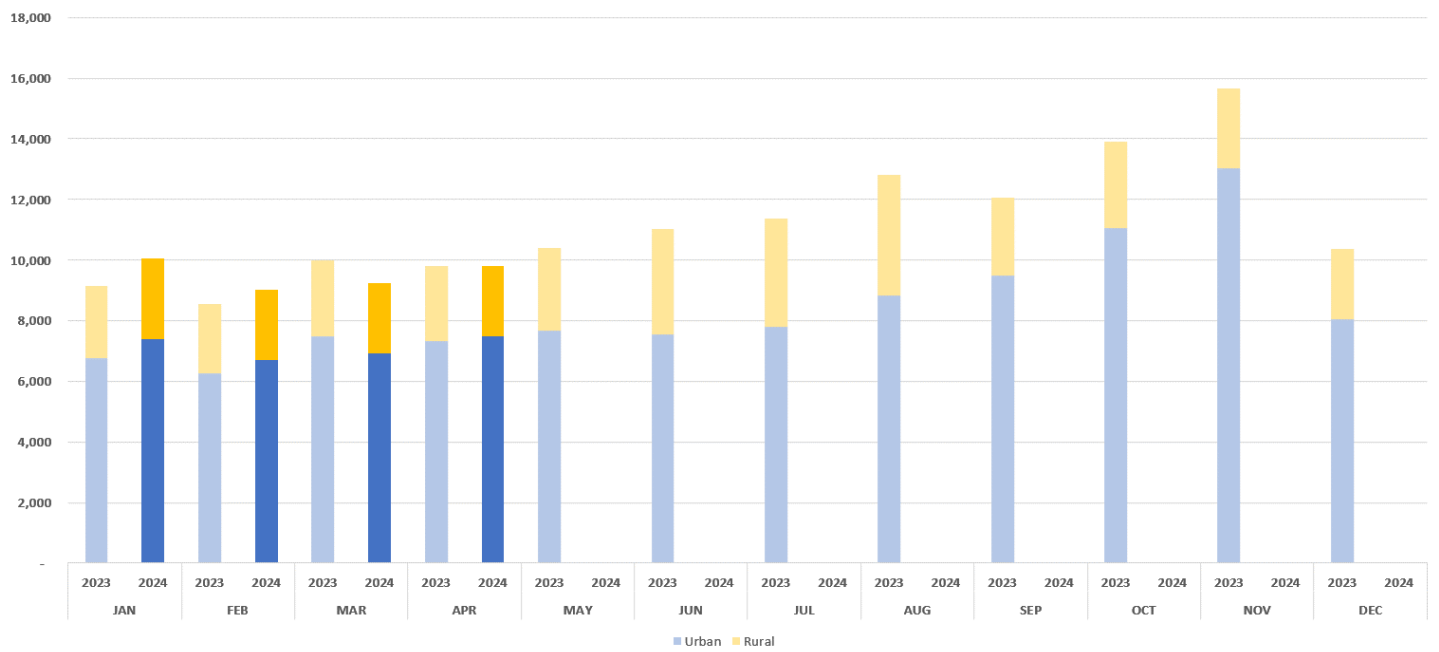
DRT continue to recruit and train staff to deliver the 44,405 new annual revenue service hours approved in the 2024 budget. The new service hours are planned to be implemented starting at the September service change. Approximately 26 per cent of the new service hours will be assigned to improve service reliability to mitigate impacts of congestion and construction, with the remaining 74 per cent of new service hours planned for service impacted by changes required to be implemented in January 2024, and some growth areas in the Region.

Demand Response Transit

Demand Responsive Trips



On Demand Trips



On Demand Trip Service Areas Breakdown

		APR 2024	YTD 2024
R U R A L	Uxbridge	227	1,123
	Brock	572	2,663
	Scugog	474	1,928
	Pickering	323	1,226
	Ajax	29	65
	Whitby	20	79
	Oshawa	36	177
	Clarington	650	2,351

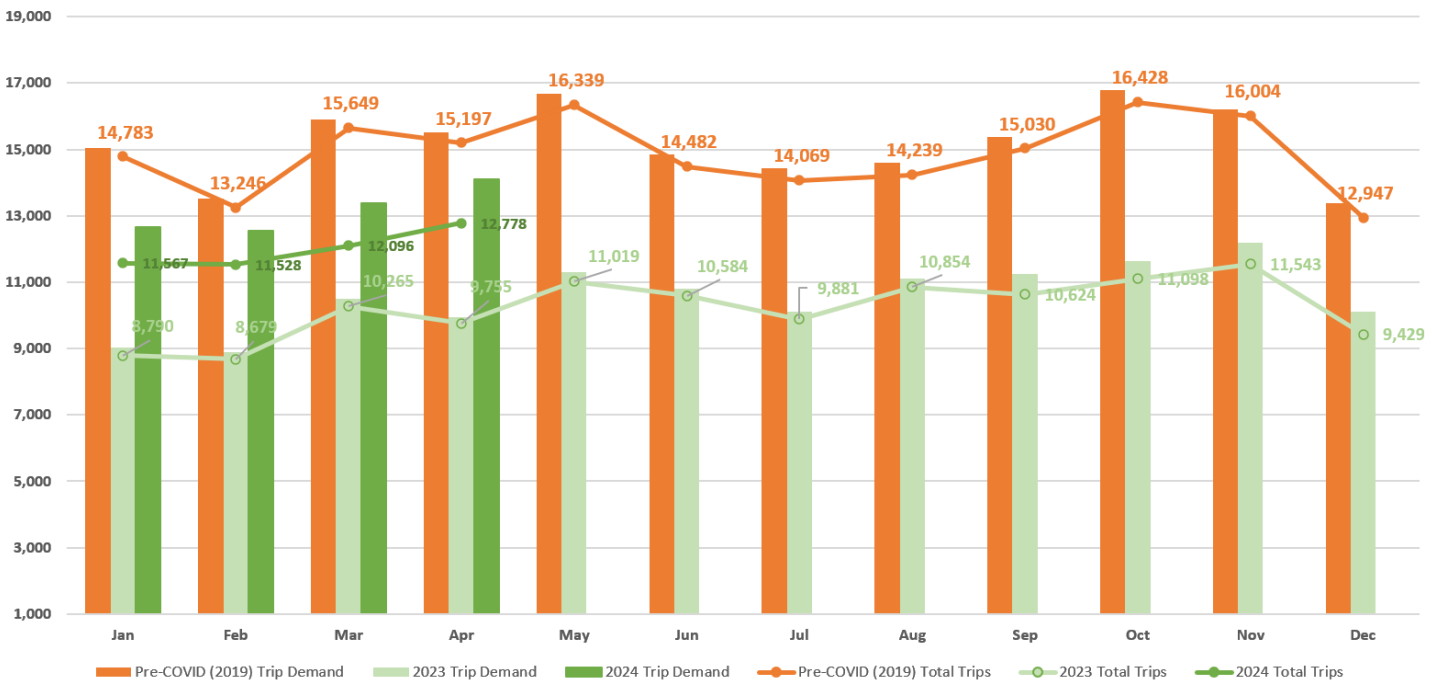
		APR 2024	YTD 2024
U R B A N	Uxbridge	483	1,960
	Scugog	492	2,410
	Pickering	1,029	3,719
	Ajax	782	3,313
	Whitby	1,659	5,661
	Oshawa	1,301	4,785
	Clarington	1,738	6,654

Specialized Trip Service Areas Breakdown

		APR 2024	YTD 2024
R U R A L	Uxbridge	18	65
	Brock	56	182
	Scugog	126	451
	Pickering	26	69
	Ajax	-	1
	Whitby	94	325
	Oshawa	12	38
	Clarington	123	518

		APR 2024	YTD 2024
U R B A N	Uxbridge	45	191
	Scugog	103	426
	Pickering	1,543	5,771
	Ajax	2,303	8,481
	Whitby	2,997	11,337
	Oshawa	4,089	15,505
	Clarington	989	3,607
	Toronto-Yo	254	1002

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.

Results

On Demand services delivered a total of 21,593 trips in April 2024, including 12,778 trips for customers registered with Specialized transit. Total On Demand trips delivered in April 2024 were approximately the same as April 2023.

Action Plan

The number of trips increased significantly following the implementation of the new On Demand system platform in September 2023, delivering over 26,500 trips in November. However, customers were commenting, and staff were observing that service was increasingly unreliable with trips being late and significantly impacting travel plans. System settings were reviewed, and several parameters were adjusted. For example, the dwell time setting of On Demand trips, or time to pick-up or drop off a passenger, was set at 5 seconds and not representative of the average time customers require to board the vehicle, secure their seat belt, and pay their fare. Similarly, the dwell time for pick-up of a specialized transit trip was too short, particularly for pick-ups involving a mobility device.

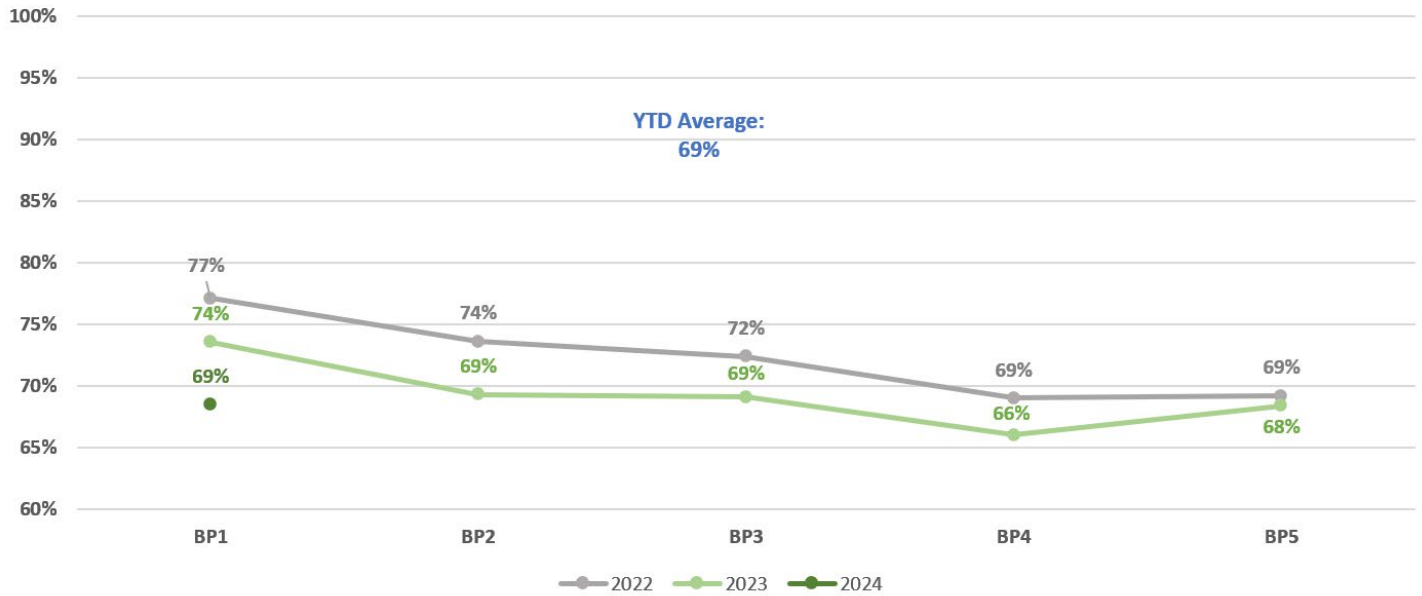
The parameters were adjusted for January 2024, which provide for more accurate trip times. The changes have resulted in an improvement to reliability for booked trips, with a lower overall capacity on the service.

The 15,260 additional On Demand service hours approved in the 2024 budget are planned to be implemented as soon as possible, in consideration of driver recruitment and vehicle procurement.

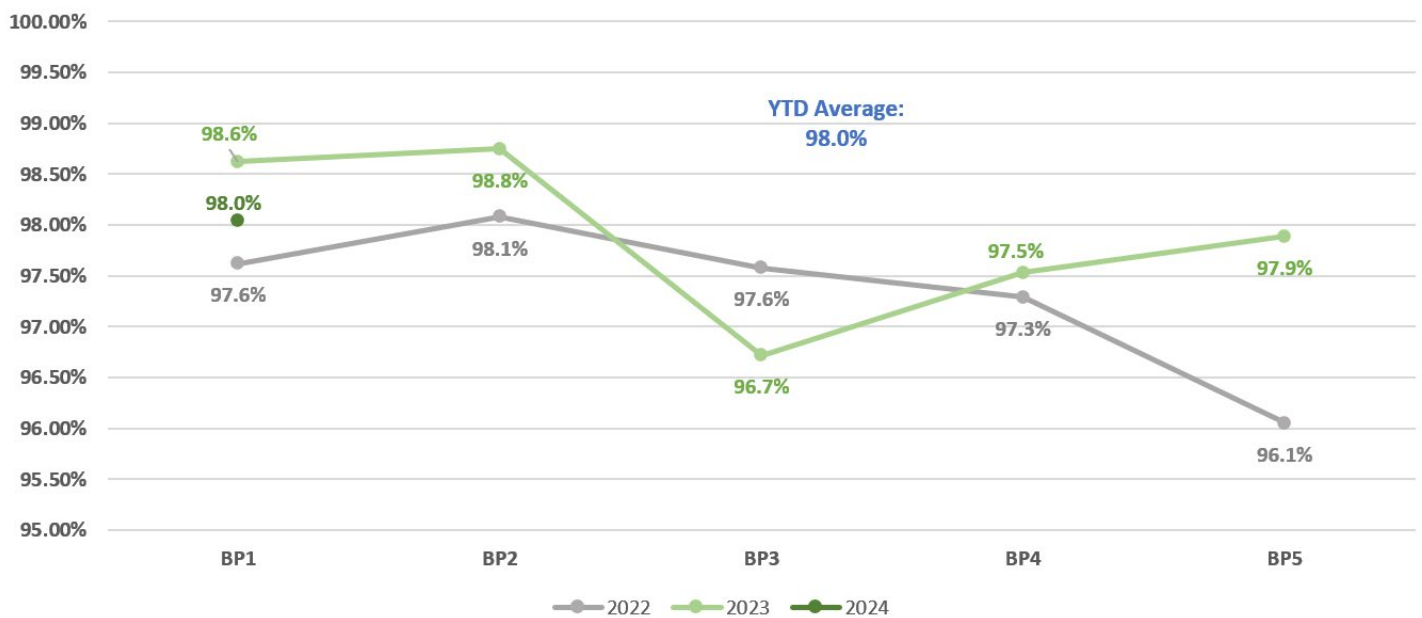
Service Delivery

On Time Performance and Availability (conventional)

Scheduled Service On-Time Performance



Scheduled Service Service Availability



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 one was 69 per cent, recovering slightly from the record low 66 per cent recording during the fall 2023 (board period 4). This improvement is attributed to the allocation of resources to areas of highest pressure on the scheduled network to improve route performance.

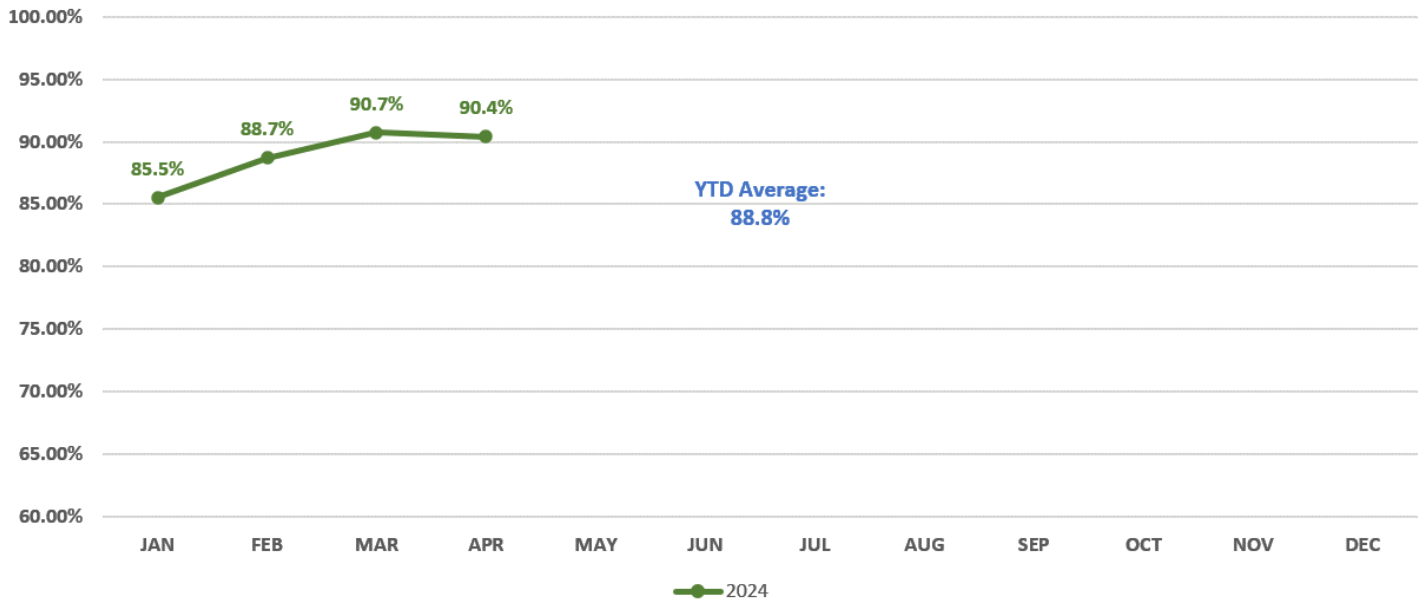
Congestion on main traffic corridors continues to impact the transit network, with Service Availability in April at 97.1 per cent, compared to 98.6 per cent in 2023.

Action Plan

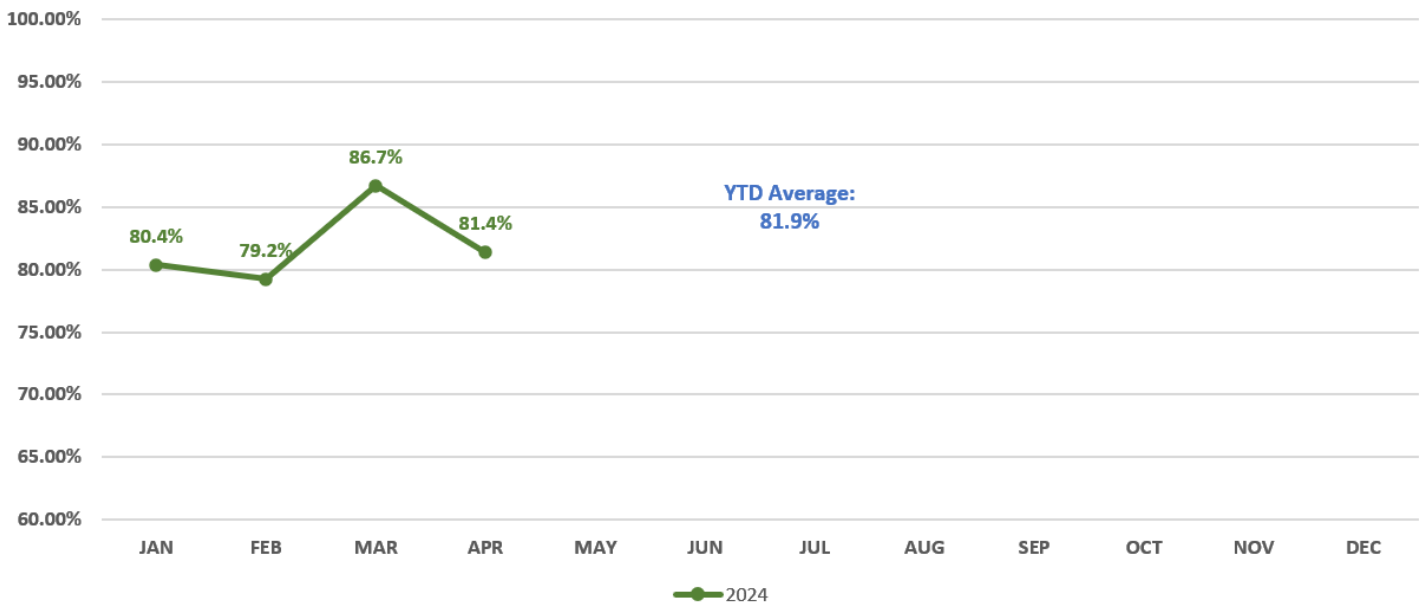
DRT continue to experience service impacts from trips operating at maximum passenger capacity, congestion and construction projects. Some planned trips are cancelled when a route is operating excessively late to enable subsequent planned trips to remain on schedule. Trip cancellations, which reduces service availability, impact customers through less route capacity, longer wait times, and longer travel times due to missed connections. When fully implemented, the new 2024 revenue service hours will improve OTP and service availability for customers.

On Time Performance (Demand Responsive)

On Demand On-Time Performance



Specialized On-Time Performance



Definition

On Time Performance – Demand Response: Measures the percentage of customer pickups that occur as scheduled up to 5 minutes after the pick-up window. OTP – Demand Response is measured monthly, with a target of 80 per cent.

Results

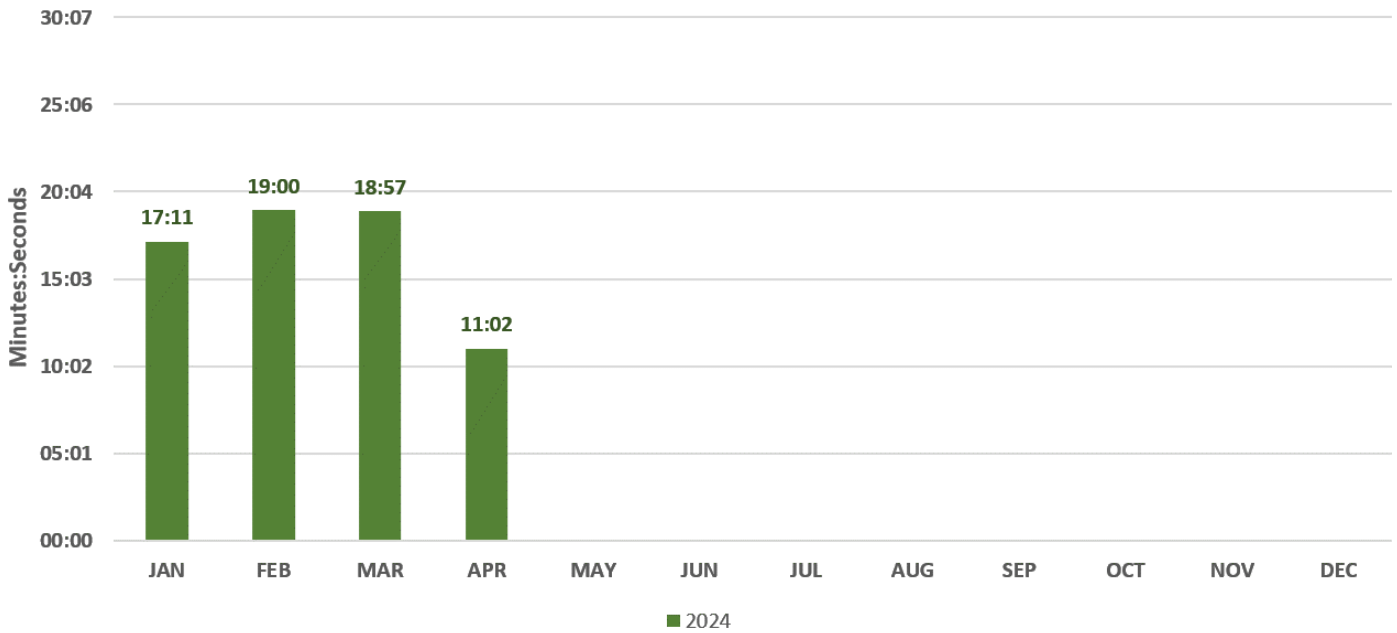
OTP – Demand Response for April 2024 was 90.4 per cent for On Demand trips, and 81.4 per cent for specialized transit trips.

Action Plan

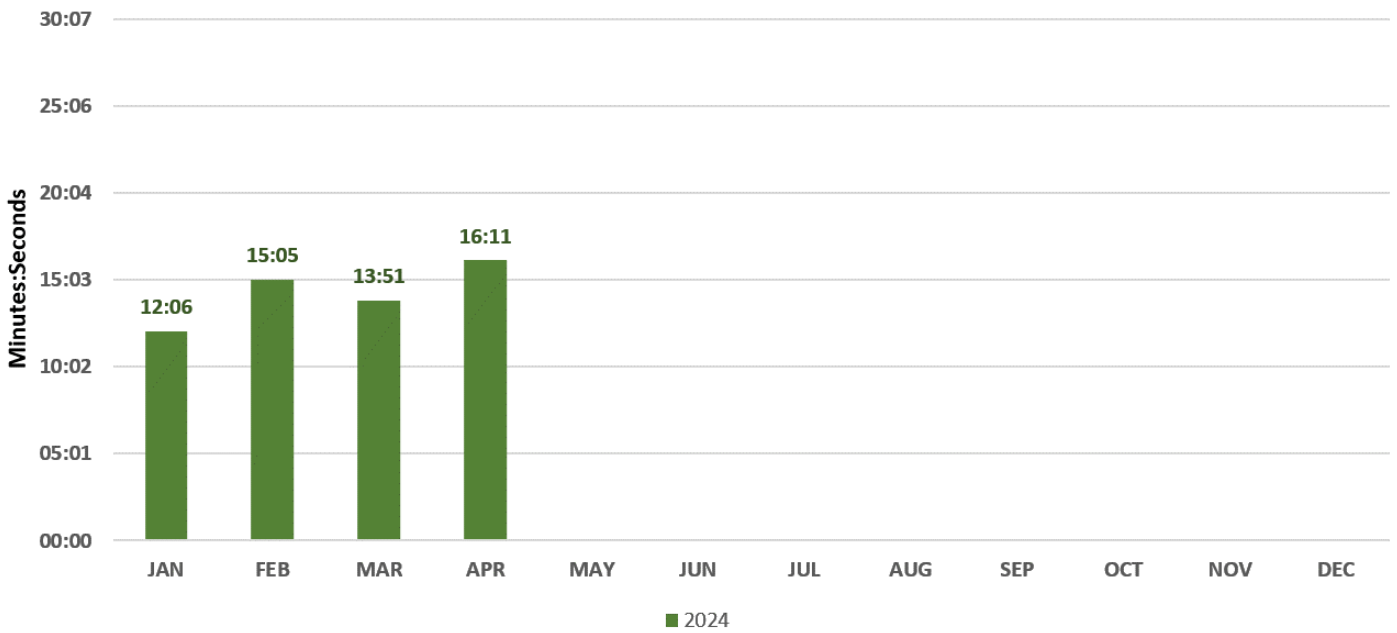
Reliability of scheduled On Demands trips has improved following the January 2024 adjustments to system parameters. DRT continue to monitor OTP – Demand Response trends throughout 2024 and will review the current performance target for 2025.

Service Availability (Demand Responsive)

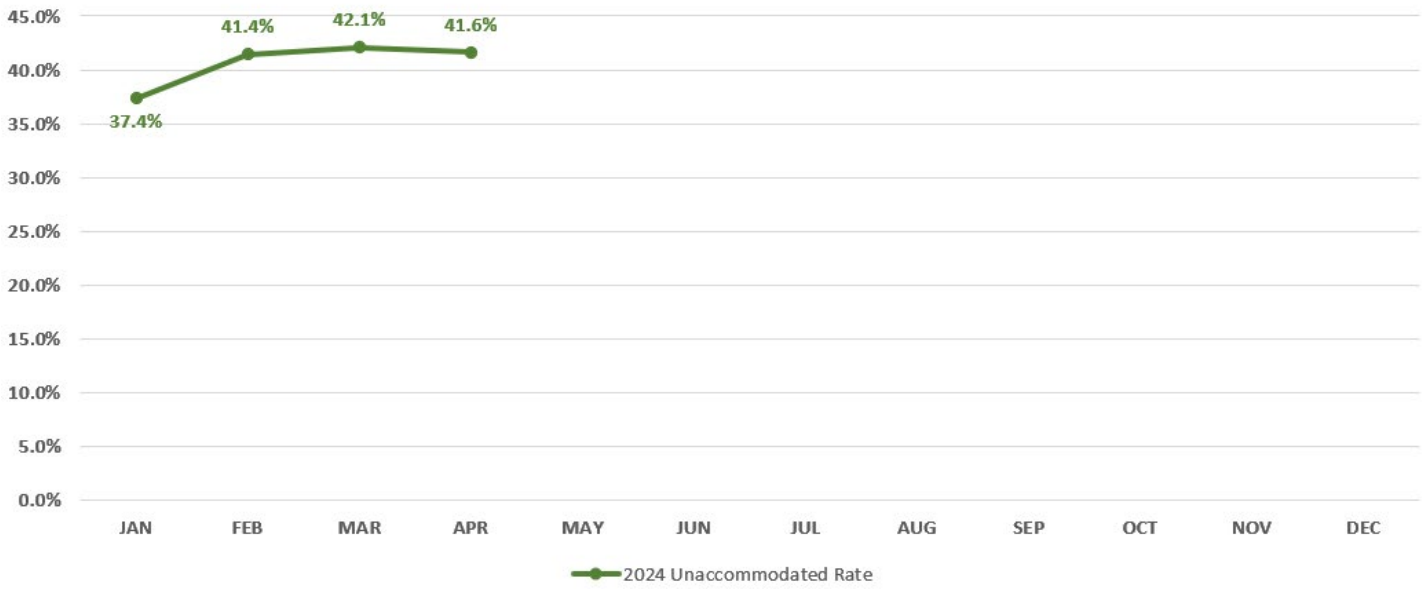
On Demand Average Difference in Requested Trip Time vs. Booked Trip Time



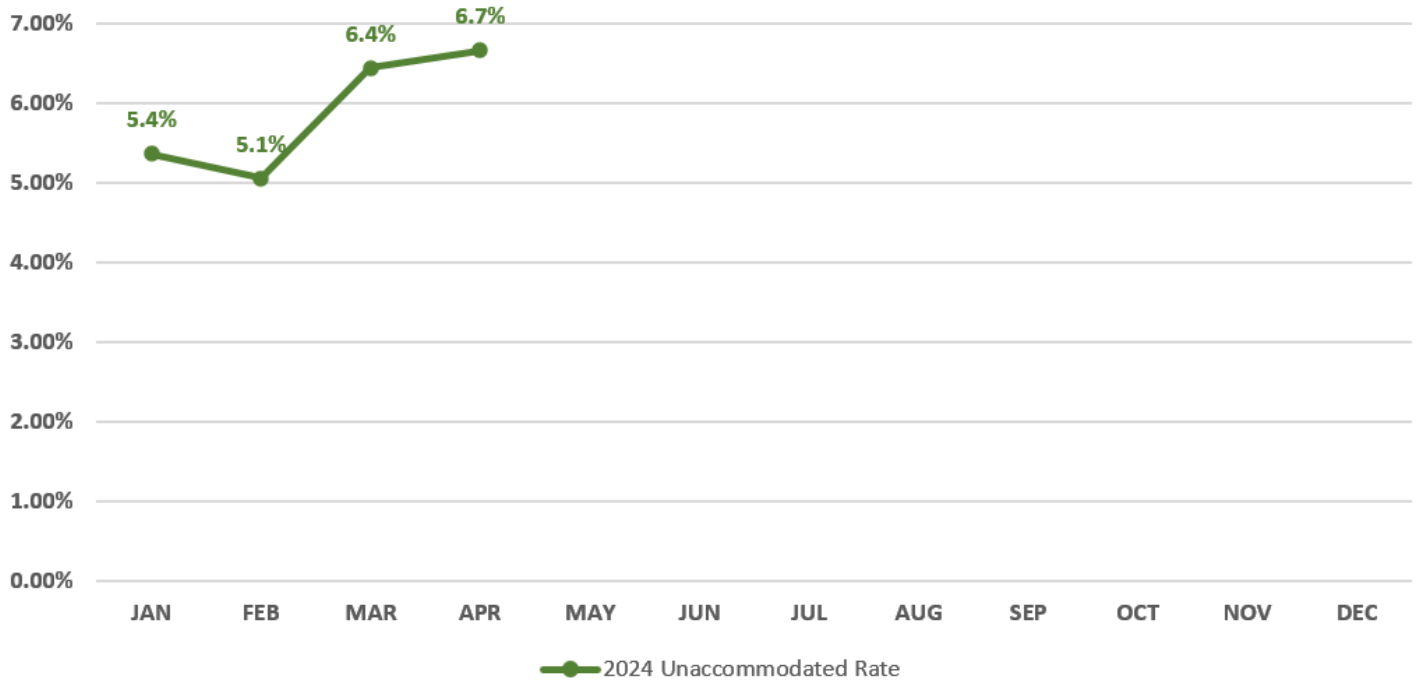
Specialized Average Difference in Requested Trip Time vs. Booked Trip Time



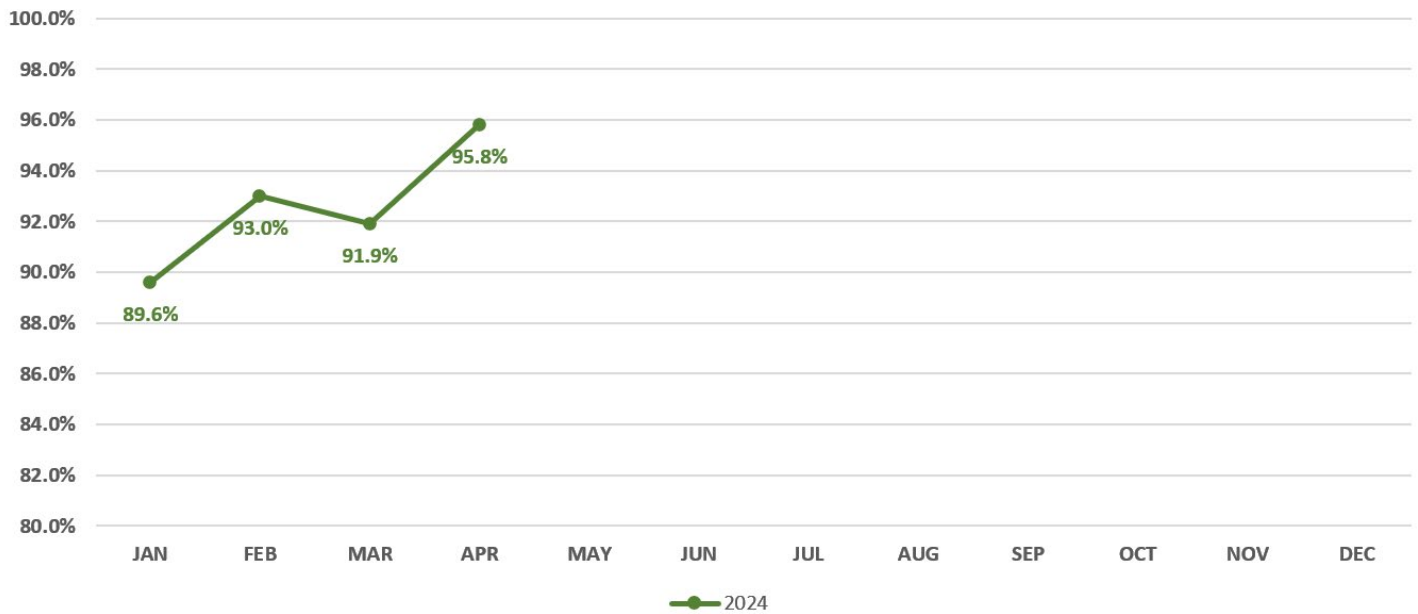
On Demand Unaccommodated Rate



Specialized Service Unaccommodated Rate



Demand Response Service Service Availability



Definition

Service Availability – Demand Response: Service Availability – Demand Response is reflected through three metrics.

Variance between Requested and Actual Booked Pick-up Time: Average difference between the pick-up time requested and actual booked pick-up time. This metric measures how closely a trip can be scheduled to the customer's preferred time. This metric is measured monthly, with a target of 15 minutes.

Unaccommodated Rate: Per cent of requested customer trips that were unable to be scheduled due to lack of capacity, within the service guideline trip scheduling parameter of 30 minutes for Urban and 60 minutes for Rural service areas (relative to pick-up time requested by customer).

An appropriate target for this metric is being developed in consideration of the investments planned in the DRT Transit Service and Financing Strategy (2023-2032), and the approved 2024 budget.

Service Availability: Actual On Demand service hours delivered as a per centage of scheduled On Demand service hours. The service availability target is 99.5 per cent. Service availability for Demand Response service is reported monthly.

Results

Variance between Requested and Actual Booked Pick-up Time

The April 2024 variance between requested and actual booked pick-up time for On Demand trips improved to 16.2 minutes, or approximately 3 minutes from last month . For specialized transit trips, the variance improved to 11.1 minutes.

Unaccommodated Rate

The April 2024 unaccommodated rate for On Demand trips was 41.7 per cent, and 6.6 per cent for specialized transit trips. The high unaccommodated rates are influenced by the continued increase in demand for transit services.

Service Availability

Service availability for April 2024 was 95.7 per cent, a significant improvement over the past three month.

Action Plan

Staff continue to review the new metrics for On Demand and are actively engaged with the service provider to improve service performance. Implementation of the 15,260 additional On Demand service hours approved in the 2024 budget occur gradually over the next few months as resources are secured (drivers and vehicles), which will improve capacity and significantly influence reliability.

Updates

1. Service change summary, June 24, 2024

Effective Monday June 24, 2024, service will be updated to respond to seasonal reduction in travel during the summer months, seasonal service enhancements to recreational and key regional destinations, and improvements to service reliability and GO Train connections.

Seasonal Service Changes:

- NEW Seasonal Route 100 - Pickering Waterfront will operate on weekends and holidays only from June 29 – September 2, connecting Pickering Parkway Terminal, Pickering Waterfront (Liverpool St./Annland Rd.), and the Finch/Kingston Road corridors. In partnership with the City of Pickering, this route will be fare-free.
- Route 224C to the Ajax Waterfront will be reinstated on weekday evenings and weekends.
- PULSE 901 will operate every 15 minutes on weekdays.
- Route 917Z will be reinstated on weekends, serving the Toronto Zoo and Rouge National Urban Park every 30 minutes.
- Route 920 will operate every 20 minutes during the midday.
- Route 921 will be suspended during the summer.

Routing/Reliability:

- Route 605 routing modified to operate via Albert Street and Toronto Street.
- Route 917 routing through the Hunt St. and Dowty Rd. area will be reinstated.
- Improved connection to GO Train services on routes 112, 121, 301, and 319.
- Departure times adjusted to improve reliability on routes 302, 392, 605, 905, 915, 916, and 917.

Construction/Detours:

- Construction in the Pickering Town Centre area (Pickering Parkway and Glenanna Road) will create a long-term detour on several routes (112, 121, 900B, 916) . Pickering Parkway Terminal will still be served.
- Route 905 will detour via Regional Road 47 and Highway 7/12 due to long-term construction in Epsom. On Demand will continue to serve the Epsom community.

2. Service change summary, September 3, 2024

Effective Tuesday September 3, 2024, DRT plans to implement a series of new routes, service reinstatements, and improvements to reliability. Implementation of these service enhancements is conditional on recruiting and training the required staff to deliver the additional services. The enhancements address some gaps in the current DRT network including service to areas with a significant walk distance to transit stops, improving reliability of scheduled service, improving On Demand capacity, and implementing new routes to key high-growth areas including Seaton, West Whitby, and South Bowmanville.

Subject to resource availability, enhancement include the following.

- Reinstate bi-directional 902 service to Bowmanville along Highway 2, and extend Route 502 to operate through South Bowmanville.
- Reinstate midday service on Routes 301, and 319.
- Return 15-minute peak service to PULSE 915 and 916.
- Implement two-way service on Route 227, extending to serve the Lake Driveway and South Ajax industrial areas.
- Reinstate Route 211 during weekday peak periods.
- Implement evening service on Routes 409/419 through Whitby and Oshawa.
- New route serving the Whites Road corridor in Pickering, connecting Pickering Parkway Terminal and Seaton, Route 112 will terminate at Zents/Tillings.
- New route serving west Whitby including the Des Newman and Coronation corridors.
- Deployment of approximately 13,000 annual service hours to support On Demand capacity, including vehicles dedicated to serving rural areas.

3. Replacement for buses lost in August 2023 Fire

During the fire on August 16, 2023, DRT lost 19 buses. Though the commitment of our bus vendor, Nova Bus, the first five replacement buses have arrived in Durham, with the remainder planned to be delivered in the coming months. Nova recognized the challenges ahead for DRT, and they ensured the replacement bus orders were quickly scheduled into their production schedule. New buses are usually delivered 12-18 months from the time the vendors receives the purchase agreement. DRT truly appreciate Nova Bus for their commitment to helping DRT to recover from the devastating fire.

4. Clean Bus Canada conference

On May 16, 2024, Chair Crawford provided a key note address to transit professions who had gathered in Toronto to talk about the status of the transition of municipal transit fleet to battery electric buses. Chair Crawford provided a review of DRT's transition journey, and highlighted the need for funding from other levels of government for DRT and the Region to reach the greenhouse gas emission target and expand the local transit system to provide resident with access to a frequent and reliable transit network.



Later in the day, Pri Uthayakumar, Program Manager Sustainability and Strategic Initiatives, shared details of DRT's transition plan and the current challenges and opportunities.

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-11
Date: June 5, 2024

Subject:

Specialized Transit: Resumption of Integrated Trips

Recommendation:

That the Transit Executive Committee receive this report for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Transit Executive Committee (TEC) an update regarding the resumption of integrated trips for customers registered with Specialized transit.

2. Background

2.1 The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) transportation standard, part of Ontario Regulation 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards (IAS), is intended to remove barriers to persons with disabilities to ensure equity for all customers in accessing and using public transit. Eligibility requirements specified in the transportation standard are based on the abilities of a person, not the person's disabilities. A person may qualify for specialized transit services when the person is unable to access and use conventional transit services.

2.2 Equity is the foundation of the AODA for the delivery of public transit services. One person should not be advantaged over another person when using public transit. For example, two residents travelling from the same address to the same destination are expected to be provided equitable access to public transit. A person with a disability who is unable to use conventional transit service for all or

part of their intended travel may be eligible for specialized transit.

2.3 Durham Region Transit (DRT) adopted the AODA eligibility categories in 2015.

- Conditional Eligibility: A person with a disability where environmental or physical barriers limit their ability to consistently use conventional transportation service.
- Temporary Eligibility: A person with a disability that temporarily prevents them from using conventional transportation services.
- Unconditional Eligibility: A person with a disability that prevents them from using conventional transportation services.

2.4 Since August 2014, DRT has operated a full fleet of AODA-compliant, accessible, conventional transit buses. Accessible features include bus kneeling (bus lowers at its front right-hand corner), a fully extendable ramp at the bus front door, priority seating and a reserved space for up to three mobility devices at the front of the bus, and automated bus stop announcements and displays.

2.5 DRT continues to invest in bus stop infrastructure to remove accessibility barriers and ensure customers can access and board conventional services.

- Total DRT bus stops: **2,113**
- Accessible DRT bus stops (hard surfaced): **1,794** or 85%:
 - (100% of active stops by end of 2025)
- Total DRT bus stops with shelters (therefore eligible for integrated transfers): **597**

2.6 Integrated trips for customers registered with specialized transit was launched in 2015, where customers with conditional eligibility may complete their door-to-door trips using a combination of vehicles. This service delivery approach is also known as the “Family of Services”, a term adopted by several transit agencies. For example, a customer registered with DRT specialized transit who plans to travel but is unable to access a conventional bus stop, may be provided an integrated trip where On Demand will pick them up at their home and take them to the nearest appropriate bus stop. From there the customer will travel on a conventional bus to complete their journey. DRT first launched integrated service for specialized customers in 2015; however, the practice was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.7 With Durham Region Transit’s (DRT) investments in accessible vehicles, infrastructure, and training, and with the adoption of the AODA requirements,

DRT is able to resume integrated mobility options for customers. Through the comingling of On- Demand and Specialized trips starting in 2023, customers using the On-Demand service are already taking integrated trips.

- 2.8 There are currently some differences in the scheduling and service delivery of On-Demand and Specialized transit trips. On-Demand customers can book trips through the DRT App whereas specialized customers need to call a booking agent. Further, at this time DRT continue to enable specialized transit customers to book up to seven-days in advance whereas On-Demand customers can only book 24-hours in advance. As we move toward increased integration and advance the scheduling platform, DRT will align On Demand service to ensure all customers receive equitable services.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 TEC approved recommendations of Report [#2020-DRT-12](#) DRT Rural Review, which included:
- a new On Demand technology platform to support the scheduling and dispatching of both Specialized transit and On-Demand trips;
 - combining the delivery of On-Demand and Specialized transit based on their complementary delivery model; and
 - DRT branded vehicles and uniformed operators/drivers for On-Demand.
- 3.2 TEC approved recommendations of Report [#2021-DRT-25](#) Demand Responsive Services, which included:
- integrating Specialized and On-Demand transit services into a single On-Demand service;
 - improving the integration of all DRT services towards a “one DRT” customer experience; and
 - implementing an automated dispatching software and related app for the seamless integration of On-Demand and Specialized transit trip bookings that can meet both customer and business/operational requirements.
- 3.3 Report [#2022-DRT-13](#) Update to Demand Response Services, provided a status update for the transition to a single demand response service, including the new system platform and contracted service delivery.

4. Resumption of integrated trips

- 4.1 When customers apply for Specialized transit, their abilities are assessed to determine the appropriate AODA eligibility category. Customers with unconditional eligibility are provided trips through On-Demand only. Customers with conditional

eligibility may travel using the integrated service (multiple vehicles) model. For those customers who can travel using the integrated service, an offer of “travel training” is included in their welcome package. This way, their first trips on DRT will be integrated and supported, and their experience will be consistent in terms of service delivery.

- 4.2 Existing customers with conditional eligibility and who are eligible for integrated trips will be reviewed by staff. Staff will connect with them individually to offer the support needed to begin the transition to travelling via integrated trips. This will be through individual travel training outreach to ensure that they are supported through the transition in their service experience.
- 4.3 Staff will begin identifying existing customers whose eligibility and trip patterns make them candidates for travel training starting in July 2024.
- 4.4 In October 2024, all new eligible customers will be required to complete travel training as part of the registration process.
- 4.5 In February 2025, it is expected that customers registered with Specialized transit will be able to leverage the full suite of services available through the Via app, once the technical barriers of the platform have been resolved.
- 4.6 Individual travel patterns and travel frequencies vary significantly. There are approximately 1500 active specialized customers, with approximately 900 customers travelling at least once a month. It is expected that approximately 60%, or 540 of these customers are candidates for a supported transition to the integrated service.
- 4.7 Generally, by integrating customer trips, the length of individual specialized trips will be shortened. This will increase available capacity to improve the current unaccommodated trip rate and wait time for booked trips.
- 4.8 Durham Region Transit (DRT) will continue to enhance accessibility and mobility of the public transit network including compliance with AODA and consistent procedures and process that promote a seamless customer transit experience throughout the GTHA.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

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

- Environmental Sustainability
 - Expand sustainable and active transportation.
- Economic Prosperity
 - Position Durham Region as the location of choice for business
 - Enhance communication and transportation networks to better connect people and move goods more effectively.
- Service Excellence
 - Optimize resources and partnerships to deliver exceptional quality services and value.

5.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following DRT strategic goals and priorities:

- Advancing the Organization:
 - Modernization of Eligibility Office & Service Delivery Practices.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 DRT On Demand is a modern, public transit service that continues to innovate to meet the evolving travel expectations of the community.
- 6.2 DRT services, including On Demand, comply with the requirements of the AODA and the Integrated Transportation Standard. Integrated specialized transit trips ensures equity for all residents to access and use public transit. Continuing with the current process of providing door to door trips on a single vehicle for all customers registered with specialized transit, regardless of their abilities, will continue to exacerbate the reliability and capacity challenges customers are experiencing.
- 6.3 Integrated specialized transit trips will provide additional capacity in DRT's on-demand network, resulting in service for more customers, and a reduction in unaccommodated trips, thus providing better value for money for the Region overall.

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

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



Durham Region Transit Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2024-DRT-12
Date: June 5, 2024

Subject:

U-Pass Negotiation Framework

Recommendation:

That the Transit Executive Committee (TEC) recommends:

- A) That Durham Region Transit (DRT) staff be authorized to negotiate separate & independent U-Pass agreements with each of Durham College, Ontario Tech University, and Trent University (Durham Campus), or a single joint agreement, at the sole discretion of the General Manager of Durham Region Transit, or their delegate, to allow for mutually beneficial considerations and risk mitigation during U-Pass contract negotiations.
- B) That the agreement(s) established with each of Durham College, Ontario Tech University, and Trent University (Durham Campus) be negotiated with an intent to realign U-Pass rates to better match upcoming service growth as endorsed by Council on DRT's Long-Term Service & Financing Strategy, a more appropriate revenue cost ratio and alignment with DRT's Council endorsed fare pricing strategy, and in consideration of switching from the Presto E-Ticket Solution to the Presto Mobile Wallet Solution, as presented in Confidential Attachment 1.
- C) That in conjunction with recommendations b) and the information presented in the Confidential Attachment, and as part of an overall negotiation strategy, staff be provided delegated authority to discontinue the UPASS with one or more of the post-secondary institutions in the event reasonable attempts at achieving increases fail during referendums and the costs to administer the program, including staff costs, outweigh revenues.

- D) That the negotiated agreements be brought back to TEC and then to Finance and Administration Committee for final approval.

Report

1. Purpose

- 1.1 DRT's Universal Pass (U-Pass) program provides students who are enrolled in participating post-secondary institutions with unlimited access to local transit by charging all students at the institution a flat rate for transit access. The flat rate forms part of the ancillary fees that students pay as part of their enrolment with their institution. The program relies on the mandatory charge being applied to the entire student population as the guaranteed revenue allows U-Pass prices to be set lower than the amount students would otherwise pay for monthly passes or single fare rides over the same period. Several key benefits of the U-Pass program include:
- consistent revenue for DRT to support better planning and forecasting;
 - unlimited public transit travel for students, within the Region, and with the new OneFare Program, cross boundary travel as well;
 - supports more affordable housing options for students to live further from campus;
 - reducing traffic congestion and minimizing parking requirements on post-secondary campuses; and,
 - reducing greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging public transit.
- 1.2 Any ancillary fee increases (which includes U-Pass) exceeding predetermined thresholds from the three post-secondary institutions may trigger a student union referendum, of which there exists a risk that should an agreement not be reached upon expiry of the current agreement, and negotiations fail, a U-Pass program will cease to exist. Currently, there is only a single agreement that covers the U-Pass program across the three institutions, however there is variation in the referendum threshold levels that must be taken into consideration when approaching the negotiations. In addition, the student body population also differs vastly for each institution and is also a critical element of the negotiations. The following table lists the ancillary fee increase thresholds and student body population for each post-secondary institution:

Table 1 – Referendum Thresholds & Student Body Population

Post Secondary Institution	Ancillary Fee Increase Threshold Before Triggering Referendum	Estimated Total Student Body Population
Ontario Tech University	5%*	9,945
Trent University	5%	1,565
Durham College	2%	13,038

* There is no set percentage threshold at Ontario Tech University, but it is estimated that increases at or beyond 5% would trigger a referendum

- 1.3 DRT entered into the current multi-year U-Pass agreement with Durham College, Ontario Tech University and Trent University effective for the period May 1, 2017, through August 31, 2019. The parties have since executed consecutive one-year extensions to the original agreement through August 31, 2025. The negotiations for entering into a new multi-year agreement has been avoided in recent years due to the impacts of the pandemic, among other considerations. Table 2 illustrates the historical U-Pass rate increases over the last decade.

Table 2: U-Pass Rate Increases 2014-2024

Semester Beginning	U-Pass Fee	Annual % Increase	Note
September 1, 2014	\$89.00		
September 1 2015	\$103.00	15.7%	
September 1 2016	\$120.00	16.5%	
May 1, 2017	\$120.00		Latest Multi year agreement
September 1, 2017	\$127.00	5.8%	Latest Multi year agreement
September 1, 2018	\$135.00	6.3%	Latest Multi year agreement
September 1, 2019	\$139.00	3.0%	1 Year Extension
September 1, 2020	\$141.75	2.0%	1 Year Extension
September 1, 2021	\$144.50	1.9%	1 Year Extension
September 1, 2022	\$147.25	1.9%	1 Year Extension
September 1, 2023	\$150.00	1.9%	1 Year Extension
September 1, 2024	\$152.85	1.9%	1 Year Extension

2. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 2.1 The extension of the U-Pass agreement through the 2024-2025 academic year, including a 1.9 per cent increase in the fee per eligible student from \$150.25 per

semester to \$152.85 per semester for the period of September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025 was approved by TEC through Report #2023-DRT-26.

3. Background

- 3.1 DRT provides a base network of direct and frequent service connecting students to post-secondary institutions, with nearly 700,000 residents within walking distance of a bus route that directly serves a post-secondary institution in Durham Region, and 1.5 million residents with access using one or two bus routes (one transfer or less) in 2022.
- 3.2 In 2023 and 2024 (to date), DRT has made significant improvements to routes serving post-secondary institutions to account for increased ridership throughout the network, including:
 - a. 15-minute all-day service implemented on Route 905, connecting Whitby Station to Ontario Tech University/Durham College North Campus.
 - b. Route 302 service extended to Ontario Tech University/Durham College North Campus 7-days per week.
 - c. Extension of Route 409 to Ontario Tech University/Durham College North Campus and Windfields Farm Drive, providing direct service to Oshawa Centre Terminal and two-way service via Garrard Road.
 - d. Modified PULSE 901 schedule to provide consistent 10-minute frequency between downtown Oshawa and Ontario Tech University/Durham College North Campus, improving capacity and reliability of service.
 - e. NEW Route 921, providing limited-stop, faster service between Scarborough and Ontario Tech University/Durham College North Campus during high-demand periods.
 - f. Resources added to Route 920, providing more reliable service and consistent 15-minute headways.
 - g. Resources allocated on key corridor routes including PULSE 901, 902, 905, 917, and 920, benefitting students throughout the network.
- 3.3 DRT has also made improved bus stop infrastructure including new stops and new transit shelters at post-secondary institutions including but not limited to:
 - a. New bus stops and shelters installed on Conlin Rd. and Founders Rd.
 - b. New bus stop and shelters installed on Simcoe St., at Commencement Dr.
 - c. New bus stop installed at Simcoe St. at Taunton Rd.
 - d. Bus stops relocated at Trent University Durham, bringing closer to pedestrian crossing and residence building, with new shelter installed

- 3.4 DRT seeks to continue improving service across the network, with plans to implement additional service where it is needed most in 2024 and beyond, including but not limited to:
- a. Increased frequency on PULSE 915 and 916, key travel routes for students accessing Ontario Tech University/Durham College North Campus.
 - b. Improved reliability and consistent headways across the PULSE network, improving access to all campuses.
 - c. New local routes in high-growth areas including West Whitby, Pickering, and north Oshawa, providing additional local connections, and making transit easier to access.
 - d. Reinstatement of select local routes where walk distance to transit is long, and gaps in the network exist.
 - e. Improved On Demand capacity, with dedicated vehicles to support travel to/from rural and northern communities, or travel when scheduled service may not operate.
- 3.5 As DRT continues to budget annually for the implementation of the 10-year Service and Financing Strategy, continued improvements to the network are planned for implementation, with new connections to Toronto and York Region, rapid transit projects, and a nearly 100% increase in service hours available to all residents.
- 3.6 The U-pass remains DRT's best value fare product, allowing students to have access to unlimited travel on all DRT scheduled and On Demand services throughout the four-month semester. The most recent (2024-2025 academic year) U-Pass semester rate is \$152.85 per student. On a monthly basis, this equates to a monthly pass cost of \$38.21, which is \$12.19 less than DRT's Transit Assistance Program (TAP) available to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program clients (\$50.40 per month) and less than the cost of six adult round trips (i.e., 12 rides) per month. The U-Pass rate is equivalent to 29 per cent of an adult monthly pass, and 37 per cent of a youth monthly pass.
- 3.7 The potential to enter into a separate agreement with each of the post secondary institutions as recommended above will mitigate risk where the U-Pass program is in jeopardy of dissolution, such as in the event that negotiations with any one of the three post secondary institutions fail due to a number of reasons, with the main one being that a student union referendum has been triggered and all proposed U-Pass rates are rejected. Should negotiations fail with any of the

institutions, DRT can still support a U-Pass program with the remaining parties under the recommended arrangement of executing separate agreements.

- 3.8 The U-Pass accounts for 29 per cent of DRT's budgeted ridership in 2024 and is anticipated to generate approximately \$7.8 million in revenue for DRT, representing 22 per cent of DRT's total fare-related revenue. Despite the U-Pass program being such an important driver of DRT's ridership and revenue, U-Pass fares have not kept pace with the increase in gross operating expenditures, nor with the rate of revenue increase from other fare rate media, and critically does not align with DRT's Council endorsed fare strategy. Table 3 compares the growth amongst fare revenue, U-Pass, and gross operating expenditures between 2020 to 2024, with U-Pass revenue trailing at a 16% increase, compared to a 25% increase from fare revenue, and a 31% growth in gross operating expenses. Note that the 2020 budget figures below were derived before the pandemic and based on trends inclusive of 2019 actual performance and prior, where ridership continually experienced record levels each year. Looking forward, with Council's endorsement of DRT's Long-Term Service and Financing Strategy (#2023-DRT-05), DRT's network of revenue hours is targeted to grow by 652,393 hours between 2022 to 2032. Therefore, it has become more crucial than ever for DRT to align growing operating costs that will have a direct benefit to its ridership base with a responsible fare pricing strategy which will promote equity amongst all fare paying riders.

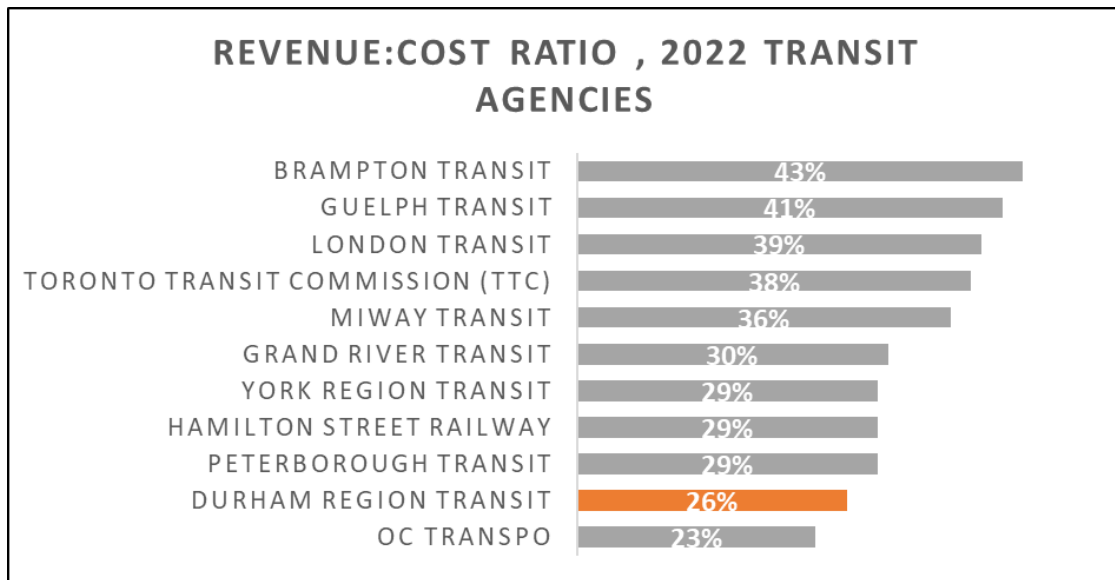
Table 3: 2019 to 2024 budgeted operating expenditure and revenue growth

Budgeted (\$ '000s)	2020	2024	Increase (2020-2024)
Fare revenue	\$ 22,473	\$ 28,195	25.46%
U-Pass	\$ 6,778	\$ 7,865	16.04%
Gross operating expense	\$ 94,017	\$ 122,833	30.65%

- 3.9 Historically, DRT's revenue cost ratio (RC Ratio), which is the percentage of transit operating expenditures offset by fare, U-Pass, and advertising revenues, is below comparator transit systems in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. A primary factor is Durham Region's large service area of over 2,500 square kilometers – the largest of all GTHA transit systems – and relatively low population densities in many areas of the region. The impacts of the pandemic have only exacerbated this issue, which dropped DRT's RC Ratio from 38% pre-pandemic to 26% in 2022. Figure 1 below highlights the RC Ratio amongst DRT's comparators, while Figure 2 highlights the total service area covered by comparator transit agencies. From the two figures below, it should be noted that

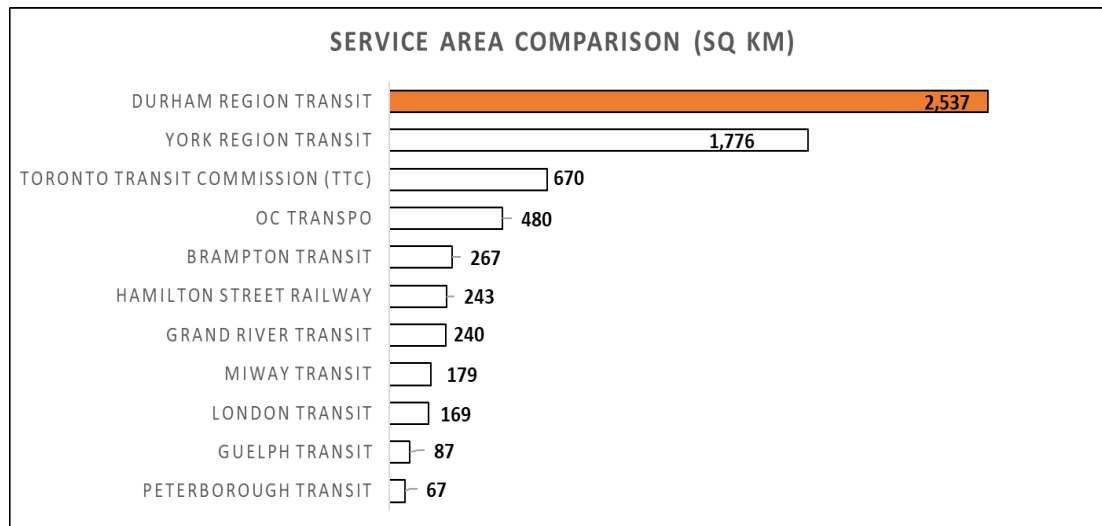
Durham Region Transit and York Region Transit’s total service area by far outsize that of other agencies, but also rank amongst the lowest in RC Ratio at under 30% in 2022. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the top 5 transit agencies with the highest RC Ratio, Brampton, Guelph, London, Toronto, and Mississauga all have service areas smaller than 25% of Durham Region’s service area (under 630 sq km).

Figure 1: Revenue Cost Ratio for GTHA Transit Agencies (2022 data)*



*DRT’s RC Ratio in 2023 has recovered further to 33%. It is highly likely that comparator transit agencies will also see higher figures than presented on the figure above, given post pandemic ridership is recovering overall.

Figure 2: Service Area Comparison



4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 All financial implications are presented in the Confidential Attachment to this Report.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 This report, seeking authority for the parameters in which DRT will negotiate U-Pass increases as proposed in the Confidential Attachment, will be presented to Council for final approval before engaging the post-secondary institutions. To date, the Region and DRT have not yet triggered a referendum through proposed increases to the UPass fare.
- 5.2 Assuming the successful negotiation, including the potential of student referendums, DRT will work with Finance and Legal to bring a final report to TEC and Finance and Administration Committee to authorize the execution of an amendment to the U-Pass Agreement to implement the multi-year extension beginning September 2025.
- 5.3 Upon execution of the agreement extension, the Region's fees and charges schedule will be updated to reflect the increased fee.

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. Goal 1: Environmental Sustainability – By providing convenient and cost-effective public transit, we can reduce reliance on single occupancy passenger vehicles directly minimizing carbon emissions as well as reducing congestion on the road network overall.
- b. Goal 4: Social Investment – Students represent a vulnerable community that is more sensitive to general inflation and cost of living increases. Inexpensive and convenient public transit helps mitigate against these issues and ensures students can travel between their residence and campus, as well as to employment opportunities within the Region.
- c. Goal 5: Service Excellence – Durham Region Transit is always looking to expand its service offerings, and with the 10-year approved service growth plan, public transit within the Region will continue to provide exceptional value to students and customers in general. The ongoing commitment to the U-pass Program is an example of continued service excellence in the face of difficult budgetary considerations.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 DRT's U-Pass Agreement has benefited all parties in a variety of ways. For DRT it has contributed to strong ridership growth amongst post secondary students, thereby contributing to overall fare revenues as well as mitigating congestion if the same trips were completed using single occupancy passenger vehicles. For Durham's post secondary institutions, it has provided students with an affordable option for school and personal travel, while assisting the institutions in managing parking and traffic pressures on campus and in the surrounding community. In addition, for the Region overall, promoting transit is a cost-effective mechanism for reducing localized emissions thereby contributing to our collective environmental sustainability and health outcomes.
- 7.2 An annual U-Pass rate increase between the parameters as recommended for each year of a multi-year agreement with each of the three institutions will align closer with DRT's projected increase in growth related operating expenditures, which will drive the 10-year growth plan as endorsed by Council.
- 7.3 The execution of three separate and independent U-Pass multi-year agreements with each of the three post-secondary institutions will allow for more mutually beneficial negotiations between DRT and the institutions, especially should there exist any specific issues that only affect a select number of the institutions. Despite the execution of separate agreements with each of the institutions, this report recommends a uniform U-Pass rate for all the institutions.

8. Confidential Attachment

Attachment # 1 Memo to Council from Jason Hunt and William Holmes

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