



Transit Executive Committee Agenda

Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 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. Delegations	
There are no delegations	
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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, April 8, 2026 at 1:30 PM

12. Adjournment

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The Regional Municipality of Durham

Durham Region Transit Executive Committee Minutes

Wednesday, February 4, 2026

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:30 PM.

Commissioner Crawford assumed the Chair.

1. Roll Call

Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

* indicates individuals who participated electronically.

Members

Present: Commissioner Crawford, Chair
Commissioner Garrod, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Anderson
Commissioner Brenner
Commissioner Mulcahy
Commissioner Pettingill
Commissioner Wotten
Regional Chair Henry

Also

Present: None

Members

Absent: Commissioner Carter

Staff Present: E. Baxter-Trahair, S. Dessureault, N. Harkness, W. Holmes, K. Hornburg, R. Inacio, A. Khan, N. Lysaght, A. Mak, D. Margiotta*, M. Morris, A. Naeem*, C. Norris, A. Pezzetti, J. Phelan, N. Prasad, J. Rosebush, K. Smith, and P. Uthayakumar

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Motion #1

Moved by Commissioner Wotten, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,
That the minutes of the regular Transit Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, be adopted.

Carried

Motion #2

Moved by Commissioner Mulcahy, Seconded by Commissioner Pettingill,
That the order of the agenda be altered to consider Item 5.1 at this time.

Carried

6. Delegations

- 6.1 Anwoy Barua, Vice-President of Student Affairs, Ontario Tech Student Union;
Prabhmeet Kaur, Vice-President of External Affairs, Trent Durham Student
Association
Re: U-Pass Concerns and Improving Transit in Durham Region
-

Motion #3

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

Carried on a 2/3rds Vote

A. Barua, Vice-President of Student Affairs, Ontario Tech Student Union and P.
Kaur, Vice-President of External Affairs, Trent Durham Student Association
appeared before the Committee regarding U-Pass concerns and improving transit
in Durham Region.

A. Barua and P. Kaur acknowledged Durham Region Transit's (DRT) ongoing
efforts and continued investment in regional transit expansion; recognizing
capacity pressures on student-heavy routes; and the importance of ongoing
dialogue with post-secondary institutions.

Alumni students from Ontario Tech University and Trent University Durham
shared their experiences using DRT to commute to their universities over the past
10 years.

A. Barua and P. Kaur identified opportunities for improvement through long term
capacity investment, including the use of articulated buses on high-demand, long-
distance routes to help reduce overcrowding and capacity related bypasses.

A. Barua and P. Kaur responded to questions from the Committee.

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 Verbal Update.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- Black History Month
- General Manager (GM) Information Highlights – December 2025
- GM Information Highlights – 2025 Summary

- GM Report Updates
 - DRT Accessibility Plan Survey
 - Pilot for Stand Alone Solar Lighting
 - State of Transit in Durham
- Transit Advisory Committee Recommendations
- Youth Access to Durham Region Transit Services
- GO East Express Trains
 - East Harbour Station Construction
- DRT's contributions to Community Safety and Well-Being
- Video: 2025 Year End Highlights

B. Holmes responded to questions from the Committee regarding DRT's ability to assist with transportation capacity needs for Clarington secondary students; measures DRT is taking to address bus overcrowding; whether DRT has considered reducing fares to possibly increase ridership; and the rationale for the decrease in the unaccommodated rate for On Demand Specialized boarding compared to 2024.

5. Delegations

- 5.1 Anwoy Barua, Vice-President of Student Affairs, Ontario Tech Student Union;
Prabhmeet Kaur, Vice-President of External Affairs, Trent Durham Student
Association
Re: U-Pass Concerns and Improving Transit in Durham Region
-

This item was considered earlier in the meeting. See Page 2 of these minutes.

6. Correspondence

- 6.1 Correspondence received from Kathleen Flynn (Clarington Trustee) dated
January 27, 2026
Re: Transportation Capacity Needs regarding Clarington Secondary Students
-

Staff advised that a response would be provided to K. Flynn, Clarington Trustee, along with an invitation to further discuss public transportation opportunities for secondary students.

Motion #4

Moved by Commissioner Mulcahy, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,
That correspondence received from Kathleen Flynn (Clarington Trustee),
dated January 27, 2026, re: Transportation Capacity Needs regarding
Clarington Secondary Students, be referred to staff for a response.

Carried

- 6.2 Correspondence received from Doug Glass (Ajax Resident) dated January 31,
2026

Re: Request for Clarification on Performance Metrics, Reporting Continuity, and Value-for-Money Framework

Motion #5

Moved by Commissioner Mulcahy, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,
That correspondence received from Doug Glass (Ajax Resident),
regarding Reports #2026-DRT-02 and #2026-DRT-03, be referred to
consideration of Items 7.2 and 7.3.

Carried

7. Reports

7.1 General Manager's Report – February 2026
(2026-DRT-01)

Report #2026-DRT-01 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Motion #6

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Wotten,
That Report #2026-DRT-01 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

Carried

7.2 Durham Region Transit Technology Roadmap (2026-2030)
(2026-DRT-02)

Report #2026-DRT-02 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Staff responded to questions from the Committee regarding DRT's use of the enterprise asset management system and plans to optimize its utilization, and whether other transit providers are using this system.

Motion #7

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Wotten,
That Report #2026-DRT-02 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

Carried

7.3 Response to Transit Advisory Committee Recommendations
(2026-DRT-03)

Report #2026-DRT-03 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Questions were raised with respect to whether DRT should provide the local municipalities with written notice to clear sidewalks near bus stops during the winter months; whether all municipalities have the same approach to sidewalk

clearing; and who is responsible for snow removal on sidewalks in areas near bus stop locations.

E. Baxter-Trahair advised that they would follow-up with the Corporate Communications Office on the possibility of using the Region of Durham's communication channels to inform homeowners and business owners of the importance of clearing sidewalks.

Motion #8

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Wotten,
That Durham Region Transit advise the Transit Executive Committee of
any recommended budgetary fare changes at least one month before
receiving the related staff recommendation report.

Carried

8. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions to be considered.

9. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

10. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 1:30 PM in Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

12. Adjournment

Motion #9

Moved by Commissioner Mulcahy, Seconded by Commissioner Pettingill,
That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,

M. Crawford
Chair

S. Dessureault
Committee Clerk

Driving Durham

2026-2030 Service Strategy Summary



Driving Durham: Five-Year Service Strategy (2026-2030)

DRT service strategies anticipate residential and non-residential development, incorporate customer and stakeholder feedback, and consider Regional mode share targets to forecast future service

Service levels are consistent with the Transit Service and Financing Strategy; the Service Strategy articulates where and when service would operate, not the total amount

Circumstances change over a 5-year period; the plan will be reviewed at the mid-point. In each annual service plan/budget, adjustments will be made to reflect current conditions





The Route Ahead: 2022-2025

- The Route Ahead guided service planning during the later part of the COVID-19 pandemic and the years that immediately followed. The usual 5-year cycle was interrupted and will resume with this service strategy
- That service strategy focused on rebuilding ridership, adapting to changing travel behaviour, and building foundations for future growth



The Route Ahead: Successes

- Since 2022, service across the Region has increased significantly including new scheduled service routes, longer spans of service, and higher frequency.
- This growth is reflected in ridership trends and supported by
 - Recreational destinations including Rouge National Urban Park, Toronto Zoo, waterfront parks, and trailheads
 - 24/7/365 scheduled service on Highway 2 and Simcoe Street, and On Demand in the urban area
 - Adjustments to service delivery models as ridership grows, replacing On Demand with scheduled service
 - Accessible bus stop infrastructure and additional bus stop amenities (e.g., shelters, bike racks, lighting)



Driving Durham: 2026-2030

Driving Durham builds on past successes. Service improvements are guided by five pillars:

Availability

Customers throughout the Region should have access when they need to travel

Innovation

Customer experience should be enhanced by technology and creative solutions

Reliability

Service should be frequent, delivered as scheduled, and respond to evolving travel patterns

Safety

Customer and employee safety should be the top priority

Growth

Service should be available when residents move into new communities to build transit-friendly habits



Our customer base

DRT serves a wide variety of trip needs and customer markets

Post-secondary travel	30%	Primarily UPASS holders (both school and non-school travel) at Ontario Tech, Durham College, and Trent. DRT also carries students to campuses in Scarborough and elsewhere.
Between Durham and Toronto*	15%	Customers connecting to GO Transit and TTC are primarily going to downtown, where the transit mode share is very high due to traffic and parking pressures. Providing convenient connections to trains is a priority.
Internal trips in Durham*	50%	Most trips are general-purpose travel, for a combination of work, shopping, recreation, appointments and other purposes. Building an anywhere-to-anywhere network serves these riders especially.
Youth	10%	An important growth market, especially by driving long-term behaviour.
Seniors	5%	This group is expected to grow as the Region's population ages.
At-risk residents	8%	TAP provides discounted fares for those on OW and ODSP, reducing barriers to employment, healthcare, education and essential services
Villages	1%	Essential mobility options for residents with limited transportation options, and supporting tourism and outdoor recreation.

* Not including post-secondary

Shares add up to > 100%, since the groups are not mutually-exclusive



Major service initiatives

Four major service initiatives are captured in the Service Strategy:

Filling gaps in the network

- Eliminating one-way services
- Consistent weekday and weekend service
- Off-peak service for customers with different travel needs

Keeping up with growth

- Expansion to new growth areas
- Service in intensifying areas

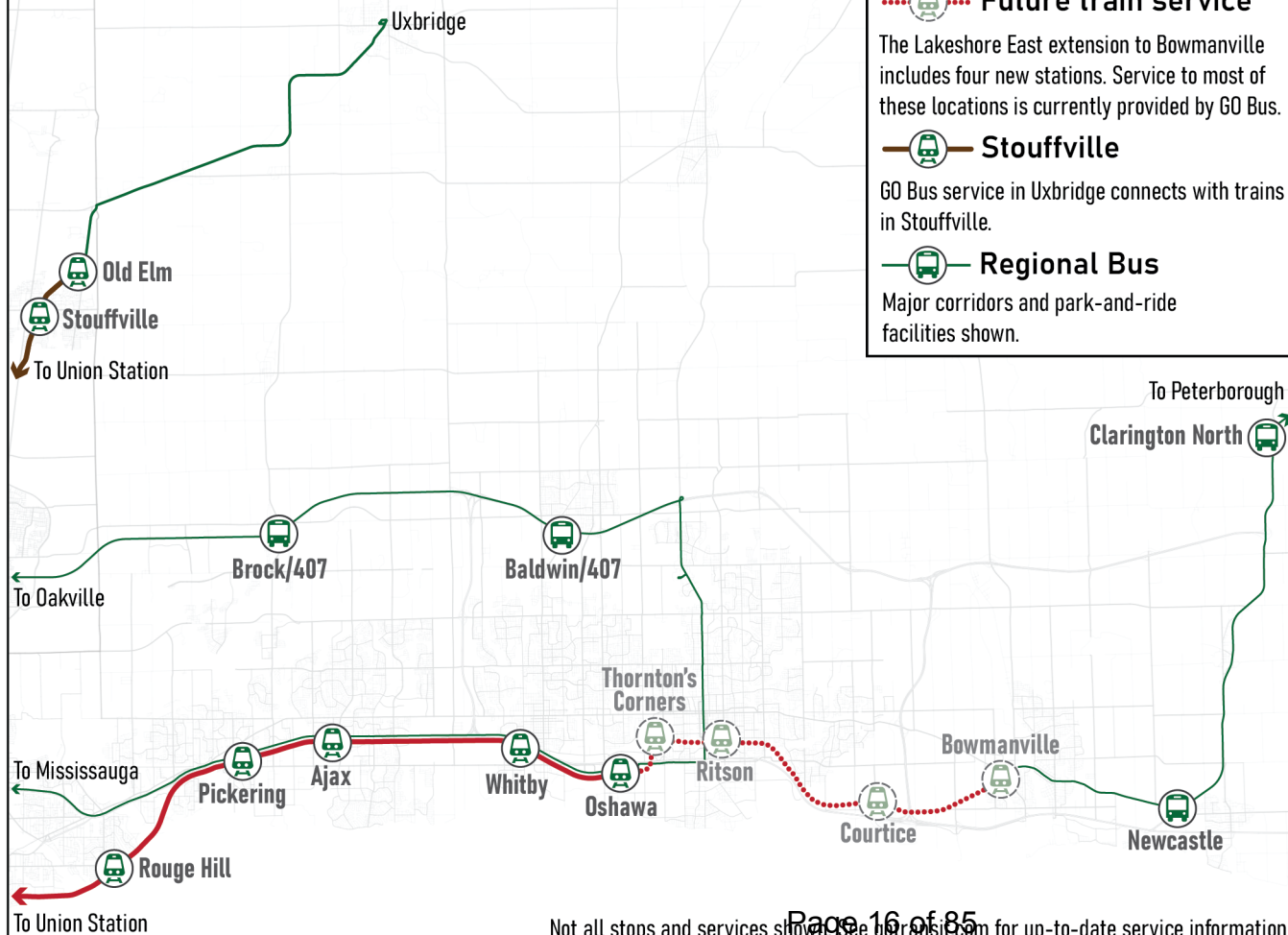
Frequent and available network

- More frequent service to meet demand and drive ridership
- Operating at more times of the day

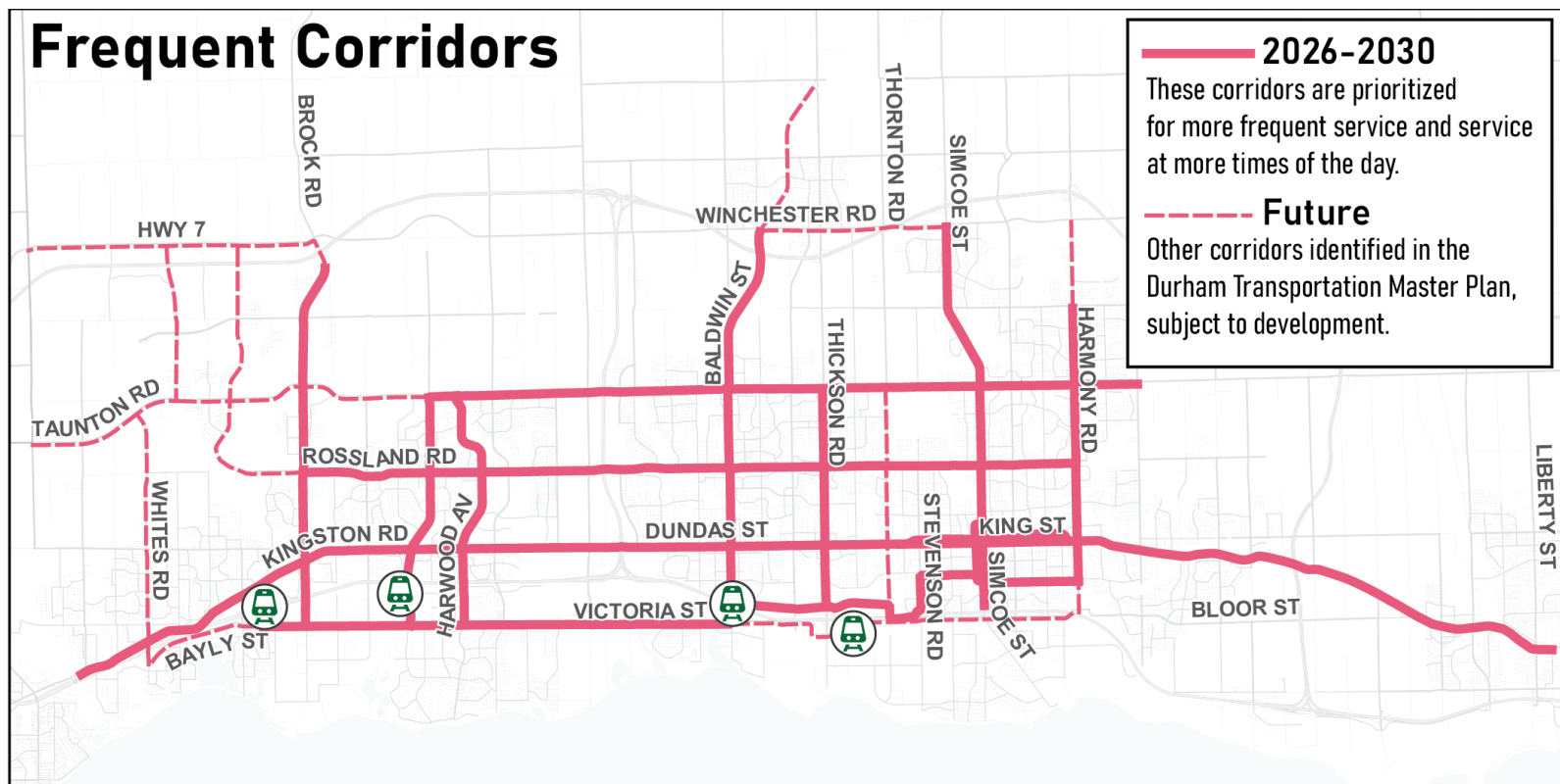
Evolving On Demand

- Adjusted trip-planning rules
- Connecting Villages

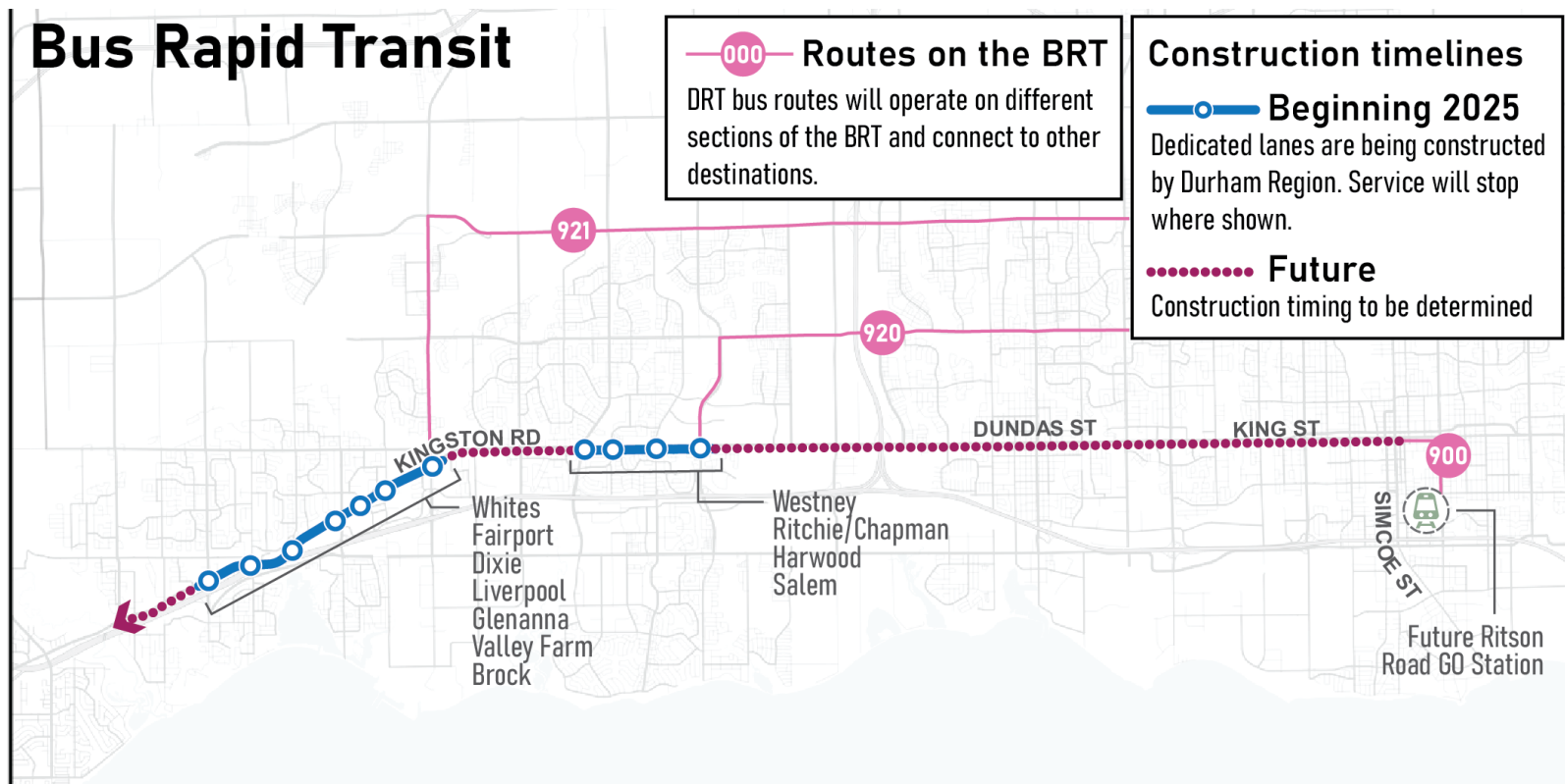
Regional Transit Connections



Frequent corridors



Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit





The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2026-DRT-04
Date: March 4, 2026

Subject:

General Manager's Report – March 2026

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. Connected and Vibrant Communities

- Improve public transit system connectivity, reliability, and competitiveness

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 –March 2026

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
March 4, 2026
TEC
Attachment #1

Performance Measures Dashboard	<u>2</u>
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Ridership	<u>4</u>
Service Delivery	<u>7</u>
Updates	<u>11</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	January	0.52	0.55	✓ -5.0	✓ -5.0

Ridership

Ridership (x1,000)	Number passengers	January	917	1,084	✗ -19.5	✗ -19.5
PRESTO Ridership	Customers paying using PRESTO (per cent)	January	93.1	93.9	✗ -0.8	✗ -0.8
Bus full occurrences	Number operator reported occurrences	January	164	282	✓ -41.8	✓ -41.8
Demand Responsive						
Ridership - On Demand Specialized	Number customer boardings	January	16,126	15,839	✓ 1.8	✓ 1.8
Unaccommodated Boarding Rate - On Demand Specialized	Boarding requests not scheduled (per cent)	January	14.5	13.5	✗ 7.7	✗ 7.7
Ridership – On Demand	Number customer boardings	January	9,206	9,719	✗ -15.8	✗ -15.8
Unaccommodated Boarding Rate – On Demand	Boarding requests not scheduled (per cent)	January	24.5	28.4	✓ -15.8	✓ -15.8

Service Delivery

Scheduled						
On time performance	On-time departures from all stops (per cent)	Service Period 1 ³	N/A	72.5	N/A	N/A
Service availability	Scheduled service delivered (per cent)	Service Period 1 ³	N/A	98.5	N/A	N/A
Demand Responsive						
Service Availability – Demand Response	Planned Service Delivered (per cent)	January	91.5	95.7	✗ -4.4	✗ -4.4
On time performance – On Demand Specialized	On-time customer pickups (per cent)	January	75.6	81.3	✗ -7.1	✗ -7.1

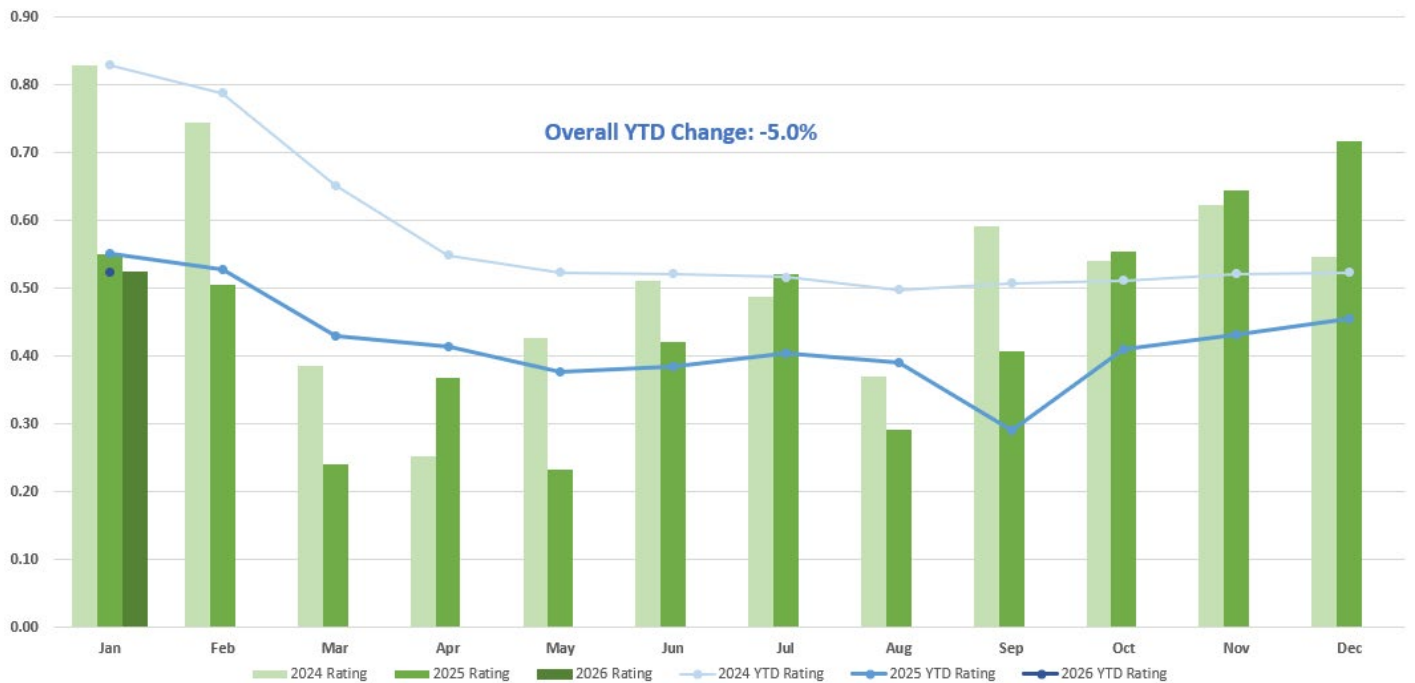
Scheduled						
On time performance – On Demand	On-time customer pickups (per cent)	January	91.2	93.0	✗ -1.9	✗ -1.9
Service availability – On Demand Specialized	Average difference in requested trip time vs. booked trip time (minutes)	January	15.1	12.2	✗ 23.4	✗ 23.4
Service availability – On Demand	Average difference in requested trip time vs. booked trip time (minutes)	January	19.2	19.0	✗ 1.4	✗ 1.4

¹Target is 2025 measure for the same period

²Year to Date (YTD) compared to previous year

³January 5 to April 12, 2026

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 10 per cent relative to the previous year.

Analysis

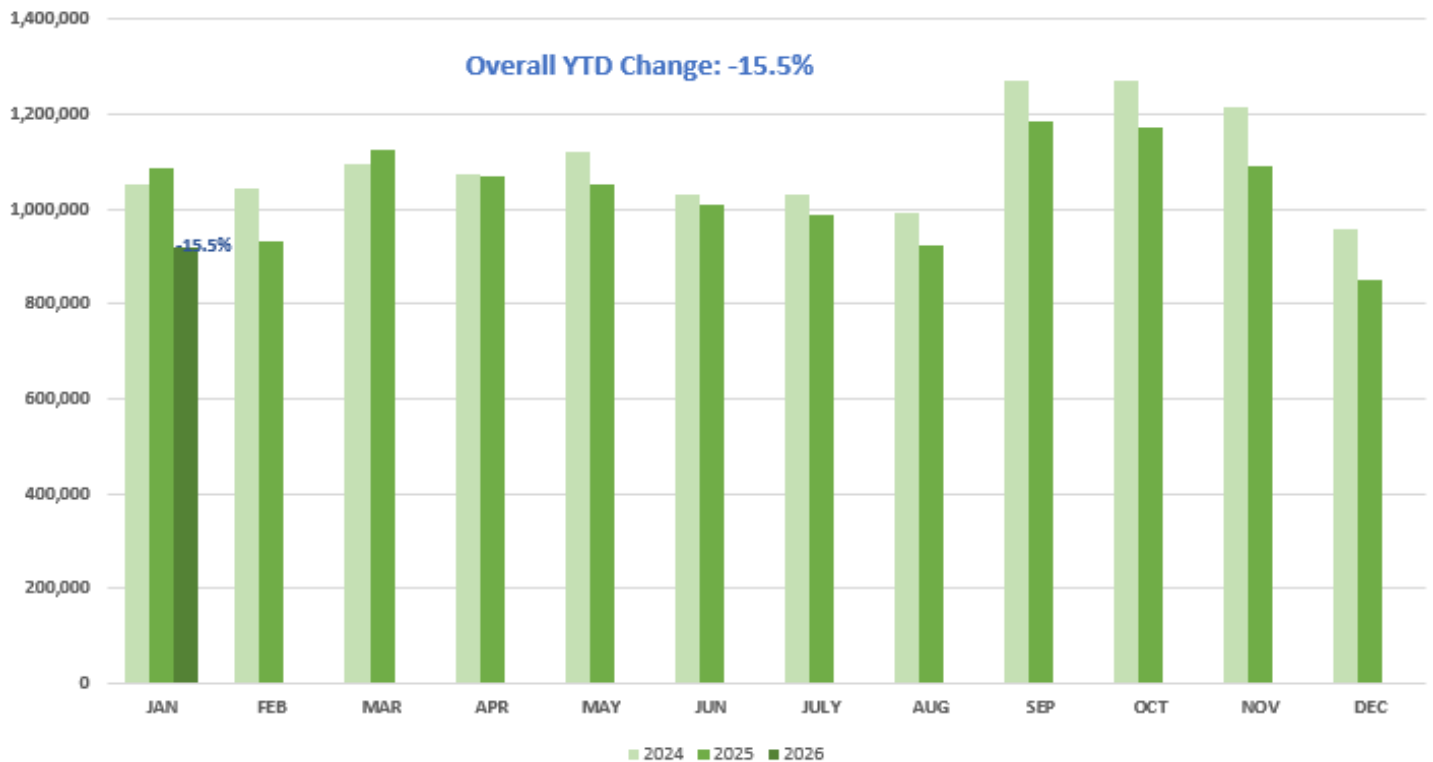
The preventable collision rate for January was 0.52 compared to 0.55 for the same month in 2025.

Action Plan

Starting in late 2024, Operations Supervisors began performing audits across all stations and terminals to monitor bus movements, and coaching Operators as appropriate. Supervisors are also engaged in proactive conversations with Operators to reinforce positive performance and areas for improvement.

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

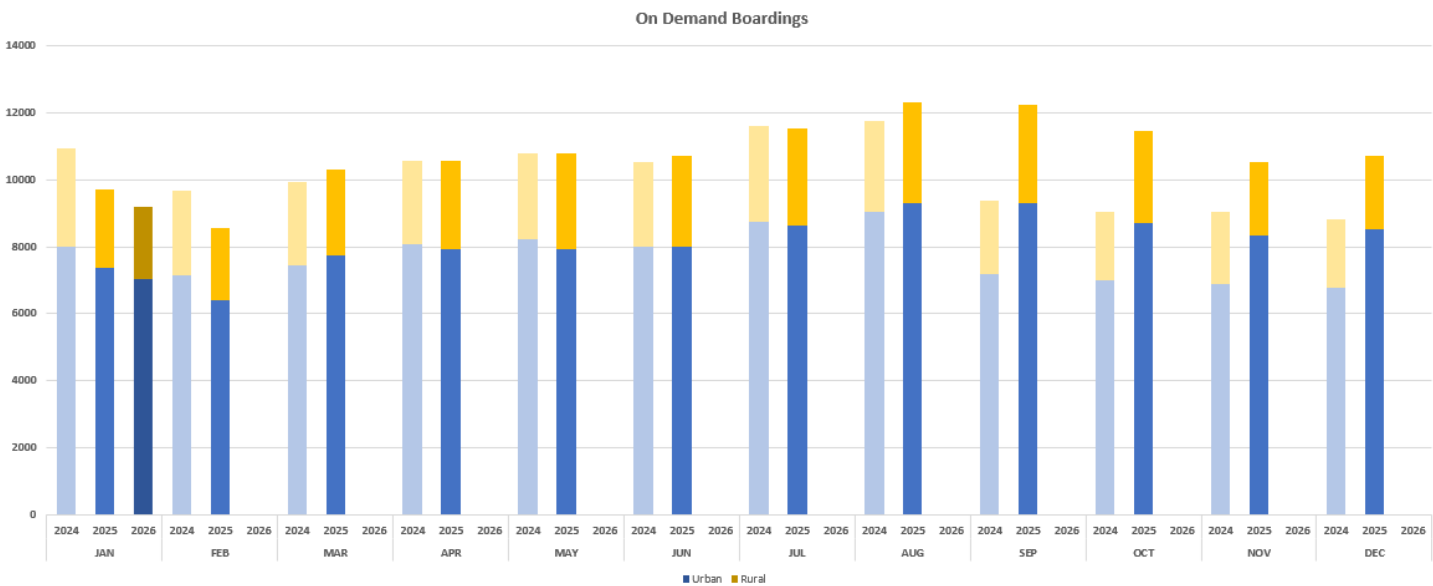
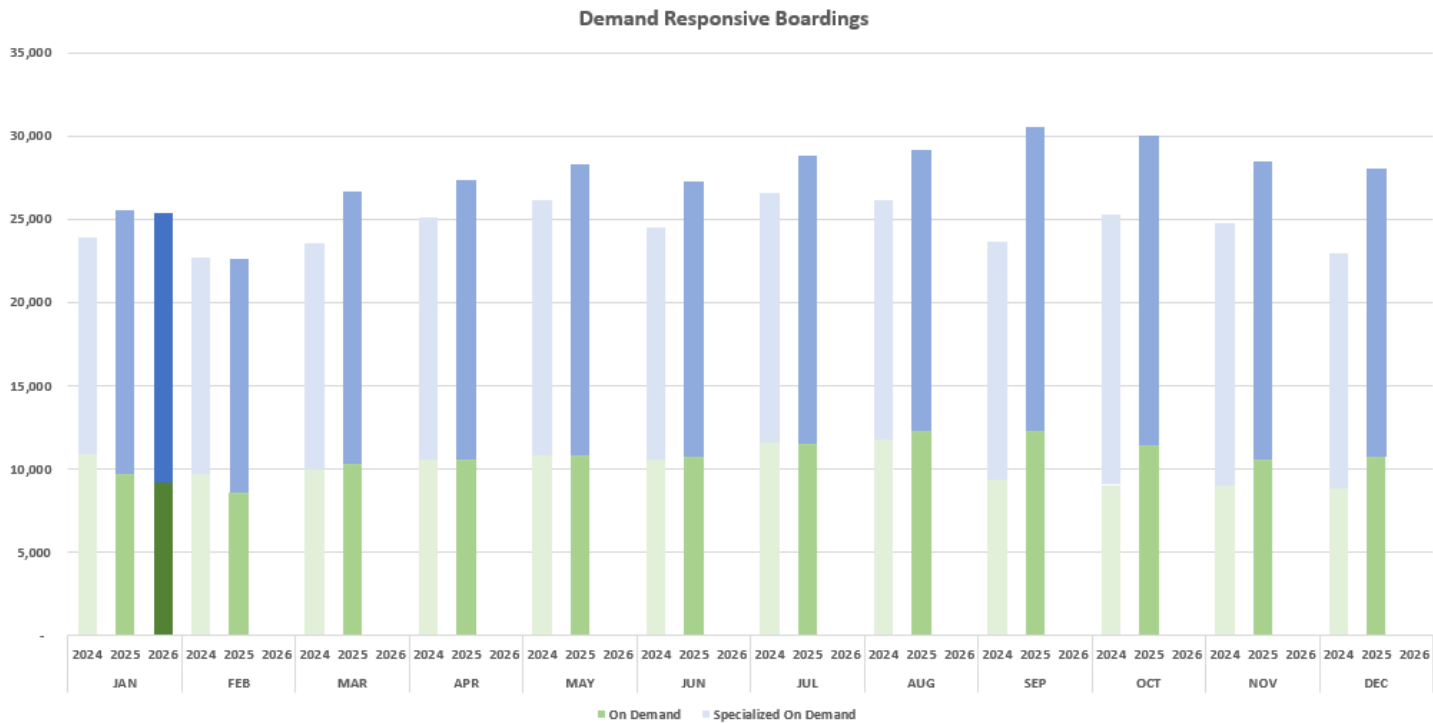
Ridership on scheduled service for January was approximately 917,000 riders, approximately 16 per cent lower than January 2025.

Typically, ridership is lower on days experiencing significant snow events. People cancel their non-essential trips because of comfort reasons when snow can make access to stops and travel difficult.

In January 2026, there were three events that contributed to lower ridership than 2025. First, post secondary classes started a week later in 2026, resulting lower ridership of UPass customers and staff/visitors. The Region also experienced at least two significant snow events where ridership was significantly reduced on the day of the event and at least one day afterwards.

Action Plan

Many transit agencies across the GTHA and Ontario have experienced a recent decline in ridership particularly municipalities with post-secondary institutions. DRT continue to invest in service enhancements intended to make transit more convenient for residents, and competitive with individual automobile trips. Ridership will continue to be monitored to identify emerging trends and potential mitigation measures.



On Demand Boardings By Service Area

		JAN 2026	YTD 2026
R U R A L	Uxbridge	238	238
	Brock	314	314
	Scugog	447	447
	Pickering	264	264
	Ajax	14	14
	Whitby	56	56
	Oshawa	94	94
	Clarington	728	728

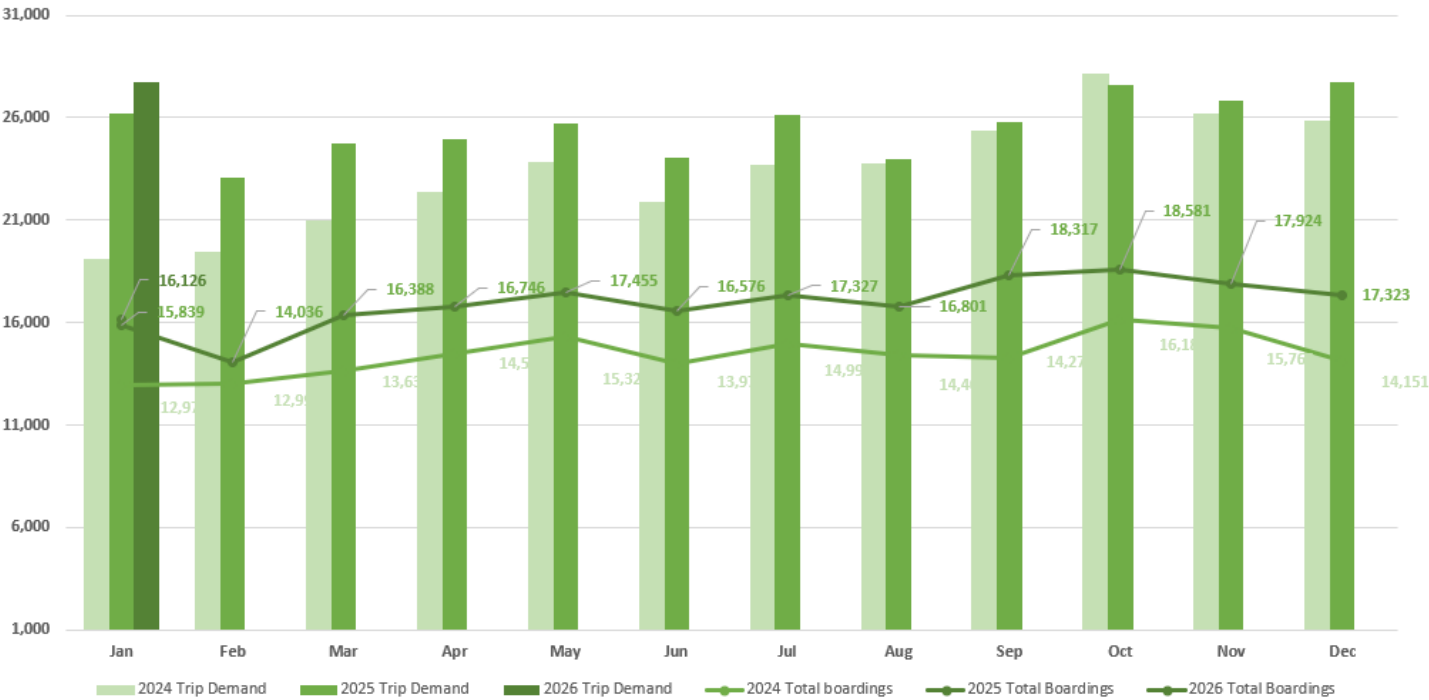
		JAN 2026	YTD 2026
U R B A N	Uxbridge	625	625
	Scugog	436	436
	Pickering	541	541
	Ajax	667	667
	Whitby	1,412	1,412
	Oshawa	2,076	2,076
	Clarington	1,294	1,294
	Toronto-York	-	-

On Demand Specialized Boardings By Service Area

		JAN 2026	YTD 2026
R U R A L	Uxbridge	26	26
	Brock	67	67
	Scugog	70	70
	Pickering	42	42
	Ajax	-	-
	Whitby	137	137
	Oshawa	19	19
	Clarington	163	163

		JAN 2026	YTD 2026
U R B A N	Uxbridge	169	169
	Scugog	129	129
	Pickering	1,849	1,849
	Ajax	3,117	3,117
	Whitby	3,435	3,435
	Oshawa	5,380	5,380
	Clarington	1,206	1,206
	Toronto-York	317	317

On Demand Specialized Transit Boardings



Definitions:

Boardings: A boarding is counted each time a passenger enters an On Demand vehicle, regardless of the origin or destination of the trip.

Results

On Demand boardings were 25,332 in January 2026, including 16,126 boardings (64 per cent) for customers registered with specialized transit. Overall boardings were less than one per cent lower than January 2026 compared to last year, including a two per cent increase in trips for customers registered with specialized transit, and five per cent lower for other On Demand Customers.

Boardings were lower in January 2025 due to factors including weather and lower service availability for the On Demand service.

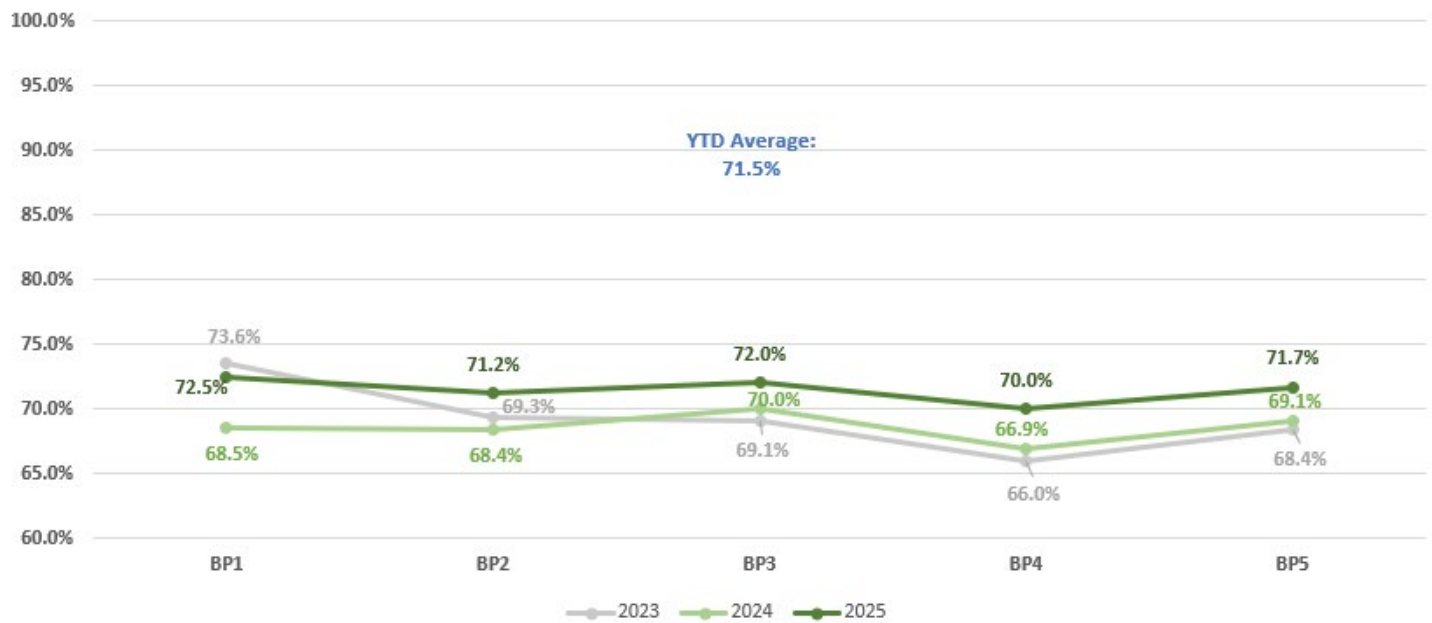
Action Plan

DRT is working closely with the contracted service provider to resolve the current fleet availability challenges impacting service availability.

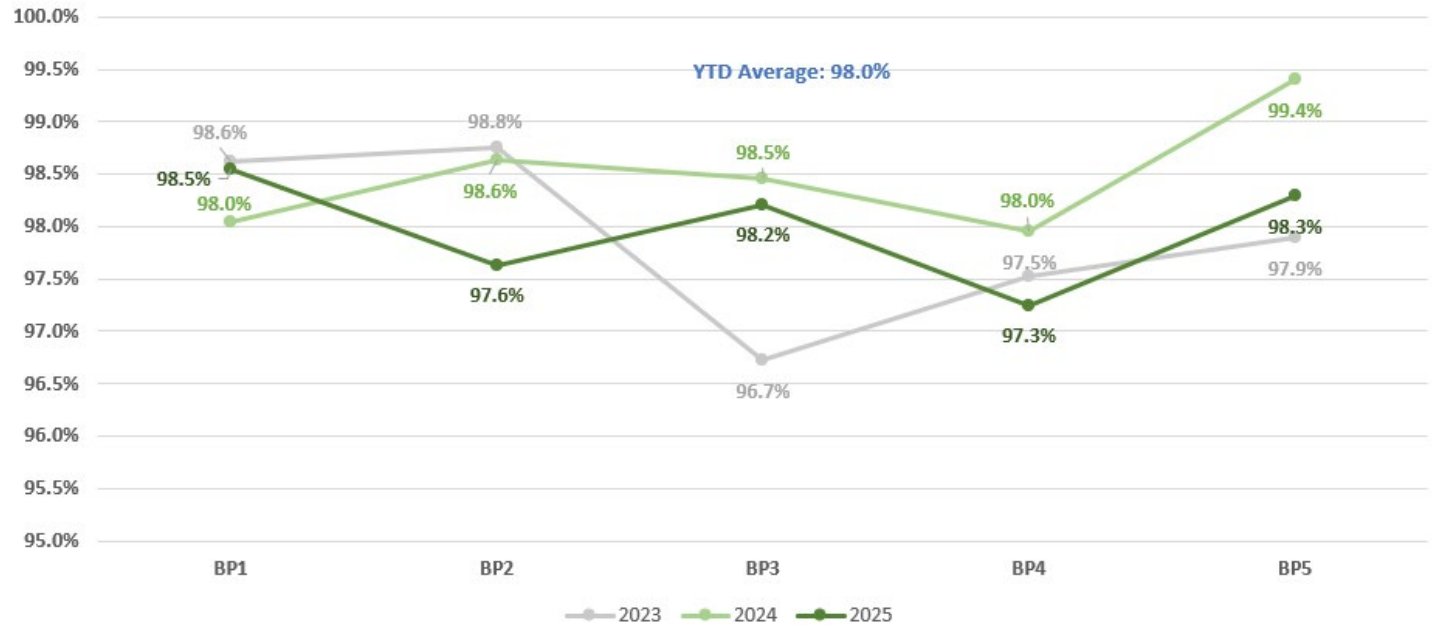
Service Delivery

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.

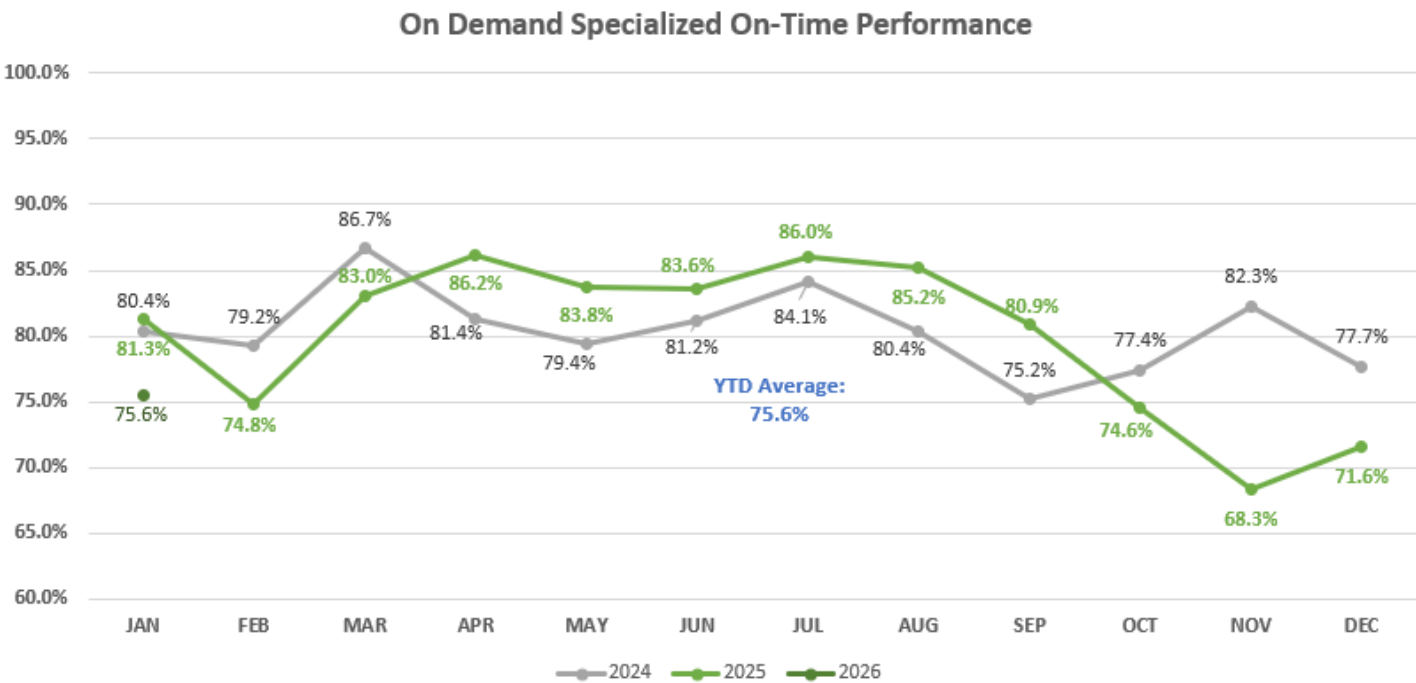
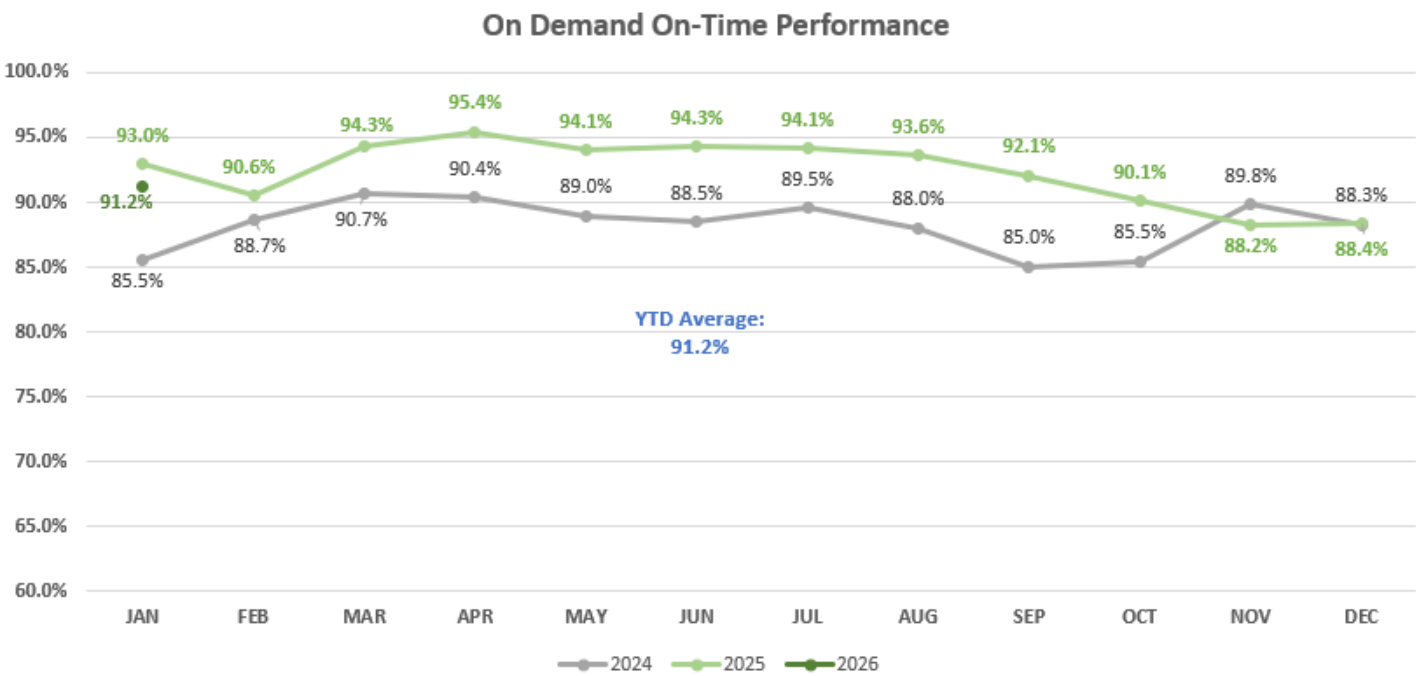
Results/Analysis

OTP results for Service Period 1 (January 5, 2026 – April 12, 2026) will be reported in June 2026.

Action Plan

The Operations team continue to evaluate scheduling processes and service management procedures and decisions to improve OTP and Service Availability performance.

On Time Performance (Demand Responsive)



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

On-Time Performance (OTP) for Demand Response in January was 76 per cent for customers registered with specialized transit, and 91.2 per cent for other On Demand boardings.

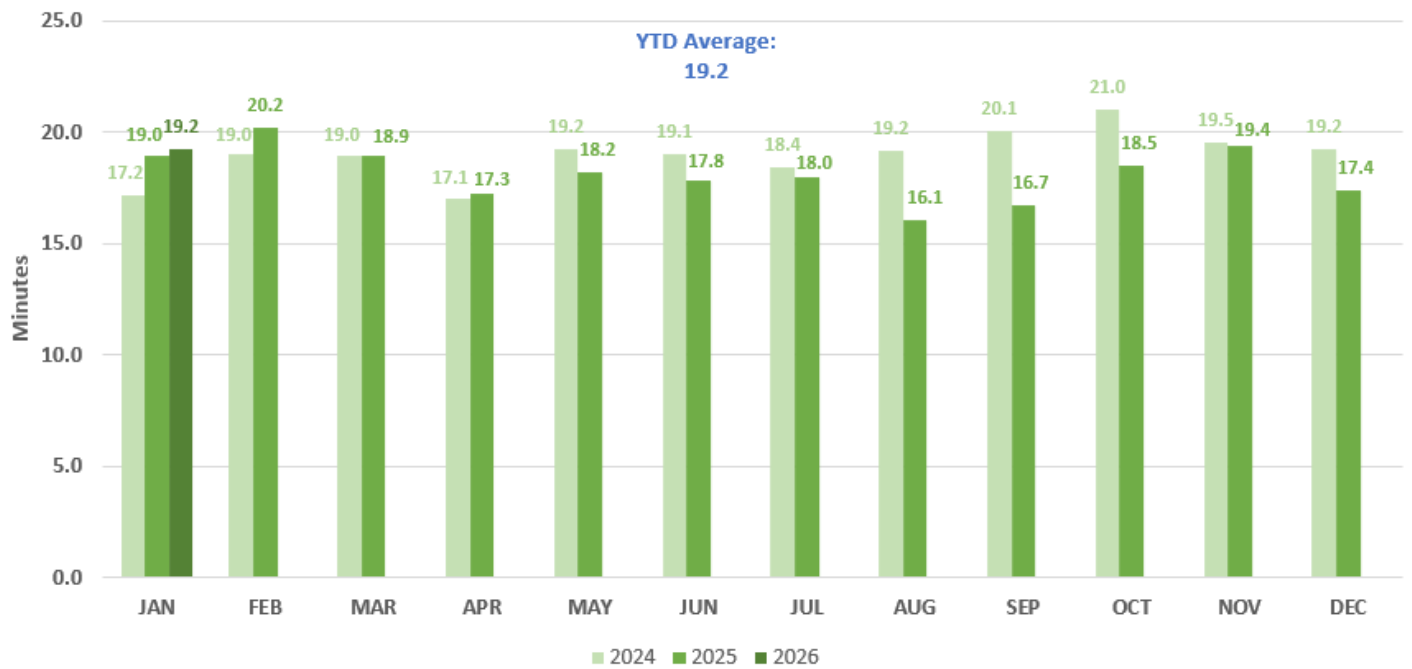
Lower service availability in January impacted OTP primarily due service management actions to minimize the trip cancellations for as many customers as reasonable. These actions include re-routing vehicles and adding additional trips to vehicles, which can result in longer travel times and delayed pick-ups for some customers.

Action Plan

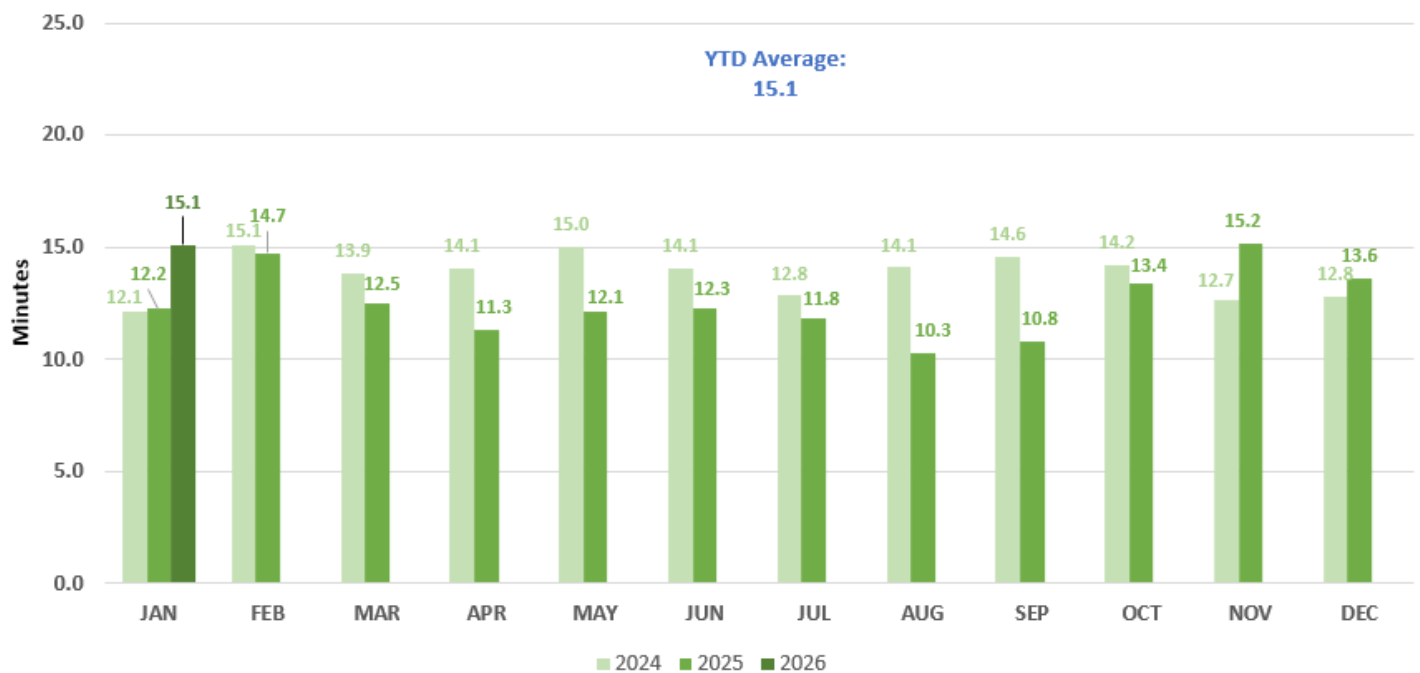
Staff continue to monitor service performance and system parameters to maximize performance of the On Demand network.

Service Availability (Demand Responsive)

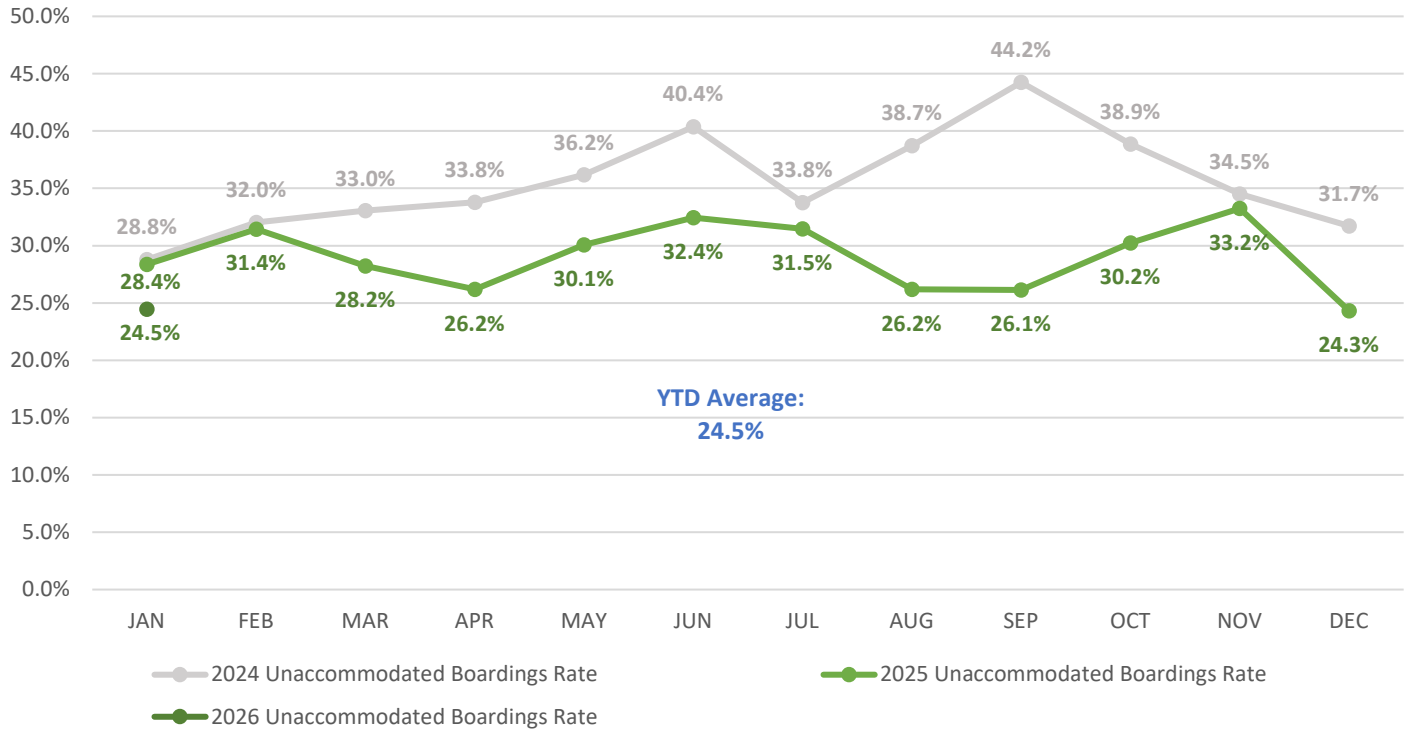
On Demand Average Difference in Requested Trip Time vs. Booked Trip Time



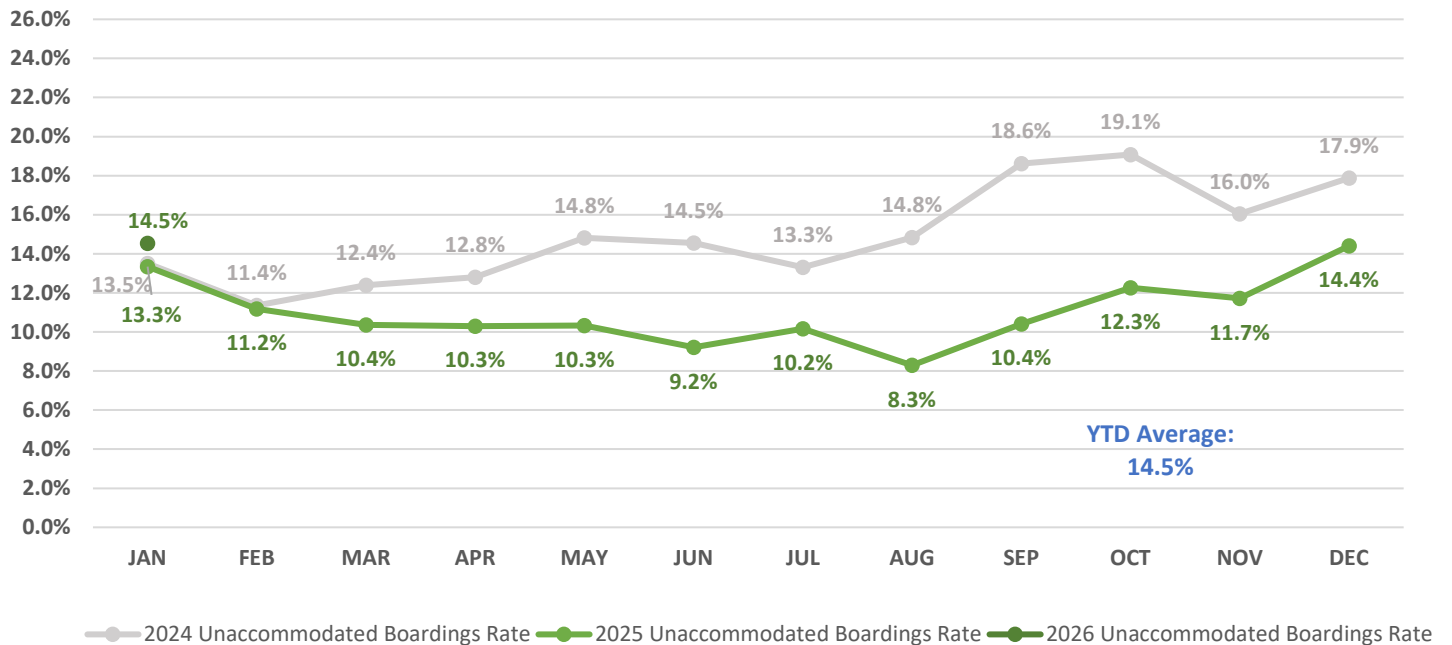
On Demand Specialized Average Difference in Requested Trip Time vs. Booked Trip Time

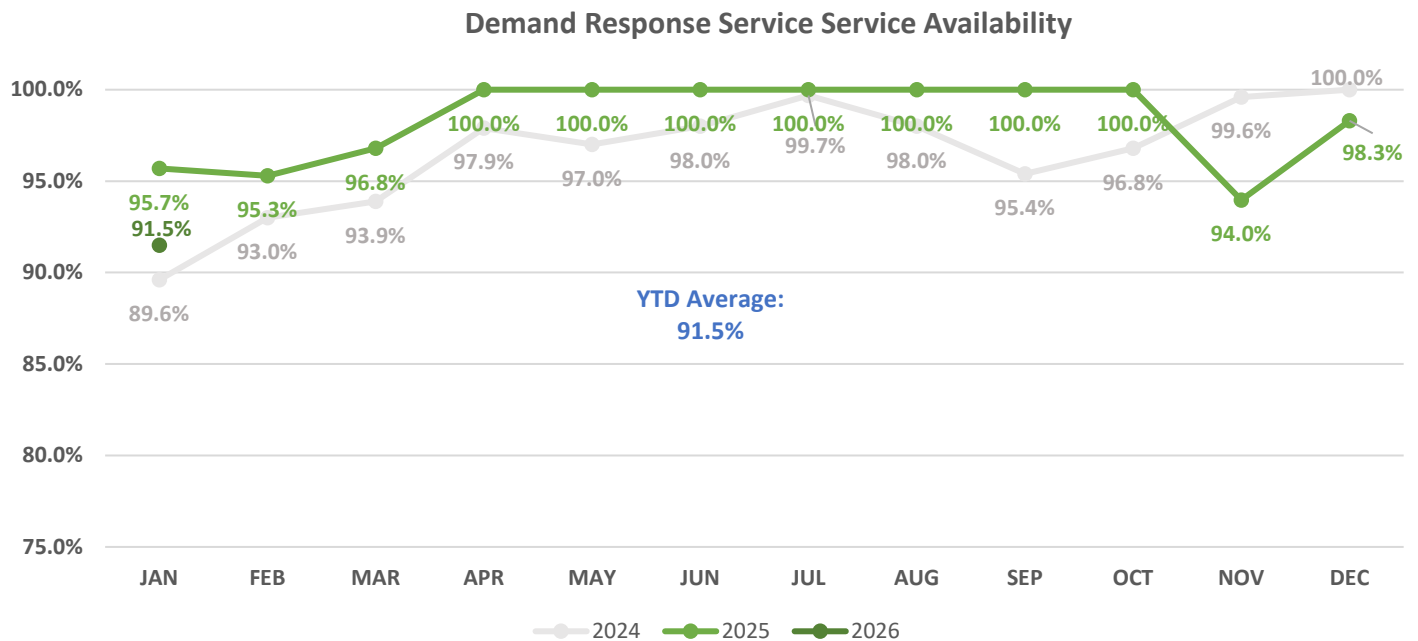


On Demand Unaccommodated Boardings Rate



On Demand Specialized Service Unaccommodated Boardings Rate





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 variance between requested and actual booked pick-up time in January for customers registered with specialized transit was 15.1 minutes, and 19.2 minutes for other On Demand boardings.

These increases are attributed to service availability challenges resulting in lower service capacity during the month.

Unaccommodated Rate

The unaccommodated rate in January 2026 for customers registered with specialized transit was 24 per cent, or seven per cent lower than last year, 14 per cent for other On Demand requests, or a 14 per cent improvement over last year.

Service Availability

Service availability for January 2026 was 91.5 per cent, resulting in less daily capacity for customer trips.

The significantly lower Service Availability continues to be attributed to unplanned vehicle maintenance.

Action Plan

The continued low Service Availability is impacting OTP and unaccommodated rates. Service management actions to mitigate impacts to customers have included re-routing vehicles and adding additional trips to vehicles, result in longer travel times and delayed pick-ups for some customers.

DRT is working closely and monitoring the action plan implemented by the contracted service provider to reverse the current fleet challenge.

Updates

1. Follow-up to On Demand scheduling platform outage

Overnight on October 20th, 2025, Amazon Web Services (AWS) experienced an unprecedented worldwide system outage, impacting organizations around the globe. Locally, this outage directly impacted the On Demand platform, and the DRT service provider Via, which leverages AWS to support their data and systems. By mid-morning, the entirety of the data and systems crashed, leaving DRT unable to complete trips due to lack of access to data regarding customers, contact information, travel plans or customers transported earlier in the day.

It was an unprecedented outage for a system that provides 99.9% uptime across the globe. Regardless, the outage left DRT without any customer and service information for booked trips.

Via has implemented the following actions since the AWS outage to mitigate their risk of a future outage.

- System resilience improvements, including additional monitoring, a more distributed server approach, and ongoing quality improvements.

DRT has implemented the following operational enhancements.

- Prior to the start of the service day, staff upload all planned customer trips inclusive of the customer name and contact information, pick-up location and time, drop-off location and time.
- In the event of a systems outage, implementing a manual processes to deliver pre-booked trips. Where possible, real-time trip requests received from customers by telephone may be able to be accommodated.

2. New On Demand Optimization to enhance capacity and customer experience

Optimization allows the On Demand platform to organize planned trips within vehicle capacity, maximizing efficiencies resulting in capacity to schedule more customer trips, particularly real-time trip requests. The optimization process will also provide customers time to check the Via app to confirm their planned rides for the next day.

The optimization process will require DRT to pause new trip requests for a 60 minute period each day. The pause in accepting trip requests will be 17:30-18:30 hrs daily. This is typically the period of least trip request activity and enables DRT to validate the outcome of the optimization.

The customer communication campaign started in late February and will continue until the launch of the optimization process on March 14, 2026.



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2026-DRT-05
Date: March 4, 2026

Subject:

On Demand Service Delivery Parameters

Recommendation:

That the Transit Executive Committee recommends:

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Transit Executive Committee with an overview of On Demand objectives, policies, and parameters, and their impact to reliability and system capacity. The report highlights a number of configurable system parameters, and the impacts to service and customers when parameters are adjusted.

2. Background

- 2.1 Equity is the foundation for the delivery of public transit services. Barriers to accessing public transit should be removed and not created, and 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.
- 2.2 Since August 2014, DRT has operated a full fleet of accessible AODA-compliant conventional transit buses. Accessible features such as kneeling (bus lowers at its front right-hand corner), a fully extendable ramp at the bus front door, priority seating and reserved spaces for up to three mobility devices at the front of the bus, and automated bus stop announcements and displays. In 2025, DRT achieved a significant milestone with the completion of installation of accessible hard surfaced pads at all bus stops within the urban zones of the Region. These

transit accessibility improvements have enabled many people with disabilities to use scheduled bus service.

- 2.3 In 2020, DRT launched its On Demand Service as an extension of the scheduled service. It provided transit access for all residents of Durham by connecting low ridership zones in urban areas to the nearest bus routes, and curb-to-curb service in rural areas of the Region.
- 2.4 On Demand and Specialized services were amalgamated into a single demand response service in 2023, adopting On Demand as the name for the co-mingled service. The amalgamated On Demand service has enabled DRT to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the service by using a common pool of resources (drivers and vehicles) and a single and modern demand response system platform.
- 2.5 The current objectives of the On Demand service are to provide public access to transit services from all areas of the Region of Durham where scheduled service is not available or not operating, to provide service for customers registered with specialized transit, and to maintain service reliability while maximizing the number of customers trips within allocated resources.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 Report #2020-DRT-12 DRT Rural Review, where TEC approved the following.
 - a. Implement a new On Demand technology platform to support the scheduling and dispatching of both Specialized transit and On-Demand trips;
 - b. Combine the delivery of On-Demand and Specialized transit based on their complementary delivery model; and
 - c. Use DRT branded vehicles and uniformed operators/drivers for On-Demand.
- 3.2 Report #2021-DRT-25 Demand Responsive Services, where TEC approved the following.
 - a. Integrate Specialized and On-Demand transit services into a single On-Demand service;
 - b. Improve the integration of all DRT services towards a “one DRT” customer experience; and
 - c. Implement 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.
- 3.4 Report #2025-DRT-06 Changes to On Demand Booking Standards, where TEC approved the following.

- a. Adjust booking window to four days for customers eligible for specialized transit, with a three day booking window when all customers can book trips through the On Demand app;
- b. Adjust booking window to three days for On Demand customers;
- c. subscription trips up to 40 per cent of service capacity, including a minimum 25 per cent for customers eligible for specialized trips; and

4. Discussion

- 4.1 On a monthly basis, DRT On Demand delivers approximately 30,000 customer trips, including 900 to 1,000 trips on weekdays.
- 4.2 Regular feedback from customers regarding the delivery of On Demand service can be categorized into three categories.
 - a. Booking trips at the times requested.
 - b. Late pick up or drop off, and cancelled trips.
 - c. Dynamics of trips such as duration of trips, shared rides, indirect travel, and integrated trips.
- 4.3 The current On Demand service delivery model integrates various policies, system parameters, and operational requirements such as the following.
 - a. On Demand is a shared ride service, with multiple trips assigned to a vehicle.
 - b. Service performance is influenced by various system parameters, such as resources, service area coverage, maximum customers travel time, dwell times at pick-up and drop-off, vehicle wait time for customers to arrive
 - c. Service performance is also influenced by unplanned issues beyond the control of DRT, such as traffic conditions and customer behaviours (i.e. actual time to board, being late, no shows and late cancellations).
- 4.4 DRT can adjust policies and configure some system parameters, each of which impact the capacity and reliability of the service. For example, configurable parameters can be adjusted to improve the reliability of the service such as on-time performance, travel times, directness of trips, and dwell times, but the outcome will be lower capacity and less customer trips delivered. Similarly, parameters can be adjusted to increase capacity for more trips, but the outcome will be reduced reliability of the service. DRT experienced this issue firsthand in November 2024, when parameters were adjusted to maximize the number of customer trips. However, the outcome was a significant impact to service reliability, specifically trips were operating very late, and for January 2025, the changes were reversed to improve reliability but resulted in lower capacity and number of customer trips delivered.
- 4.5 DRT uses the Via platform to manage On Demand services. The system manages customer profiles, matches customer trip requests to vehicles, maximizes network effectiveness and efficiencies, and provides real-time service information to customers and staff. The system includes several configurable

parameters to adjust to business requirements, such as the parameters listed above, as well as examples listed below.

- a. Specify pick-up and drop-off locations to ensure vehicles can safely access locations.
- b. Maximum capacity for each vehicle.
- c. Maximum length and time of a customer trip.
- d. Optimizing system capacity by organizing and re-organizing booked rides and vehicles in real time without impacting scheduled customer trips.

These are generally global parameters and are standard across the system. There are other parameters, such as dwell time, that are configured based on the customer; customers with a disability and registered with specialized transit, and other customers.

- 4.6 One of the configurable system parameters is dwell time, or time a vehicle holds at each customer's pick-up and drop-off location to enable the customer to board the vehicle. It's a global parameter, with one duration for customers registered with specialized transit, and another for other customers. Increasing dwell times provide more time to board the vehicle; however, the result is less capacity for customer trips. Reducing dwell time increases capacity for more customer trips but may not provide adequate time for the customer to board resulting in trips operating late.
- 4.7 Another configurable parameter is maximum time a customer spends riding on the vehicle. When On Demand was launched, DRT maintained the long-standing maximum ride time policy of the former shared-ride Specialized Transit; customers were expected to be able to ride in a vehicle for 90 minutes. As a shared ride service, the On Demand platform uses the maximum 90-minute ride time when scheduling multiple trips, and many customers do not receive a direct ride. For example, some customers may travel east before heading west towards their destination. Generally, shorter trips tend to be more direct than longer distance trips.
- 4.8 Based on DRT's current service model, adjusting parameters to add one additional minute to planned customer trips, which could include dwell time, would result in a reduction of 90-100 customer trips per week, or 4,500 – 5,000 customer trips per a year.
- 4.9 Although complaints about ridesharing declined by 61 per cent between 2024 and 2025 as customers likely became more familiar with the On Demand service, customers continue to share that they feel there are too many customers in a single vehicle. If DRT was to reduce vehicle capacity by one seat, there would be less capacity for ridesharing, resulting in approximately 250 less customer trips each weekday, or approximately 60,000 less customer trips per year.

- 4.10 In 2016 DRT launched integrated trips, sometimes referred to as the “Family of Services” model. Some customers who are eligible for specialized transit have the abilities to use the regular scheduled bus service for a part of or their full trip. In 2025, 48 unique customers completed over 1,500 integrated trips. When these customers used the schedule service instead of On Demand, capacity was available for other customers with disabilities who are unable to use the scheduled service. It’s estimated that in 2025, almost 2,000 additional customer trips could have been delivered if all active eligible customers had booked integrated trips. By leveraging all available accessible transit vehicles to deliver trips, DRT can better meet the travel needs of more customers using the same level of resources. For On Demand, this would also reduce the unaccommodated rate for the On Demand service.

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. Connected and Vibrant Communities
- C3. Improve public transit system connectivity, reliability, and competitiveness.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 There are several policy and configurable system parameters that impact overall On Demand service capacity, reliability, and customer satisfaction. Some policies or parameters may result in a positive customer experience, such as being picked up or dropped off as scheduled, but another customer may have a negative experience such as being unable to book a trip because capacity is not available.
- 6.2 DRT is actively leveraging the system/platform solutions to improve capacity and reliability, and engaging with customers to encourage more integrated trips, where appropriate, to maximize the efficient use of accessible vehicle capacity across the transit network.
- 6.3 While customer demand continues to exceed capacity, the On Demand service model is stable and generally achieving current objectives. However, as part of DRT’s commitment to continuous improvement, a thorough examination of the On Demand is appropriate in consideration of the many enhancements implemented over the past five years. This work would need to consider the state of demand responsive services and best practice adopted internationally, effectiveness of in DRT’s use of the system/platform, confirming or adjusting the objectives for the On Demand service, and sustainability considerations.
- 6.4 In 2027, DRT is planning a detailed review of the On Demand Service, with the intention to recommend to the Transit Executive Committee changes and/or adjustments for implementation in 2028.

For additional information, contact: Anthony Pezzetti, Deputy General Manager Operations.

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



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2026-DRT-06
Date: March 4, 2026

Subject:

Driving Durham Five-Year Service Strategy (2026-2030)

Recommendation:

That the Transit Executive Committee recommends

That the *Driving Durham: Durham Region Transit Service Strategy (2026-2030)* be endorsed.

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement from the Transit Executive Committee (TEC) to adopt *Driving Durham: Durham Region Transit Service Strategy (2026-2030)*, which will guide the continued evolution of the DRT network through the next five years. Elements of the strategy will be implemented accordingly, pending the approval of annual operating and capital budgets.

2. Background

- 2.1 Since 2022, DRT Service Planning has been guided by *The Route Ahead*, a three-year service strategy intended to influence transit services during the pandemic recovery period (2023-2025). Ridership dropped significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, and *The Route Ahead* strategy aimed to rebuild ridership while responding to new travel behaviours during the various phases of recovery from the pandemic.
- 2.2 *The Route Ahead* strategy has resulted in service improvements across the network included the following.
- Frequency improvements on major corridors.

- Expanded access to recreational opportunities including Rouge National Urban Park, trailheads in the Region, and the Pickering and Ajax waterfronts.
- Enhanced service equity leveraging new Social Equity Guidelines.
- Implemented overnight service on the Highway 2 and Simcoe Street corridors to provide 24/7 coverage.
- Continued adjusting service delivery models to transition from On Demand to Scheduled service based on ridership levels.
- Completed Local Area Transit Plans in multiple communities to inform future transit service configurations.
- Implemented the OneFare program, removing double fares when transferring between the TTC and DRT.
- Installing bike racks at busy stops and strategic locations to improve connections between transit and active transportation.
- Completed the hard-surfacing of all bus stops in the urban areas of Durham to improve accessibility and promote a more comfortable and convenient transit experience for all customers.
- Collaborated with municipalities to improve pedestrian connections to bus stops
- Collaborated with Regional and municipal partners and Metrolinx on the Lakeshore East GO extension and DSBRT programs.

2.3 Further, DRT ridership has exceeded expectations of *The Route Ahead*, greenfield development has exceeded what was expected back in 2022, especially in the Seaton area of Pickering and North Oshawa, and scheduled services have replaced On Demand during weekday peak periods in almost all of the Region's urban areas.

2.4 Sustaining ridership growth over the coming years will depend on continued operating and capital investment. The strategy's goals of service expansion to new growth areas, and frequency improvements on major corridors to meet growing demand from intensification and growth, require fleet and related facility expansions. All the service initiatives described in the plan require growth in revenue service hours.

2.5 Demand for public transit service from residents, businesses and institutions, continues to exceed DRT's capacity. Transit resources continue to be allocated to areas of greatest demand across the Region.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

3.1 #2021-DRT-20, The Route Ahead, Durham Region Transit 2022-2025 Service Strategy.

In September 2021, TEC approved the implementation of *The Route Ahead*, guiding service planning over a three-year period during the later stages of pandemic recovery.

3.2 #2023-DRT-05, Transit Service and Financing Strategy (2023-2032).

In February 2023, TEC and Regional Council approved a 10-year Service and Financing Strategy, which identified a long-term need for sustained growth in DRT service hours to meet increasing demand and to achieve service levels more consistent with the Region's comparators in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. This includes a 127 percent increase in revenue services and significant capital investments for fleet growth and electrification.

3.3 #2023-DRT-21, Stations, Terminals, and Hubs Strategy.

In October 2023, TEC received DRT's strategy for stations, terminals and hubs as part of the transit network. These facilities support passenger journeys for DRT's service delivery models (scheduled service and On Demand) and provide operational facilities to enable growth as the Region's urban areas expand.

4. Discussion

- 4.1 Consistent with the service hour and capital investments outlined in the Transit Service and Financing Strategy, DRT service is expected to grow significantly over the next five years. The *Driving Durham* strategy directs that growth to meet a range of objectives including meeting latent demand for transit service in locations and at times when it does not currently operate, service improvements to drive ridership growth on major corridors, and adjusting service models for cost-efficiency.
- 4.2 Services are generally planned to achieve the greatest benefit to transit customers and to the Region. In most cases the benefits are realized by maximizing productivity and allocating resources to areas of greatest ridership demand. Prioritizing fast and frequent service on major roads, connecting to trip generators like major employers and large campuses, and integrating with Regional Transit connections supports this plan.
- 4.3 Some DRT services are delivered in consideration of their importance to the wider community. This may include services in rural areas and overnight services, which are often planned to make efficient use of operator and vehicle resources when they are available.
- 4.4 The beneficiaries of improved transit service extend beyond those riding public transit; the traveling public at large who benefit from congestion relief, employers are able to recruit from a larger pool of potential workers living farther from their business, families can forego purchasing a second or third vehicle, and the community well-being benefits when seniors can age-in-place, pollution is reduced by removing cars from the road, and barriers to health and social services are reduced.
- 4.5 DRT services are planned and delivered based on established Service Guidelines (Appendix 1). These guidelines ensure consistency across the Region in route

planning, bus stops, routes, and route schedules.

DRT's ridership productivity guideline has been revised to ensure consistent application to all regular urban routes, with a separate productivity guideline for rural routes and overnight services.

The proximity guideline influences bus stop placement and routing choices, and ensures that as many dwellings and employers as practical are within a reasonable walk of a bus stop. The guideline has been revised to promote efficient delivery of the shared-ride On Demand service. Specifically, the maximum distance a customer is required to walk to reach an On Demand pickup point has increased to 1,000 metres kilometer from 800 metres. This update is planned to increase trip pooling (increase average number of customer in a vehicle) resulting in improved use of resources an more customer trips delivered. The proximity standard of 1,250 metres overnight further promotes increased trip pooling and is consistent with other GTHA agencies operating overnight services, including the TTC.

4.6 DRT's service strategies are based on five pillars:

- a. Availability: customers throughout the Region should have access to service throughout the entire day.
- b. Innovation: customer experience should be enhanced by modern tools and technology.
- c. Reliability: service should be frequent, delivered as scheduled, and respond to evolving travel patterns.
- d. Safety: customer and employee safety should be the top priority.
- e. Growth: service should be available when residents move into new communities to build transit-friendly habits.

4.7 *Driving Durham* is responsive to the travel needs of various customer groups summarized below.

- a. Post-secondary students and staff: Campuses in Durham and Scarborough are well-served by the current network, located on main corridors where DRT delivers frequent service, seven days a week. This customer market is subject to external influences beyond DRT's control, such as recent federal immigration policy changes. However, despite fluctuations in recent years, this remains a strong and significant customer group for DRT.
- b. Commuters between Durham and Downtown Toronto: The number of customers connecting to GO Transit, whether for peak-hour commuting, weeknight and weekend entertainment, or a variety of other purposes, is a strong and reliable customer market. As parking both in Downtown Toronto and at Durham-area GO Stations becomes more scarce, and large employers in the city centre announce "return-to-office" plans, more customers are expected to use the GO Rail network with a corresponding increase to public transit travel for their first-mile, last-mile transportation needs.

- c. Youth: Youth use DRT to get to/from their school, but most of their travel is for other purposes such as work and social engagements. Providing a positive transit experience for youth customers can be an important factor in developing transit-focused travel behaviours later in life.
- d. Seniors: Seniors are currently the smallest customer demographic using DRT services, and their travel needs are often different from other groups. For example. They may have more flexible schedules and can travel outside peak commuter periods, they may be less concerned with the directness or speed of transit trips, and they may be more sensitive to walking distances.
- e. At risk residents: Building on DRT's Social Equity Guidelines and the success of programs such as the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program and the Transit Assistance Program (TAP), DRT continues to emphasize accessibility and inclusion across the transit network.
- f. Customers travelling Durham Region: The largest market for DRT continues to be customers travelling within the Region, including trips to work, shopping, leisure and recreation, and medical and other appointments. DRT's grid network is designed to enable convenient travel anywhere within the Region.

4.8 The *Driving Durham* strategy is based on layers of service operating at different levels.

- a. Inter-regional travel is generally operated by GO Transit, connecting multiple municipalities throughout the GTHA and beyond. Regional connections to the GO Train are an important part of the DRT network.
- b. Frequent transit corridors such as the Durham Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor and Simcoe Street Corridor in Oshawa are the focus for frequency improvements. These corridors form a grid across the Region to which customers can quickly connect to other bus routes and the On Demand service.
- c. Routes on the DRT scheduled network operate in urban areas where productive service can be sustained every 30 minutes or better, and every 90 minutes or better in rural areas. These routes connect customers with a range of destinations including subdivisions and employment areas that are not located along Frequent Corridors.
- d. On Demand is available where and when scheduled service does not operate, in areas of low ridership across the Region, including rural areas, and for customers registered with specialized transit. The service connects customers to nearby scheduled bus routes at stops and terminals in the urban areas, and to nearby communities in rural areas.
- e. Active transportation facilities are important to the transit network; transit customers start and end their trips by walking or rolling. DRT coordinates closely with municipal and regional partners to promote a strong pedestrian network and cycling connections to transit service.

4.9 *Driving Durham* includes four categories of initiatives which are summarized below.

- a. Expanding and enhancing the transit network: Replacing one-way loops with two-way service and operating a consistent service seven days a week. Consistent and easy-to-understand service is important for generating and sustaining ridership. Eliminating one-way loops provides customers a more direct trip without needing them to “take the long way around.” This initiative will also consider a pilot for Community Connectors, an off-peak limited service when regular scheduled routes are not operating.
 - b. Extending routes to residential and industrial growth areas: Route extensions and new routes are planned where the urban boundary is expanding most quickly throughout the lakeshore communities, to serve new residential and commercial developments.
 - c. Building a more frequent and available network: Adding service to more times of day such as weekday midday, evenings and on weekends, and adding more trips on routes that operate along Frequent Corridors to meet existing demand and encourage new customers onto transit.
 - d. Strengthening the On Demand service: Evolving the service to improve integration with the scheduled network, assigning resources strategically to ensure consistency for customers, and evolving On Demand service to balance customer requirements with available resources.
- 4.10 Reflecting the pace at which development timelines can change, this five-year strategy will be reviewed in its third year (2028) to validate that routing and service level assumptions continue to be relevant, and where necessary consider adjustments based on the realities at that time. Throughout the life of the plan, elements will be implemented or adjusted based on how the road network advances, progress of residential and commercial development, feedback from customers and stakeholders, and unplanned situations or conditions that may emerge. Progress will be reported through the annual business plan and budget process.

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. Connected and Vibrant Communities
 - Improve public transit system connectivity, reliability, and competitiveness
 - b. Healthy people, Caring Communities
 - Provide services for seniors and work with community partners to support aging in place.
 - c. Resilient Local Economies
 - Attract and retain quality employers that strengthen key economic sectors, including energy and technology.
 - Support the growth of new business startups and small to medium local businesses.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Service Strategy (2026-2030) will inform the planning and implementation of transit services over the coming years to meet the diverse needs of Durham residents, workers, and visitors. Planning is consistent with the 10-year Service and Financing Strategy (2023-2032) and supports robust and efficient ridership growth throughout the Region.
- 6.2 For additional information, contact: Anthony Pezzetti, Deputy General Manager Operations, and Jack Phelan, Manager Transit Policy and Planning.

7. Attachments

Attachment #1: The Service Strategy (2026-2030)

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

Driving Durham

Durham Region Transit (DRT)

Service Strategy 2026 to 2030

Note to the reader: Document structure notes are shown in Word comments, usually indicating content that will be shown in sidebars and info boxes. Graphs and maps to be updated for consistent style in the final version. Visuals (e.g., examples of queue jump lanes) to be added in final version. Figures' (graphs, maps, etc.) captions will be added in final versions. Graphs will be styled to match the rest of the document. Maps will be finalized.

Durham Region Transit's (DRT) Vision, Mission, Principles and Values

Vision

The public chooses DRT service because it is convenient and meets their mobility needs.

Mission

To deliver efficient and effective mobility solutions across the Region of Durham in the most sustainable way possible.

Principles

- Every customer trip counts.
- We provide value to customers, our stakeholders, and our community.
- We provide customer-centric integrated services that enable independent, spontaneous and worry-free travel.
- We are accountable for decisions and transparent in sharing successes and failures.
- We mitigate the environmental impact of our operations.

Values

Committed to serving our local communities, DRT shares the core values outlined by the Region:

- **Accountable:** We are accountable to community members and continue to build trust by demonstrating efficiency, transparency, and data-informed decision-making.
- **Caring:** We are caring, compassionate, and thoughtful. We apply a client-centred and sustainable approach to serving community needs.
- **Collaborative:** We are collaborative and recognize the importance of working together and engaging the community to achieve a shared vision for the future.
- **Inclusive:** We are inclusive and work to ensure that everything we do is accessible, equitable, and fair. We aim to create a welcoming environment for all.
- **Innovative:** We are innovative and adaptable to meet community needs. We modernize, continuously improve, and strive for excellence in all that we do

The Land on which we operate

Durham Region Transit (DRT) acknowledges the Indigenous Peoples who have long called this region home. We recognize and respect the rights of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg as the signatory nations to the Williams Treaties of 1923, and the role of the Haudenosaunee and Wendat in the region's history. Thoughtful transportation planning actively strengthens long-term sustainability and equitable access across the Region.. DRT is committed to working with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities as transit services grows and evolves across Durham Region.

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Setting the stage

Durham Region Transit in 2025

Across Durham Region's 2,500 square kilometres and serving 780,000 residents, DRT operates an integrated network included scheduled and demand response services. Demand response transit is provided through the On Demand service, which is available to eligible customers registered with specialized transit, and for other customers in when and where scheduled transit does not operate, including rural areas.

In 2025, DRT operated approximately 615,000 hours of fixed-route service and 200,000 hours of On Demand service. A transit fleet of 200 conventional buses, including the first six battery-electric buses and eight 18-metre articulated vehicles, deliver services across 36 routes, with monthly ridership of 900,000 to 1.2 million customers. On Demand service carries an additional 25,000 – 30,000 customers each month. Transit ridership exceeded pre-pandemic levels by 2024, setting a new ridership record of 13.1 million annual rides.

As one of several transit agencies in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), DRT connects with Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), York Region Transit (YRT), and regional GO Transit services. The Ministry of Transportation OneFare program, which provides customers with free transfers between DRT and other GTHA systems, enhances transit affordability for affected residents. In September 2025, more than 75,000 DRT trips began on another transit system through OneFare.

Service reliability and customer experience continue to strengthen across the system. In 2025, overall customer satisfaction is strong, with 70 per cent of riders reporting that they are satisfied with DRT's services. On-time performance (OTP) —a key driver of customer satisfaction—has reached approximately 72.5 per cent. This reflects ongoing improvements and highlights the need for continued investment in service reliability and transit priority measures to reach DRT's system-wide OTP target of 80 per cent. These indicators demonstrate solid progress and provide a foundation for the service and infrastructure enhancements outlined in this strategy. The Regional transit mode share (DRT and GO) has remained stagnant for many years, at an estimated eight to ten per cent.

The next five years

Durham Region is expected to grow by 15 per cent between 2025 and 2030, driven by both new greenfield development and intensification within existing urban areas. In consideration of the strong ridership recovery after the pandemic and Regional growth projections, sustained investment in DRT service is an opportunity for the Region to significantly enhance transit ridership towards the transit modal share objectives outlined in the Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The TMP 2031 transit modal share targets are 20 per cent for urban growth centres and rapid transit corridors, 12 per cent in existing urban areas of south Durham, 15 per cent in new urban areas of south Durham, and seven per cent in the rest of Durham.

Many DRT routes are already positioned to meet rising demand. Over the next five years, they will be supplemented by:

- New routes and extensions to emerging communities,
- Increased service frequencies on key corridors,
- Service adjustments in response to changing travel demand, customer feedback, and infrastructure investment,
- Enhancements to Regional Transit services.

Despite this strong foundation, sustained investment in both service and infrastructure will be required to meet this opportunity.

Compared to neighbouring agencies in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and beyond, the level of service operated by DRT per resident has historically been low. Transit connects people with jobs, education, and services, and generates economic and social benefits throughout the Region. Record-setting levels of service growth in 2023 - 2025 has ensured the gap between DRT and its peers has not grown. *Driving Durham* is consistent with the investment targets in 10-year Transit Service and Financing Strategy.

The strength of a transit network is a function of where service operates, and how often. The network must connect residents, workers and visitors with their destinations conveniently and efficiently. Since 2022, DRT service planning has been guided by *The Route Ahead*, a service plan that laid a strong foundation for the future following the COVID-19 pandemic. This strength of the foundation includes the intra-regional routes serving long-distances across multiple municipalities, high-volume corridors, and intersecting neighbourhood and employment-area routes that feed these higher-volume corridors.

Driving Durham provides a blueprint for how the DRT network will grow through 2030, including the following key elements.

- Expanding scheduled service into new growth areas,
- Increasing frequency on major routes to meet and drive demand,
- Redeploying On Demand resources where scheduled service is introduced,
- Evolving rural service through a mix of On Demand and strategic scheduled trips,
- Enhancing customer experience through technology upgrades, transit priority measures, and stop/terminal improvements,
- Reducing barriers to transit use through integrated services and a continued focus on accessibility.

While this strategy outlines how DRT will evolve over the next five years, circumstances can change. Adjustments to this strategy will be incorporated in response to development patterns, resources, ridership, and customer and stakeholder feedback. DRT is committed to listening to the community and adapting services within the Service Guidelines outlined in Appendix 1.

A strong foundation: *The Route Ahead 2022 - 2025*

Enabled by record investments in transit service, *The Route Ahead* introduced service enhancements that expanded access and laid the foundation for a strong long-term network. This network will continue to evolve along with Durham Region in a consistent and predictable fashion and support the Region's goals of a higher transit mode share. Key network strengths are summarized below.

Consistent 30-minute-or-better service in all urban areas

This service level enables spontaneous, flexible travel and supports ridership growth—particularly among riders choosing between multiple modes. While some agencies achieve this standard during select periods of the day, few in the GTHA apply it across all service periods.

24-hour service in Durham’s urban areas

DRT is one of the only GTHA systems offering around-the-clock service, seven days a week. This supports night-shift workers, the night-time economy, and provides riders with confidence that they will not “miss the last bus”—a key factor in adopting a transit-oriented lifestyle.

Early service to new growth areas

Providing transit early helps establish sustainable travel habits and reduces dependence on multiple vehicles. Challenges experienced in new subdivisions and growth areas include incomplete road networks, active construction, and missing pedestrian connections. DRT continues to work with regional and municipal partners to address these barriers and deliver service as early as possible. On Demand is often critical to overcoming these barriers in the early stages of occupancy.

Region-wide service coverage, including rural areas

Through its integrated Scheduled and On Demand network, DRT provides service to every corner of Durham Region. This ensures residents have access to transit regardless of where they live or work.

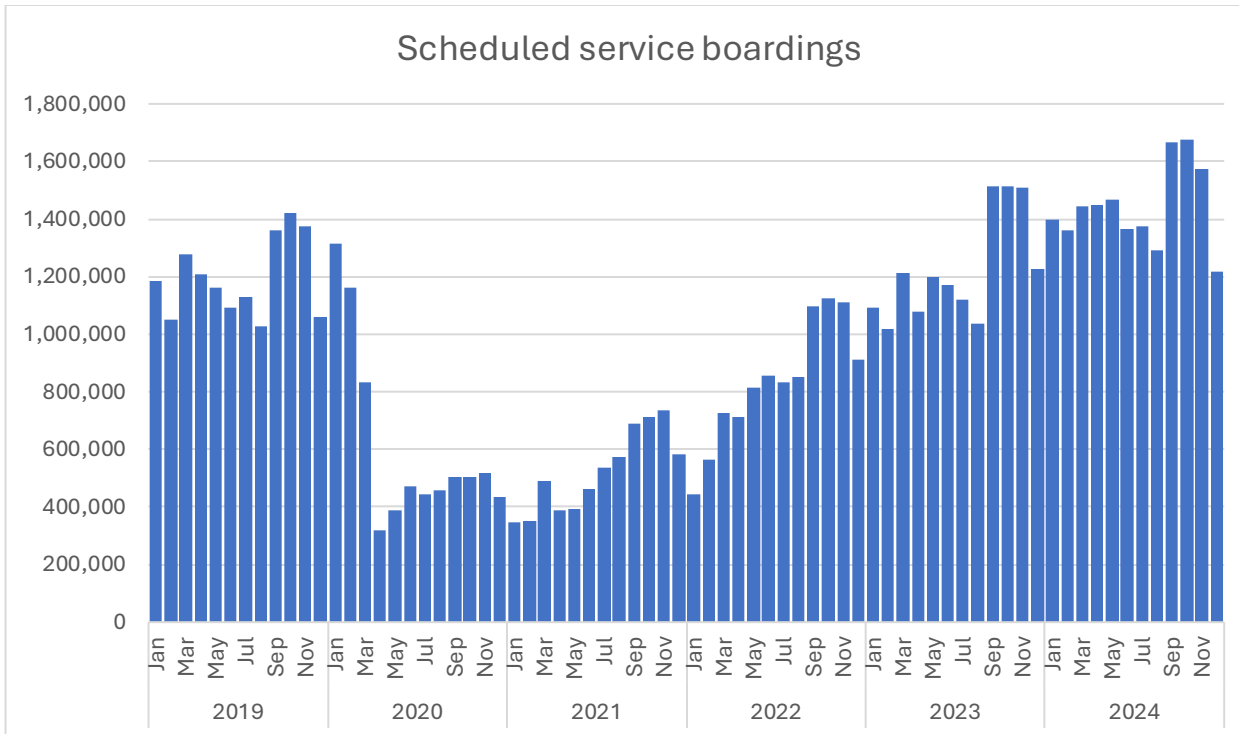
Recent ridership trends

From record boardings in 2019 and a strong start to 2020, ridership fell sharply during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, declining by 56 per cent. By 2024, DRT had not only recovered but exceeded pre-pandemic levels, recording the highest annual ridership in its history.

This growth reflects a combination of factors: customers returning to in-person work, school, and activities; a growing population; and targeted service improvements that have made transit more convenient and reliable. As DRT has now surpassed 2019 boardings, the rate of ridership growth is stabilizing, with recent trends pointing toward more modest, steady increases driven by population growth and incremental service enhancements.

Ridership patterns in 2025 also highlight the influence of broader provincial and national trends. Federal immigration policy changes have contributed to lower international student enrollment, coinciding with a decline in U-Pass ridership. At the same time, return-to-office initiatives are generating increased travel to GO Transit for trips toward Toronto. Despite these short-term fluctuations, ongoing service investment and continued population growth point to long-term ridership gains across the network.

Chart X: Scheduled service boardings between 2019 through 2025



The need for continued service enhancements

Sustaining ridership growth and increasing the share of trips made by transit will require the continued service and capital investments outlined in the Region’s DRT 10-Year Transit Service and Financing Strategy. This includes supporting growth from new urban development at the edges of the built-up area, accommodating intensification that increases demand on existing services, and expanding service to advance broader Regional goals of shifting more trips to transit.

Although it is often assumed that suburban or lower-density areas cannot support strong transit, industry experience—particularly in the GTHA—demonstrates the opposite. Examples include Toronto’s shift to a frequent suburban grid in the 1960s; Brampton Transit’s substantial frequency improvements since the early 2000s; and DRT’s own minimum headway standards introduced post pandemic. Success in these environments depends on several key elements:

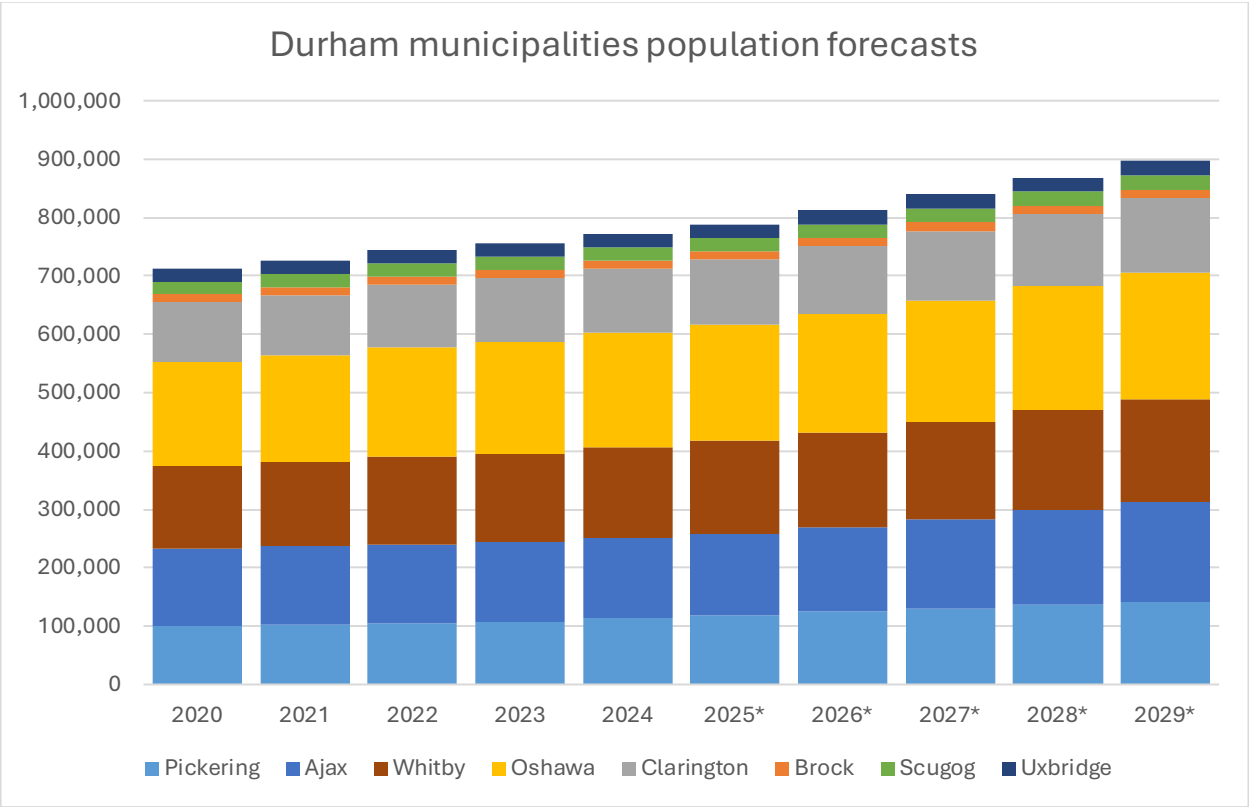
- Travel times that are reasonably competitive with driving.
- Reliable, consistent service throughout the day.
- Safe, connected sidewalks and pathways that support access to transit stops.

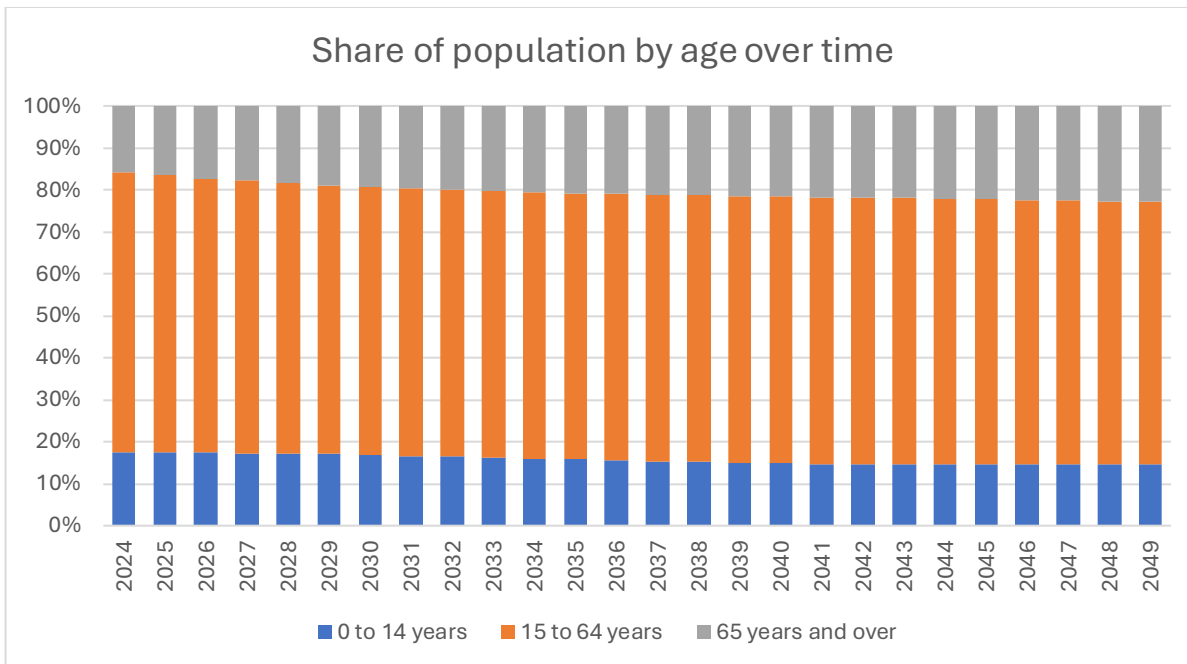
Conversely, transit systems across North America show that stagnating or declining service can trigger a cycle of reduced access, falling ridership, and further service cuts.

DRT has established a strong foundation of base service on which to continue building. The network will grow based on feedback from customers and stakeholders, responding to emerging travel needs, and expanding the frequency, availability, and effectiveness of transit throughout the Region.

To ensure that service improvements remain responsive, transparent, and accountable, DRT will report on system performance annually through the regular reporting to the Transit Executive Committee and through Region’s annual business plans and budget process. Each year, DRT publishes key performance indicators—including ridership trends, productivity, on-time performance, customer experience metrics, and progress toward service guideline compliance—and identify where adjustments are needed. This ongoing reporting cycle ensures that customers and stakeholders have a clear understanding of how the network is performing, where resources are best deployed, and how investments contribute to long-term transit outcomes.

Chart #X: Population forecast for Durham municipalities





Supporting Regional plans

DRT will continue to support initiatives for a more compact, transit-friendly Region, including the following:

- Durham Region’s Transportation Master Plan.
- Durham Region’s Strategic Plan.
- The Official Plans of Durham’s eight municipalities.
- Metrolinx’s 2041 Regional Transportation Plan.
- Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.
- Durham Region Corporate Climate Change Action Plan.
- Durham Community Energy Plan.

Customer markets

Understanding DRT’s key customer segments helps to ensure that the network meets diverse mobility needs and that investments are targeted equitably and where they will have the greatest impact. Some groups identified in DRT’s Social Equity Guidelines are easy to segment (e.g., PRESTO data tells us the proportion of riders who are seniors), while others are more difficult to identify (e.g., data on sole-parent families and newcomers to Canada is not available at a scale useful for planning specific routes). The following summarizes the major markets represented in DRT’s ridership today. Percentages may add up to more than 100 per cent, due to overlap in the categories.

Post-secondary travel

The post-secondary student travel market makes up 30 percent of transit trips and is primarily comprised of U-Pass customers traveling to Durham College, Ontario Tech University and Trent University. DRT also carries

students to Centennial College’s Progress and Morningside campuses, the University of Toronto Scarborough, and through Regional connections to campuses across the GTHA.

This market is generally well served, as the major campuses are located along corridors with high all-day demand from a wide variety of customers—not just students. DRT works closely with local institutions to ensure access during class periods and exam schedules. The 2025 three-year U-Pass agreement also reflects a continued commitment to student mobility.

While this is one of DRT’s most important and stable customer groups, future demand will also be shaped by factors outside DRT’s control, such as enrollment trends, federal immigration policies affecting international students, and housing availability.

Travel between Durham and Toronto

Customers connecting to GO Transit—most travelling to downtown Toronto—account for 15 per cent of DRT trips. Although this is not the largest market it is among the most dependable: public transit accommodates upwards of 75 per cent of trips to downtown Toronto from Durham Region during weekday peak periods. GO Transit ridership on weekends is also hitting historic highs. More leisure trips into downtown Toronto are being accommodated on public transit.

There are various factors that influence a customer’s decision to use DRT to travel to, and from, the GO station rather than using a car. At the GO station, there may be issues with parking availability, it could be difficult navigating traffic in and out of the facility, and it may take longer to travel there by bus, compared to an automobile. The convenience of DRT services is also important. As parking availability diminishes at various stations, more train riders will consider DRT if service is operating where and when they need to travel.

The extension of the GO Transit Lakeshore East train service to Bowmanville will make local transit a more attractive option for accessing regional trains in Oshawa and Clarington. DRT services will be reconfigured to meet trains at the four planned stations. Like the existing network in Pickering, Ajax and Whitby, DRT service on major corridors will connect to the peak direction of GO Train travel. These changes may also create opportunities to reallocate some resources to improve local services.

While an important travel market for public transit, trips to downtown Toronto, whether by car or transit, only make up about six per cent of daily trips in Durham Region. To grow transit mode share meaningfully, DRT must focus on the variety of local trips within the Region. To serve both markets, DRT focuses GO-oriented travel onto main corridors, rather than on purpose-made, train-oriented commuter routes. This creates stronger performing routes, with greater demand that can support more frequent service. During peak periods, DRT routes are scheduled to connect with trains in the direction of the greatest travel, where possible. In most places this means bringing people to the train in the morning, though some routes do more to bring employees into the Region. Therefore, they are timed in the opposite direction.

Fare policies have a significant impact on cross-boundary and regional connections; needing to pay an additional fare to cross a municipal boundary or to connect from the train to a local bus discourage ridership and add complexity to the trip planning process for new customers. [Ontario’s One Fare Program](#) eliminates the need for customers to pay a double fare when transferring between the TTC and adjacent transit agencies. This provides more affordable and easy-to-understand travel options for customers. DRT looks forward to extending the One Fare funding agreement with the Province of Ontario beyond 2028.

Internal trips within Durham Region

Internal trips within Durham Region, not including post-secondary travel, represent 50 per cent of all DRT ridership.

A significant per centage of these trips are to and from work—with shopping, leisure, recreational, and appointments making up the rest. Because internal trips within the region are often shorter and face fewer traffic and parking constraints than longer trips, choices between transit and the car are more sensitive to transit service levels. People are generally more willing to plan longer trips in advance; accept waiting time at a bus stop if it will be only a small part of their overall trip; and value in-vehicle time on transit when it is long enough to be productive.

The transit system needs to support people to travel anywhere-to-anywhere. Driving Durham proposes investments providing frequent and available service on more corridors. These improvements will encourage customers to make local trips using transit within Durham Region and their local communities.

The emergence of new employment and retail areas, and growth in existing ones, presents both challenges and opportunities for ridership growth. Areas of the Region like the Pickering industrial area, the Salem Road corridor in Ajax, and the south Whitby/Oshawa industrial area are well-served by DRT. As with new residential developments on the periphery of the built-up area, scheduled services will be extended into newly developed employment areas when possible and when demand warrants.

Youth

Accounting for 10 per cent of transit trips, youth customers are an important growth market for DRT. Research shows that young people who have positive transit experiences are more likely to continue using transit as adults. By providing a network that is easy to navigate, reliable, and available across more times of day, DRT can meet the immediate needs of youth and contribute to shaping long-term travel behaviour.

Seniors

Senior customers represent five per cent of trips on the DRT network. As the Region's population ages and more residents age-in-place in their own homes and communal living arrangements in the community, senior travel is expected to increase. While many travel patterns mirror the general population, seniors may be more sensitive to walking distances, mobility barriers, and trip complexity. Many of these customers also benefit from more flexible schedules. In some cases, longer travel times, infrequent service, or more circuitous routing may be preferable if it reduces walking distance or the need to transfer.

Supporting at-risk residents

Approximately eight per cent of customers use the Transit Assistance Program (TAP), which provides reduced fares for residents receiving Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) benefits. Affordable transit helps ensure access to employment, healthcare, education, and essential services.

Consistent with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), DRT is committed to removing physical barriers that prevent Durham residents, workers, and visitors from accessing public transportation. DRT provides a hard surface at all bus stops and is working with stakeholders to address gaps in the accessible pedestrian network. All vehicles are low-floor and equipped with ramps, designated wheelchair spaces, and courtesy seating for customers with disabilities or limited mobility. All vehicles are also equipped with audible and visual route and next stop information, and the website and printed material meet AODA requirements.

New transit terminals and hubs will incorporate principles of universal design. For customers who cannot ride conventional service, On Demand will continue to offer mobility for eligible individuals. DRT's travel training program ensures anyone can get help learning their transit route. Through the implementation of Social Equity

Guidelines, and strong minimum service guidelines, DRT is committed to delivering a transit network that meets the varied needs of the community.

Services in Durham's villages and rural areas

Rural and village travel represents one per cent of DRT ridership, but these services provide an essential mobility option for residents with limited transportation choices, including seniors, workers, and students. Rural services also support tourism and outdoor recreation. DRT's Social Equity Guidelines place particular emphasis on two groups of travellers in these areas: those with reduced travel options, such as seniors who can no longer drive; and those seeking employment and educational opportunities.

Service levels in villages are designed to meet typical daily needs—accessing groceries, government services, medical appointments, social travel, and employment—with a focus on weekday travel and service from morning to evening. Given longer distances and lower ridership potential, rural services operate less frequently than those in urban areas. On Demand service provides first-mile/last-mile connections, and links rural residents to scheduled routes for longer trips.

Driving Durham: 2026 to 2030 Service Strategy

Pillars

The foundation of the service strategy is supported by five pillars: availability, innovation, reliability, safety and growth.

Availability

Transit is available where and when customers need it. A mix of scheduled and On Demand service provides access across all areas of Durham Region. Wait times will be reduced for transfers, On Demand pick ups, and GO Transit connections. Major corridors will operate at high enough frequencies that transit becomes an attractive choice for customers with multiple travel options.

Innovation

The ability to meet customers' evolving needs requires a combination of existing and new strategies.

DRT will continuously adapt its flexible service delivery models to meet new customer needs and travel patterns. Leveraging technological solutions will be critical for success, as will be increasing access of these solutions for all customers.

Technologies for analyzing service performance and optimizing the allocation of scarce resources are evolving rapidly. To get the most service for customers and to improve its reliability DRT will enhance its capacity and tools.

Reliability

Service will be planned so that customers can rely on reaching their destination on schedule.

Transit priority measures will improve reliability while decreasing travel time. Routes will be adjusted in response to growing congestion to support trips staying on schedule, and real-time service updates will inform customers when disruptions occur so they can make informed travel decisions.

Safety

Safety is central to each customer's journey, be it in a vehicle or at bus stops and terminals.

DRT will continue to improve customer safety through infrastructure design, training and collaboration with partners and stakeholders.

Growth

Durham Region's ongoing residential and employment growth requires transit to be a competitive mobility option. DRT will support new communities from day one through transit-first planning and will collaborate with municipal partners to support economic development and access to employment and recreation.

Service design elements

Direct routing

Direct routing minimizes deviations and keeps buses on straight, efficient paths between major destinations. This reduces overall travel time and supports a simple grid network in which most customers need only one transfer to complete a trip. While small deviations are sometimes necessary—to meet walking distance guidelines, access terminals, or avoid duplicating other routes—DRT will maximize direct routing wherever appropriate.

Frequent service

DRT designs routes which operate at a 30-minute or better frequency in the urban area, and more often along main regional travel corridors. DRT will operate more frequent services to address demand and to drive ridership.

Service is much more convenient when customers do not need to consult timetable and more reliable even when service disruptions occur.

Service there when you need to travel

DRT operates service 24 hours a day in the urban area and operates service late into the evening in rural areas. This ensures customers can rely on transit for all types of trips and helps build a culture of transit use across the Region.

Service design elements outside of DRT's control

A resilient transit network also depends on factors shaped by regional and municipal partners. DRT will collaborate closely with local governments, agencies, and developers to advance transit-supportive planning in the following areas.

Density

The Ontario Transit Supportive Guidelines recommends that 22 units per hectare, or 50 residents and jobs per hectare, as the minimum density at which a basic 20 to 30 minute bus service can be supported. While strong service can exist in lower-density areas, higher densities generally support greater ridership. DRT will promote transit-oriented development (TOD), especially around major transit station areas.

DRT will collaborate with local and regional groups to support and promote TOD and transit-friendly communities across the Region, including the major transit station areas.

Mixed use corridors

Corridors with a variety of destinations—jobs, schools, retail, health services, and housing—yield stronger ridership and support higher frequency. Route 901, for example, connects major destinations across Oshawa including post-secondary campuses, the Region's largest hospital, downtown Oshawa, employment areas, and a variety of housing types. It is one of DRT's highest-performing services.

Currently, GO stations within Durham are largely surrounded by parking, limiting their function as transit destinations. DRT will support municipal and Regional partners to advance important work in transforming GO stations into hubs and destinations.

Location of essential services and workplaces

Recent trends across Ontario have seen essential services—such as medical centres, senior’s residences, hospitals, and some major office-based workplaces—built or planned to be built on greenfield developments far from main transit corridors.

When major destinations are built far from main transit corridors, it decreases the attractiveness of public transit. This subjects transit users to long journey times, more transfers between vehicles, and limited schedules. Such developments increase the Region’s cost to provide transit. It requires additional operating (service hours and employees) and capital (buses and associated infrastructure) funding to serve a particular destination. This makes it more challenging for employers to attract employees who rely on public transit.

For transit to succeed, major destinations—such as health centres, commercial and industrial developments, schools, hospitals, senior’s residences, event venues, and shopping centres—need to be located centrally and on major corridors (where frequent transit service is operating). DRT will work with partners at the Region of Durham, local municipalities, and other stakeholders to encourage transit-supportive land use decisions. A comprehensive transit network.

A comprehensive transit network

The transit network in Durham Region includes various transit services that operate as one comprehensive transit network.

Regional transit

GO Transit rail

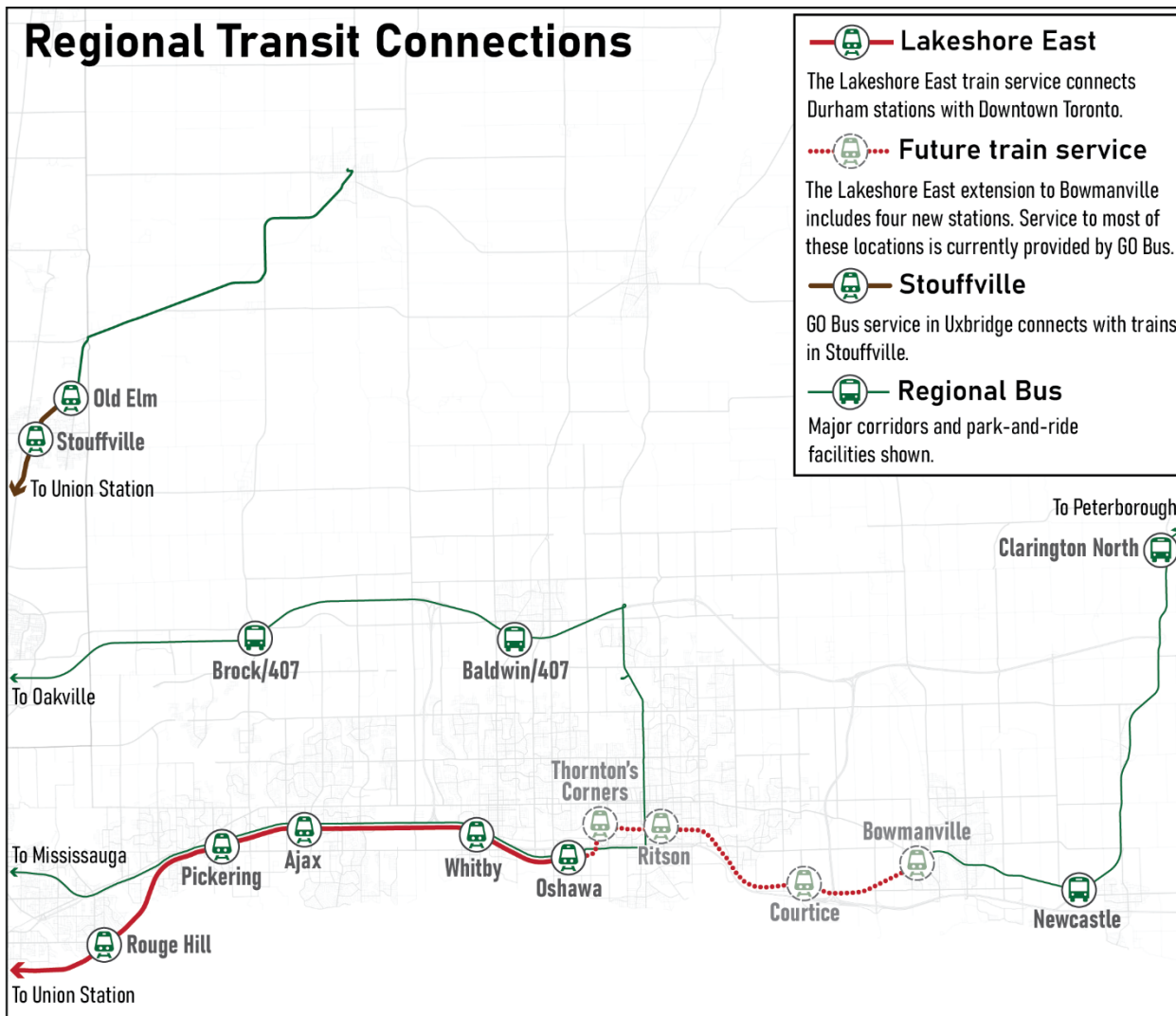
The GO Lakeshore East rail service provides rapid transit service between Durham Region and Toronto. Many DRT services feed into the GO rail line, and work is underway to extend train service to four new stations in Oshawa, Courtice and Bowmanville.

DRT is working in collaboration with Metrolinx and Regional partners on the design of the Lakeshore East rail service, and the integration of DRT services with the extension. When the extension opens, DRT services will be reconfigured to feed the stations, providing new one-seat rides from these GO stations to areas of Oshawa and Clarington. *Driving Durham* is intended to enhance service in anticipation of the extension’s opening so that those re-routed services meet the needs of commuters and other travelers. Parking at some of the new stations will be minimal with a large proportion of riders arriving by bus. Creating new connections and increasing frequency on existing routes are vital to achieving a strong transit mode share at new stations.

GO Bus

GO Bus routes along Highway 407 connect Oshawa, Markham, York Region, and points west, with 30-minute service most of the day. DRT will continue co-ordinating connections at Brock Road in Pickering, Baldwin Street in Whitby, and the North Campus Terminal in Oshawa, as well as connections to the Stouffville GO line and Peterborough. Services along shared corridors will be planned to complement—not duplicate—each other.

Map Y: Rapid Transit Connections



DRT service

The DRT route network can be described as a *modified grid* (see network maps in Appendix 2). Service operates primarily on arterial roads with minimal deviations from a direct line. This ensures that trips are direct and trip times are reduced for customers. Routes deviate from the grid primarily to access bus terminals and train stations.

Frequent corridors

Durham Region's Transportation Master Plan identifies corridors intended for high-frequency service. In general, these corridors align with DRT services operating most frequently and late into the evening. In some cases, multiple overlapping DRT routes combine to provide overall frequent service, such as where Route 920 enhances frequency on portions of Rossland Road and Kingston Road.

To improve reliability, some corridors feature or are planned to include dedicated transit lanes, HOV lanes, queue jump lanes and signal priority. Service is planned to operate every 20 minutes or better during the daytime, seven days a week. Customers will benefit from enhanced amenities on buses and at transit stops. Peak period frequency is planned to operate every 15 minutes or better on most Frequent Corridors with service up to every 5 minutes on Highway 2 and Simcoe Street. Some identified corridors are in areas still under development; service here will be enhanced as they intensify.

Mapy: Frequent Corridors

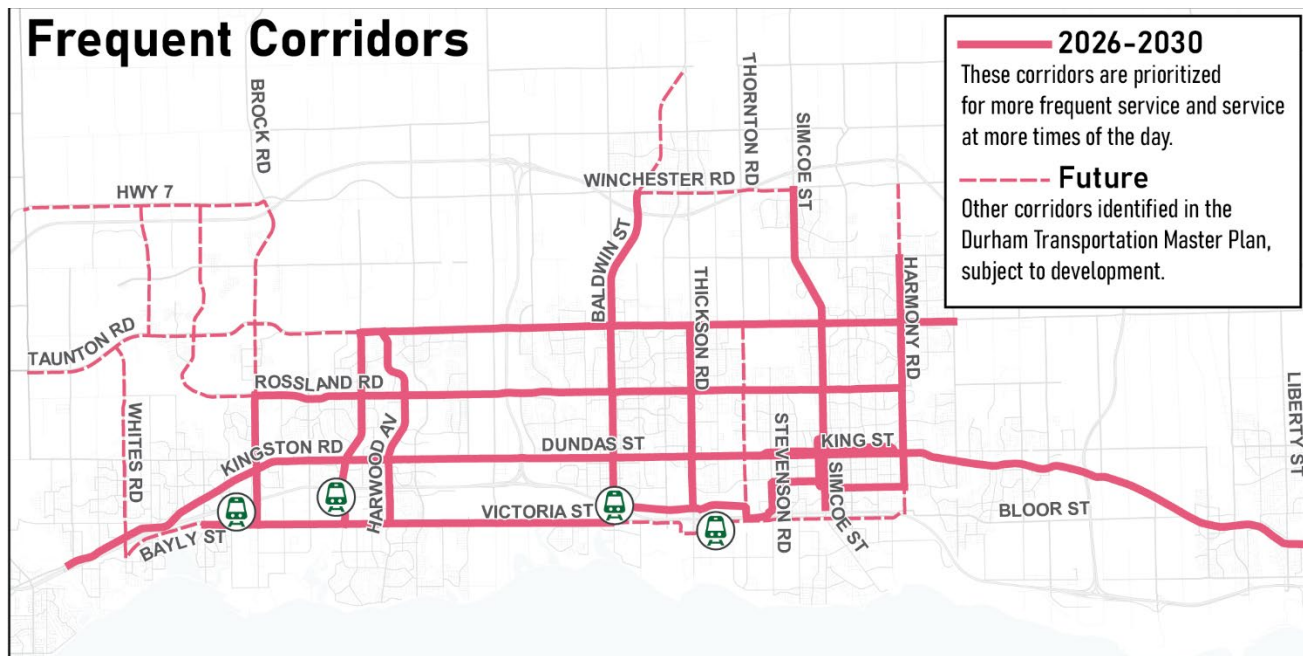
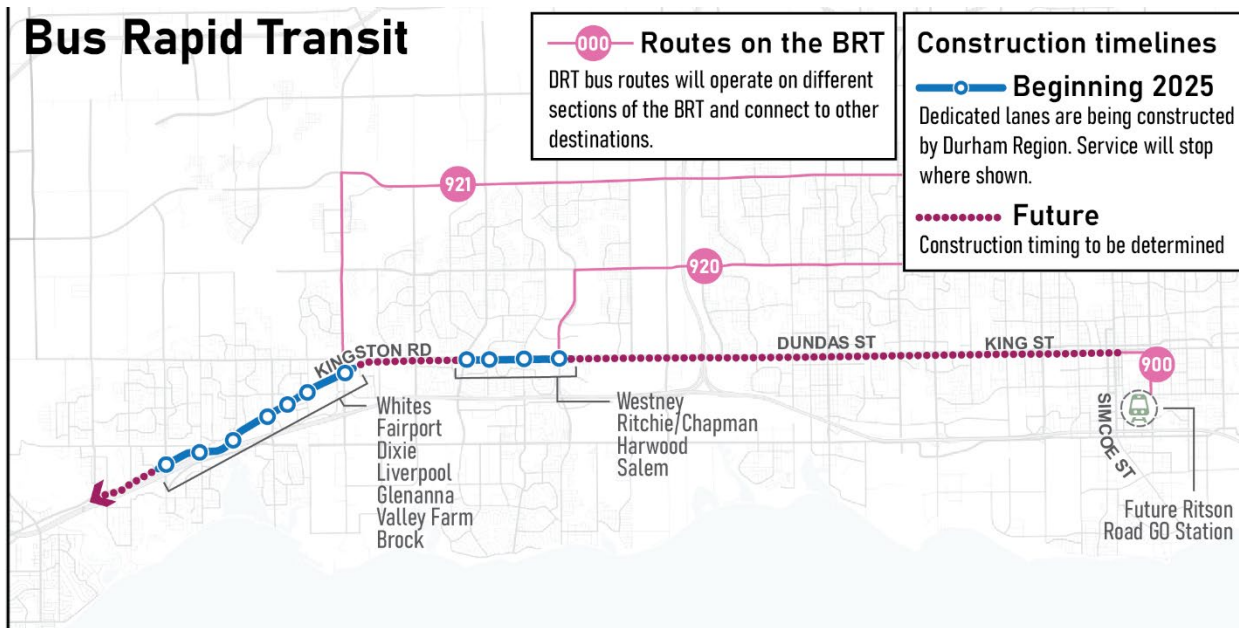


Figure X:

Bus Rapid Transit

The Region is currently constructing the first phases of the Durham Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit (DSBRT) along the Highway 2 corridor, expected to open in 2026-2027. As segments become operational, Routes 900, 920, and 921 will operate on dedicated DSBRT lanes in the centre of the roadway. Customers will access transit at enhanced median island stations featuring next-bus arrival information and improved weather protection. To promote speed and reliability of service, additional segments are expected to be built in the coming years. In anticipation of the first segments being complete, DRT and its Regional partners are working to ensure a positive customer experience through customer communication, internal training and liaising with stakeholders, such as for snow clearing and technology providers.

Map Y: Bus Rapid Transit



On Demand

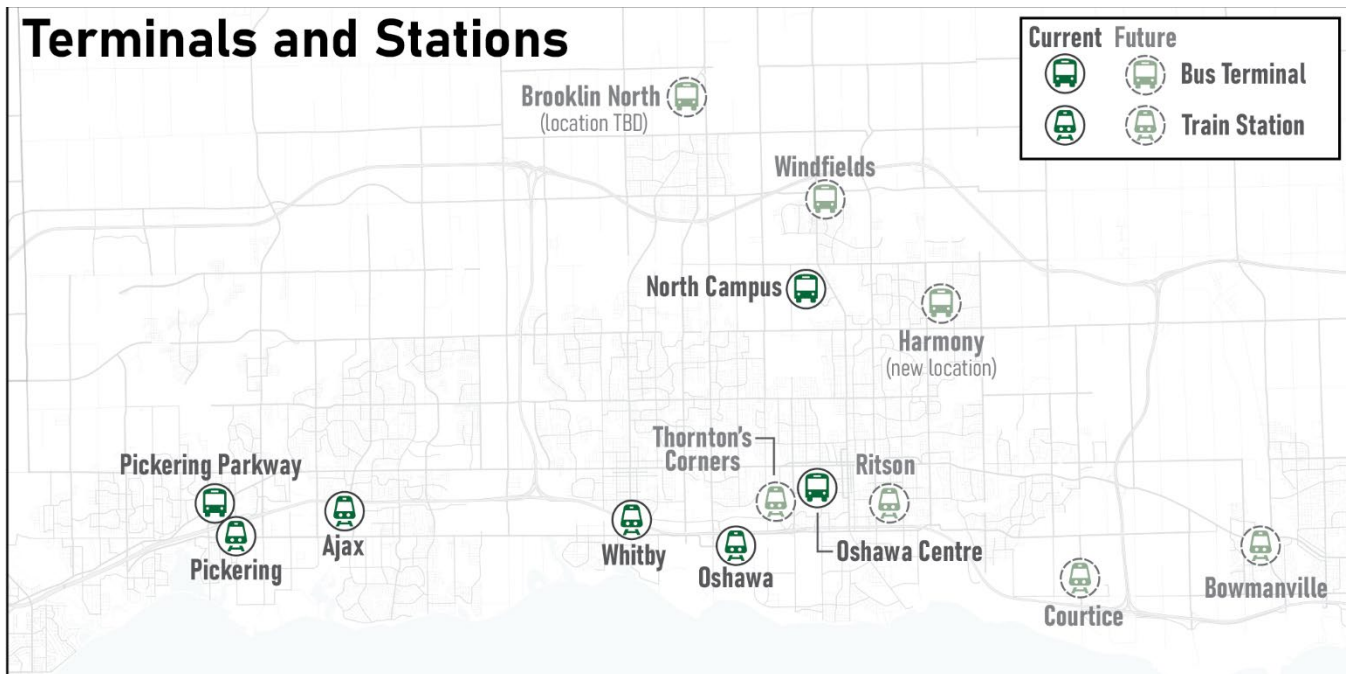
When scheduled service is not available, customers have access to On Demand for their mobility needs. In urban areas, the On Demand service is provided at bus stops and will connect customers with nearby operating scheduled service routes to continue their journey. In rural areas, On Demand provides a first mile/last mile connection to destinations outside towns and villages, and some intra-community services during low-demand periods.

Registered customers receive door-to-door On Demand service according to their eligibility under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Infrastructure

Stations, terminals and hubs

New and upgraded terminals and stations will improve transfers between buses, GO rail, and active transportation. These facilities are designed to be accessible, weather-protected, and connected to pedestrian networks.



Bus stops

Bus stops are the first point of contact between customers and the transit service. All stops must meet accessibility standards and DRT guidelines. Where ridership warrants and if space is available, shelters, benches and other amenities are installed for customer comfort and convenience.

Active transportation connections

High-quality active transportation connections are important to transit ridership. Transit customers begin and end their journeys by walking, rolling, cycling or engaging in another form of transportation. Effective connections reduce the need to operate circuitous, low performing bus routes through local neighbourhoods to reach potential customers.

Most transit trips result in a return journey, with transit service operating on opposite sides of the street. A well-connected pedestrian network provides safe and convenient locations where customers can cross busy streets. Where they exist, bus stops are often co-located with traffic signals. Elsewhere, pedestrian crossovers, mid-block pedestrian signals and other appropriate facilities enhance pedestrian and transit user safety.

The transit network should be accessible to all. Therefore, DRT will continue to co-ordinate with Regional and local municipal partners to identify gaps in the existing sidewalk and crosswalk network; and influence transit-friendly pedestrian network design for new residential, commercial, and industrial developments.

Mobility is changing fast. E-scooters, for example, are becoming more popular in some jurisdictions, although questions remain including about their batteries. DRT is working to better understand emerging mobility options and protecting space for these options in the design of future transit stop areas.

Transit priority

Transit priority measures provide enhanced speed and reliability for transit services, increasing the competitiveness of transit. Transit signal priority (TSP) makes it easier for buses to travel through intersections, making the journey faster for customers, and helping reduce resource requirements to operate similar levels of service on routes.

To enhance travel times on busy corridors, DRT will continue to coordinate regional partners to implement queue jump stops at busy intersections. Queue jump stops allow buses to bypass traffic queues at an intersection, by using the right-turn lane and far side bus bays to travel through the intersection.

DRT will continue to advocate for additional transit priority measures at GO train stations. Many DRT routes converge at GO train stations. Targeted improvements at these locations will benefit large numbers of customers. Reduced travel time into, and out of, GO stations will help position DRT as an attractive choice for residents considering DRT.

Service plan initiatives

Driving Durham 2030 is built on four initiatives that together will create a transit network that is more frequent, available at more times of the day, and expanding into both new and established communities:

1. Filling gaps in existing service, including a pilot of community connectors
2. Keeping up with growth
3. Frequent and available network
4. Evolving On Demand

By 2030, these initiatives will deliver a network that is easier to understand, more consistent throughout the week, and aligned with how and where people travel.

Initiative 1: Filling gaps

Initiative 1 removes long-standing gaps created by historical resource constraints, including one-way loops, differing weekday/weekend routings, and short spans of service. Eliminating these gaps will ensure DRT consistently meets its Service Design Guidelines and delivers a network that is easier to use, more predictable, and more equitable.

Two-way service where one-way loops exist

Large one-way loops mean customers often ride “the long way around” for short trips. Examples include:

- South Pickering (Route 101).
- Bowmanville (Route 502 evenings and weekends).

Converting these to two-way service shortens travel times and improves access to employment areas. Some routing refinements will be paired with growth-related improvements under Initiative two.

Consistent routing seven days a week

Differences between weekday and weekend routing can confuse customers and limit travel options. Examples include:

- Routes 411/421 in southern Courtice.
- Route 121 in Pickering.

Weekday and weekend routings will be harmonized to offer the same routing every day of the week.

Pilot for Community Connectors

A new service, Community Connectors, is planned to be piloted during the term of *Driving Durham* for customers seeking direct access to key destinations such as shopping centres and healthcare facilities — primarily during weekday midday periods when other routes may not be operating. Routes are likely to operate in areas where senior's residences, civic destinations and healthcare facilities are concentrated consistent with DRT's Social Equity Guidelines.

The pilot is expected to include one or two routes with limited number of trips and indirect paths by design, trading speed and frequency for purpose-based mid-day travel. The pilot will be implemented where resources allow and without a significant impact to service levels in areas of greater transit demand. The Community Connector pilot will be evaluated in consideration of ridership and service productivity.

The Community Connector pilot will be considered the following conditions.

- Service will operate outside of peak periods when buses are not required to meet morning and afternoon peak vehicle requirements.
- Service will be scheduled considering operator and vehicle availability for efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
- Service will not duplicate other scheduled services, except where it offers additional local stops along a parallel limited-stop service.

Initiative 2: Keeping up with growth

Durham Region is expanding, and DRT will extend scheduled service into new communities, while increasing frequency in intensifying areas. These investments ensure compliance with service proximity guidelines and provide sufficient capacity as demand grows.

On Demand will continue to fill the gaps where scheduled service is not yet warranted, and scheduled service will be introduced early in each new community so residents can adopt transit from the beginning — supporting one-car or no-car households.

The pace of development across an area the size of Durham Region is an inexact process. The network described here and illustrated in Appendix 2 reflects the best information available, and adjustments will be made through periodic reviews and the annual service planning process each year. As DRT enters the third year of the *Driving Durham* plan, a review will be conducted to update expected development and new priorities.

Expanding the network in Seaton (Pickering)

- Five routes forming a complete east–west and north–south grid.
- Routes 112, 118, 912: service every 30 minutes, seven days a week, early morning to late night.
- Routes 114, 903: weekday peak-period service every 30 minutes.

Expanding the network in Ajax and Pickering

- Extend Route 101 to Ajax GO via Church Street, providing two-way service and improved access to Durham Live and the Pickering Casino Resort.
- Extend Route 211 north to Taunton Road as development progresses.

- New service in the Audley Road / Kerrison Road area, creating a 15-minute corridor along most of Route 224 and improving access to the Audley Recreation Centre.
- Expand weekend and evening service on routes currently operating only during peak hours.

Expanding the network in Oshawa and Whitby

- Extend Routes 301, 306, and 319 to reduce walking distances and improve access to GO Transit services.
- Operate routes in more service periods, moving toward seven-day service Region-wide.
- Introduce Route 408, serving Northwood Business Park and improving connections near Oshawa Airport.
- Extend Routes 410 and 423 to new communities north of Conlin Road, including the new Windfields Terminal

Expanding the network in Bowmanville

- Reconfigure Routes 502 and 505 into distinct north and south Bowmanville services.
- Expand evening and weekend service to achieve seven-day operation across more routes

Initiative 3: Building a more frequent and available network

A key objective of Driving Durham is to create a grid of routes offering frequent, all-day service across the urban area from Pickering to Bowmanville. Investments will include:

- Improving all-day frequencies to 15-minutes (peak) and 20-minutes (off-peak) on major corridors, such as:
 - Highway 2 from Oshawa to Bowmanville
 - Harwood Avenue
 - Brock Street
 - Thickson Road
 - Taunton Road
 - Rossland Road
 - Bayly–Victoria corridor
- Extending late-evening service to support workers, students, and shift-based employment.
- Strengthening the consistent, easy-to-understand high-frequency network forming the backbone of Durham’s transit system.

This frequent grid will make transit more spontaneous, reliable, and competitive with driving for a greater share of trips.

Initiative 4: Evolving On Demand and service to Durham’s villages

On Demand service remains a vital part of the DRT network, particularly in rural communities and during low-demand periods. Evolving On Demand and expanding scheduled service will create a more balanced, reliable system as demand for travel continues to rise. However, On Demand continues to be oversubscribed, and even

with new resources being added each year, the demand for door-to-door trips is growing faster than the system's ability to service them. As Durham Region continues to grow, On Demand will need to evolve to remain sustainable, dependable, and cost-effective.

A central principle of this initiative is matching the right service to the right context. Scheduled service will play a greater role in low-density and rural areas because they can provide a consistent, predictable, and attractive level of service while using resources more efficiently than highly individualized trips. Reflecting this lower ridership generation potential, a separate productivity standard applies (see Appendix 1).

Connections among Villages, urban areas, and neighbouring Regions will be enhanced with scheduled services operating between Pickering and Uxbridge with connections to Markham.

Rural areas

In rural communities, demand is distributed across long distances. Most trips are to or between key villages and towns. To support long-term sustainability:

- DRT will replace all-day On Demand service with scheduled routes where trip patterns consistently link villages and towns, subject to productivity guidelines and where it is the most cost-effective to do so.
- On Demand will continue to provide first-mile/last-mile access outside built-up areas.
- Longer rural trips will be increasingly integrated with scheduled services to ensure On Demand can remain responsive for shorter, local trips.

This approach will help rural residents maintain mobility while ensuring the Region's resources are used responsibly as demand grows.

Urban areas

On Demand faces capacity challenges in urban areas, especially in late evenings. DRT will:

- Add scheduled late-evening service where cost-effective, freeing On Demand resources for other times and places.
- Apply targeted measures to increase On Demand trip pooling and improve efficiency when demand is high, including:
 - Concentrating pickups and drop-offs at major stops.
 - Modest increases to the maximum walking distance to scheduled service before On Demand is offered from 800 metres to 1,000 metres (1,250 meters in overnight periods).
 - Working with technology providers to improve routing and trip-planning suggestions.

These changes ensure On Demand remains sustainable as the Region grows and more customers rely on transit.

Throughout the Driving Durham period, DRT will undertake a comprehensive review of its service delivery models to determine:

- How to best integrate fixed routes and On Demand into a seamless network.
- How productivity thresholds should be applied in low-density or equity-priority contexts.

- What level of service On Demand can realistically deliver in different communities.
- How to ensure On Demand remains sustainable, dependable, and financially responsible.

Appendix 1: Service Guidelines

Service deployment

Residents of Durham Region can access transit services throughout the urban area on a 24-hour basis. To ensure that services are sustainable and implemented in an efficient and fair manner, service delivery varies by time of day and day of the week.

Scheduled and On Demand service roles

- **On Demand** provides base coverage in rural areas and at times or locations where scheduled service is not operating.
- **Scheduled service** is deployed where ridership potential, road conditions, and service standards justify fixed routes.

Guidelines for deploying scheduled service

- **Road types:** Scheduled routes will operate on arterial and collector roads. Local-road will only be considered when no arterial or collector road is available and where appropriate road and transit design considerations are implemented in collaboration with municipal partners. For example, prohibiting on-street parking to ensure safety and reliability of the transit route.
- **Minimum productivity:** New routes or trips will be planned where projections indicate they will meet minimum productivity targets (see Ridership Productivity Guideline).
- **Headways:**
 - Urban area: buses will be scheduled 30 minutes apart or better.
 - Rural area: buses will be scheduled 90 minutes apart or better.
- **Ongoing monitoring:** Route performance will be reviewed regularly. Based on demand, routes may be modified, extended, reduced, or transitioned between scheduled service and On Demand.

Ridership productivity guideline

Ridership productivity measures the average number of customer boardings for each service hour of a bus route. Resources for a route that does not meet productivity expectations will be redeployed to areas of higher ridership demand.

Productivity expectations vary by service type :

Scheduled Service type	Minimum boardings per vehicle hour
Urban routes	15
Rural routes	8
Overnight service	8

Additional guidance:

- Routes in their first 12 months are not expected to meet minimum thresholds.

- In priority neighbourhoods, each boarding is counted as 1.25 toward productivity calculations, consistent with Social Equity Guidelines.
- Service periods for a route that consistently fall below thresholds will be reviewed for potential adjustments, without cancelling the entire route.

Service frequency guidelines

Service will operate at least every 30 minutes, per the Service Deployment guideline.

Higher-frequency service will operate where trips regularly exceed the vehicle capacity guideline and additional trips are required to meet observed demand.

Higher frequencies are implemented routes serving Frequent Corridors, with service every 15 minutes or better during peak periods and every 20 minutes or better during other periods.

Service on DSBRT is planned to operate as frequent as every five minutes.

Vehicle capacity guideline

The vehicle capacity guidelines provide a level of customer comfort and reduces the risk that customers are not left behind at bus stops. The guideline is used when designing services, and customers' experience may vary due to unplanned operational issues and day-to-day variability in travel demand.

The following guidelines are used when designing the service:

Vehicle type	Off-peak design maximum customers onboard (100% of seated load)	Peak period design maximum customers onboard (150% of seated load)
18-metre (articulated)	52	78
12-metre	36	54
On Demand sedan, van, minibus	Varies by vehicle type	Varies by vehicle type

Customer load is measured at the busiest point of the route during the busiest hour.

Service proximity guideline

Service proximity means the walking distance between dwellings and the nearest bus stop.

For Scheduled service within the urban areas:

- 80 per cent of dwellings will be within a 500-metre walk of a bus stop.
- 95 per cent of dwellings will be within an 800-metre walk of a bus stop.

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

For applicable day-time On Demand trips in urban areas, and to improve trip pooling and utilization of fleet capacity, 100% of dwellings will be within a 1,000-metre walk of a bus stop.

For applicable overnight On Demand trips in urban areas, and to improve trip pooling and utilization of fleet capacity, 100 per cent of dwellings will be within a 1,250-metre walk of a bus stop.

Pick-up and drop-off locations for customers registered with Specialized transit receive On Demand service based on their approved eligibility.

Express route planning guidelines

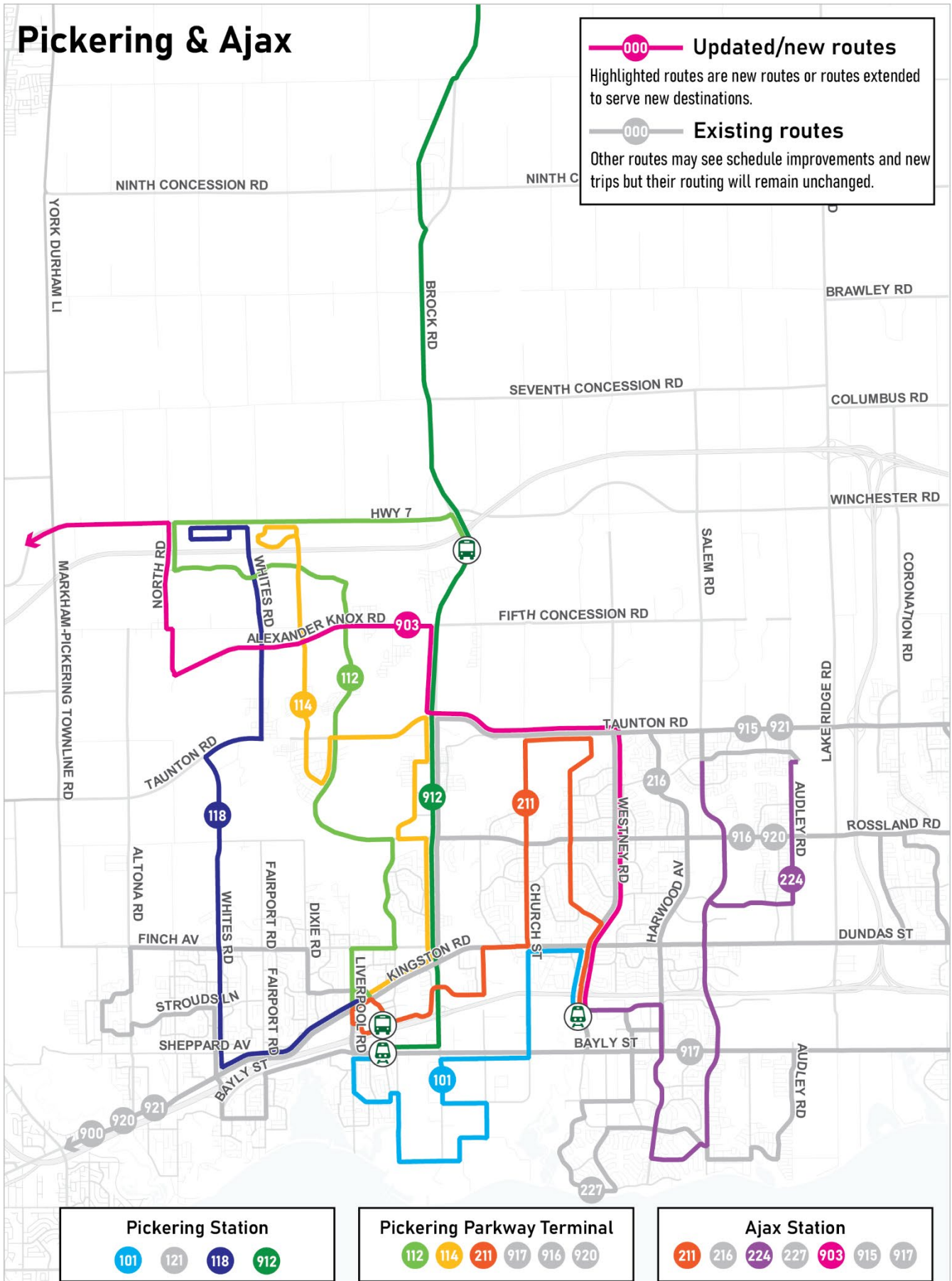
As ridership grows on a particular route and more trips are added, there are opportunities to realize efficiencies and improve the customer experience by operating at a limited number of stops along the route, sometime referred to as Express trips. Express trips can take different forms: some can skip long segments entirely, and others stop only at the busiest stops along a route or operate directly between the first and last stops.

Express service will be considered under the following conditions.

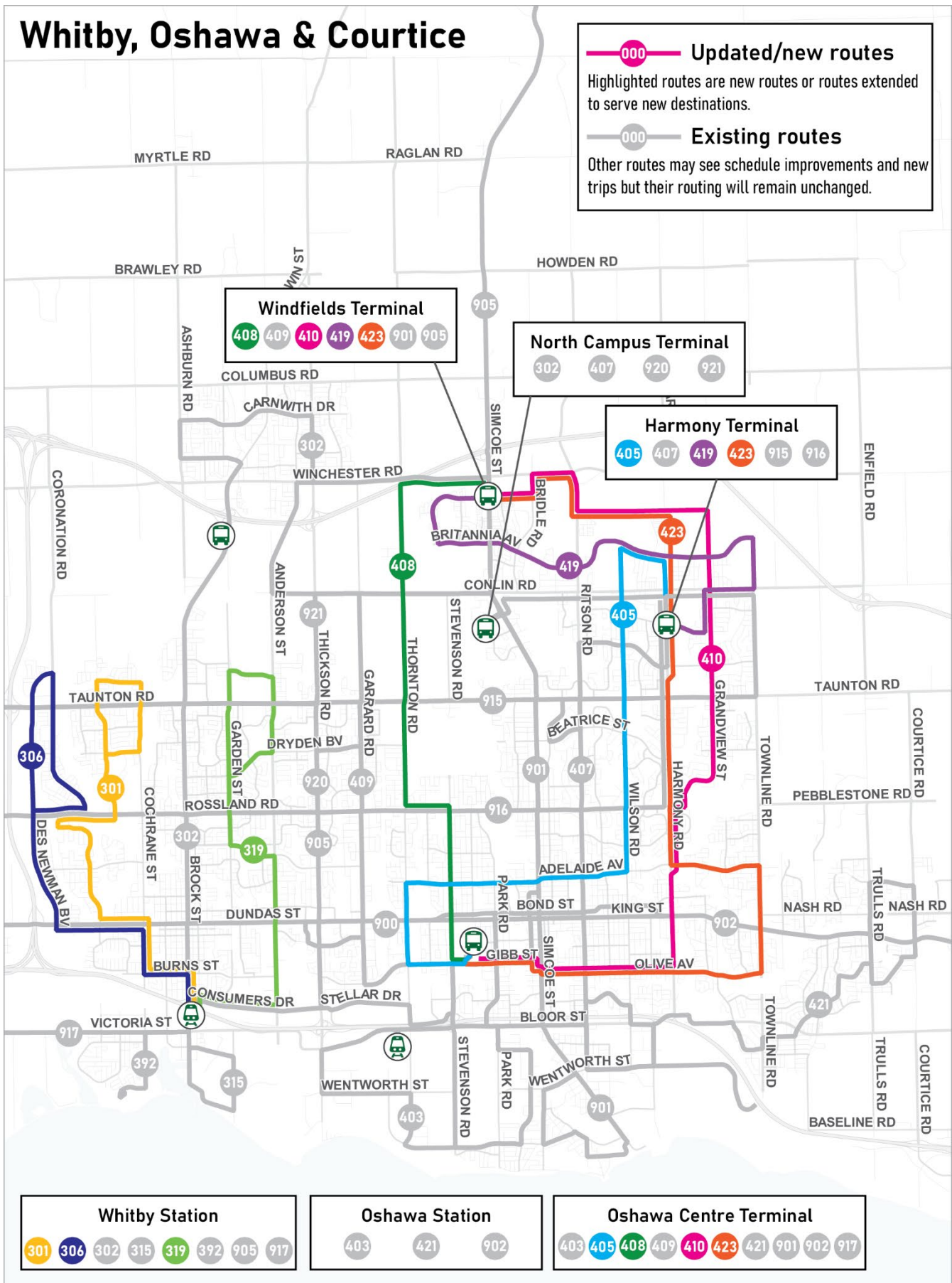
- The total travel time savings for customers is significant, considering the “whole trip time” including waiting at the bus stop. Replacing a frequent local service with less frequent local and limited stop services can make overall trip times longer if the wait time at bus stops increases significantly.
- A significant demand for the express service exists. Allocating resources to increase frequency on an existing local service can also benefit large numbers of customers; a case-by-case analysis should be conducted to balance these priorities.
- Both the express service and any corresponding local service will meet minimum productivity and vehicle capacity guidelines.
- Customer impact is consistent with DRT’s Social Equity Guidelines.
- The service is more efficient to deliver.

Appendix 2: Network Maps

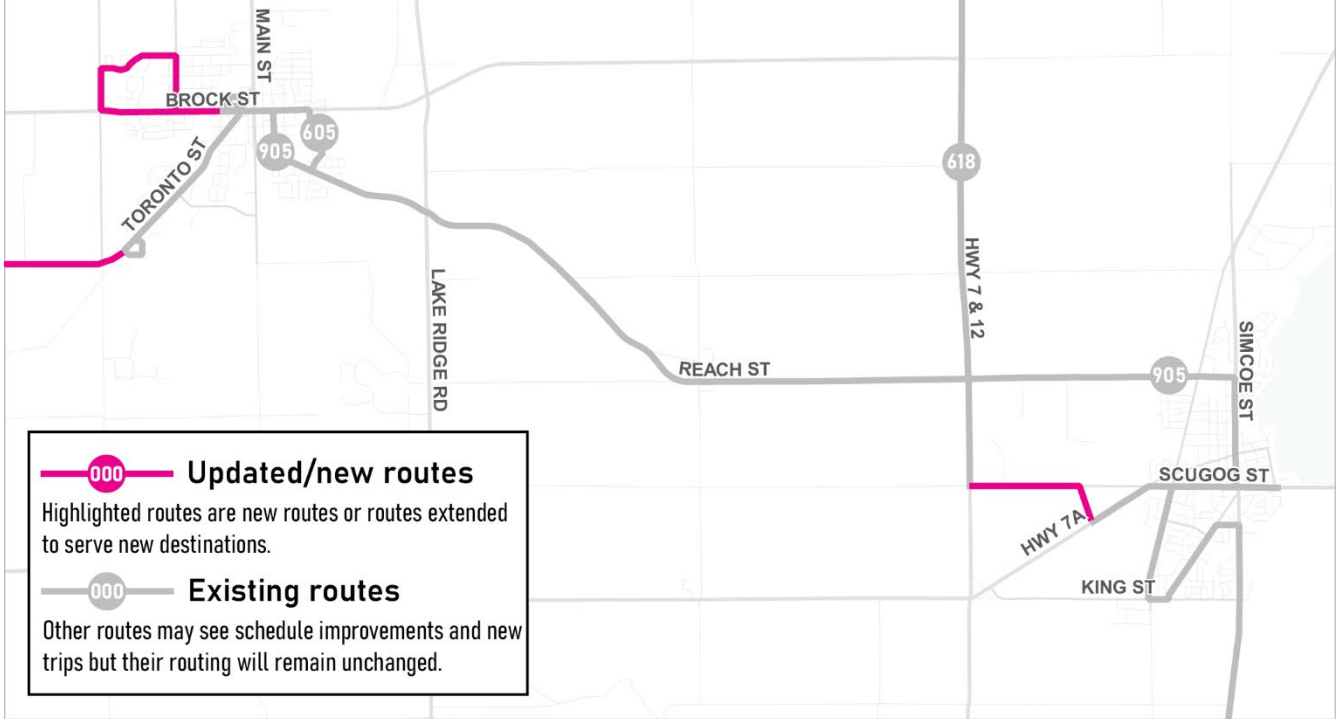
Pickering & Ajax



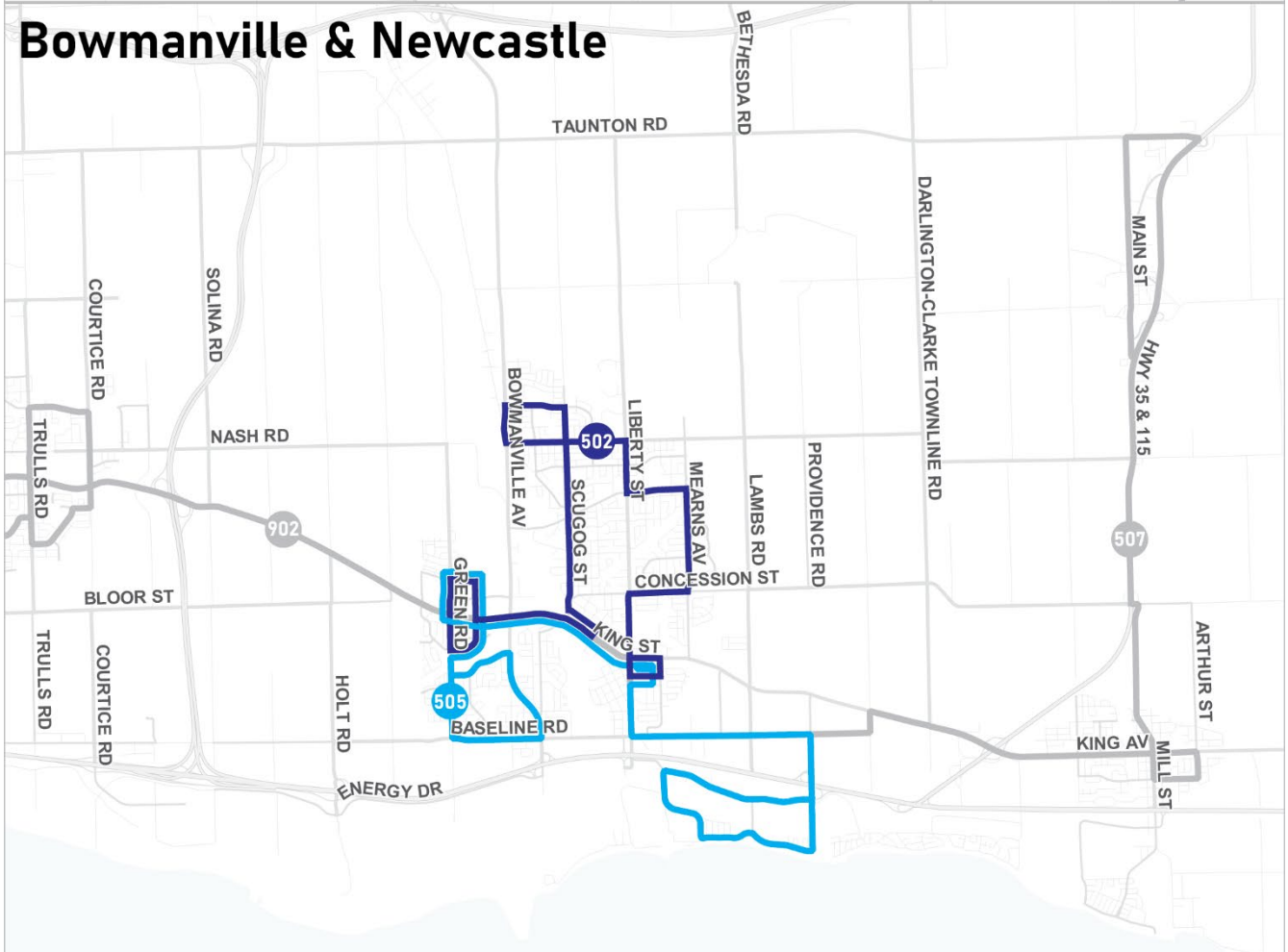
Whitby, Oshawa & Courtice



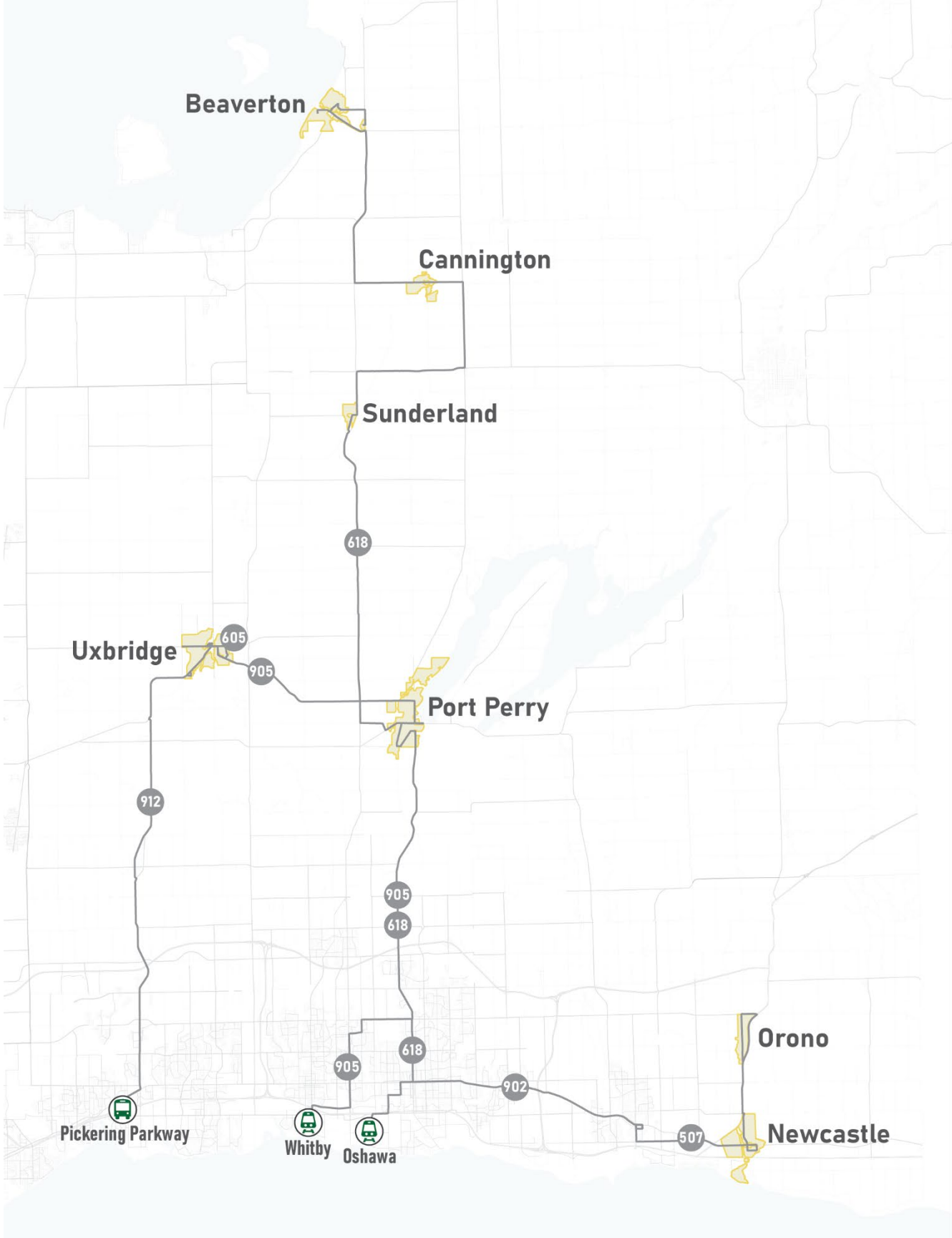
Uxbridge & Port Perry



Bowmanville & Newcastle



Rural Durham



Appendix 3: Summary of *Driving Durham* actions

#	Action	Primary partners / stakeholders
1	Plan and implement transit priority measures, including queue jump lanes and transit signal priority (TSP).	Regional works/transportation, local municipalities
2	Provide transit in new growth areas as soon as practical.	Regional planning, local municipalities, developers
3	Advance transit supportive development, especially around existing and proposed stations and terminals.	Regional planning, local municipalities, developers, Metrolinx
4	Identify and work with local municipalities to fill gaps in pedestrian and active transportation networks that affect access to transit stops.	Regional works, local municipalities
5	Coordinate connections and complementary services with GO Transit.	GO Transit / Metrolinx
6	Continuously adapt flexible service delivery models to meet evolving customer needs and travel patterns.	Internal DRT planning and scheduling
7	Reduce customer wait times for transfers, On Demand trips, and connections to trains.	Internal DRT planning, GO Transit (for rail connections)
8	Plan services to improve on-time performance so customers can reliably reach their destinations	Internal DRT planning, Regional traffic operations
9	Ensure services operate at the times of day when customers need to travel.	Internal DRT planning and scheduling
10	Maximize direct routing where appropriate to improve travel times and ease of understanding.	Internal DRT planning, local municipalities
11	Operate more frequent services to address crowding and grow ridership.	Internal DRT planning, Regional finance
12	Conduct a review of On Demand service focusing on sustainability, reliability, and capacity.	Internal DRT planning, On Demand service and technology providers
13	Deliver real time service updates to inform customers of service disruptions.	DRT Customer Service, TTS/technology providers

14	Continually improve customer safety through infrastructure, operator training, and partner collaboration.	Regional works, local municipalities, Operators, Emergency Services
15	Conduct a mid-term review of <i>Driving Durham</i> during the third year of the plan.	Regional planning, Internal DRT planning, local municipalities
16	Report annually on transit system performance through the Region's service planning and budget process, including metrics on ridership, productivity, on time performance, customer experience, and alignment with service guidelines. Findings will inform yearly service adjustments and long-term investment priorities.	Internal DRT planning and scheduling, Regional finance, DRT Customer Service
17	Pilot a limited community connector service and evaluate sustainability	Internal DRT planning and scheduling