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The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Durham Region Transit Executive Committee
From: General Manager, Durham Region Transit
Report: #2023-DRT-21
Date: October 4, 2023

Subject:

Stations, Terminals, and Hubs Strategy

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 inform the Transit Executive Committee on the DRT strategy for stations, terminals and hubs as part of the transit network. The strategy identifies customer amenities and requirements to support passenger journeys for DRT's service delivery models (scheduled and demand response).

2. Background

2.1 In 2016, DRT launched its latest Five-Year Service Strategy that articulated the vital role of stations and terminals in providing an attractive and effective passenger experience. The strategy also identified potential terminal and station locations to support the proposed network and enhance the passenger experience.

2.2 In December 2017, the Durham Transportation Master Plan included several recommendations, including stations and terminals. Direction 2 highlighted the need to elevate the role of integrated public transit including rapid transit with the goal of transit being convenient and reliable across the Region. Action 13 recommended that transit station and terminal needs be identified, including needs

for upgrades to existing facilities and physical footprint and operational parameters for future facilities. These needs were recommended to be identified as early as possible in the planning process to enable protection of land and permit long term financial planning.

- 2.3 In 2021, DRT launched The Route Ahead, a plan to influence transit services during the pandemic recovery period as DRT rebuilds ridership, adapt service to new and emerging travel behaviours, and build the foundation for future service growth.
- 2.4 In January 2023, TEC and Regional Council approved the DRT Transit and Financing Strategy (2023-2032), that identified priorities for infrastructure, accessibility and passenger amenities by highlighting investments in new infrastructure and amenities for an enhanced customer experience while enabling expanded operational activities. The priorities included a new Harmony, Pickering Parkway and Windfield Farms terminals with improved customer information, amenities and operational support, and new transit Hubs offering improved customer amenities and information, while supporting integration of On Demand and Specialized transit services (in addition to future integration with active transportation).

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 Report #2020-DRT-08 DRT's Transit Stop Guidelines provided a framework for the placement and design of transit stops within the region. The guideline provides the location review process by stakeholders, assists local area municipalities during their project design activities, and support a consistent and improved transit stop environment throughout the region that meets the current and future expectations of DRT customers and the community.
- 3.2 Report #2020-DRT-12 DRT's Rural Review identified specific passenger infrastructure meant to support the efficient and effective deployment of transit services in Durham's rural areas.
- 3.3 Report #2021-DRT-20 DRT's The Route Ahead 2022-2025 was approved by TEC at its meeting on September 8, 2021, to inform the planning and implementation of transit services during the pandemic recovery period to support mobility needs of Durham residents and businesses.
- 3.4 Report #2023-DRT-05 Transit Service and Financing Strategy (2023-2032), approved by TEC and Council in February 2023, identified the commitment to unprecedented 10-year investment in DRT services, including a 127 percent

increase in revenue services, significant capital investments for fleet electrification, and priorities for infrastructure, accessibility and passenger amenities

4. Discussion

4.1 Integrating Mobility Options

The DRT transit network operates as a single cohesive network, offering On Demand, local, base, and PULSE rapid bus service. Together they provide transit mobility options to all residents of Durham Region. Existing active transportation options, such as walking and cycling, and new mobility options, such as scooter, bike and e-bike sharing programs, are key in providing first and last mile access to the transit network.

4.2 Hubs

Transfer hubs will provide connections between On Demand and scheduled bus routes and offer options for pedestrians or cyclists to leverage paths, trails, and in some cases parking infrastructure.

Hubs will be located at major intersections where scheduled bus routes are frequent, supporting longer distance trips across the Region or into Toronto and York Region. Hubs will be located based on criteria supporting a consistent, and customer-focused design across the transit network.

4.3 Terminals and Stations

Terminals and stations are key places where passengers move seamlessly through the transit system, connecting between buses, On Demand vehicles, surrounding destinations, and in the cases of stations, the GO rail service.

They are critical to service efficiency, reliability, and availability, and support the human aspect of transit service delivery by providing key infrastructure for customers, transit operators, and staff. They also play an important role for access and egress points to the transit network where pedestrian and cyclist access is particularly important.

The Stations and Terminals located within Durham Region are strategically located along east-west in the south along the Highway 401 / GO Lakeshore East corridor and the Highway 407 corridor to the north, with facilities located in each of the five municipalities along the Lakeshore. Their strategic locations provide a convenient transfer point for passengers between DRT services, access to key destinations,

and will support future growth of the transit system to align with growth across the Region.

New terminals are required to replace existing locations that do not support operational requirements where DRT is unable to provide enhanced amenities to customers, and to support growth of the greenfield development in the Region.

4.4 Rapid Transit Stations

Planned rapid transit lines, such as the Simcoe Street Rapid Transit and Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit, further enhance frequent, reliable and direct mobility options across the Region. Rapid Transit Stations located along the routes will be supported by amenities similar to a transit hub, providing a consistent customer experience. Where feasible, rapid transit services may serve DRT terminals to facilitate connections with other local routes.

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. Environmental Sustainability

- Expand sustainable and active transportation

b. Economic Prosperity

- Position Durham Region as the location of choice for business
- Enhance communication and transportation networks to better connect people and move goods more effectively

c. Service Excellence

- Optimize resources and partnerships to deliver exceptional quality services and value

6. Conclusion

6.1 The Station, Terminals, and Hubs Strategy, informs how infrastructure will be planned and implemented to provide customer focused and convenient on-street and off-street transfer points between scheduled DRT routes and Demand Response services, and with regional rail and bus service.

7. Attachments

Attachment #1: Stations, Terminals and Hubs Strategy

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