

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

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

November 21, 2023

A meeting of the Transit Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 in Meeting Room 1-A, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:00 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Crawford, Chair
A. Andrus*, Community Group, Participation House
M. Bonk, Brock
R. Claxton-Oldfield, Member at Large
I. Giffin*, Uxbridge, attended the meeting at 7:10 PM
P. Gunti, Clarington, Vice-Chair
J. McEwen*, AAC, attended the meeting at 7:03 PM
A. Mujeeb*, Pickering
T. Ralph, Whitby
T. Smale, Member at Large
R. Smith*, Community Group, Durham Association for Family Resources
*** denotes members of the Committee participating electronically**

Absent: A. Ali, Ajax
W. Henshall, AAC

Staff

Present: F. Amin, Administrative Assistant, Durham Region Transit
A. Chung, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
Z. Osime-Fakolade, Program Manager, Engagement and Change Management, Durham Region Transit
D. Margiotta*, Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit
N. Ratti, Manager, Policy and Planning, Durham Region Transit
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
*** denotes staff participating electronically**

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by M. Bonk, Seconded by R. Claxton-Oldfield,
That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Advisory Committee
meeting held on Tuesday, September 19, 2023, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Presentations

There were no presentations.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. Correspondence Items

There were no communication items to be considered.

7. Information Items

There were no information items to be considered.

8. Discussion Items

A) At-Risk Populations Interaction with Durham Region Transit

T. Ralph advised that at the September 19, 2023 meeting, he requested to have this item placed on the agenda for discussion. He brought forward concerns with how Durham Region Transit and Durham Region are working together to address the at-risk populations using bus shelters for shelter.

Z. Osime-Fakolade advised that Durham Region Transit is working with Durham Region Social Services and will be funding two positions to help support the at-risk populations that are occupying DRT bus shelters.

Discussion ensued with regards to offering one-time tickets for residents in need; confusion among residents as to who owns the bus shelters; at-risk populations using the bus shelters more with the colder weather; providing safety for residents riding DRT buses that has occupants in it; bus shelter installation guidelines; and whether businesses are able to sponsor bus shelters to allow for partial funding.

A. Mujeeb raised concerns with regards to bus shelters being located too close together. N. Ratti advised she would look into the situation and bring an answer back to Committee members.

B) AODA Standards on Transit Vehicles

Chair Crawford advised that Wayne Henshall was not in attendance to speak to this matter and that the discussion item will be added to the next agenda.

C) Update on Durham Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit (DSBRT) Corridor

T. Ralph requested an update with regards to the Durham Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit corridor. He raised concerns with regards to traffic becoming more of a concern and when priority lanes will be considered past Pickering.

Chair Crawford advised that the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is handled through Durham Region, the outer lanes through Ajax will be moving to the middle of the road, and that intersections will need to be updated. She stated that the project is being funded through a grant and is targeted to begin next year.

Staff responded to questions with regards to how Durham Region is addressing cars that are using the bus lanes and whether Durham Police can be brought in for enforcement; and whether specialized transit vehicles are able to use bus lanes. N. Ratti advised that the recommendation to allow specialized transit vehicles to use bus lanes would be taken under advisement.

F. Amin stated that more detailed information can be found in Report #2023-DRT-21 of the General Manager of Durham Transit which is included on the October 4, 2023 Transit Executive Committee Agenda.

D) Station, Hubs, and Terminals Plan

T. Ralph requested an update with regards to the Whitby location being proposed for a future hub location. He raised concerns with regards to the location at Rossland Road and Thornton Road and whether there will be more infrastructure built around the transit hub.

Staff advised that the location was proposed to assist riders with transfers further north in Durham Region and that transfer hubs provide an opportunity for regular bus vehicles and specialized vehicles to be at the same location and provide seamless transfers.

E) Transit Advisory Committee Action Plan

Chair Crawford advised that Wayne Henshall was not in attendance to speak to this matter and that the discussion item will be added to the next agenda.

F) Fleet Identification and Cleanliness

I. Giffin raised concerns with having trouble identifying On-Demand vehicles and with the cleanliness of the exterior of Durham Region Transit vehicles. He suggested an update to the design of the logo and to paint the doors or hood of the On-Demand buses for easier identification.

Staff responded to questions with regards to whether the On-Demand vehicles are subcontracted out; whether the branding is up to date; and if there is a phone number located on the vehicles for residents to call.

Staff advised that the cleanliness of the vehicles will be brought to the attention of the subcontractor.

9. Other Business

A) Service Changes

R. Claxton-Oldfield requested an updated regarding upcoming service changes for Durham Region Transit.

Staff advised that there will be an official communication included in the General Manager's report at the December 6, 2023 Transit Executive Committee meeting which will include service changes being implemented, capacity constraints, lower performing routes, and ensuring customers maintain access to transit in current guidelines.

B) Bus Schedules

P. Gunti raised concerns with regards to the lack of communication to riders with respect to bus schedule changes in Courtice, particularly with respect to routes 411, 421 and 902.

Discussion ensued regarding that when the school board makes changes to their dismissal times, the information needs to be communicated to Durham Region Transit. N. Ratti advised that schedules are adjusted regularly and that the routes indicated would likely be updated in January. She further advised that DRT regularly sends out communication updates to advise of any schedule changes and that schedule times are not timed with elementary school dismissal times.

C) Bus Stop Accessibility

T. Smale raised concerns with regards to the accessibility at some DRT bus stops and in particular the stops on Baldwin Street South in the Town of Whitby.

Staff advised that DRT strives to provide accessible bus stops for all riders and are continuing to evaluate stops that are not accessible in the annual bus stop plans. N. Ratti advised she would look into the bus stop indicated above.

D) Durham Region Transit Budget

T. Ralph raised concerns that even with an increase in funds as a result of increased ridership, some routes are being removed.

Staff advised that the increase in ridership is covering the deficit from ridership being down in past years. It was also noted that ridership has increased in some areas and resources are being moved around to handle these increases.

N. Ratti also advised that there has been a 30% increase in ridership since August 2023 and DRT has fully recovered from pre-pandemic ridership levels.

E) Scheduling of Routes 411, 421 and 902B

R. Claxton-Oldfield raised concerns with regards to the configuration for Routes 411, 421 and 902B and whether changes can be made for more efficiency.

Staff advised they would review the matter and provide a response at the February 20, 2023 Transit Advisory Committee meeting.

F) One Fare Transit Between Durham Region and City of Toronto

M. Bonk raised concerns regarding the government implementing one fare transit from the City of Toronto to Durham Region and how that will affect the revenue and riders in Durham Region.

Staff advised that Durham Region Transit is involved with the one fare implementation and more information can be found in Report #2023-DRT-27 of the General Manager which was presented to the Transit Executive Committee on November 8, 2023.

G) Abilities Centre Roundtable

R. Smith requested an updated with regards to the roundtable at the Abilities Centre and whether there would be future roundtables conducted.

Staff advised that the roundtable was facilitated by an external party and that a summary of the feedback was provided in Report #2023-DRT-18 of the General Manager which was presented to the Transit Executive Committee on September 6, 2023. A copy of the report will be shared with all participants in the coming months.

H) Leased Buses from TTC

R. Claxton-Oldfield requested an update with regards to the leased buses from TTC.

Staff advised that Durham Region Transit is continuing to use the leased buses and that 12 buses have been purchased which are anticipated to arrive in May 2024.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, February 20, 2024 at 7:00 PM

11. Adjournment

Moved by P. Gunit, Seconded by R. Claxton-Oldfield,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

M. Crawford, Chair, Transit Advisory Committee

K. Smith, Committee Clerk