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## **The Regional Municipality of Durham**

### **MINUTES**

#### **TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**May 20, 2025**

A meeting of the Transit Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025 in Meeting Room 1-B, Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:05 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

#### **1. Roll Call**

Present: Commissioner Crawford, Chair  
A. Andrus\*, Community Group, Participation House  
R. Claxton-Oldfield, Member at Large  
I. Giffin\*, Uxbridge  
P. Gunti\*, Clarington, Vice-Chair  
J. McEwen\*, AAC  
A. Mujeeb\*, Pickering  
T. Ralph, Whitby  
T. Smale, Member at Large  
J. Westerman, Oshawa

**\* denotes members of the Committee participating electronically**

Absent: A. Ali, Ajax  
W. Henshall, AAC  
R. Smith, Community Group, Durham Association for Family Resources

#### **Staff**

Present: F. Amin, Administrative Assistant, Durham Region Transit  
S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services  
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
A. Pezzetti, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit  
J. Phelan\*, Manager, Policy and Planning, Durham Region Transit  
**\* denotes staff participating electronically**

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **3. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by T. Smale, Seconded by J. Westerman,  
That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Advisory  
Committee meeting held on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, be adopted.

**CARRIED**

#### **4. Presentations**

A) Jack Phelan, Manager, Policy and Planning, Durham Region Transit, Re: What's in a Route Name

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J. Phelan, Manager, Policy and Planning, Durham Region Transit provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding What's in a Route Name.

Highlights from the presentation included:

- What are Destination Signs?
- Study Area
- Worldwide Stats
- Within Canada
- Local Trends
- Global Trends
- DRT's Destination Signs
- Why Does DRT Use Numbers and Destinations?

J. Phelan responded to questions from the Committee regarding whether the implementation of front-facing indicator lights to signify DRT vehicle accessibility has been considered; the existing mechanisms in place to notify visually impaired riders when their bus has arrived; how customers are adjusting to route variations; trip selection process on the DRT website; the removal of DRT's phone number from bus stop signage; the distance between bus stop locations; whether accessibility is a key consideration in the planning and implementation of changes to DRT; and whether the Transit Advisory Committee will be included in the rebranding process for DRT.

#### **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) TAC Priority Focus Areas

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F. Amin advised the Committee to engage in an open discussion on how DRT can enhance communication and community engagement to better understand the needs of the community.

Discussion ensued regarding increasing communication by having DRT participate at more community events across the Region of Durham; the methods of communication used to inform customers on route changes; the groups that DRT prioritizes in its services and outreach efforts; the challenges posed by the decline in local media channels; whether local MPs and MPPs have been contacted to help promote DRT; the possibility of offering educational rides to groups who may feel unfamiliar using DRT; and strategies to encourage greater transit use among seniors in the Region of Durham.

Staff advised that DRT has a community ambassador and engagement team that visit local community centres to provide travel training to promote transit awareness.

B) Update on Voyago Contract Status

J. Westerman requested an update on the status of the Voyago contract, as well as information regarding the maintenance standards for DRT vehicles.

Staff advised that Voyago was recently audited by DRT, which identified no issues and confirmed satisfaction with the services provided.

C) Distance Between On Demand Stops

A. Mujeeb raised concerns regarding the distance between On Demand Transit stops and the removal of On Demand stops.

Staff advised that DRT's service standard is to ensure that 95 percent of dwellings in the urban area of the Region of Durham are within an eight-hundred-meter walk of the nearest bus stop for both scheduled and On Demand services.

D) 121 Weekend Route

A. Mujeeb asked why Route 121 operates on a different route during the weekends.

Staff advised that DRT focuses on allocating service where and when it is most beneficial to the majority of riders, which may result in differences between weekday and weekend service patterns.

E) Does DRT Staff Use Transit

A. Mujeeb asked whether DRT staff utilize DRT services.

Staff advised that some DRT staff use the service for their own travel needs, and that DRT staff also utilize it when traveling to meetings or community events.

F) Durham Region Transit and School Bus Services

A. Mujeeb asked why there is a duplication of service between DRT and school bus transportation.

Chair Crawford advised that at this time, the Durham District School Board and DRT have not integrated their services.

**9. Other Business**

**A) Removal of Capacity Limits on On Demand Transit Services**

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I. Griffin raised concerns regarding the recent removal of capacity limits to On Demand transit services and how this change may impact residents in Uxbridge.

Staff clarified that On Demand Transit Services is a co-mingled service designed to provide access for customers living in a rural area, and is also used by customers who are eligible for specialized transit.

Staff advised that in December 2024, DRT had paused subscription bookings used by specialized transit customers with recurring trips in order to conduct a comprehensive review of how customers engage with and access the system, with the goal of developing recommendations for potential improvements. Staff advised that at the May 7, 2025 Transit Executive Committee, the Committee approved the removal of capacity limits on subscription bookings.

Discussion ensued regarding how the removal of capacity limits will impact the rural municipalities within the Region of Durham.

Moved by I. Giffin, Seconded by T. Smale,

That we recommend to the Transit Executive Committee for approval:

That the Transit Executive Committee reconsider the removal of capacity limits as set out in Recommendation A) of Report #2025-DRT-06, as amended, and approved at the May 7, 2025 Transit Executive Committee meeting.

CARRIED

**B) Permanent Cut to the Gas Tax**

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T. Smale raised concerns regarding the recent release of the provincial government's budget, specifically the permanent cut to the gas tax, and how this change may impact DRT which currently receives a subsidy from this funding source.

Chair Crawford recommended that DRT staff review the matter and provide a response at the September 16, 2025 TAC meeting.

**C) Increased Access to the Lakeshore**

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T. Smale asked whether DRT will be offering special services during the summer months to provide increased access to the Lakeshore.

Staff advised the Committee of several special services currently being offered, as well as additional services planned for the upcoming summer months.

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at 7:00 PM

**11. Adjournment**

Moved by T. Ralph, Seconded by T. Smale,  
That the meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 PM.

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M. Crawford, Chair, Transit Advisory Committee

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S. Dessureault, Committee Clerk