

Item No. 2



November 5, 2019

TTC Board Members
Toronto Transit Commission
1900 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4S 1Z2

Dear Board Members:

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) is forwarding the approved minutes of its General Monthly meeting of September 26, 2019 to the November 12, 2019 Board Meeting for information (attached).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mazin Aribi
2019 ACAT Chair

Attachment

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting: Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit
Meeting No. 347

Meeting Date: Thursday, September 26, 2019

Location: 1900 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON
7th Floor Boardroom

Present: Mazin Aribi, Chair
Marian McDonell, Co-Vice Chair
Angela Rebeiro, Co-Vice Chair
Margo Brodie
Mary Burton
Anita Dressler
Jessica Geboers
Bobbi Moore
Craig Nicol
James Pyo
Lauri Sue Robertson
Igor Samardzic
Sam Savona
Chris Stigas

Regrets: Thomas Richardson

TTC Representatives: Matt Hagg, Senior Planner - System Accessibility
Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager - Customer Service, Wheel-Trans
Dean Milton, Manager-Strategic Initiatives
Desrienne McIlwrick, Lead Travel Trainer
Charlene Sharpe, Assistant Manager-Policy & Planning, Wheel-Trans
Cameron Penman, Division Manager - Customer Service
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans
John Beynon, Chief Instructor, OTC
Romaine Toban, Diversity Consultant
Ricardo Couto, Divisional Manager, Bus Transportation
Tony Clunies, Project Manager, ITS

Copies: Rick Leary, Chief Executive Officer
Kirsten Watson, Deputy CEO – Operations

Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, Chief Customer Officer
Orest Kobylansky, Executive Director - Operations
Susan Reed Tanaka, Chief Capital Officer
Josie La Vita, Chief Financial Officer
James Ross, Chief Operating Officer
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans
Deborah Brown, Head of Customer Communications
TTC Board Members

Items Discussed:

1. Call to Order / Attendance
2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Remarks from ACAT Chair
5. Review and Approval of August 29, 2019 Minutes
6. Business Arising Out of Minutes/Outstanding Items
7. Deputation: Nil
8. Update - Stop Calling Announcements
9. Stantec Presentation – Cross Border Report
10. Subcommittee Reports and Updates
 - Communications
 - Design Review
 - Service Planning
 - Wheel-Trans Operations
11. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlights for the Next TTC Board Meeting
12. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update
13. Report on Customer Liaison Panel
14. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters
15. Review of Correspondence
16. Other / New Business
17. Next Meeting – October 31, 2019
18. Adjournment

1. Call to Order / Attendance

Chair Mazin Aribi called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and attendance was taken.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil.

3. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Sam Savona and seconded by Margo Brodie, the agenda was approved.

4. Remarks from ACAT Chair

Mazin Aribi thanked the TTC for organizing the 2019 TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit at the Beanfield Centre at Exhibition Place on September 25, 2019 and for the tremendous work that was done by the TTC staff to make the event a success. Mazin also thanked the ACAT members who volunteered at the ACAT booth.

Mazin stated that all comments received from the event would be reviewed by TTC Staff and ACAT, and all responses would be posted on the TTC website.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member noted there had been misinformation and miscommunication regarding transportation provided when leaving the event. Mazin suggested the matter be referred to SPS.

5. Review and Approval of August 29, 2019 Minutes

On a motion by Anita Dressler and seconded by Bobbi Moore, the minutes of the August 29, 2019 meeting were approved.

6. Business Arising Out of Minutes / Outstanding Items

- Item: Lack of Tactile Information on Stop Poles for Shared Bus Stops. Matt Hagg advised there had been several tactile stop poles installed and a site visit would be arranged shortly.
- Item: Review of the Impact of Curb Side Bike Lanes. Sam Savona reported there was no update and the matter was ongoing.

7. Deputation

Nil.

8. Update – Stop Calling Announcements

Ricardo Couto provided an update regarding the next stop announcements on buses, where the compliance is now, and the next steps that the TTC Bus Transportation department are taking. Technical issues have been corrected and compliance is now at 99.4% as of September 2019, up from a low of 93.3% in June 2019. Bus Transportation will continue to provide reminders to Operators on their obligation to call all service stops in the event of any defect or malfunction.

At ACAT's suggestion, an email address and phone number was set up for ACAT members to report any stop calling deficiencies directly to Transit Control. This was completed on July 8, 2019.

9. Stantec Presentation – Cross Border Travel Study Report

Brian Putre, Stantec Consulting, provided a presentation.

The focus of the cross border study is to investigate cross border policies in more detail. The scope of work also included data analysis of existing trip data over a six-month period (July to December 2018) as well as the policies of the TTC's GTA peers and whether the TTC is in alignment with them. The study was to develop possible strategies to improve cross border travel.

Brian Putre stated that the TTC currently has the most compassionate policy, in that it will drive up to one kilometer past the border, whereas Durham, York, and Peel regions all have a hard stop at the border, with the exception of a transfer point located within the City of Toronto. Brian stated his main objective today was to understand user concerns.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Members inquired if it would be possible for the TTC to have designated stops where programs are frequent for Wheel-Trans users. Brian Putre stated that there are approximately a dozen transfer points. The study can look at is the addition of more transfer points.

Members suggested that with improved TTC service, YRT and Durham Transit could see significant cost savings. It was suggested that they could assist in defraying the costs for cross border services. Dwayne Geddes stated that would be proposed to the Councillors.

Members noted that, during the Paralympic games, a customer could call one number that would book their entire trip across the GTA. Dwayne Geddes advised that was being considered.

Members asked if there was a possibility taking customers across borders for repeated medical appointments, that any additional costs would be passed onto the facility. Brian Putre stated that could be a discussion to be had in the future.

Members stated when someone applies for Wheel-Trans service, they need to state which municipalities they are applying for accessible transit. Members asked if there was a way to be approved for all those municipalities at the same time. Dwayne Geddes advised that it is not possible at this time.

Members observed that the way the application form is worded gives the impression that if an individual is accepted by Wheel-Trans, they are also accepted in other municipalities. Dean Milton advised the form is meant merely to give permission to share information. He noted perhaps the language of the document needs to be clarified.

Members asked for a draft of the Cross Border Travel Study report in advance of the October Board meeting. Dwayne Geddes advised it would be provided.

10. Subcommittee Reports and Updates

Communications Subcommittee (CS) – Mary Burton, Chair

A CS meeting was held on September 5, 2019.

- Family of Services

Alicia Sgromo advised that, as part of the communications campaign for Family of Services and Conditional Trip Matching which is tentatively scheduled for fall 2019, a package is being developed for every conditional customer to receive by mail. The package will include a letter explaining what their conditions are and a Family of Services FAQ.

- TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit

Heather Brown discussed the materials that would be available at the upcoming Public Forum.

- PRESTO Update

Heather Brown reported that the Wheel-Trans solution for taxis has been delayed again. The delay is both with the equipment and software. More information may be available by the October meeting. The support person PRESTO card would still move forward; however, it is not a priority issue.

- Elevator Status on the Website

Heather Brown provided an update on the elevator status on the website. The planned service outages are input manually daily. Emergency outages are sent out from Transit Control as service advisories. Heather Brown will inquire on how the third-party elevator outages are managed.

The next CS meeting will be held on November 7, 2019.

Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) – Craig Nicol, Chair

A DRS meeting was held on September 4, 2019.

- Subway Platform Edge Tactile Tiles, ISO Compliance

TTC staff attended to seek input from ACAT on a proposal to revise the TTC's standard for subway platform edge tiles to be in compliance with a newer standard set by the International Standards Organization (ISO). The current TTC standard was developed about 30 years ago in collaboration with stakeholders including CNIB.

A sample of an ISO-compliant tile was presented for review.

When tested by ACAT members, underfoot, the sample tile was found to provide improved hazard detection and did not create impediment with a mobility device.

DRS agreed that the ISO compliant tile should be used for new construction and for replacement of an entire run of tiles along any one platform edge. New and old tile designs

should not be mixed in a run of tiles.

- Easier Access 3 (EA3) Glencairn Station Upgrade

Steve Stewart and TTC Engineering presented the EA3 design (30%) for Glencairn Station. The design includes two flow-through elevators, power sliding doors, and tactile tiles at the top of stairs. Due to station design which features on-street bus stops and entry from both sides of Glencairn Avenue, a crosswalk will be needed to reach the accessible south side access from the westbound bus stop.

DRS members raised a concern about the restricted space to access elevator E2 at both the concourse and platform levels. Several suggestions were made regarding the relocation of this elevator and the safety measures needed at platform level if relocation is not possible. Steve Stewart agreed to review the suggestions.

DRS advised that the required pedestrian crossing must have an accessible pedestrian signal; this would include traffic signals. DRS also requested information on the location and design of a Wheel-Trans stop.

- Streetcar Stop on Bridges

Curtis Batuszkin, Supervisor – Transit Stops, discussed the curb cuts at streetcar stops at Fort York and Bathurst. Due to the bridge design, there was no ideal solution for the curb cut to access the second door of the streetcar and the relocation of the stop is not possible. DRS members had little choice but to accept a curb cut closer to the front door of the streetcar.

The next DRS meeting will be held on October 18, 2019.

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS) – Anita Dressler, Chair

A SPS meeting was held on September 4, 2019.

- Unplanned Subway Closures

Janet Weller, Group Station Manager, attended and advised on the procedures for unplanned subway closures and emergency closures. At this time, persons with disabilities are accommodated to the best of TTC's ability during these situations. Some changes are being made with respect to emergencies or unplanned closures. Shuttle buses will no longer come into the station to avoid overcrowding; instead, the buses will stop outside of the station at specially marked bus poles. Customer Service Agents (CSA) will be dispatched to assist. Trains cannot always turn back at accessible stations. In case this occurs, there will be designated spots to assist customers who require elevators. A supervisor or CSA will be on hand to assist.

Numerous questions and suggestions were posed by the members including:

- Need for staff to direct people and keep things orderly (supervisors, Customer Service Agents or to consider enabling other staff like station janitors to assist)
- Train crew to ensure that no one is left on the platform where a train goes out of service before they move off
- Using geographical locations for shuttle bus pick-ups (e.g., the northwest or southeast corner)

- Making announcements before the closed stations in order that persons can disembark at an accessible station
- Using video screens in the stations to display instructions to assist people with hearing loss
- Concerns of assistance at overcrowded shuttle stops

To address these concerns, SPS requested that Janet Weller attend the next meeting with Transit Control staff.

- 2019 TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit

Matt Hagg advised the Subcommittee about plans for the upcoming annual TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit. A TTC Board Meeting will be held prior to the Forum. Staff will be on hand to arrange Wheel Trans rides home after the event.

The next SPS meeting will be held on November 6, 2019.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee (WTOS) – Sam Savona, Chair

A WTOS meeting was held on September 12, 2019.

- Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System

Miquel Escobar, Systems Analyst, provided an overview on how the IVR system works. The IVR system sends out the automated calls that each customer receives to inform them of the trip times and vehicles for trips booked for the next day. Members asked if the quality of the voicing of the message could be improved, staff will investigate.

- Wheel-Trans Transportation Update

Natalie Francis, Division Assistant Manager, advised that Wheel-Trans is looking to have 400 Operators by the end of the year. Dispatch has made improvements to its internal communications system which provides updated road closures or delays. There will also be a dedicated FOS Dispatch desk to assist customers on their trips, once FOS is in full implementation.

- Vehicle Location Pilot

Lodon Hassan reported that the new mobile app would have a vehicle locating feature “Where’s My Bus?” for trips scheduled on buses initially. Members are asked to volunteer to test this app feature.

- Review of Wheel-Trans Policies

Dean Milton reviewed each section of the FOS Conditional Travel Policy. The policy outlines what customers can expect when transferring to and from Wheel-Trans and conventional services.

The next WTOS meeting will be held on October 17, 2019.

11. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlight for the Next TTC Board Meeting

CS:

- Review of materials for the Public Forum
- Discussion on elevator status on the website
- Delay in the Presto App and the Support Person Card

DRS:

- ISO Replacement of Platform Edge Tiles
- Easier Access Glencairn Station

SPS:

- Discussions on Unplanned Subway Closures

WTOS:

- Review of Wheel-Trans FOS Conditional Travel Policy
- Vehicle Location Pilot on the new mobile app

12. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update/Travel Training Update

Dean Milton, Manager - Strategic Initiatives, provided an update.

- Newsletter

The most recent newsletter was mailed out and customers should have received it around September 5. A feature on Wheel-Trans Re-Registration was published in the Toronto Star on Monday, September 23, 2019.

- FOS Update

A letter concerning Conditional Trip Matching and Family of Services will be sent to all conditional customers. ACAT will go through a final review before the mailing, ahead of the program launch. The date of Conditional Trip Matching is yet to be determined. Notices regarding conditional trip matching will also be distributed to City Councillors next week.

There are now 3,500 trips from Wheel-Trans connections to either subway or designated transfer stops on bus and streetcar routes; 94% of these trips are on the subway. There are an estimated 580,000 fully diverted trips; trips completely on the conventional TTC not using Wheel-Trans fully travel on.

- Access Hubs

Construction notices for access hubs will be delivered next week. Four hubs will be in place by the end of 2019, namely Jane and Eglinton - southwest and northeast corners, Neilson and Ellesmere - southwest, and Victoria Park and Ellesmere – southeast.

- Customer Experience

All six customer-facing policies planned for 2019 had been reviewed by the TTC Legal and Diversity and Human Rights departments and by ACAT. The next step is to ensure that the Standard Operational Procedures are in place internally to support these policies.

- Re-Registration

The Re-registration process is planned to begin late 2019.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Members inquired if the polices would be available online, hard copy, or alternative formats. Dean Milton advised that they would, with alternative formats being available upon request.

Members inquired if an accessible station is out of service, i.e., Bathurst for the next six months, will the FOS team ensure that no one is sent there to continue their trip. Dean Milton advised that Staff would be aware of that and would monitor the service issues.

Members inquired if there would be some way to communicate to Wheel-Trans if customers are stranded at an access hub. Dean Milton advised that the installation of cameras at the access hubs is being reviewed.

- Travel Training

Desrienne McIlwrick, Lead Travel Trainer, provided an update.

The next Station Orientation Day is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at St. Clair West station. The event information is posted on the self-booking website in the hopes that more customers are made aware of the event. A TTC photographer will be attending the 1:00 p.m. time slot to obtain some in-action travel training photos.

To date, 747 customers have expressed interest in travel training, with 740 of those customers having been contacted. Desrienne has provided one-on-one route training to 137, and 204 have participated in other fashions. 20 customers are scheduled or in the process of booking appointments, and a total of 29 customers have declined. The remaining 350 customers have not yet responded to the offer.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Members inquired if it would be possible to determine how many customers sign up for training following the special TTC Board Meeting of September 25, 2019. Desrienne advised that she keeps track of whether customers are referred to Travel Training from an Environics customer survey, from Wheel-Trans Customer Service, if she met a customer at an event (such as Access Expo), or other. Several customers have recently shared that they learned about the program through the Wheel-Trans newsletter.

Members stated that they often get more than one survey per month. Dean Milton stated that there are parameters in place so that a customer does not receive the same survey within a set period of time.

13. Report on Customer Liaison Panel (CLP) - Anita Dressler, ACAT Representative

No CLP meeting was held since the last ACAT meeting.

14. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters

A TTC Board Meeting was held on September 24, 2019 at City Hall.

The approved ACAT minutes of June 27 and July 25, 2019 were received by the Board. Mazin Aribi provided highlights from the ACAT minutes. Mazin also informed the Board Members of the 2 motions passed at the June 27 ACAT meeting regarding the elevator redundancy at interchange stations. A request from Vice Chair Alan Heisey was made to have this item brought back to the TTC Board as an agenda item for further action.

The TTC Board received a status update on Dupont Station and approved a property acquisition for Spadina Station as part of the EA3 program.

The TTC Board approved a staff report regarding the Subway Platform Gap Retrofit Program. Staff recommendations were:

1. Adopt a platform edge gap retrofit standard of a maximum horizontal gap of 89 mm and a maximum vertical gap of 38 mm;
2. Direct staff to report back on the status of this program in fall 2020; and
3. Adopt the retrofit solution of a sloped tactile edge tile at a maximum 5% gradient.

A motion was also made by TTC Chair Jaye Robinson regarding the Streetcar Camera Enforcement to Address Urgent Passenger Safety Concerns. The motion states that: "The Toronto Transit Commission request the Minister of Transportation to enact amendments to the Highway Traffic Act, 1990 to permit the operation of streetcar enforcement cameras to monitor and enforce traffic violations."

Mazin Aribi invited the Board members to attend ACAT meetings.

A special TTC Board Meeting was held on September 25, 2019 at the Beanfield Centre at Exhibition Place.

Mazin Aribi gave a presentation entitled "ACAT, Our History, Successes, Challenges and the Road Ahead".

The next TTC Board meeting will be held on October 24, 2019, at City Hall.

15. Review of Correspondence

Nil.

16. Other / New Business

John Beynon, Operational Training Centre, advised that, beginning next year, the Bus Recertification Program will return to a two-day training program. The training sessions will be held at the Wilson Training Centre, which raises an accessibility issue for ACAT members. The suggestion is to meet ACAT members at Sheppard West Station and shuttle them to the Training Centre and back. Mazin Aribi stated that the Committee would discuss the matter further and advise.

Mazin Aribi asked about the status of the Streetcar Recertification Program. John Beynon replied that he will pass the request on.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member noted that, at the Public Forum, posters suggested that there would be flashing lights above the doors to indicate that the ramp is deploying and asked if there could be something installed at eye level. The member inquired if ACAT could have more input to alter the notifications. Mazin Aribi advised that ACAT could and recommended that the issue be referred to the Design Review Subcommittee.

17. Next Meeting

The next meeting of ACAT will be held on Thursday, October 31, 2019, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the 7th Floor Boardroom, 1900 Yonge Street

18. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

Beverly Kowbel
Recording Secretary