



Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit

September 30, 2021

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 August 26, 2021 and September 30, 2021 to the November 29, 2021 Board Meeting for information (attached).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Igor Samardzic
2021 ACAT Chair

Attachment

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting: Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit
Meeting No. 369

Meeting Date: Thursday, August 26, 2021
1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual meeting via Webex

Present: Igor Samardzic, Chair
Debbie Gillespie, Co-Vice Chair
Chris Stigas, Co-Vice Chair
Carmen Galvan
Margo Brodie
Gwyneth Dalzell
Sean Hollingsworth
Angela Marley
Jonathan Marriott
Craig Nicol
James Pyo
Lauri Sue Robertson
Janice Shachter
Mahendan Sivabalasundaram

Pool Members: Kim Pearson
John Rae
Rhonda Solomon
Howard Wax

Regrets: Sam Savona

TTC Representatives: Jim Ross, Chief Operating Officer
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans
Stephan Boston, Chief Instructor — Operations Training
Centre

Heather Brown, Manager of Customer Communications
Natalie Francis, Acting Manager Planning and Policy,
Wheel-Trans
David Lo Presti, Manager – Contracted Taxi Services,
Wheel-Trans
Dean Milton, Manager – Strategic Initiatives, Wheel-Trans
Cameron Penman, Manager of Customer Service, Wheel-
Trans
Sierra Buehler, Senior Planner – Systems and Policy
Diana Francis, Assistant Manager – Operations, Wheel-
Trans
Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager – Customer Service,
Wheel-Trans
Victoria Kolakowski, Travel Specialist, Wheel-Trans
Sara Mahboob, Human Rights Consultant — Human Rights
& Investigations
Hanh Nguyen, Administrative Assistant, Wheel-Trans
Mohammed Shaikh, Assistant Manager, Wheel-Trans
Twain Spark, Assistant Manager in Transportation, Wheel-
Trans

Invited Guests:

Joanne De Laurentiis, Vice Chair — TTC Board

Items Discussed

1. Call to Order / Attendance
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Remarks from ACAT Chair
 - a. TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters
 - b. ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with TTC CEO and TTC Chair: Nil
6. Review and Approval of July 29, 2021 Minutes
7. Outstanding Items
8. Deputation: Nil
9. Review of Correspondence: Nil
10. COVID-19 updates
11. Wheel-Trans Transformation updates
12. Subcommittee reports, highlights and updates
 - Communications
 - Design Review
 - Service Planning
 - Wheel-Trans Operations
13. Other / New Business
14. Next Meeting – September 30, 2021
15. Adjournment

1. Call to Order / Attendance

ACAT Chair Igor Samardzic called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. and attendance was taken.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The land acknowledgement was read by the ACAT Chair.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil.

4. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Lauri Sue Robertson, seconded by Carmen Galvan, the agenda was approved with no amendments.

5. Remarks from ACAT Chair

a. TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility

There was no TTC Board meeting for the month of August.

The next TTC Board Meeting will take place on September 15, 2021. The Chair encouraged members to watch online via the live webcast on YouTube.

The Chair encouraged all those attending today's meeting to promote the upcoming ACAT recruitment campaign. The TTC will be accepting applications for the new members of ACAT from September 7, 2021 to 4 p.m. on September 21, 2021.

The public is encouraged to access the TTC website where the entire application process is provided, including an FAQ section, Terms of Reference and past meeting minutes and agendas for reference.

The Chair outlined several different ways to submit an application, which include electronic, by mail, and fax. He encouraged interested candidates to refer to ttc.ca for more details. Paper applications can be requested at TTC Customer Service, 416-393-3030. If an accommodation is required, email acat@ttc.ca.

The TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit will be taking place on Thursday, October 21, 2021 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member brought up a point which was addressed during the Communications Subcommittee meeting, that ACAT applications should be available throughout the year, in order to include applicants who may miss the allowed application window.

They noted that there may be people who thought of applying throughout the year, but were unable to, due to the applications only being available at a specific time.

The suggestion was made for executives and staff to take this item to the Agenda Review meeting for consideration.

A member advised that the TTC Public Forum would be discussed including how they plan to promote this event at the Communications Subcommittee meeting on September 2, 2021.

b. ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with TTC CEO and TTC Chair

ACAT has a quarterly meeting coming up on September 13, 2021 in a virtual form.

The Chair noted that if any members have ideas for items or themes that should be discussed or brought up with the CEO and/or the Chair of the TTC Board. The Chair encouraged members to submit these items to the executive as soon as possible.

6. Review and Approval of July 29, 2021 Minutes

On a motion by Angela Marley, seconded by Craig Nicol, the July 29, 2021 minutes were approved with no amendments.

7. Outstanding Items

ACAT Terms of Reference – Ongoing.

On August 19, the Terms of Reference were sent to staff after ACAT Executives and liaisons provided further comments and feedback. The next step will involve updating and receiving all ACAT members' comments and feedback.

8. Deputation

Nil.

9. Review of Correspondence

Nil.

10. COVID-19 updates

Heather Brown, Manager of Customer Communications provided updates on the incoming September service, which will be higher than September 2020.

Masks will continue to remain mandatory on the TTC even if riders are vaccinated. Staff will be handing out complimentary one-time use masks at surface busy locations. Masks are also available for free at all stations.

The City of Toronto announced mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for its employees. The TTC will also be adopting this policy. All employees of the City of Toronto, including TTC employees, will be required to disclose and provide proof of vaccination status. First dose of vaccination by September 13 and fully vaccinated by October 30.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member asked if the recent mandatory vaccine directed at city workers impact the contracted taxis and accessible taxis working with Wheel-Trans.

David Lo Presti, Manager – Contracted Taxi Services at Wheel-Trans advised they are working with contractors to ensure that they maintain the same standards of all drivers that fall under provisional work. Wheel-Trans is an extension of the TTC, they can enforce the vaccination mandate to its contractors. Additionally, they noted that all accessible taxis have a partition barrier and comply with the recommendations of a mid-shift cleaning and sanitization. These requirements will be in place until the foreseeable future.

A member added that Wheel-Trans conduct spot inspections of all the taxis, as they have experienced being in a vehicle where the driver removed the barrier due to being fully vaccinated.

Staff appreciated the report and reiterated that all drivers must have a partition barrier, no matter their vaccination status. Accessible taxis are audited for contract compliance and will notify the auditors of any violation of the requirements.

Staff will circle back to this item when more information become available.

11. Wheel-Trans Transformation updates

Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans attended an outreach initiative across Toronto at Jane and Finch. Along with staff, they were on site for COMTO Back2School initiative handing out backpacks and various school supplies which were donated by TTC staff throughout the month.

Wheel-Trans continues working on the transformation with all efforts. The mobile app is still underway and they will have more vehicles coming in by end of the year.

Wheel-Trans staff heard the committee's concerns about bringing back ride sharing. The TTC and staff are concerned of the safety and wish to address all the concerns before reintroducing ride sharing. There is no current date as to when ride share will return but it will eventually return. Mr. Geddes noted they approach this item cautiously in order to ensure customers are safe and that these concerns are addressed before moving forward.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Members wondered what the maximum number of riders will be on the larger buses, where normally they can hold up to seven people.

Staff advised the current model was set out to accommodate and hold as many people as possible. However, with the current social distance situation, they won't be able to fulfil that mandate. They brought up the issue that if they set a strict number, it may not include riders of the same household. Wheel-Trans assured the committee they are in constant conversation with the Toronto Public Health and Safety department to commit to customer safety. They also reminded members Wheel-Trans will consider all aspect before making any changes.

A member wondered if there is a timeframe on the ride share decision, and what would go into the process before they are implemented.

Staff advised that any decision made will take a few weeks to implement as there will a lot to be done in terms of communication and discussion with the committee. They have heard of ACAT's concerns with ride share, but if any other members would like to express their comments or concerns, they should reach out to Lauri Sue Robertson, Interim WTOS Chair so that they may be discussed during the subcommittee meetings.

A member raised concerns about ensuring the sanitization of vehicles when using the handrails and overall service.

Staff advised there have been increased cleanliness on all vehicles and hand sanitizer is available on all vehicles for customers.

The Chair thanked Wheel-Trans for the updates, and for their back-to-school initiatives.

12. Subcommittee reports, highlights and updates

Communications Subcommittee (CS) – Angela Marley, CS Chair

A CS meeting was held on August 5, 2021 via Webex.

Community Bus

Emily Pickles, Communications Advisor Customer Communications presented the communications plan for Changes to Community Bus routes scheduled for September 7, 2021. Schedule adjustments, route changes and some new stop locations are being made to these bus routes. This information will be broadcasted through email to Wheel-Trans customers, social media announcements, brochures on Community Buses, on ttc.ca and internally to staff.

Website update

Digital Communications have updated the ACAT section of the new website. They are planning to launch the website in Q4 2021.

The Webex meeting links were added to the ACAT General Meeting agenda on the meeting section of the website, ttc.ca. This link enables members of the public to log in and observe ACAT General Meetings.

September service / back to school communications plan

Heather Brown, Manager of Customer Communications presented a communications plan for the September service as an increase of ridership on the system is expected.

The September service priorities will focus on back to school, high demand routes, service reliability, and any alternative service needed to mitigate construction and service disruptions. Safety is key in the TTC welcome back message.

Masks continue to be mandatory on the TTC into the fall, including for customers who have been vaccinated.

Wheel-Trans communications

Lema Salaymeh, Senior Community Liaison for Wheel-Trans Communications spoke about reintroducing ridesharing and working on the timeline as to when that will be. She said that Wheel-Trans understands customers are concerned for their safety and they want to ensure that customers are in the know as to when rideshare will be available. Wheel-Trans will inform customers in the Access Newsletter, send an e-blast and post it on the website, Wheel-Trans Self Booking site and on social media.

In response to the question in the July ACAT meeting, in what formats can people submit their ACAT application form,

- Online submission directly from ttc.ca/acat,
- Print the application form to complete and mail it in, or fax it to Wheel-Trans, 416-393-0126,

- Call TTC Customer Service Center 416-393-3030, to request an application be mailed to them,
- If they need another type of accommodation, contact TTC Customer Service or email ACAT@ttc.ca.

Another committee member added that it would be useful to have the questions about the application process in the website's FAQ section.

Updating of station descriptions on the current website

Customers told ACAT members they are not finding updated information regarding newly accessible subway stations on ttc.ca. Although the station descriptions are being updated on the Beta new website, they have not been updated on the current site. Subsequently, staff is working with ACAT members to update the current site descriptions of stations that have become accessible.

A member suggested having TTC employees who know ASL (American Sign Language) being identified as a resource, similar to speaking other languages.

The next CS meeting is scheduled for September 2, 2021.

Highlights for the next Board meeting

- Back-to-school communications update

Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) – Craig Nicol, DRS Chair

DRS meetings were held on August 4, 2021 and August 18, 2021 via Webex.

DRS meeting on August 4, 2021

Accessibility Requirements for Provincial Subway Program

Metrolinx representatives presented an Ontario Line Project overview along with accessibility requirements for the upcoming provincial subway program. The focus was on general features that would apply throughout including a two elevator path in all stations, larger elevators, wider platforms with edge doors as well as the Queen and Osgoode interchange stations. The two station designs discussed were preliminary in nature and smaller detail was not reviewed. Metrolinx expect to come back in the fall with more station designs including the line stations, circulation issues, signage and other elements.

Questions and Comments from Subcommittee

At Osgoode, DRS objected to the circuitous three elevator connection between Line 1 and the Ontario Line platforms recommending that the design should be revised to include a direct accessible connection from Line 1 platform to the Ontario Line concourse level.

DRS pointed out that the Osgoode design did not provide a second elevator connection between the Ontario Line and Line 1 platforms making accessible connection impossible in the event of an elevator failure.

DRS emphasized the importance of simple direct access between the Ontario Line and subway, LRT, streetcar and bus. This should be a focus when each station is reviewed.

DRS meeting on August 18, 2021

Platform Gap Update

Glen Buchberger, Head of Plant Maintenance provided an update on the TTC's Platform Edge Gaps remediation program including scheduling and prioritization. Gap measurements are being re-checked and suitable materials ordered to complete the work. Staff will return to the subcommittee with updates regarding field verification results. To date, vertical gap remediation has been performed at 11 stations and horizontal gap remediation is expected to be completed shortly at 6 stations.

Questions and Comments from the Subcommittee

DRS noted a need to prioritize work to coincide with OPTO recommending that gap measurements and remediation for accessible stations proceed from Sheppard West south and then north to Finch.

DRS expressed satisfaction with improved accessibility from the gap remediation project.

Other Business

The issue of restricted space on Davisville platforms was raised along with the matter of necessary platform reconstruction in 2025-6. Members considered that discussion needs to take place to find a way to improve space on the platforms.

The next DRS meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2021.

Highlights for the next Board meeting

- Provincial subway program accessibility
- Gap Remediation report and recommendations

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS) – Carmen Galvan, SPS Chair

A SPS meeting was held on August 4, 2021 via Webex.

King Street Transit Priority Corridor – Stop Accessibility

Matt Hagg, Senior Planner - System Accessibility introduced the issue that was brought up by Chair and Vice Chairs of ACAT regarding current temporary ramps on the King Street Transit Priority Corridor that are in poor condition and have become inaccessible.

The permanent solution will be to rebuild the track and stops along King Street to implement proper raised platforms. In the meantime, a proposed solution would be to remove current ramps and replace them with asphalt ramps from the sidewalk to the street. These ramps would generally align with the second door on the streetcar where the accessible door is located, and where this is possible.

Questions and Comments from Subcommittee

A member asked about the durability of the handrails on the proposed asphalt ramps, but TTC staff reassured that the new asphalt ramps won't need handrails, as they'll be similar to a sidewalk ramp down to the street. TTC staff also noted that the ramp will be approximately 2 meters wide which is consistent with the permanent curb ramp infrastructure at other stops.

Members had concerns about the gradient of the slopes. Ramp will need to meet AODA requirements. The curb will be sloped on all sides so that the ramp won't go straight down to the road but to the sides as well. The committee suggested including a marking to draw attention to the slope on the side. They recommended a colour marking by paint. TTC staff will be present at the time of construction to ensure the requirements are met.

Other Business

A member raised an issue regarding drivers who have a tendency to pick-up or drop-off customers before the designated stop, maybe due to service disruptions and route changes. TTC staff replied that this should not be happening and that all operators are trained to pull-up as close to the curb as possible and follow guidelines. TTC staff said that he will send the minutes to the training manger.

The next SPS meeting is scheduled for September 1, 2021.

Highlights for the next Board meeting

- Ramps along the King Street Transit Priority Corridor

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Members wondered if drivers knew that a customer is waiting to board the streetcar if the ramp is at the second door, located away from the designated stop pole.

Some members added that through their experience, the temporary ramps that are currently at these locations were not at the pole, yet drivers understood there were passengers waiting to board the streetcar. Additionally, members noted that the presence of a transit rider in that area is more obvious, however some members were still concerned about how the drivers are trained to ensure that they notice someone on the ramp, not only at the designated stop.

SPS Chair noted that it was not discussed during the meeting, however they will take this comment back for discussion.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee (WTOS) – Lauri Sue Robertson, WTOS Chair

A WTOS meeting was held on August 12, 2021 via Webex.

Lauri Sue Robertson, Interim WTOS Chair presented the committee with its updates.

Marco Iorfida, Scheduling and Policy Specialist, presented updates regarding the Wheel-Trans stops and landmarks at subway stations that were submitted for review last meeting.

Ross Visconti, Project Manager – GIRO presented the updates for the late October implantation of the Phase 4 improvements to the internet bookings systems.

Victoria Kolakowski, Travel Trainer Specialist provided updates from recent travel-training sessions. Both Victoria and Dean Milton, Manager of Strategic Initiatives at Wheel-Trans travelled the conventional system using motorized mobility devices in order to get a better understanding and perspective of the challenges and experiences when travelling on FOS. They travelled on the bus, subway and streetcar and found this experience very informative. The challenge they faced during the trip was accessing the bus.

Dean Milton presented statistics of FOS riders that were projected for the year. By the end of 2021, Wheel-Trans will offer 440 FOS vehicle transfer stops across 64 bus and streetcar routes, at all accessible subway stations and 1,500 non-vehicle stops.

Other Business

Members suggested Wheel-Trans add a policy regarding mandatory vaccinations for Wheel-Trans riders.

The next meeting is to be held on September 9, 2021 Webex.

Highlights for the next Board meeting

- Travel training sessions have resumed via virtual means

13. Other / New Business

A member inquired if Wheel-Trans would make vaccination mandatory for customers that use their services considering it is mandatory for TTC staff.

Staff advised unless there is a mandate given from the City of Toronto specifically regarding TTC riders to be vaccinated in order to use the system, they do not expect to have such mandate in place.

Members are in agreement to TTC's mandatory requirement for staff to be vaccinated under the City of Toronto's recent mandate for city workers. The TTC requires all staff and drivers be fully vaccinated by October 2021.

14. Next Meeting – September 30, 2021

The next ACAT General meeting will be held on September 30, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. via Webex.

15. Adjournment

On a motion by Debbie Gillespie, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Elaine Genest
Recording Secretary

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting: Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit
Meeting No. 370

Meeting Date: Thursday, September 30, 2021
1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual meeting via Webex

Present: Igor Samardzic, Chair
Debbie Gillespie, Co-Vice Chair
Chris Stigas, Co-Vice Chair
Carmen Galvan
Margo Brodie
Sean Hollingsworth
Angela Marley
Jonathan Marriott
Craig Nicol
James Pyo
Lauri Sue Robertson
Janice Shachter
Mahendan Sivabalasundaram
Sam Savona

Pool Members: Kim Pearson
John Rae

Regrets: Rhonda Solomon
Howard Wax

TTC Representatives: Jim Ross, Chief Operating Officer
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans
Stephan Boson, Chief Instructor, Operations Training Centre
Leslie Millan, Head of Marketing and Customer Experience
Al Pritchard, Head of Bus Maintenance
Heather Brown, Manager of Customer Communications
John Boucher, Garage Manager, Wheel-Trans
Marina Davidovic, Senior Project Manager, IT Services
Tash Harriott, Manager – Digital Communications
David LoPresti, Manager – Contracted Taxi Services,
Wheel-Trans
Dean Milton, Manager – Strategic Initiatives, Wheel-Trans
Cameron Penman, Manager of Customer Service, Wheel-
Trans
Charlene Sharpe, Divisional Manager, Wheel-Trans
Onder Erturk, Senior Systems Analyst, IT Services
Matt Hagg, Senior Planner – System Accessibility, Strategy
and Foresight
Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager – Customer Service,
Wheel-Trans
Victoria Kolakowski, Travel Specialist, Wheel-Trans
Brittany Manu, Anti-Racism Policy Consultant, Diversity
Hanh Nguyen, Administrative Assistant, Wheel-Trans
Grace Permaul, Human Rights Consultants — Human
Rights & Investigations
Cheteh Sutrisno, System Support Analyst, IT Services
Mathushan Thilakanathan, Co-Op Student, Strategy and
Foresight

Invited Guests: Joanne De Laurentiis, Vice-Chair, TTC Board
Mazin Aribi, Deputant, Former ACAT Chair

Items Discussed

16. Call to Order / Attendance
17. Land Acknowledgement
18. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
19. Approval of Agenda
20. Remarks from ACAT Chair
 - a. TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters
 - b. ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with TTC CEO and TTC Chair
21. Review and Approval of August 26, 2021 Minutes
22. Outstanding Items
23. Deputation: Mazin Aribi
24. Review of Correspondence: Nil
25. COVID-19 updates: Nil
26. Website launch updates
27. Wheel-Trans Transformation updates
28. Subcommittee reports, highlights and updates
 - Communications: TTC Public forum on Accessible Transit and Communication on closures and diversions information
 - Design Review: Bloor-Yonge Station capacity improvement project
 - Service Planning: Nil
 - Wheel-Trans Operations: Wheel-Trans Stops and Landmarks improvements and Travel Training
29. Other / New Business
30. Next Meeting – October 28, 2021
31. Adjournment

1. Call to Order / Attendance

ACAT Chair Igor Samardzic called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m. and attendance was taken.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The land acknowledgement was read by the ACAT Chair. He noted that today was especially important as it is the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation.

Brittany Manu, Anti-Racism Policy Consultant spoke to the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and items the TTC are working on in order to recognize, acknowledge, honour, value, bring awareness and to share the experiences of the Indigenous communities. Flags at Hillcrest have been lowered to half mast, and orange arm bands are given to every employee working on site as a sign of respect and to show solidarity with Indigenous communities. The TTC is working through different initiatives focused on acknowledging the historic and present day injustices of the collective impact of the residential schools on Indigenous communities and to acknowledge the 10-point action plan on Diversity and Inclusion. The TTC is working to ensure across the organization employees are putting in the effort needed to make an inclusive, welcome, space that honours indigeneity and also create a space that's inclusive for all the members of the TTC both customers and employees.

Members observed a minute of silence in recognition of the lost lives of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada's history.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil.

4. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Sam Savona, seconded by Lauri Sue Robertson, the agenda was approved with no amendments.

5. Remarks from ACAT Chair

a. TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters

The TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit will be taking place on Thursday, October 21, 2021 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Recruitment for incoming ACAT members has been completed and the Chair looks forward to meeting new members to join in January 2022.

The ACAT Chair advised that the meeting package will now include Subcommittee Chair reports for members to read ahead of time and form any questions or comments in advance. The agenda format will include the major topics from Subcommittee Chair reports. The new format will be tested for a few months and feedback from members is encouraged.

b. ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with TTC CEO and TTC Chair

The ACAT Executive Quarterly meeting was held on September 13, 2021. Several items were discussed, including updates to the TTC website and ensuring its accessibility with regards to the highest standard currently possible as well as discussions on ACAT concerns with the planned Ontario Line design for Osgoode Station.

The upcoming ACAT 30th anniversary in 2022 was acknowledged.

The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2021. The Chair noted that if members have any items to bring up for the meeting to please advise the ACAT Executives.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member inquired if a decision was made on who will organize the ACAT 30th anniversary. They hoped that the ACAT 30th anniversary date will coincide with the TTC's 100th anniversary and that there is enough time to include as many previous ACAT members for feedback.

Staff will take the item back and advise once more information is available.

A member asked when in-person meetings will be held again.

Staff advised that they are not in position to return to in-person meetings yet. Any type of public group gathering is limited in adherence to the Toronto Public Health guidelines. It was noted that members may need to keep that in mind for ACAT's 30th anniversary in 2022.

Staff commented that nothing public had been planned to recognize the TTC's 100th anniversary. Discussions are underway around what a public event could look like, once COVID restrictions are eased. More information will be shared when it is available.

The Chair requested that staff provide updates on the ACAT 30th anniversary plans every General Meeting starting next year until the celebration.

Staff noted the September 1st event for the TTC's 100th anniversary was a media event and not public facing event. It was a small gathering of invited guests that included City Councillors and Board members. It was very closely monitored from a COVID-19 perspective. ACAT Chair Igor Samardzic attended to represent all of ACAT.

A member wondered if the event was held at an accessible location and if any past ACAT Chairs were present.

Staff advised the event was held at an accessible location. The guest list was kept at a very low number which did not include any previous ACAT Chairs, due to COVID restrictions.

6. Review and Approval of August 26, 2021 Minutes

On a motion by Angela Marley, seconded by Debbie Gillespie, the August 26, 2021 minutes were approved as amended.

7. Outstanding Items

- Item: ACAT Terms of Reference – Ongoing.
Members submitted feedback as requested between September 10 to 21.
Feedback is under review and an update will be provided.

8. Deputation: Mazin Aribi

Mazin Aribi, former ACAT Chair gave his deputation on Wheel-Trans implementing a new policy for conditional customers prior to making Family of Services mandatory. This policy would allow conditional Wheel-Trans customers a minimum of 8 door-to-door trips a month due to the fact that people with disabilities and seniors may experience a last minute change of plans beyond their control. For example, if they are not feeling well, their support person is no longer available, their mobility device is no longer in use, or it prevents conditional customers from taking the leap to using conventional transit. This service would provide comfort and reduce anxiety for customers.

The second item Mazin presented would be that once FOS becomes mandatory, Wheel-Trans would collect data from conditional Wheel-Trans users who refuse to take FOS trips and log the purpose of their declined trip. The survey would allow for multiple choice

answers and be accessible for use. The benefits would be to identify trips that are not feasible from a Wheel-Trans customer perspective. It would also identify transfer points that may be confusing for users.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans thanked Mazin for his deputation and noted that these were some great suggestions. He wanted to ensure that these items have been brought up in the past and that Wheel-Trans have recognized this item, which is why it has been addressed in the current policy. He recognized that some customers may not be able to travel, which is why they have a list of conditions that allow for a door-to-door trip if needed. Customers may call Reservations and explain their situation in order to arrange a new trip. These trips are verified on a case-to-case basis. There is no need for a point system in this case, as there could be too many differentiating scenarios.

A member agreed with Mazin that it would allow flexibility for conditional users.

Another member noted that it is sometimes hard for customers to get a hold of Customer Service when they need to change a trip. They noted that even if they call hours ahead, they aren't able to connect to customer service. They suggested that this item be discussed at the next WTOS meeting for further discussion and consider another strategy if staff don't agree.

Dwayne responded that customers would call Reservations in order to book a trip. Reservations are available from 5:30 to 11:00 p.m. 7 days a week. The wait time has greatly improved due to customer concerns raised in the past and that staff listened and provided a solution to shorter wait times over the phone.

Dwayne reiterated that with the door-to-door service there is no need for points, and customers can simply call and explain their situation in order to get some assistance. He noted that adding points would only create limitations.

The Chair moved that the discussion be discussed at the next WTOS meeting.

9. Review of Correspondence

Nil.

10. COVID-19 updates

A member raised a concern that they received a letter from the TTC that as an employee they would need to register online and provide vaccination status. They wondered why they received the letter as they are not a TTC employee.

Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager of Customer Service in Wheel-Trans apologized to members who received the letter. Staff will investigate and remediate the issue. ACAT members can disregard the letter. Future communications meant strictly for TTC employees will not be sent to ACAT members.

11. Website launch updates

Tash Harriott, Manager of Digital Communications gave the members a walkthrough of the new website. Although it was scheduled to be launched by the end of September, the release has been delayed, as they are waiting for confirmation from the CEO based on his discussion with the Board. While they are aiming to acquire WCAG 2.0 compliance by the launch, there are some accessibility deficiencies that can only be fixed post-launch. They noted that launching the website at the end of the month is crucial, as the current site is failing and is no longer supported. The new website will launch with known accessibility and some functionality deficiencies but aren't critical. The goal is to launch the website in its current state and fix the deficiencies listed in 2.0 compliance immediately. They are hoping to receive feedback from the public and from the ACAT members regarding regular use of the new site to identify and move forward with post-launch improvements.

Some new key features:

- Plan a trip from the home page
- Implemented subway status dashboard
- Current service alerts widget
- Elevator and escalator alerts dashboard
- My TTC e-Services has been improved
- Additional links at the footer
- Complaints, compliments and suggestions forms have been optimized
- Alerts affecting stations or routes will be visible on station pages.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member raised a concern that the station description pages are not readable by screen readers. Specifically, the Finch station page, shown by Tash in the walk-through. The

member noted that people can't access the descriptions and that buttons are not labelled, rendering it completely inaccessible for screen reader users. They suggested that the website not be launched if it is not readable.

Marina Davidovic, Senior Project Manager in IT offered to set up a time to speak with members and take a look at some items from the website that need to be worked on.

Members wondered if the trip planner had access to the user's location. Tash responded that it has the possibility to take into account the user's location as long as the service is enabled on the user's device.

Another member commented that the new website requires more clicks to get to a specific page. It was noted the layout of the page is designed more for mobile users, which makes the computer layout harder to use. On a design note, within station descriptions, the size of the font headings for the subway platform descriptions is confusing and inconsistent.

Staff are aware of the CSS and design issues and are planning to correct post-launch of the website. There are some stylistic issues to be corrected, including the text and font sizing across the website. There are some limitations with the platform currently being used that may make it difficult to customize, however, staff reassured they are aware of the issues to correct. They had to weigh the benefits of releasing a new website, or continuing to support a broken one, such as the current site.

Another member advised that the accordion menu on the station pages do not react the same when using a screen reader. In this case, it makes it hard to know when to click on a menu item. They noted that the tabs had previously worked in April 2021 when it was introduced to the member.

A member commented that if the TTC had a high priority on making accessibility they would delay the launch of the website.

Tash advised delaying the website was considered but that the more they delay the launch, the more the team falls behind on maintaining and optimizing items on the new site. Staff are managing two websites at the moment. She noted that if they can launch the new site with needed adjustments, they can focus all their efforts into improving and updating the new website. She reminded that there will be regular updates and accessibility audits in order to deliver an optimal experience for users.

12. Wheel-Trans Transformation updates

Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans provided the committee with Wheel-Trans updates. He noted that in-person Travel Training has returned. A number of customers are interested and have begun scheduling training in the coming months. More updates will be provided at the WTOS meeting.

He announced that a bus familiarization day at the Birchmount division will be held at the end of October. This will allow customers who use mobility devices to test out riding on the conventional system in a controlled environment. In-person vehicle exploration will return.

As a part of the Easier Access program, members are invited to attend a virtual meeting on October 7, 2021 to learn more about upcoming construction at Greenwood Station.

13. Subcommittee reports, highlights and updates

Communications Subcommittee (CS) – Angela Marley, CS Chair

A CS meeting was held on September 2, 2021 via Webex.

Public forum

Alicia Fowlie, Customer Communications, presented the plans for the 14th annual TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit to be held virtually on Thursday, October 21, 2021 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. This is the second time the Forum will be held virtually, with American Sign Language interpretation and Live Captioning. Attendees must register for the event and can participate online or by phone.

Keisha Campbell, Chief Diversity and Culture Officer will be the Emcee for the Forum. Presentations will include: Igor Samardzic – ACAT Chair, Dwayne Geddes – Head of Wheel-Trans and a presentation on the Conventional system accessibility. Questions and comments from attendees will start by 7:30 p.m.

Members raised concern about the amount of time allotted to presentations, as it takes away time from time for the public giving feedback to the TTC, which is the purpose of the Public Forum. Discussed eliminating guest speaker and having Keisha Campbell speak briefly about the role of the TTC Diversity and Culture department.

Members requested an audio cue, paralleling the visual, be provided while attendees are waiting on Webex for the Forum to begin.

Staff are implementing members' suggestion to run the TTC 100th Anniversary video during the pre-meeting wait time.

As details were not in the recent *ACCESS* newsletter and as ridership is lower due to COVID restrictions, in addition to the TTC's routine communication channels members recommended sending a phone message to Wheel-Trans customers about the Public Forum.

Communication of Closures and Diversions

CS has been discussing the importance of clear communication when transit routes are changed enabling customers to know where to find their transit stop. Staff are preparing a presentation to a joint CS and SPS meeting in Q4 2021.

Website

Alicia Fowlie reported that the subway station descriptions of stations that became accessible this year, have been updated on the current and new websites.

The next CS meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2021.

Highlights for next Board meeting

- TTC Public Forum on Accessible Transit
- Communication of Closures and Diversions Information

Desing Review Subcommittee (DRS) – Craig Nicol, DRS Chair

DRS had one meeting on September 7, 2021.

Bloor-Yonge Station Capacity Improvements

Bryan Shaw, Lead Architect for the Bloor-Yonge Station Project presented the subcommittee with a 30 percent design plan to modify and expand the existing Bloor-Yonge Station to address overcrowding on Lines 1 and 2.

The design provides for:

- separate eastbound and westbound platforms at Line 2;
- a northward extension of Line 1 platforms;
- expansion of Line 1 platform transfer areas;
- five new elevators making for more direct and second elevator service in all instances;
- a new simpler entry at the HBC retail level;
- an additional accessible entrance;
- new emergency exits; and
- many other enhancements.

The elevator path between platforms is more direct with three-stop elevators connecting the HBC entrance level with Line 1 northbound and southbound and line 2 westbound. To reach line 2 eastbound an elevator change is necessary.

Questions and Comments from Subcommittee

- Response to a question about increasing platform width at Line 2 westbound revealed that although vertical circulation elements will be moved to the south side of the renovated platform at some locations banks of three escalators will result in no width increase at these locations.
- Concern was raised that the renovated westbound platform design does not provide an emergency exit route with an area of refuge.
- Elevator size was questioned, the response was that elevator sizes are increased from the regular TTC size, the capacity is rated at 28 persons.

Other Business

- Members asked about responses from Metrolinx on ECLRT issues raised and were informed that Metrolinx is expected to return to the subcommittee in November.
- It was noted that one of the newly installed ramps on the King Street Transit Priority Corridor is already deteriorating. Staff will investigate and bring an update to the next meeting.

The next DRS meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2021.

Highlights for next Board meeting

- Bloor-Yonge Station Capacity Improvement Project

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member wondered how many people using mobility devices may fit in the new elevators.

Craig Nicol, DRS Chair responded that they have asked for a response on this and more information will be discussed in coming meetings.

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS), Carmen Galvan, SPS Chair

No meeting was held in September.

The next SPS meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2021.

SPS members are invited to attend the Communications Subcommittee meeting on

October 7, 2021.

Wheel Trans Subcommittee (WTOS), Lauri Sue Robertson, Interim Chair

WTOS held a meeting on Thursday, Sept. 9, 2021

Marco Iorfida, the Scheduling and Policy Specialist, provided an update on Wheel-Trans stops and Landmarks, with input from Angela Marley. Angela discussed the issue of the address used for the Pioneer Village Station.

Victoria Kolakowski, the Travel Trainer specialist, provided the subcommittee with an update on the Travel Training that is available, both virtually and eventually in person.

Family of Services Update was provided by Dean Milton, Manager of Strategic Initiatives. He provided an update and statistics on Family of Services usage. It was established that scheduled Community Buses cannot be easily integrated into the FOS at this time.

There were no outstanding items this month, but the issue of travel training for people on stationary buses will be added for future reference.

New Business

- A member asked how people who use mobility devices will be able to practice getting on and off the buses. Victoria and Dean advised us that this will be held at a Division in the future. Customers will be notified.
- Low-floor streetcars are easier to enter and leave than the buses, but the ramps can be steep when deployed to street. There will be no buses at the Variety Village Expo this year.

The next WTOS meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2021.

Highlights for the next TTC Board meeting

- Progress has been made in improving Wheel Trans stops and landmarks, to make it easier to be dropped off and picked up at accessible entrances.
- Travel Training: Customers are eagerly waiting for the opportunity to practice boarding and exiting from buses.

14. Other / New Business

A member wondered if it was possible to update the mobile app as some icons are not readable or labelled. When adding a new device, the icons are non-readable. Please update the icons to read "Add" and "Remove" instead of the "plus" and "minus" icons.

Sam Savona, WTOS Chair invited Mazin to the next WTOS meeting for further discussion regarding his deputation.

15. Next Meeting – October 28, 2021

The next ACAT General meeting will be held on October 28, 2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. via Webex.

16. Adjournment

On a motion by Lauri Sue Robertson, the meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Elaine Genest
Recording Secretary