



Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit

September 26, 2024

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 29, 2024 to the October 29, 2024 Board Meeting for information. During the August meeting, major topics included a deputation from Toronto Grace Hospital regarding the size of mobility devices allowed on Wheel-Trans vehicles; reviewing the High Park Seasonal Service route and experiences; and updates on the TTC Annual Public Forum on Accessible Transit.

The following is a summary of the main topics discussed at the August ACAT Subcommittee meetings:

Communications Subcommittee

The next Communications Subcommittee Meeting will take place in September.

Design Review Subcommittee

- A more detailed presentation on the Initial Recommendations from the Standards Development Committee for the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards was provided. Major take backs included: discussions surrounding bilingual signage and announcements, electric vehicle charging stations, and harmonizing exterior ramps and chairs – TTC staff are recommending a 50% contrast level on exterior stairs. ACAT members will submit their comments to TTC staff to be sent to the Design of Public Spaces Standards Development Committee.
- TTC Transportation Specialists attended the meeting to answer questions regarding the Floating Bus Stops Standards. ACAT members suggested: separate elevations between bike lane, sidewalk, and floating bus platforms, slightly raising the refuge area for easier detection, and consistency among pedestrian signal locations.
- In Early September 2024, the TTC will be rolling out the new fare gate timing software in 1-3 stations as a trial. If successful, it will be rolled out to all stations through late September and October 2024.

Service Planning Subcommittee

- Service Planning provided a presentation on the 2025 Annual Service Plan. An updated report implementing members' concerns and suggestions will be brought to the October meeting.
- Management is working through the 5-Year Accessibility Plan reviews. Once ready, TTC staff will distribute the draft plan to SPS members.
- TTC's Annual Public Forum on Accessible Transit will be taking place on September 18, 2024 at the North York Memorial Community Hall and will follow a hybrid model.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee

- TTC staff introduced the new Secret Shopper Pilot Program. This program is to observe conventional TTC operators' treatment of customers and their compliance with accessibility standards.
- Information on the Wheel-Trans Transformation Program was provided. Wheel-Trans is currently testing an update to reduce the extended pick-up and drop-off windows.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Anita Dressler
2024 ACAT Chair

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION
COMMITTEE MINUTES

APPROVED

Minutes of Meeting: ACAT General Meeting
Meeting Date: Thursday, August 29, 2024
1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Location: Hybrid meeting via Teams

Present: Anita Dressler, ACAT Chair
Betty Rivington-Law, ACAT Co-Vice Chair
Mei Hung
Debbie Gillespie, Chair SPS
Bobbi Moore
Angela Marley
Lori Bailey
Chau Sheung Wong
Tammy Adams
Lavarnan Mehavarnan

Pool Members Michelle Pena Escobar
Paul Manna
Oda Al-Anizi

Regrets Erica Tanny, ACAT Co-Vice Chair
Wangari Muriuki
Maria Marin
Roberta Butler
Howard Wax
Frank Lockhart

TTC Representatives: Rick Leary, CEO
Bruce McGregor, Deputy CEO
Cameron Penman, Head, Wheel-Trans
Dean Milton, Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Wheel-Trans
Matt Hagg, Manager, Customer Policy and Planning,
Strategy & Foresight
Levenson Lincoln, Assistant Manager, Wheel-Trans
John Boucher, Manager, Vehicle Maintenance, Lakeshore
Garage
Natalie Francis, Manager, Planning and Policy, Wheel-Trans
Shima Eghanian, Operations Manager, Streetcar
Maintenance
Ike Onuoha, Program Manager, Vehicle Programs

David LoPresti, Manager, Contracted Taxi Services, Wheel-Trans

Jason Albom, Chief Instructor, Operational Training Centre

Michelle Edwards, Project Coordinator, Vehicle Programs

Mohammed Shaikh, Divisional Manager, Wheel-Trans

Marc Mis, Head, Strategy and Foresight

Alexandra Nicastro, Administrative Assistant, Wheel-Trans

Sneha Madhuri, Communications Advisor, Corporate Communications

Jasmine Eftekhari, Manager, Service Planning

Ross Visconti, Project Manager, Wheel-Trans

Warren Rupnarain, Accessibility Consultant, Diversity

Loris Dametto, Senior Project Manager, Vehicles Program

Items Discussed

- 1/ Call to Order / Attendance
- 2/ Land Acknowledgement
- 3/ Declaration of Conflict of Interest
- 4/ Approval of Agenda
- 5/ Review and Approval of June 27, 2024, and July 25, 2024, Minutes
- 6/ Remarks from TTC Executive
- 7/ Remarks from ACAT Chair
- 8/ Wheel-Trans Transformation Update from Cameron Penman
- 9/ Outstanding Items
- 10/ Deputation:
 - a. Large Mobility Devices on Wheel-Trans – Toronto Grace Health Care, Carly Hunter
- 11/ Review of Correspondence: Nil
- 12/ Subcommittee Reports, Highlights and Updates
 - Communications
 - Design Review
 - Service Planning
 - Wheel-Trans Operations
- 13/ Other/New Business
- 14/ Next Meeting – Thursday, September 26, 2024
- 15/ Adjournment

1. Call to Order/Attendance

Anita Dressler, ACAT Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Attendance was taken.

2. Land Acknowledgement

A member read the Land Acknowledgement.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil.

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda: Debbie Gillespie

Seconded: Betty Rivington Law

Carried: Agenda approved.

5. Review and Approval of June 27 and July 25, 2024 Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes of June 27, 2024 as amended: Betty Rivington-Law

Seconded: Debbie Gillespie

Carried: Approved.

Motion to approve the Minutes of July 25, 2024: Betty Rivington-Law

Seconded: Lori Bailey

Carried: Approved.

6. Remarks from TTC Executive – Rick Leary, CEO

Rick Leary, CEO attended the meeting on his last day and thanked ACAT members for their support and contributions over the last ten years, seven of those in the position as CEO. Rick reflected on his time with the TTC, commending ACAT on their help with advancing the TTC towards accommodating the needs of all customers and advancing the accessibility and the barrier free path they have been working towards. He introduced Bruce Macgregor, Deputy CEO who will be Acting as CEO until an Interim CEO is selected.

Questions and Comments

Nil.

7. Remarks from ACAT Chair

The Chair thanked everyone for their support while she was absent. She encouraged all ACAT members to attend the TTC Annual Public Forum on Accessible Transit as a chance to interact with TTC staff and the general public.

Questions and Comments

Nil.

8. Wheel-Trans Transformation & Update from Cameron Penman

Cameron Penman, Head, Wheel-Trans, gave a short update.

Staff continues to work towards the new Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems RFPs, which are expected to be posted later this year. He noted that they are close to signing the contracts for phases 5-8 of the reservations, scheduling, and dispatch software upgrades, which should also be ready for implementation next year.

The re-registration campaign continues to progress successfully. Approximately 1,800 additional legacy customers have re-registered in 2024, reducing the number of legacy customers which still need to re-register to 3,400. Reminder letters have been sent.

Cameron mentioned he is looking forward to seeing ACAT members at the TTC Annual Public Forum on Accessible Transit on September 18, 2024 at the North York Memorial Community Centre.

Questions and Comments

A member commented the reminder message sent to Wheel Trans riders the night before a ride now come later than they used to. Ross Visconti, Project Manager, Wheel-Trans, explained the call-outs are completed in the order of the trip pick-up times, from morning to evening, so the reminders may be coming later with increased ridership.

A member commented on the diversity questionnaire at the end of the registration for the TTC Annual Public Forum on Accessible Transit and that it was not reviewed by the Communications Subcommittee. This item would be taken back to Heather Brown, Director, Customer Experience and Jeff Short, Senior Accessibility Planner, Strategy & Foresight.

The Chair noted that the Wheel-Trans Self-Booking site notice for the TTC Annual Public Forum on Accessible Transit does not mention ACAT, only the TTC Management. Cameron will review the wording and address that.

A member also noted that the advertisements for the Public Forum had changed, and wondered if there was an official change or miscommunication, as it is always co-hosted by ACAT. Cameron confirmed it had not changed.

A member suggested adding an Agenda for the Public Forum and a better explanation of the Marketplace so that customers understand what to expect.

9. Outstanding Items

a. Honorarium

This item was deferred to 2025.

b. Sam Savona Tribute Update:

This item is deferred to 2025 for the completion of the College station elevators.

c. GTA Member

This item was deferred for further discussion.

d. AODA Training Motion

This item was deferred.

10. Deputation

a. Large Mobility Devices on Wheel-Trans – Toronto Grace Health Care

Carly Hunter from Toronto Grace Health Care wrote a letter on the inability for new Wheel-Trans vehicles to fit the larger mobility devices and a deputation was given by Cindy and Joanna. This regarded an incident in the spring where the operator of a Wheel-Trans vehicle denied service to a patient at Toronto Grace Health Care as their wheelchair was too large.

Levenson Lincoln, Assistant Manager, Customer Service apologized for the experience and thanked Cindy and Joanna for bringing this to Wheel-Trans and ACAT's attention. He looked into previous trips taken by this customer and it was confirmed they had used the current Wheel-Trans vehicles before with no issue. He put this note on her file to assure this would not happen again. Additionally, a Mobile Supervisor was sent to Toronto Grace Health Care to review the mobility device and determined it was within the limits which Wheel-Trans permits. He also noted the different ways to connect with the TTC and will reach out to Toronto Grace Health Care to see if a visit could be arranged to answer questions and help residents.

Questions and Comments

Nil.

11. Review of Correspondence

Nil.

12. Subcommittee Reports, Highlights and Updates:

Communications Subcommittee (CS)

The Communications Subcommittee did not hold a meeting in August.

The next meeting will be held on September 5, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

Design Review Subcommittee (DRS)

Lori Bailey provided the August 13, 2024 meeting update for the DRS.

Summary Highlights

1. More detail was provided on the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards Committee and DRS members provided some feedback that will be included with the TTC staff members comments and forwarded to the Committee. Members were asked to provide their feedback to Jeff Short prior to August 19, 2024 for inclusion in the document being sent to the Standards Committee.

2. TTC Staff Brittany Chung, Transportation Specialist, Transportation Engineering, Curtis Batuszkin, Senior Planner, Transit Stops and Rohan Majmudar, Project Manager, Street Furniture Transportation Department for the City of Toronto provided some clarification on items discussed at the last DRS meeting in July 2024. They also took back some items for clarification and asked for updated drawings from the City to help provide visual clarification and ensure no suggestions or recommendations were missed. A member suggested that someone from the department that does the drawings could be invited to a DRS meeting to ensure nothing is missed prior to the deadline.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. and would be chaired by Jeff Short.

Questions and Comments

A member commented that they sent a suggestion after this meeting regarding adding wayfinding from the sidewalk/street to station doors, as this was missing when the Line 5 stations were designed. They suggested going forward, that this be looked at by DRS when a design for a station is brought to them.

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS)

Debbie Gillespie, SPS Chair gave the report for the meeting held August 20, 2024.

Summary Highlights

1. Jasmine Eftekhari, Acting Manager for Service Planning
Jordan Langlois, Service Planning Team gave a presentation for the 2025 Annual Service Plan. They expect to return in the fall with a final report to present to the SPS. Members were concerned with the change to a stop at East York Acres, that would include an additional 200 metre walk.

2. Jeff Short reminded members of the upcoming TTC Forum on Accessible Transit that was being held at the North York Memorial Community Hall on September 18, 2024 as a hybrid meeting again.

The next meeting would be held on September 17, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee (WTOS)

Mei Hung, WTOS Chair, gave the report for the meeting held August 14, 2024.

Summary Highlights

1. A presentation on a new Secret Shopper pilot project was given by Warren Rupnarain based on the comments received at the Wheel-Trans Public Consultations regarding proper accessibility procedures not being followed on the conventional system. He noted that he will be doing a “secret shopper” undercover visit with the travel trainers, who will be acting as a stranger or a companion. Operators would not be given feedback; this is only to collect information to improve training.

2. A presentation covering the transformation updates for phases 5-8 was given by Ross Visconti, providing more details on what to expect in the coming years. Updates will include modernization of the scheduling and dispatch software, updated real time traffic information and rerouting capabilities, along with voice recognition and AI (Artificial Intelligence) support for booking to reduce the number of steps required to book a ride. Checkers Cabs are now fitted with the “where’s my ride” capabilities and this would be rolled out to all cabs in the future. Wheel-Trans expects all of the transformation projects to be completed by August 2027.

3. The FOS Diversion Survey results were provided to members, which confirmed that diversion is up in 2024 to 33% from 31% in 2023.

Next Meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

13. Other/New Business

a. High Park Seasonal Service

A member recounted her experience taking the High Park Seasonal Service from Keele Station to High Park. She noted that there were difficulties with station staff knowing where the stop at Keele Station was located and suggested better communication to staff so they could direct customers. This item would be sent to the Communications Subcommittee for further discussion.

14. Next Meeting

Next ACAT General Meeting: Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

15. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m. on a motion by: Betty Rivington Law

Cindy Edwards
Recording Secretary