



City of Hamilton
ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES ADDENDUM

Meeting #: 25-004
Date: April 8, 2025
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Location: Room 264, 2nd Floor, City Hall
(hybrid) (RM)
71 Main Street West

Carrie McIntosh, Legislative Coordinator (905) 546-2424 ext.2729

Pages

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.7 PW25020

- *a. Correspondence from Brad Evoy, Disability Justice Network of Ontario, respecting Item 7.7 - Memorandum PW25020, Correction to Delegation Information on Fare Assist Program Eligibility 3

*7.8 PW25021 5

Accessible Transportation Services Request for Information – Transportation Network Company

Apr 2, 2025

RE: Memorandum on Item PW25020: Correction to Delegation Information on Fare Assist Program Eligibility

Dear Chairperson Kemp and Committee Members,

I'm writing to you today in response to the memorandum provided by Manager Nancy Purser regarding my previous delegation on Fare Assist Program Eligibility. This memorandum purports to be a correction to my delegation—however, I wish to provide further clarification to my own remarks and to question the nature of this correction.

The memorandum remarks that my statements are essentially false as the current program relies on a notice of assessment from the Canada Revenue Agency to illustrate income which purportedly makes “Fare Assist Program [...] open to all Hamilton residents with household income below the Statistics Canada Low-Income Measure” regardless of income source.

This misrepresents a fundamental issue that we take with this program. First, let us be clear: being *technically* eligible *if* you fit other criteria or provide other paperwork is not the same as simply being eligible by right for being part of one of these social assistance or membership programs—which was the core of my commentary to you all on this specific point.

Using inclusion in these programs as a measure or path to eligibility rather than *just* requiring the production of a notice of assessment is very much what we're getting at with our proposal for a sibling program. Disabled communities, particularly Indigenous, Black, and racialized disabled communities have long spoken to barriers with using the CRA as a means of assessment—particularly when inclusion in social assistance and employment insurance programs are already arduous for our community members. This is a piece of context that I know members of our disabled communities understand, but clearly members of HSR staff do not.

For a related example, I would ask members to consider the similar barriers that these eligibility requirements create to those found in the Canada Disability Benefit. Our recommendations are informed by parallel thinking on these barriers through the use of the income tax system.

Daniel Béland and Samuel Ragot have [described](#) the core point on CDB eligibility as:

...many organizations had suggested that people benefiting from provincial or territorial disability-specific financial assistance plans should automatically qualify. This idea was intended to avoid potentially eligible people from having to fill out a new series of forms, relying instead on the exchange of information between governments.

DJNO is one such organization that has made this very criticism of the CDB. This issue is mirrored in the implementation in Fare Assist and creates an eligibility barrier, particularly to those who have not been included in public facing promotions (CPP-D, WSIB, and other recipients). Updating information on the Fare Assist website or other materials, does not resolve this barrier and, in our view, this remains a fundamental concern. While we also believe

that other programs that are not income-based should be part of discussion on eligibility (like CNIB membership), the fact is that income tax-based assessment is not sufficient to ensure *actual*, practical access to this program. Proof of enrollment in these social assistance and support programs should simply be enough—that is the point of the discussion for a sibling program.

Further, for Black, Indigenous, and racialized disabled communities, there are clear intersecting barriers to filing taxes *in general* that have led some to call for limited automatic or assisted filing services from the CRA (as in this article from [the National Observer \[link\]](#)). We know that Black, Indigenous, and racialized disabled communities are not often given needed focus when developing program eligibility criteria and known barriers to communities are often left to the wayside—as they have been through the development of Fare Assist and as we would seek to correct with any new programs.

Finally, having additional—and not removing this route to eligibility—pathways to eligibility is something that we are only asking for a further exploration for future programs in consultation with disabled communities in Hamilton. We do not believe that these issues are resolved by one-size-fits-all solutions and require deeper examination with HSR and with the community together.

Issuing a ‘correction’, as presented by Manager Purser in this memo, misses the mark of our ongoing criticism of eligibility of existing programs and lacks the deeper context—from both policy and lived experience perspectives—that my comments come from. Again: being *technically* eligible *if* you fit other criteria or provide other paperwork is not the same as simply being eligible by right for being part of one of these social assistance or membership programs—which was the core of our commentary. It remains necessary to rethink how we understand one-size-fits-all approaches like is being suggested with Fare Assist’s eligibility criteria. Until people in these programs can access Fare Assist or new sibling programs without additional barriers, this criticism and recommendation for change will remain.

Thank you all for your time.

With kind regards,



Brad Evoy

Executive Director,

Disability Justice Network of Ontario



City of Hamilton Memorandum

To: Chair and Members of
Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities

Date: April 8, 2025

Report No: PW25021

Subject/Title: Accessible Transportation Services Request for
Information – Transportation Network Company

Ward(s) Affected: (City Wide)

Information

Accessible Transportation Services (ATS) has informed Council regarding the release of a Request for Information (RFI) for a transportation network company. A transportation network company has a network of available fleet who can respond to on-demand calls for service and includes providers like taxi companies or ride-share services. The Communications Update (HSR2501) was provided to Council on March 27, 2025, and is attached to this memo as Appendix "A" to PW25021.

The goal of this process is to gather information from potential service providers regarding their ability to provide door-to-door transportation options for Accessible Transportation Services customers. This will help us to determine if there are enough interested vendors to justify a formal procurement process to enhance or complement services currently provided.

It is important to remember that this is an information-gathering process only. As we consider new ways to deliver trips and improve the customer experience for eligible clients, we are informing the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities in the spirit of cooperation.

Information gathered through this process will assist us in responding to both Office of the Auditor General recommendations (see AUD22007 and AUD22009), and feedback from the recent customer survey and journey mapping work. Once the information is gathered, we will provide a summary to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

Consultation

N/A

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Communication Update – (HSR2501) (City Wide) ATS RFI
for Transportation Network Company

Prepared by: Michelle Martin, Manager
Public Works, Transit/ Accessible Transportation Services

**Submitted and
recommended by:** Michelle Martin, Manager
Public Works, Transit/ Accessible Transportation Services



COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	March 27, 2025
SUBJECT:	Accessible Transportation Services Request for Information – Transportation Network Company (City Wide) (HSR2501)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Maureen Cosyn Heath Director, Transit Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

The Transit Division’s Accessible Transportation Services section has been considering solutions to improve the customer experience for those who use specialized transportation, provided to persons with disabilities whose needs may not be met by conventional transit. Accessible Transportation Services staff have worked with the City’s Procurement Division to prepare a Request for Information to gather information from the market of possible transportation network companies regarding their interest and ability to provide door-to-door transportation options. This process is the first step that will assist staff to determine if there are enough interested vendors to justify a formal procurement process such as a request for proposals or tender to enhance or complement services currently provided.

Staff will follow the City’s procurement policy throughout the process. It is important to remember that this is simply an information-gathering process only, and there is no obligation on the part of the City to take further action.

Further updates will be provided once staff have had a thoughtful review of the information learned through the request for information process. This is a crucial step in re-envisioning alternative solutions to improve the customer experience for clients of Accessible Transportation Services.

**SUBJECT: Accessible Transportation Services Request for Information –
Transportation Network Company (City Wide) (HSR2501) - Page 2 of 2**

What is a Transportation Network Company?

A transportation network company like a taxicab company or a ride-share service, has a network of available fleet who can respond to on-demand calls for transit.

Why is Accessible Transportation Services releasing this Request for Information?

We remain committed to looking for new and innovative ways to meet demand and improve the customer experience for persons who rely on specialized transportation. We already know, through customer surveys and journey mapping work, that there is an interest in having service solutions which allow for more spontaneous travel and less restrictive booking window. This process will help us determine what other solutions may be possible.

This process is also a critical step towards addressing other concerns raised by the Office of the Auditor General, specifically:

- Planning for contingencies in the event of any circumstances preventing the current contractor from meeting trip demand (AUD22007).
- Finding alternatives to the current Taxi Scrip program in a manner that allows for greater oversight (AUD22009).

Information gathered through this process will assist staff in responding to feedback collected through recent customer surveys. It may also help staff form future recommendations about service delivery options for specialized transit, as outlined in the Accessible Transportation Services Road Map.

Accessible Transportation Services will inform the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) of the upcoming process and will share general information learned with them. Staff will continue to engage with the Committee and consult on future options.

For further information, please contact Maureen Cosyn Heath, Director, Transit, at Maureen.CosynHeath@hamilton.ca or (905) 546-2424 ext. 1860.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

N/A