

Pilon, Janet

Subject: A perspective from a person with vision loss on using the HSR

From: Paula Kilburn
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 2:34 PM
To: McIntosh, Carrie <mailto:Carrie.McIntosh@hamilton.ca>
Cc: 'James Kemp'
Subject: FW: A perspective from a person with vision loss on using the HSR

Could you please send this to the members of the Public works committee. If you think this is appropriate.

From: Paula Kilburn
Sent: Tuesday, February 6, 2024 10:59 AM
To: 'James Kemp'
Subject: A perspective from a person with vision loss on using the HSR

After watching the Public works meeting on Monday Feb 6 I regret withdrawing my delegation.

I write this from a personal perspective and also as a member of the ACPD.

I used to use the HSR before they had stop announcement and it was terrifying. I have vision loss and relied on the driver to tell me when I was at my stop. I was dropped off quite a few times at the wrong place and because of this I now have panic attacks if I go on the bus, try and imagine not knowing where you are and scared to ask for help.

Even though there are stop announcers on the buses now and speakers outside I know from others that they don't always work so this gives me no confidence to even try to take the bus again.

When we didn't have to pay and were allowed to use the back door a person with vision loss could find the seating for those with disabilities, Now we have to use the front door finding a seat is much more difficult, the inside of the bus is not well lite and the seats are a dark color, therefor to find an empty seat you have to touch peoples legs. This doesn't go down well with some passengers and you get some nasty remarks.

Finding the yellow strip to indicate you want to get off the bus is hard to find as there is no tactile marks on it.

Using the Presto card reader is also a problem, first you have to find it, tapping the card is not to bad but I am not able to read the screen so have no idea how much money is left on the card and if there is a transfer and for how long.

As James Kemp said we have tried to bring these deficiencies' forward for many years and get nowhere. We have talked to the procurement managers and the HSR directors which there have been many about the lay out of the new buses and they say they will take our comments into consideration when buying new buses, well this never happens. I feel like the ACPD is just a place they come to ask our opinions because they have to and make no effort to make changes to the fleet. We may have a disability but we are still citizens of Hamilton and therefor should be treated with the same dignity as anyone else.

Paula Kilburn.
Chair DARTS board of directors
Vice Chair ACPD