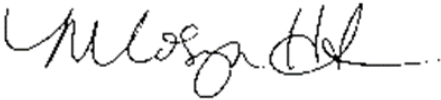




Hamilton

# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	December 2, 2024
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Accessible Transportation Services 2023 Customer Satisfaction Results (PW24085) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Michelle Martin (905) 546-2424 Ext.2765
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Maureen Cosyn Heath Director, Transit Public Works Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## COUNCIL DIRECTION

Public Works Committee, at its meeting of April 22, 2022, approved the following: “That staff be directed to undertake a (Re)Envision-based voice of customer consultation process to consider service design and customer experience for users of Accessible Transit Services and that this consultation will include broad stakeholder engagement, including but not limited to, existing Accessible Transportation Services registrants, DARTS, Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities and Seniors Advisory Committee and any other applicable groups” (PW Report 22-006, Item 3(e) (PW21055(a))).

## INFORMATION

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with an update on ongoing activities related to the voice of customer consultation process for Accessible Transportation Services.

In 2018, the Transit Division undertook broad engagement of conventional transit customers as part of its review of the entire Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) network, with the goal of re-configuring the conventional service from the ground up to improve HSR services across the city. The (Re)Envision the HSR project did not contemplate

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

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specialized transit. The above motion provided the opportunity to expand voice of customer work to Accessible Transportation Services.

Between 2020 and 2022, Accessible Transportation Services received multiple recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General, including that Accessible Transportation Services should conduct a review of the service delivery model. To review service delivery, staff understands the importance of engaging key stakeholders through various activities to best understand customer profiles and service needs.

#### Accessible Transportation Services Survey

In 2015, Accessible Transportation Services engaged Forum Research to conduct a survey specific to customer satisfaction with service, including the current specialized transit services provided by contractor DARTS. and the results were presented at the Accessible Transportation Services Subcommittee meeting on March 31, 2016. The 2015 survey demonstrated overall satisfaction with the service but outlined some key areas for improvement, including trip booking and scheduling, phone wait times, complaint investigation, and on-time performance. It was conducted by phone with a random sample of 402 active Accessible Transportation Services customers. Forum Research reported a 95% (+/- 5%) confidence level in the results, indicating that the survey sample reliably represented the target population.

Concerns were expressed by some members of the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities that there were customers who perhaps wanted to respond to the 2015 survey but who were not asked. To address this concern, staff undertook a survey of all active customers. Staff reviewed survey contents with the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities Transportation Working Group at their meetings on July 25, 2023 and September 8, 2023, with additional opportunities for working group members to provide feedback via email. This history was provided to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities on September 12, 2023 (Report 23-009, Item 8.1)

The 2023 survey was offered in print and online. The target population was the 8,360 active users of Accessible Transportation Services who had used DARTS at least once in the preceding year. They were contacted via direct mail as well as through broader communication efforts to ensure active customers were reached. The survey contained 60 questions about service use, service satisfaction, disability, mobility devices, destinations on transit, and demographic information. At the request of the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities, respondents were able to skip any question they wished, and the demographic questions were specifically flagged as optional. The survey also included the option to provide contact information for the purpose of

participating in a customer panel. There were 275 respondents who expressed this interest.

Accessible Transportation Services is pleased to report an overall response number of 965 (over 10% of the target group), with a lower number on individual questions depending on the responses provided. For a target population of this size, a response total of 368 on any given question will provide a confidence of level 95% (+/- 5%), and staff will bear this in mind as future detailed analysis is conducted. With any survey where participation is voluntary, there will always be self-selection bias on the part of respondents, where some may be motivated to participate due to strongly held positive or negative opinions based on their customer experience. At the same time, voluntary respondents are likely to be committed to fully engage and to take the time needed to complete a survey to the best of their ability.

Staff discussed next steps for review and presentation of survey results with the Transportation Working Group of the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities on October 22, 2024. It was agreed by all that such a large dataset should be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively for significant relationships and presented once this is accomplished.

Accessible Transportation Services have engaged McMaster University to make the best use possible of the survey dataset, specifically, with the School of Earth, Environment, and Society, due to work done by Dr. Léa Ravensbergen on mobility work (the emotional, physical, and logistical labour imposed on older riders with disabilities using transit) (Ravensbergen et al., 2021) and on mobility of care (use of transit to shop for groceries, attend medical appointments, and drop children off) (Ravensbergen et al., 2022). Further analysis and exploration of relationships will take place as staff reviews service needs and plans for an integrated transit pilot (Report PW19083(a) / FCS18048(b)).

### Journey Mapping

While the above survey provided a representative response of active Accessible Transportation Services customers, the standardized questions did not deeply explore the real benefits and challenges of the service for customers, so Accessible Transportation Services also used journey mapping. Journey mapping is a customer satisfaction industry best practice that captures the customer experience and journey pain points more profoundly, using a storytelling approach.

Dillon Consulting conducted in-depth interviews with thirteen customers about their experience using specialized transit. Interviewees were chosen to cover a list of demographic attributes: age, gender identity, type of mobility aid, type of disability, travel with/without a support person, length of time as an ATS client, preferred method

of booking, purpose of travel, regularity of travel, area of residence, and typical trip distance. The Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities Transportation Working Group was provided information about the journey mapping project at the April 25, 2023, and September 26, 2023 working group meetings. At the request of the working group, the final interview script and list of demographic categories were sent to the entire Committee for review to ensure their concerns were addressed: specifically, that a broad range of experience would be captured and that interviewees were made as comfortable as possible and clearly understood they could decline to answer any question.

The results were compiled into five personas to anonymize the interview data while elaborating on the individual customer experience. For example, the exercise illustrated the anxiety and stress for customers who are concerned about getting somewhere on time, and the positive difference that pleasant social interactions with trained Operators can make. The personas were presented to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities on November 12, 2024 (Meeting 24-010, Item 8.1). Distinct from the journey mapping exercise, interviewees were also asked for their thoughts and possible concerns about integrated transit service. These interview results will be included in a future recommendation report about an integrated service pilot.

Accessible Transportation Services looks forward to continued collaboration with the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities, with the new Accessible Transportation Services customer service panel, and with McMaster University. Staff also look forward to future collaboration with other stakeholder groups based on information gleaned and lessons learned from the above customer satisfaction work.

#### **APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

N/A