



City of Hamilton Report for Information

To: Chair and Members
Public Works Committee

Date: May 20, 2025

Report No: PW22079(j)

Subject/Title: Accessible Transportation Services Performance

Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

- 1) That Report PW22079(j) **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Key Facts

- Accessible Transportation Services (ATS) is required to report annually to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) on key performance indicators, as mandated by a past Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario decision. In 2022, Council directed that these reports be provided quarterly.
- Accessible Transportation Services is responsible for client approval and program/contract management. The service is delivered by a contractor (DARTS) and their subcontractors. DARTS is responsible for daily operations, including call centre operations, trip booking, vehicle safety, on road service delivery and management of their subcontractors.
- The latest report was presented to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities at Meeting 25-005 on May 13, 2025. The full report is available in Appendix "A" attached to Report PW22079(j).
- Appendix "B" attached to Report PW22079(j) summarizes contractor vehicle inspection results for 2024.

Financial Considerations

Not applicable.

Background

In 1998, an Ontario Human Rights Code complaint was filed, and the subsequent settlement established, in part, that the City of Hamilton report on service-specific requirements: notably, a trip denial rate goal of 5%, an on-time performance goal of 95% or greater for DARTS trips, and an annual report to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) on trip requests, trip denials, passenger refusals of trips, cancellations, no shows, missed trips, trips provided, complaints and on-time performance.

Public Works Committee, at its meeting of April 22, 2022, approved the following: “That staff be directed to report back to the Public Works Committee and the Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities on a quarterly basis respecting Accessible Transportation Services (ATS)” (PW Report 22-006, Item 3(d) (PW21055(a))). Subsequently, Accessible Transportation Services and the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities reviewed moving to yearly reporting (PW25009) and Public Works Committee received the related recommendation report (PW25024).

The history of Accessible Transportation Services quarterly performance reporting was outlined in PW22079(i). Q4 2024 indicators were presented to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities Transportation Working Group on April 22, 2024 (ACPD Meeting 25-005, Items 7.10(c) and 7.10(e)). The annual 2024 performance report was provided to the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities on May 13, 2025 (ACPD Meeting 25-005, Item 7.5). At the request of the working group, the annual report includes data going to 2019, to compare recent trends against trends prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Analysis

The following analysis provides a high-level summary of key facts and trends, found in Appendix “A” attached to Report PW22079(j).

Trips Delivered

- Accessible Transportation Services delivered 573,349 system trips through both the shared ride service on DARTS and the Taxi Scrip Program in 2024.
- Trip counts on DARTS have been increasing steadily since the COVID-19 pandemic, but in 2024 were still 32% lower than in 2019.
- 2024 DARTS trip counts were overbudget by about 2.4% but delivered at a cost per trip that was 4.9% below budget.
- DARTS maintained a denial rate of 2.1% overall for 2024, well below the 5% goal set by the Ontario Human Rights Commission settlement.
- The percentage of system trips taken by Taxi Scrip has decreased by about 4% since 2019.

Applications for Service

- Applications have not returned to pre-pandemic levels and in 2024 were about 36% lower than in 2019.
- Applicants are rarely denied eligibility, and this is unchanged from 2019-2024.
- The number of applications that staff were unable to process appears to have increased since 2022, when an updated application was released. Please note, some of the “unable to process” applications from past years may now have a “deceased” or “closed” status in the system.
- A revised application is planned in 2025, with improvements to guide applicants to properly complete the sections requiring informed consent, which are the sections that are typically incorrectly completed.
- Application trends closely align with overall system trip counts.

On-Time Performance

DARTS 2024 overall on-time performance approached 99%, which exceeds the Ontario Human Rights Commission target of 95% and approaches the industry best practice.

Call Centre Performance

The DARTS call centre service level (the rate of calls answered within five minutes) has increased about 14% since 2023 and average customer wait time has decreased by about two minutes.

Complaints:

Total complaints received per 1,000 trips on the shared ride service (DARTS) increased from 1.8 per 1,000 trips in 2019 to a high of 7.7 in 2023. In 2024 they fell back to 3.3. This is close to the 2016 industry average of 2.1 but still above the best practice of 1 complaint per 1,000 trips.

Commendations

Commendation rates also increased from 2019 to 2023 and fell back down to 0.5 in 2024. This is better than the 2016 industry average of 0.36 but still below the best practice of 1 commendation per 1,000 trips.

General Comments

Service efficiency continues to steadily improve; however, we still see trips denied and late trips as the contractor continues to experience the industry-wide problem of vehicles out of service and awaiting parts for repair. Staff are also committed to supporting the contractor to further improve denial rates, by targeting the beginning of Q3 2025 to implement and enforce a revised late cancellation and trip no-show policy. Late cancellations and no-shows reduce the opportunity to reassign unused trips to accommodate outstanding customer requests.

Additional Metrics Related to the Contractor Performance

Vehicle Inspections

Accessible Transportation Services continues oversight to keep contracted vehicles safe and reliable (see also Report PW24005). Appendix “B” attached to Report PW22079(j) summarizes contractor annual vehicle inspection results from 2022 to Q1 2025; these include results from both third-party mechanical inspections and on-site vehicle records inspections by City staff year to date March 2025.

- The number of vehicles failing their first inspection dropped from 10% at the end of 2022 to just 2% in Q1 of 2025.
 - All vehicles that failed their first inspection subsequently passed a second inspection.
- Contractor vehicle maintenance records briefly improved and even reached 100% compliance in the last half of 2024 (see Report PW22079(i)). However, Q1 of 2025 saw 4 instances of records non-compliance out of 12 reviews. Accessible Transportation Services continues to send detailed reports of records review outcomes to the contractor for their internal review.

Contractor Compliance

Accessible Transportation Services continues to address contractor non-conformance when necessary. In addition to thirteen performance related letters being sent in 2024, four such letters have been sent to date in 2025, respecting serious matters where contract terms have not been met by the Contractor.

The above aspects of contractor performance will continue to be reported at least annually for the information of the Public Works Committee.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Accessible Transportation Services provides the above information in support of the following Council Strategic Priorities:

2. Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods
 - 2.2. Make sure people can safely and efficiently move around by foot, bike, transit, or car; and
3. Responsiveness & Transparency
 - 3.1. Prioritize customer service and proactive communication.

Continued attention to the above indicators not only supports oversight of contractor performance but also informs both continuous quality improvement and long-term planning for a safe, accessible, and sustainable service.

Previous Reports Submitted

- [ACPD Meeting 25-005, Item 7.5](#)
- [ACPD Meeting 25-005, Item 7.10\(c\)](#)

- [ACPD Meeting 25-005, Item 7.10\(e\)](#)
- [PW25024 Accessible Transportation Services Performance Report Frequency](#)
- [PW25009 MEMO Accessible Transportation Services Performance Reporting](#)
- [PW22079\(i\) Accessible Transportation Services Performance Report Q3 2024](#)
- [PW24005 Darts Vehicle Safety Audit AUD22007\(a\) Update to Management Response January 18, 2024](#)
- [PW Report 22-006, Item 3\(d\), \(PW21055\(a\)\)](#)
- [PW21055\(a\) Accessible Transportation Services Eligibility Audit Management Response April 22, 2022](#)

Consultation

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Owen Quinn, Project Manager Transit Customer Loyalty, Public Works

Mike Perez, Project Manager Contracts and Vendor Performance, Public Works

Contractor (DARTS) staff provided 2024 key performance indicator data for the shared ride service as follows: call centre data, trip counts, on time performance, cancellations, denials, service kilometres, and services hours.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A: Accessible Transportation Services Performance Review 2019 – 2024

Appendix B: Contractor Vehicle Inspection Results 2024 – Year to Date 2025

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