



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To: Members of the Peterborough Transit Liaison Committee**

**From: Barry Wakeford Interim General Manager Peterborough Transit**

**Meeting Date: June 22, 2023**

**Subject: Peterborough Accessible Community Transit Service, Report PTLC23-008**

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## **Purpose**

To provide the Peterborough Transit Liaison Committee with a presentation on the **Peterborough Accessible Community Transit (PACT)** service, a brief history and overview of the current accessible van service.

## **Background**

Peterborough Transit began providing specialized service to passengers with various disabilities which prevented them from accessing regular transit buses. This service started in the 1980's with a passenger van and was eventually expanded to wheelchair accessible vehicles. Over the years, a variety of vehicles have been used, some with lifting devices others that could kneel and deploy a folding ramp.

Up until 2015 scheduling passenger requests was manually entered onto a ledger and was transferred each day onto individual vehicle sheets which the drivers followed throughout the day.

In March of 2015, RouteMatch was purchased and implemented as the scheduling software employed for van services. This system was installed on a city-based server and enabled real time updates and adjustments to driver schedules. Scheduling staff could now add, remove and adjust calls, and the system would relay these changes to the tablet installed in the vehicle.

RouteMatch software was replaced April 2022 with a system called VIA. This system is cloud based and offers a similar system to RouteMatch. This new software gives the customer a pickup window at the time of booking. The trip window is communicated by SMS or phone call message to the customer the night before and a confirmed pick-up time is given 30min prior to the scheduled arrival. Approximately 5min before the van

arrives, the system will alert the customer that it is on the way. VIA is the current program being used for scheduling the van service.

## **Qualifications For Van Service**

Passenger using PACT are required to register for the service and must complete 2-part eligibility package. Part one completed by the passenger and part 2 by a medical professional. During COVID and due to the shortage of family Doctors in the province, exceptions were made where applications completed by facility administrators were accepted.

## **Vehicles and Service**

PACT service consists of 11 vehicles, 7 of which are on the road weekdays, 4 on Saturday and 4 on Sunday.

The hours of service are between 6:00 am and 11:59 pm.

Trips can be booked 14 days in advance up to same day requests.

During COVID, due to the closure of many institutions the vans were utilized to supplement conventional transit.

Capacity was limited to 2 passengers per trip at that time, we have since returned to a shared ride plan, allowing more trips and less unaccommodated requests.

Presently there are approximately 900 registered riders.

The service averages 120 booked trips each weekday, and 50 on weekends.

Of those trips, approximately 40% are recurring or “subscription” bookings taking passengers to work, school and/or day programs throughout the community.

Booked on a regular basis. Trips are optimized 14, 7, 4 and 2 days out. This process takes a look at all scheduled and unscheduled rides and shuffles them to specific vehicles allowing for a more efficient flow and minimal “zig zagging” for the vehicle.

Ridership has been steadily increasing thru 2023, we are now close to 80% of pre covid ridership.

## **Future Options**

By December of 2023, para transit passengers will have the option to download and book trips through the Via app, similar to the current On Demand service passengers. The vendor is developing an “on-line” booking portal. Currently all trip requests are made through our scheduling team.

## **Summary**

As transit continues to recover from the effects and changes caused by COVID we anticipate ridership to return to previous levels of approximately 160 trips per weekday. The current system is capable of returning to that that level of service.

**Submitted by,**

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