



Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit

July 3, 2025

TTC Board Members
Toronto Transit Commission
1900 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario M4S 1Z2

Dear Board Members:

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) is forwarding the approved minutes of its General monthly meeting of May 29, 2025 to the July 2025 Board Meeting for information. At the May meeting, ACAT members received information about the TTC's Community Safety, Security and Wellbeing Plan and heard deputations about the Community Bus routes, specifically in Toronto's Hospital Row, and Family of Services communication. Members raised concerns about the safety of mobility device users during emergencies like power outages or elevator failures. The Service Planning Subcommittee was assigned to further review evacuation procedures and policies.

The following is a summary of the main topics discussed at the May ACAT Subcommittee meetings:

Communications Subcommittee

- ACAT Recruitment Communications Plan. The application process and advertising methods were reviewed, with suggestions made to use more engaging messaging and remove fax as an option for submitting applications.
- Support Person Assistance Card first on/last off campaign, with calls for improved staff training and clearer public communication.
- National AccessAbility Week and presence at May 31, 2025 AccessFest

Design Review Subcommittee

- Bus pre-boarding announcements system and technical constraints. Members provided feedback about announcement timing, confusion at final stops and the accuracy of announcements on certain bus routes.
- Machine Readable Transfer system for customers using cash payments, which will issue QR coded transfer for cash users and have accessibility focused decal design to support wayfinding for customers.
- Accessible Pedestrian Signal message development, with an emphasis on using concise, clear terms like "combined" or "centre" platform to stay within the audio time limit.

Service Planning Subcommittee

- Community Bus Route 406 Scarborough-Guildwood pilot
- Wayfinding Strategy Update, with concerns being raised about unclear signage, difficulties viewing transit shelter maps for customers using mobility devices, and comments made about providing audible messaging at accessible pedestrian signals at intersections.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee

- Legacy customer re-registration enforcement. The Subcommittee supported eligibility being changed to conditional for customers who do not re-register within 90 days and

encouraged clear consequences, including a phased approach with possible suspensions for noncompliance.

- Mobile app improvements, redundant trip confirmations and service updates.
- Policy clarification about Operators assisting with personal tasks.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Betty Rivington-Law
2025 ACAT Chair

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION
COMMITTEE MINUTES

APPROVED

Minutes of Meeting: ACAT General Meeting
Meeting Date: Thursday, May 29, 2025
1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Location: Hybrid meeting via Teams

Present: Betty Rivington Law, ACAT Chair
Lori Bailey, ACAT Vice-Chair
Sophie Petrillo, ACAT Vice-Chair
Tammy Adams
Debbie Gillespie
Maria Marin
Angela Marley
Lavarnan Mehavarnan
Karen Mootoo
Lauri Sue Robertson
Chau Sheung Wong

Pool Members: Oliva Darwin
Azim Lila
Paul Manna
Nathaniel Tok

Absent: Craig Nicol
Mei Hung
Frank Lockhart

Deputants: Adam Cohoon
Alan Yule

TTC Representatives: Mark Biamonte, Director of Emergency Management and
Fire Life Safety
John Boucher, Manager, Lakeshore Garage
Heather Brown, Director of Customer Experience
Natalie Francis, Manager, Planning and Policy, Wheel-Trans
Lodon Hassan, Divisional Manager, Wheel-Trans Customer
Service
Betty Hasserjian, Chief Safety Officer
Hung Hong, Project Manager, Wheel-Trans

Adrienne Isaac, Administrative Assistant, Wheel-Trans
Alexandra Kargutkar, Manager, Safety, Health &
Environment Policy and Strategy
Laurence Lui, Head of Service Planning and Scheduling
Levenson Lincoln, Assistant Manager, Wheel-Trans
Customer Service
David LoPresti, Manager, Contracted Taxi Services, Wheel-
Trans
Sneha Madhuri, Communications Advisor, Corporate
Communications
Dean Milton, Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Wheel-Trans
Oma Okolocha, Coordinator, Human Rights & Investigations
Ike Onuoha, Program Manager, Vehicle Programs
Cameron Penman, Head of Wheel-Trans
Mohammed Shaikh, Divisional Manager, Wheel-Trans
Jeff Short, Acting Manager, Customer Policy
Ross Visconti, Project Manager, Wheel-Trans

Items Discussed

- 1/ Call to Order / Attendance
- 2/ Land Acknowledgement
- 3/ Declaration of Conflict of Interest
- 4/ Approval of Agenda
- 5/ Review and Approval of April 23, 2025, Minutes
- 6/ Remarks from TTC Executive
- 7/ Community Safety, Security and Wellbeing Plan – Betty Hasserjian, Chief Safety Officer
- 8/ Remarks from ACAT Chair
 - a. TTC Board Meeting
- 9/ Wheel-Trans Transformation Update from Cameron Penman
- 10/ Outstanding Items
- 11/ Deputation:
 - a. Community Bus Network – Alan Yule
 - b. FOS Communication – Adam Cohoon
- 12/ Review of Correspondence: Nil
- 13/ Subcommittee Reports, Highlights and Updates
 - Communications
 - Design Review
 - Service Planning
 - Wheel-Trans Operations
- 14/ Other/New Business
- 15/ Next Meeting – June 26, 2025
- 16/ Adjournment

1. Call to Order/Attendance

Betty Rivington Law, ACAT Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Attendance was taken.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Sophie Petrillo, ACAT Vice-Chair, read the Land Acknowledgement.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil.

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as amended: Lauri Sue Robertson

Seconded: Azim Lila

Carried: Agenda approved.

5. Review and Approval of April 23, 2025 Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes of April 23, 2025: Lauri Sue Robertson

Seconded: Chau Sheung Wong

Carried: Approved.

6. Remarks from TTC Executive – Betty Hasserjian, Chief Safety Officer

Betty Hasserjian, Chief Safety Officer, acknowledged Accessibility Week and expressed gratitude to ACAT members for their advocacy and contributions to improving transit accessibility. She emphasized that their lived experiences and insights are essential to shaping TTC decisions and creating a more inclusive system for all.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Nil.

7. Community Safety, Security and Wellbeing Plan

Betty Hasserjian, Chief Safety Officer, presented the TTC's Community Safety, Security and Well-being Plan. She noted that the TTC is in the process of formalizing its Five-Year Community Safety, Security, and Well-being Plan, focused on a compassionate, people-first approach, with formal approval by the TTC Board expected in late 2025. The consultation process includes community consultation with advisory groups, including ACAT.

Betty Hasserjian highlighted community safety improvement efforts from 2021 to 2025 and discussed challenges transit agencies worldwide faced during the pandemic, where there was reduced ridership, shifts in customer behaviour and more visible social issues on transit. TTC shifted to taking a multidisciplinary approach to community safety.

In 2023 and 2024, TTC focused on enhancing high visibility presence on the system and connecting vulnerable individuals with social services outside the transit network. Based on customer feedback about staff presence, TTC hired 160 station staff in 2024 to increase visibility on the system. Also, Customer Service Agents are now outside booths interacting with customers, further enhancing staff visibility in stations. Streets to Homes workers provide street outreach and connect individuals with shelter and housing services; multidisciplinary outreach teams provide more specialized mental health support and services. Community Safety Ambassadors focus on conducting wellness checks.

The Plan elements include: communication; training; engagement; vehicle and facility improvements; data analysis and monitoring; and collaboration and partnerships.

Interdivisional and executive tables with the City, Toronto Police and Toronto Public Health have been established to enhance coordination of community safety efforts and a joint labour-management committee to address employee assaults. TTC has expanded the SafeTTC app, which is a discreet way to report incidents on the system and educate customers on emergency procedures. TTC's Community Engagement Unit continues outreach in schools and communities.

The plan also includes expanding de-escalation training and updating employee support protocols and related training modules. In addition, the TTC has implemented station infrastructure improvements and is working on a pilot to enhance cleanliness and state of good repair.

In 2025, the TTC is evaluating social supports response, initiating the assessment of the community safety and security operating model, updating the 2025/2026 winter response plan, and finalizing the Five-Year Community Safety, Security and Well-Being Plan. In 2026 and beyond, TTC will work on implementing recommendations from the social response evaluation and complete the assessment of the safety and security operating model.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member suggested there is limited staff contact at Kennedy Station on the bus level, which is challenging for customers who may need assistance with directions. They suggested having a staffed kiosk on the bus level with Ride Guides available for navigation. Betty Hasserjian would take that back to see about staff deployment, as it was noted there was staff at the platform level at Kennedy Station, not the surface level.

A member discussed the distance between the subway and buses at Kennedy Station and suggested staff should be looking out for people who appear to need help.

A member asked for more details about the new bus operator barriers and suggested communication is sometimes difficult. Betty Hasserjian confirmed the barriers are in the pilot stage and undertook to provide more information about the barrier designs, when available.

A member asked if there were any plans for seasonal requirements to assist customers who might be looking to get out of the cold. Betty Hasserjian confirmed that as part of the transport bus initiative, the TTC supports the City to transport individuals to available warming centres and shelters, upon request.

A member also noted that it would be helpful to have TTC staff approach customers in the stations who look like they might need help or are lost and asked if staff are trained to know how to approach a blind customer. Betty Hasserjian confirmed all frontline staff receive training on how to approach customers.

A member asked about the TTC safety app and how to access it. Betty Hasserjian explained what the app was used for and encouraged everyone to download it.

The ACAT Co-Vice-Chair raised concerns about the safety of mobility device users during emergencies like power outages or elevator failures, especially as more customers are encouraged to use conventional transit through the Family of Services model. They emphasized the importance of having clear evacuation plans in place for worst-case scenarios. Betty Hasserjian responded that the TTC does have emergency procedures in place, including guidance for those needing assistance, which are posted in stations. However, TTC recognizes an opportunity to improve communication to ensure all customers, particularly those requiring support, feel confident and well-informed during emergencies.

Further clarification from Mark Biamonte, Director of Emergency Management & Fire Safety, confirmed the TTC has robust emergency procedures and infrastructure, including emergency power supplies for TTC stations, and redundant systems for power to TTC trains, to ensure operations and accessibility during unplanned outages or floods. These plans and systems are in place and are regularly tested internally, as well as in coordination with emergency services, and with input from ACAT.

The ACAT Co-Vice-Chair made a recommendation for mental health training for leaders. Betty Hasserjian confirmed TTC staff do have plans to roll out mental health training for leaders in 2025.

A member asked if there was an update on the platform edge doors. Betty Hasserjian explained there was an upcoming report to the TTC Board which includes the outcome of the business case and feasibility study for retrofitting existing stations. The cost for implementation of platform edge doors is included in the Capital Investment Plan, but remains unfunded.

8. Remarks from the ACAT Chair

a. TTC Board Meeting

Betty Rivington Law, ACAT Chair gave a summary of the TTC Board meeting held May 14, 2025.

b. National Accessibility Week and TTC Family Day

National AccessAbility Week, taking place from May 25 to 31, celebrates the ongoing efforts to remove barriers and promote equal participation for all. Many in the room and online have contributed significantly through advocacy, collaboration, and communication. The TTC Family Day will take place on June 22, and several members have volunteered to participate. There will be an ACAT table at the event.

Lastly, the ACAT Members' Manual update was still in progress and will be shared for feedback and edits once it's ready.

9. Wheel-Trans Transformation Update

Cameron Penman, Head of Wheel-Trans, provided an update on the Transformation Program. He highlighted the significance of National AccessAbility Week, which coincides with the 50th anniversary of Wheel-Trans, a vital service that had greatly improved transit accessibility in Toronto. He emphasized the ongoing importance of ACAT in advancing accessibility milestones and reaffirmed the TTC's commitment to accessible service.

TTC staff continue to work towards the new Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system and has a successful bidder chosen and the successful bidder for the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems will be determined soon, likely to be presented to the TTC Board in the Fall. The scope of the Reservations, Scheduling, and Dispatch software upgrades was being finalized.

Eligibility re-registration efforts for Wheel-Trans Legacy customers continue to progress successfully. An additional 400 customers have re-registered in 2025, with approximately 2,200 active customers remaining.

Most Accessible Taxis now have "Where Is My Ride" capability, including Beck Taxi Accessible Taxis, with only a few remaining cars. Sedan vehicles will start being integrated into the system in the next few months.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Nil.

10. Outstanding Items

a. PA Audit Survey

This item was complete and would be removed after the next meeting.

b. Scarborough Centre Motion

This item was complete and would be removed next month.

c. ACAT Manual

This would be coming back to members for their edits.

11. Deputation

a. Community Bus Network

Alan Yule gave a deputation inspired by his experience with hospital visits and proposed a dedicated community bus route serving Toronto's hospital row to reduce overreliance on costly Wheel-Trans services. The current lack of accessible, predictable transit in the area pushes patients to use Wheel-Trans, even when it may not be necessary, driving up costs. Introducing a well-routed, properly sized bus with visible in transit apps and capable of serving both mobility device users and walk-on passengers, would improve access, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member asked if the recommendation was to use larger buses to pick up people. Alan Yule responded the recommendation was to introduce a larger, regularly scheduled community bus with predictable timing to reduce congestion at hospitals and lessen reliance on Wheel-Trans. The goal was for these buses to both pick up and drop off more passengers, including those who do not necessarily require Wheel-Trans, improving overall efficiency and accessibility.

The ACAT Co-Vice-Chair asked about assumptions made for the costing, specifically how many of those users are unable to use the conventional system regardless of whether there was a community bus or not and they need door-to-door service.

b. FOS Communication

Adam Cahoon gave a deputation on communication about Family of Services. Although the Family of Services travel option is officially voluntary, it was not clearly communicated to the public that riders could still opt for door-to-door service, even if they are categorized as having conditional eligibility. Many riders are unaware of their

rights or feel restricted by their designation, leading to confusion, unnecessary hardship, and a lack of transparency that needs to be addressed.

A member noted that when the FOS was introduced in 2017, TTC staff would travel around to different organizations explaining how it worked and asked if the Deputant thinks it would help to resume.

Dean Milton, Manager of Strategic Initiatives noted that while the FOS model is operationally voluntary, the vast majority, about 99% of trips for all Wheel-Trans users, including those with conditional eligibility, remain door-to-door. He challenged the idea that Wheel-Trans customers are unaware of their ability to choose, noting that complaints on this issue are minimal and the current practice of FOS being optional has been consistent over the past nine years. Additionally, under AODA guidelines, conditional eligibility assumed that individuals could use conventional transit when their conditions were not present. The decision to not make FOS travel mandatory at this time is at the discretion of the TTC Board.

A member commented that it was important for customers to know their conditions as well, and asked if there was a way to find out their conditions if a customer does not know. Dean Milton confirmed customers could find the details on their on the Self-booking Website or through Wheel-Trans Customer Service, Reservations, or by reviewing their Wheel-Trans acceptance letter.

12. Review of Correspondence

Nil.

13. Subcommittee Reports, Highlights and Updates

Communications Subcommittee (CS)

Maria Marin, CS Chair, presented the highlights for the meeting held on May 1, 2025.

The Subcommittee discussed the 2026 recruitment campaign for ACAT membership. This will be communicated through print and digital ads, PA announcements in stations, social media posts and on the TTC's website. Members suggested clarifying the application process, eliminating the fax option, using more engaging messaging, and representing younger demographics. Updates were also given on the Support Person Assistance Card and First On/Last Off campaign, with calls for improved staff training and clearer public communication. Plans for National AccessAbility Week include ACAT member testimonials, a Wheel-Trans presence at Access Fest, and coordination with initiatives like the Sunflower Program.

The next meeting was scheduled for June 5, 2025.

CS Meeting Highlights:

- ACAT Recruitment Communications Plan
- Support Person Assistance Card and First On/Last Off Communication Plan
- TTC's new partnership with AccessNow and upcoming May 31, 2025 Access Fest

Design Review Subcommittee (DRS)

Jeff Short, Acting Manager, Customer Policy, presented the highlights for the meeting held on May 13, 2025.

Tony Clunies provided a detailed explanation of how TTC's bus pre-boarding announcements are triggered and the technical constraints affecting them. Members raised concerns about announcement timing, confusion at final stops, and the accuracy of announcements on certain bus routes. Vignesh Rajendran presented the upcoming Machine-Readable Transfer (MRT) system, which will issue QR-coded transfers for cash users, with accessibility-focused decal designs to support wayfinding for customers who are visually impaired. Jeff Short shared updates on the Line 5 Accessible Pedestrian Signal audible messaging that is being developed, with discussion focused on using concise, clear terms like "combined" or "centre" platform to stay within the audio time limit.

DRS Meeting Highlights:

- Bus pre-boarding announcement system
- Accessible Pedestrian Signal message development
- Machine Readable Transfer system for customers using cash payments.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee (WTOS)

Lauri Sue Robertson, WTOS Chair, presented the highlights for the meeting that was held on May 14, 2025.

Wheel-Trans' re-registration plan mandates remaining Legacy customers who have not re-registered to re-register within 90 days or risk having their eligibility changed to conditional. TTC's Legal and Human Rights Departments support this. Subcommittee members raised concerns about noncompliance and suggested clear consequences, including a phased approach with possible suspensions. Other updates included stop and landmark changes, a new west-end appeal panel location, and a review of Wheel-Trans complaints reported in April. The Subcommittee also discussed mobile app improvements, redundant trip confirmations, and clarified that Operators cannot assist with personal tasks beyond basic duties due to liability.

The next WTOS meeting was scheduled for June 11, 2025.

WTOS Meeting Highlights:

- Re-Registration Enforcement.

- Mobile App and Service Updates.
- Policy Clarification.

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS)

Jeff Short presented the highlights for the SPS meeting held on May 20, 2025.

TTC staff provided an overview of the new 406 Scarborough-Guildwood Community Bus, a nine month pilot starting in June 2025. Taking the low ridership of Community Bus routes into consideration, Subcommittee members provided comments about visibility, routing, and rider communication. Staff also outlined a 10-year Wayfinding Strategy that aims to enhance consistency, digital integration, and accessibility throughout the TTC system. Members raised several comments, including unclear signage, transit shelter maps that are hard to view by customers using mobility devices, and providing audible messaging at accessible pedestrian signals at intersections. The next meeting was scheduled for June 17, 2025.

SPS Meeting Highlights

- Community Bus – Route 406 Scarborough-Guildwood.
- Wayfinding Strategy Update.

14. Other/New Business

Nil.

15. Next Meeting

Next ACAT General Meeting: Thursday, June 26, 2025 at 1 p.m.

16. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m. on a motion by Debbie Gillespie.

Cindy Edwards
Recording Secretary