



## COMMUNICATION UPDATE

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members City Council
<b>DATE:</b>	September 15, 2022
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Update: Actions Taken by the City of Hamilton in Response to Accessible Transit Services: DARTS Fleet Management and Vehicle Safety Audit Report (TRN2201) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Maureen Cosyn Heath Director, Transit Public Works Department
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

At the May 18, 2022 General Issues Committee, following the concerning initial findings by the Office of the City Auditor (OCA), Council directed the City to require the third-party provider of its accessible transportation services (DARTS) to remove more than one-third of its fleet from service until each vehicle, including those of their subcontractors, could go through a third-party safety review.

Understanding the impact this would have on DARTS customers, the City requested that all remaining vehicles which had already passed inspection be utilized for priority services such as critical medical appointments. Once deemed suitable for service, the vehicles were placed back into service as expeditiously as possible to minimize the impact on customers. All vehicles have undergone inspections.

The City Auditor's report titled Accessible Transit Services: DARTS Fleet Management and Vehicle Safety Audit (Report #50695) (Audit 22007) was presented to the City's Audit, Finance and Administration Committee on September 8, 2022.

The purpose of this Communications Update is to provide an overview of the City's actions following the release of the report. These actions align with the cautionary measures directed by Council and were necessary to ensure the safety of the travelling public. Continued measures regarding DARTS are planned to ensure that the safety of their vehicles can be assured and confidence in the service restored.

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

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

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

## **Actions Taken to Date**

The actions taken to date focus primarily on vehicle inspections but have also included a more comprehensive review of the DARTS contract with an aim to modernize it to ensure that the City's and the public's expectations surrounding vehicle safety are more prescriptive and understood.

Specifically, those actions have included:

- All vehicles belonging to DARTS and their subcontractors were recently inspected through the OCA process.
- Newly established standards for inspection of DARTS vehicles and those of their subcontractors.
- A commitment by Transit's Accessible Transportation Services (ATS) to enact significant changes in contract oversight of the service and increased oversight of DARTS operations, including increased site visits by ATS.
- Communication directly to DARTS about the City's concerns regarding the audit findings as well as the City's expectations surrounding a significantly improved vehicle inspection regime moving forward, including more stringent inspection standards of DARTS and their subcontractors.
- A review of accessible transit systems in other jurisdictions with an aim to present that information to City Council, at which point recommendations on the future of the City's accessible transit will be considered as part of the HSR management response to the City Auditor's report.

## **Inspection Practices of HSR's Conventional Fleet**

It should be noted that these safety and inspection standards are consistent with HSR's own standards as they relate to vehicles that service the City's conventional transit service.

As it relates to the City's conventional fleet, HSR can confirm:

- Each vehicle is subject to daily inspections, including prior to the start of service and again at shift changes by the vehicle operator.
- All vehicles in service meet or exceed all Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) requirements, as demonstrated by their certified compliance with MTO semi-annual and annual inspections.
- Transit, as with all other MTO-regulated facilities, is subject to spot inspections.
- The City's conventional fleet meets or exceeds many of the areas of concern identified in the City Auditor's report and, in many cases, are already part of HSR standard processes.

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City staff have begun developing a management response that will address all 73 recommendations in the City Auditor's report, which they anticipate will be presented to members of City Council in January of 2023.

The Transit division is thankful for the work of the City Auditor and remains committed to ensuring that both its conventional fleet and the accessible transit service that is operated by a third party on its behalf provide a service that is safe and reliable and places a priority on the wellbeing of the travelling public.

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

**N/A**