

Advisory Committee of Council Information Report



Committee	Transit Advisory Committee
Meeting Date	Thursday, June 22, 2023
Subject	Mobility Services expansion plan

Description

Guelph Transit communication with TAC for the Mobility Services expansion plan as it relates to planned operator hour availability, booking windows and cancellation policies.

Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

Inform and obtain support from the Transit Advisory Committee on the goals and plans in the Mobility Services expansion plan.

Key Findings

Guelph Transit looks to expand Mobility Services, increasing available daily Mobility trips, while also expanding in-person weekend dispatch hours to align with weekday hours currently provided. This expansion plan will better align levels of service with current demand, decrease the user booking windows, while also implementing a policy to reduce the number of daily user cancellations and user no-shows affecting trip availability.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The Mobility Services expansion plan is central to the Strategic Pillar Navigating our future, where it will “provide attractive, affordable, and reasonable transportation options for everyone,” along with “improving connections to workplaces in Guelph.” The expansion plan contributes to achieving these goals by adding more daily operator coverage, decreasing the current booking window for users, and growing to meet demand.

The expansion plan also aligns with the Strategic Pillar Working together for our future by improving existing services “through greater use of technology and data;” utilizing passenger and trip booking data to develop the service adjustments required.

Financial Implications

The Mobility Services expansion plan is proposed for 2024 – 2027, where the capital costs to implement the plan would total \$1,050,000 and operating costs to implement the plan would total \$1,015,700.

Report

Details

There are currently over 1300 active users in Mobility Services, with over 24,000 mobility trips completed in 2022 – on-track to increase further in 2023.

As part of the multi-year budget (2024 – 2027), Guelph Transit will be proposing an expansion to existing Mobility Services. The expansion plan will provide current users with increased trip availability, moving closer to same-day booking windows, and growing to align closer with current demands.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Mobility Services:

- Expand available mobility trips Monday to Friday – providing consistent hours offered to meet demand;
- Expand available mobility trips on weekends – providing consistent hours offered to meet demand;
- Expand the hours of dispatch on a Saturday and Sunday to align with Monday to Friday hours;
- Implement policy changes to lower user cancellation rates.

Current booking windows

Mobility Services currently offers customers the ability to book a trip up to 1 week (7-days) prior to the date of request.

The below table provides a list reflecting the current distribution of daily bookings:

Bookings	Percentage overall	Percentage overall (combined)
7-days in advance	40%	40%
5-days in advance	10%	38%
3-days in advance	11%	
Same-day booking	18%	
Subscriptions*	22 %	22%

*Subscriptions are for select customers that fit with the Mobility Services subscription policy

One of the goals of the Mobility Services expansion plan is to continue to reduce the percentage of 7-days in advance booking, and increase the availability of users to move closer to same-day bookings.

Available dispatch hours

Current users can book 24 hours a day, 7-days a week using the RideCo application on their device. Mobility Services currently offers in-person dispatch support for bookings as well. Existing in-person dispatch service differs depending on the days of the week, which is a product of current staff availability.

The below table reflects the current distribution of daily in-person dispatch and the planned increase in hours within the expansion plan.

	Year	
	2023 to 2024	2025 to 2027
Sunday	7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Monday	6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.	No change
Tuesday	6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.	No change
Wednesday	6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.	No change
Thursday	6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.	No change
Friday	6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.	No change
Saturday	7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Available operator hours

Mobility Services currently offers a different level of available operator hours depending on the days of the week, which is a product of current staff availability.

The below table reflects the current distribution of daily operator availability and the planned increase in hours within the expansion plan.

Available operator hours (by year in expansion plan):

	Year			
	2023	2024	2025	2026 to 2027
Sunday	10	20	30	30
Monday	26	46*	56	72*
Tuesday	24	56	56	80
Wednesday	34	56	56	80
Thursday	34	56	56	80
Friday	44	56	56	80
Saturday	28	30	40	48

*The available hours in the table reflect full-time Mobility employees. On days that have fewer service hours, Mobility part-time extraboard operators would be utilized to supplement the hours of available service.

User cancellations

A current issue impacting trip availability is the Mobility Services cancellation rate. A user cancellation is when a user booked a trip and cancelled on the same day because they no longer required the trip, or they were a no-show for their appointment. The average cancellation rate for current users is 32%, which means 32% of trips in a day are cancelled last minute or have no one show for their trip time.

This daily average is partly linked to the 7-day booking window, as some users may reserve their trip but no longer need it because they’ve booked too far in advance. Along with having a connection to available operator hours not meeting the current demand on the services. With providing more operator hours to book trips, this will naturally lower the booking window from 7-days, in turn impacting the daily cancellation rate.

The expansion plan encourages the implementation of temporary policies to deter user cancellations and no-shows (Automatic Booking Limitations), which can encourage fewer cancellations by repeat users.

Automatic Booking Limitations (ABLs)

It is proposed to begin Automatic Booking Limitations (ABLs), where excess no-shows or cancellations are found.

If a user is flagged over 10 times cancelling their trip day-of or being a no-show to their appointment over 10 times, this would result in a temporary booking limitation being placed on their account.

This would mean that the user would be able to only book 2 trips at a time for a 30-day window, and then the ABL would be removed after 30-days to allow the user to book trips freely again.

Financial Implications

The Mobility Services expansion plan is proposed for 2024 – 2027, where the capital and operating costs to implement the plan are outlined in the table below:

	Year			
	2024	2025	2026	2027
Capital	\$520,000	\$530,000	-	-
Operating	-	\$580,600	\$331,600	\$103,500

Consultations

- Guelph Transit
- Corporate Communications
- RideCo
- Transit Advisory Committee

Attachments

None

Departmental Approval

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