

# Standing Committee Report

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**REPORT NUMBER** 078-2026-Community Services-Transit Services

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**DATE**

**PREPARED**

January 27, 2026

**FILE**

**STANDING**

**COMMITTEE**

February 10, 2026

**MEETING DATE**

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**SUBJECT**

Transit Service Adjustments

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**PURPOSE** - *To seek the endorsement of the Quality of Life Standing Committee to temporarily reduce transit service levels given staffing challenges to better manage passenger expectations, help provide a more consistent and predictable service, and achieve improved system reliability.*

WITH RESPECT to Report 078-2026-Community Services-Transit Services, we request endorsement of the Quality of Life Standing Committee to forward the following recommendations to City Council:

WE RECOMMEND THAT Administration move forward with implementing temporary schedule changes across various conventional transit routes starting May 10, 2026;

AND THAT Administration monitor staffing levels and incrementally increase conventional and specialized transit service levels over the summer and fall when and where feasible;

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented to City Council for ratification.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Transit Services continues to experience a shortage of Transit Operators, including Specialized Operators, resulting in above average unplanned conventional trip cancellations. This creates a need to prioritize the deployment of available Transit Operators to mitigate negative impacts to passengers of core conventional and Lift+ Specialized Transit service. More recently, occasional vehicle shortages due to maintenance issues are also contributing to the cancellation issue. These cancellations are causing many trips to be cancelled weekly. The average system-wide trip delivery rate target is 99% or better. In 2025 the average system-wide conventional trip delivery rate was approximately 96%. High cancellations create significant disruptions for passengers, resulting in increased travel times, heightened stress, and a loss of trust in the reliability of public transportation. LIFT+ Specialized Transit service operates as

scheduled but also experiences ongoing Operator availability constraints that hinder the capability to expand service capacity to meet actual demand.

This report seeks the endorsement of the Quality of Life Standing Committee to implement temporary schedule changes across select conventional transit routes beginning May 10, 2026, in response to ongoing staffing challenges within Transit Services. This proposed approach is intended to improve service reliability and predictability, better align available staffing resources with service delivery priorities, and manage passenger expectations during a period of sustained workforce constraints.

Administration will continue to closely monitor staffing levels and operational conditions and will incrementally restore conventional and specialized transit service levels during the summer and fall periods when and where feasible. Full-service levels will be reinstated when staffing levels are sufficient to reliably support regular day-to-day operations.

## **KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

Transit Services continues to experience persistent staffing pressures that impact the ability to consistently deliver scheduled service across the conventional and specialized transit systems. These pressures include elevated daily staff unavailability due to a combination of vacancies, sick leave, disability leaves, vacation, training requirements, and employees temporarily assigned to other operational areas.

Maintaining current scheduled service levels under existing staffing conditions increases the risk of continued service disruptions, short-notice cancellations, and inconsistent service delivery. Temporary schedule adjustments are being proposed to better align available staffing with operational requirements, thereby improving overall system reliability, predictability and reducing uncertainty for customers.

A comparison of current versus proposed temporary service schedule changes is provided in Attachment A – Current vs Proposed Conventional Schedule. This attachment presents current versus proposed adjustments to weekday and Saturday service by route and service period.

The proposed adjustments are intended to maintain overall network connectivity while improving service reliability under current staffing conditions. On some routes, service frequency is reduced during peak or off-peak periods to better align with available staffing resources, while on other routes frequency is maintained or improved to support coverage and customer demand. No changes are proposed to Sunday/Holiday service levels.

Administration recommends implementing these temporary service adjustments and schedule changes beginning May 10, 2026. Administration will continue to actively monitor staffing levels, recruitment progress, training capacity, and operational

performance, and will incrementally restore service levels during the summer and fall periods as operating conditions allow.

As staffing levels allow, Specialized Transit service capacity may be increased, supporting additional trips for Lift+ registrants and improving the ability to accommodate important accessible community transportation requirements such as Seniors Programming Transportation for Long Term Care Homes.

### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATION***

The proposed adjustments in this report will result in a net service reduction of approximately 8,000 service hours. As staffing levels continue to recover over the summer and fall, these hours will be redistributed to help address Conventional and Lift+ Specialized reliability, vacation coverage and other operational (ex. staff training) issues. Any cost savings resulting from these service level adjustments will be captured in the quarterly variance reporting for Transit Services. Favourable variances in Transit operating budgets are transferred into the Capital Transit Reserve Fund.

### ***BACKGROUND***

At the October 7, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting, Report No. 352-2024 – introduced the Transforming Transit, establishing the vision that Transit will be the travel option of choice for residents and visitors through the revision of safe, reliable, and convenient service while significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

At the October 4, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting, Report No. 141/2021 – provided an update on recovering from conventional service level reductions and returning to normal levels.

At the September 14, 2020, Committee of the Whole Meeting, Report No. 107/2020 – provided an update on adjusting service levels to match fluctuating demand and to make incremental adjustments to gradually return to pre-pandemic service levels.

### ***REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED***

Attachment A – Current vs Proposed Conventional Schedule

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***REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY***

Kelly Robertson, Commissioner, Community Services

Date (02/02/2026)