

Region of Waterloo
Transportation Services
Transit Services

To: Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Development Committee

Meeting Date: December 3, 2024

Report Title: Grand River Transit Ridership Update – Third Quarter

1. Recommendation

For Information.

2. Purpose / Issue:

To update Regional Council on 2024 Grand River Transit ridership and performance.

3. Strategic Plan:

Ridership reports are prepared quarterly to highlight progress on meeting the goals of the Strategic Plan's Climate-aligned growth priority.

4. Report Highlights:

- Appendix A, Performance Dashboard, illustrates current ridership compared to the previous year, as well as other key performance metrics. GRT Ridership continues to be strong overall. Between July and September 2024, there were 6.1 million riders. Daily boardings, which measure every time a person boards a transit vehicle including their transfers, were 116,000, up one per cent from last quarter.
- In the third quarter, GRT experienced a slight 9 per cent decrease in ridership compared to 2023. This was due to the increased transfer window from 90 minutes to 120 minutes, which came into effect July 1, 2024, as well as decreased student enrolment.
- During the same period last year, GRT experienced a ridership record, which lead to overcrowding and a decrease in on-time performance. In the past year, GRT has increased service and made schedule adjustments to address the issues and improve performance. These improvements have helped GRT stabilize on-time performance, which was 73 per cent during the third quarter.
- MobilityPLUS ridership was up in the third quarter, with more than 150 extra daily boardings. Undelivered trips on MobilityPLUS are 2.62 per cent for the year. We've made tremendous progress towards the 2.5 per cent target and

MobilityPLUS customers are now seeing the benefits of operational adjustments and scheduling software updates. We started the year at 4.86 per cent from January to March, 1.9 per cent from April to June, and from July to September achieved 1.56 per cent.

5. Background:

The previous ridership update report was presented at the Sept. 10, 2024, Sustainability, Infrastructure and Development Committee (TSD-RRS-24-009).

Based on current ridership projections, we anticipate 2024 to meet or fall slightly below 2023 ridership figures.

The highest and lowest performing routes are noted in Appendix A. Along with the ION LRT, which continues to be the highest performing route, Route 8 Weber and Route 12 Westmount are the other two top performers. The same three BusPLUS routes continue to be the lowest performers, but are operating as intended. BusPLUS routes serve areas where ridership is still developing.

6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public

Area Municipalities: N/A

Public: Ridership and other performance measures will continue to be shared with the public on the GRT website.

7. Financial Implications:

Overall Q1 and Q3 2024 fare revenue received is approximately \$1 million higher than budget due to increased ridership between January and August.

8. Conclusion / Next Steps:

2024 year end ridership will be shared in March 2025.

9. Attachments:

Appendix A: Performance Dashboard – GRT

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