



Accessibility Forum

Tuesday, January 14th, 2025

A green-tinted background image showing a Durham Region Transit Pulse bus on the left and a car on the right. The bus has 'PULSE' written on its side. An orange horizontal line is positioned above the word 'Agenda'.

Agenda

1. Planning and Maintenance
 - a. Discussion: Questions and answers
2. Scheduled Service
 - a. Discussion: Questions and answers
3. On Demand and Specialized
 - a. Discussion: Questions and answers
4. What's to come in 2025



Objectives of tonight's accessibility forum

- An opportunity for DRT staff to engage with residents, share feedback, and help shape the future of accessible public transit in Durham Region.
- Highlight recent accessibility initiatives and plans.
- Share updates on new initiatives and DRT's continuous efforts to improve accessibility and inclusivity.
- Listen to feedback for consideration to influence accessibility across the transit network.
- Ensure clarity between issues of transit accessibility and access to transit.

A large, semi-transparent green image of a Durham Region Transit bus, viewed from the front. The bus number "8523" is visible on the front. The background is a dark green gradient with curved lines on the right side.

Planning & Maintenance

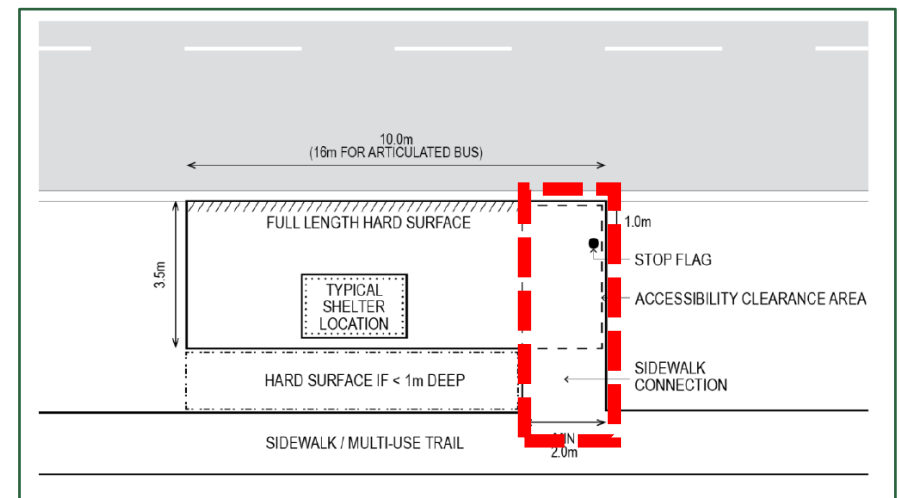
Stop Design – Accessible Hard Surface

- 98% of DRT bus stops are accessible.
- 100% by the end of 2025
- New stops, stops in construction zones, and some complex rural stops remain.



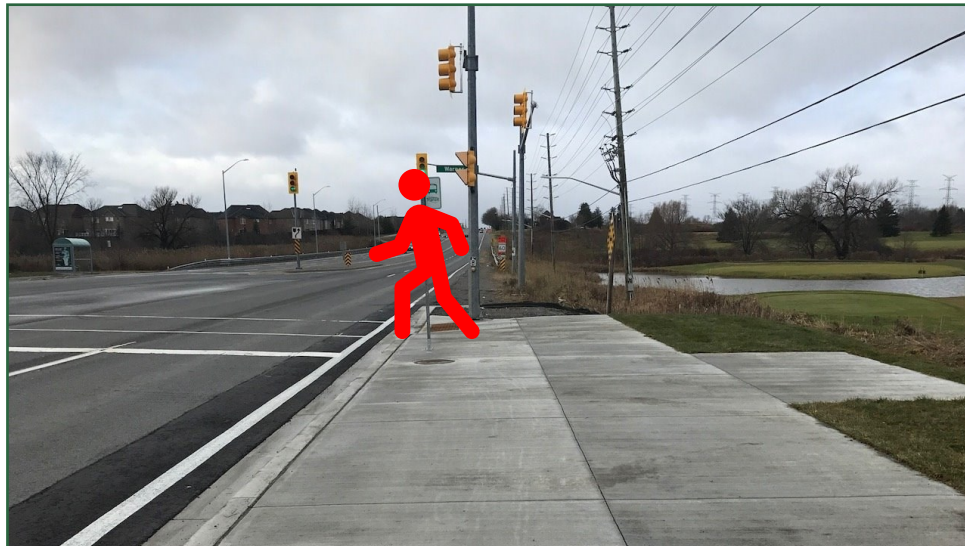
Stop Design – Clearance Area

- DRT endeavours to provide a suitable hard surface platform for all doors, with front door level boarding areas for customers using mobility aids and/or devices e.g., wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers.
- Curb cuts or gradual sloping for smooth transition from the bus stop platform.
- Tactile plating for customers who are visually impaired.
 - The CNIB provided feedback on the importance of this feature, which has influenced new stop designs, and requirements for retrofitting existing stops.



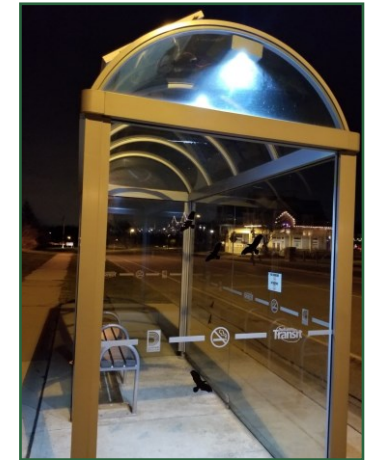
Stop Design – Pedestrian Connections

- Where no curb and sidewalk exists, pedestrian infrastructure may be required to be installed by the local municipality.
- Ditches next to the road might mean more complex engineering with significantly higher construction costs.



Stop Design – Shelters

- 30% of stops have a shelter.
- Bench provided inside shelter.
- 65% of shelters have a solar light.
 - Aiming for 100% of shelters to have solar lighting where conditions allow.
- Stops with 20 or more boardings/day are prioritized for a shelter.
 - Stops near hospitals and other community destinations are prioritized for a shelter regardless of the number of boardings at the stop.



Stop Design – Signage

- Signage:
 - Contains the correct stop number for easy reference with the DRT website or Customer Service Representative.
 - DRT is investigating bus stop sign design changes in 2025 to 2026.



Stop Design - Next Bus Display

- Currently located at:
 - Oshawa Centre Terminal.
 - North Campus Terminal.
 - Pickering Parkway Terminal
 - Clarington Boulevard and Highway 2
- Text to speech is available by pressing the button at the bottom.



Snow Maintenance at Bus Stops

- Snow clearing at bus stop pads and shelters commence within 24 hours following a winter event or when the accumulation of 5cm of snow has fallen. Salting or clearing is also performed when there are drifting or icy conditions.
- Snow clearing operations continue until all stops and shelters are completely clear.
- The minimum width of 1.5 metres must be cleared to ensure accessibility requirements are met.



Garbage & Shelter Maintenance at Bus Stops

- All shelters are cleaned once, every 2 weeks
 - Removal of garbage in and around the shelter, graffiti, non-DRT posted material etc.
- Currently 325 bus stops have a garbage and recycling unit. Units are maintained weekly.



Stop Planning – Proximity and Spacing



Up to 800 metre walk

- Locations chosen so that:
 - 80% of dwellings are within a 500 metre walk of a bus stop.
 - 95% of dwellings are within a 800 metre walk of a bus stop.

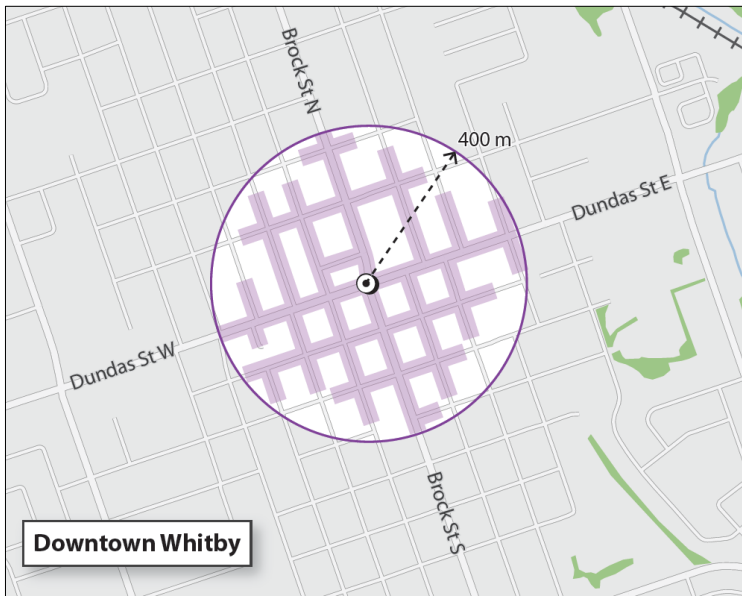


150 to 300 metres apart

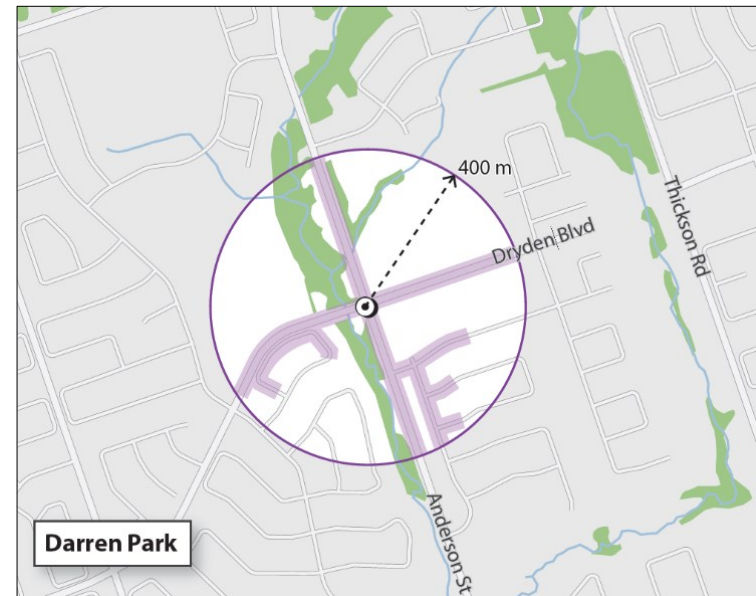
- Stop spacing can range depending on the road configuration, pedestrian connections and types of development.
- Aim for 250 metres minimum distance between stops.
 - This balances access to bus stops while providing schedule reliability for our buses.

Stop Planning – Impact of Development

Urban Grid Street Network

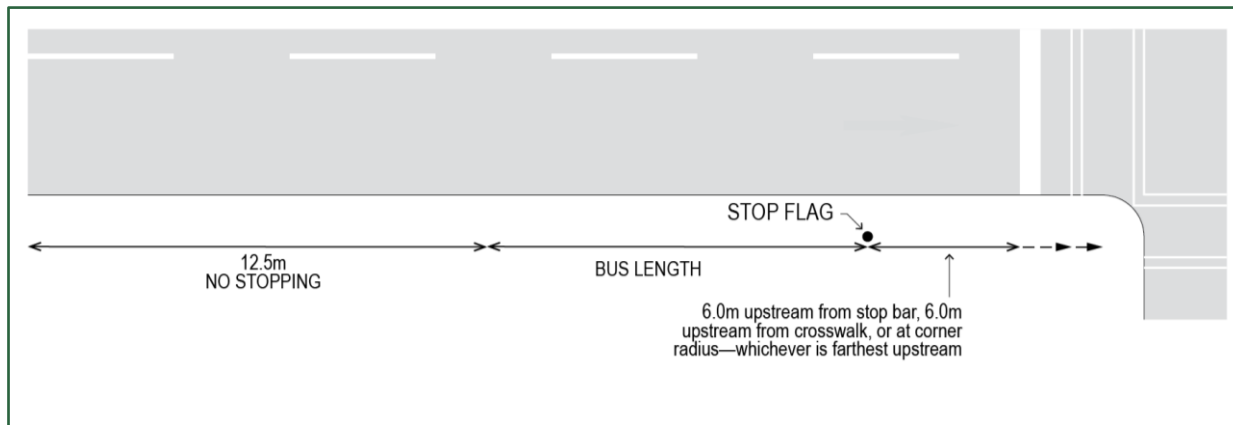


Suburban Street Network



Stop Planning – Distances from Intersection

- Stops are placed near intersections where pedestrian crossings are usually located.
- In some situations, including where buses turn, require longer distances.
- “No stopping” distances depend on circumstances, such as municipal by-laws.
- DRT supports local municipalities or Region for controlled intersections.





Scheduled Service

Boarding and Securement

- 100% of DRT buses are low floor and include a ramp and kneeling feature.
- All DRT buses have minimum two designated mobility aid securement areas (located in the priority seating area).



Pre-board & On-board Announcements

- All DRT buses have pre-board announcements for bus route and final stop destination.
- All DRT buses have both automated visual signs and verbal announcements for all upcoming stops.
 - Noise level dependent on ambient sound
- If the automated service announcement is not functioning, the operator is expected to verbally announce all bus stops.



Priority & Courtesy Seating

- All DRT buses include both priority and courtesy seating.
- Priority seating is located at the front of the bus.
- Courtesy seating is located directly after priority seating.



On Demand



Objectives of On Demand

- Commingled service for customers in low ridership areas (including rural) and when scheduled services are not operating in urban zones, and for customers registered with specialized transit across the Region.
- Shared ride service to maximize trip capacity. Rides are not intended to be direct.
- “Show-up and go” transit service, offering customers the opportunity for spontaneous travel.
- Equitable transit service for all customers.



On Demand Customers Registered with Specialized

- As in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), eligibility for Specialized is based on 3 categories:
 1. **Unconditional:** A person with a disability that prevents him/her from using scheduled transportation services.
 2. **Temporary:** A person with a temporary disability that prevents him/her from using scheduled transportation services.
 3. **Conditional:** A person with a disability where environmental or physical barriers limit his/her ability to consistently use scheduled transportation services.

On Demand Fleet

- Fleet is comprised of 40+ vehicles, including a combination of sedans and wheelchair accessible minivans and ProMasters.
- Customers are sent the appropriate vehicle at the time of pick-up based on their accessibility needs (subject to availability).





On Demand Bookings

- On Demand booking
 - Mobile app
 - Online booking portal
 - Phone (1-866-247-0055)
- Specialized booking
 - Phone (1-866-247-0055)
 - Language translation services are available.
 - Aiming to have ability to book through mobile app by end of 2025.
- Hours
 - Weekdays 05:00 to 24:00
 - Saturday 07:00 to 24:00
 - Sunday 07:00 to 22:00



A background image showing a white bus with 'PULSE' written on its side and a silver car, both set against a dark green background. An orange horizontal line is positioned above the title.

Customer Service

- DRT Customer Service
 - In person at 110 Westney Street South, Ajax (adjacent to Ajax GO Station)
 - Weekdays 08:00 to 18:00 & Weekends 11:30 to 16:00
 - Phone (1-866-247-0055)
 - Weekdays 07:00 to 18:00 & Weekends 08:00 to 16:30
 - Language translation services are available.
 - Electronically via customer comment form on the DRT website or email.
- Customers can access automated scheduled and real-time bus arrival information through the phone if they do not want to speak to a CSR. Website Next-Ride tool also provides real time schedule information.
- Website is compatible with screen-readers and provides language translation.



Equitable Access to Transit - Discussion

- Should customers registered with Specialized Services continue to be able to book up to 7 days in advance? What about On Demand?
- Should customers be able to book recurring trips (daily, weekly, etc.)?
 - Does this apply to all customers, Specialized-only?
- Should customers be held accountable for reducing capacity due to booking trips and not using the service (e.g. no-shows and late cancellation policy)?



The Sunflower Program and Hidden Disabilities



**We've joined
The Sunflower**



HIDDEN 
disabilities

DRT Joins the Hidden Disabilities Program

The Hidden Disability Sunflower Program at Durham Region Transit (DRT) will be launching in Spring 2025!



The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program, originating from the United Kingdom and now globally adopted, will help DRT staff become more aware of customers with needs related to hidden disabilities. The program aims to raise awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by individuals with hidden disabilities.

What is the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower?

The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is a simple tool for you to voluntarily share that you have a disability or condition that may not be immediately apparent – and that you may need a helping hand, understanding, or more time with DRT services.

The program acknowledges various hidden disabilities, conditions and/or chronic illnesses, including (but not limited to):

- Crohn's Disease
- Dyslexia
- Epilepsy
- Lupus
- Cancer
- Anxiety



How Do I Get a Sunflower?



Getting a Sunflower

Starting Spring 2025, lanyards, buttons and cards will be available for order or pick-up at Durham Region Transit Customer Service.

Sunflower caregiver's card will also be available for those who care for and support someone with a non-visible disability.



DRT is currently undertaking an extensive training program to ensure all staff can recognize and respond to customers participating in the Hidden Disability Sunflower Program.



Participating in this Hidden Disability Sunflower Program will support DRT's commitment of an inclusive and equitable transit network where all customers feel a sense of belonging.





Thank you

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