

Subject: Annual Update – Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap

File Number: ACS2025-TSD-TS-0001

Report to Transit Committee on 10 April 2025

**Submitted on April 1, 2025 by Renée Amilcar, General Manager, Transit Services
Department**

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Ward: Citywide

**Objet : Mise à jour annuelle de la feuille de route quinquennale des Services
de transport en commun**

Dossier : ACS2024-TSD-TS-0001

Rapport au Comité du transport en commun

le 10 avril 2025

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Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That Transit Committee receive for information the Annual Update – Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap Scorecard, attached as Document 1.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité du transport en commun prenne connaissance de la mise à jour annuelle du tableau de bord de la feuille de route quinquennale des Services de transport en commun, reproduite ci-joint dans la pièce 1.

BACKGROUND

In November 2019, the Transit Commission passed a motion directing staff to provide regular updates on service performance. That reporting mechanism has continued as a standing item on each Transit Commission (now Committee) agenda and is reflected formally in the Transit Committee Terms of Reference. The content always includes key performance indicators (KPIs) related to service delivery.

Transit Services brought updated Annual Business Plans to the Transit Commission in 2021 and 2022. Each plan reported on the progress of the previous year and identified new priorities moving forward. The Transit Services 2022 Business Plan and Reporting on 2021 Business Plan report ([ACS2022-TSD-TS-0001](#)) was received by Transit Commission on March 30, 2022.

To continue the evolution towards transparent data-driven reporting, Transit Services created a 5-Year Roadmap of initiatives and potential corresponding key performance indicators to chart progress and ensure accountability for this term of Council. The Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap was received by Transit Commission on June 29, 2023 ([ACS2023-TSD-TS-0011](#)) and a subsequent update and Scorecard was received by Transit Commission on April 11, 2024 ([ACS2024-TSD-TS-0002](#)).

The 5-Year Roadmap aligns with the recommendations and actions from the Ottawa Light Rail Public Inquiry, as well as Term of Council Priorities (2023-2026), including:

- A city that is more connected with reliable, safe and accessible mobility options.
- A city that is green and resilient.

Proud to be your choice to get there

The 5-Year Roadmap is aspirational, future-focused and guides how OC Transpo plans to modernize and grow into a world-class transit network with high service reliability, high customer satisfaction, and high employee engagement.

The Roadmap is a living, dynamic document that evolves to align with City of Ottawa strategic plans, such as the official Strategic Plan and the Transportation Master Plan. This Roadmap lays a transparent, accountable, and measurable path to guide OC Transpo over the next three years.

The 5-Year Roadmap was developed to:

- Provide a **VISION** of who OC Transpo wants to be.
- Create a **MISSION** that sets out how OC Transpo is going to achieve the vision.
- Build foundational **PILLARS** that set out what is most important to OC Transpo.

Vision: “*Proud to be your choice to get there*”

To achieve our vision, we have defined our **mission** as:

- OC Transpo connects and builds Ottawa’s communities.
- OC Transpo promises to deliver safe, clean, dependable and accessible public transit.
- OC Transpo puts our people and our customers first.

Supporting the Vision and the Mission are five foundational pillars – within each pillar there are defined Strategic Initiatives, which are measured and monitored through KPIs.



As part of the commitment to provide greater transparency for Council, OC Transpo customers, and the public, Transit Services provides this annual update on KPIs outlined in the 5-Year Roadmap.

DISCUSSION

Since the introduction of the Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap on June 29, 2023 ([ACS2023-TSD-TS-0011](#)), staff have analyzed and refined key performance indicators

(KPIs), established timelines and targets, and developed reporting schedules to ensure consistent data tracking.

The scorecard is an annual summary of significant OC Transpo KPIs and is meant to supplement the monthly KPI updates provided to Transit Committee (previously Transit Commission). The KPIs noted in the attached scorecard (Document 1) have established baselines and final targets for future annual reports.

Staff have kept Transit Committee and Council updated on progress made on key files as part of staff's commitment to transparency and accountability. Many updates and additional KPIs have been added to those updates, based on the Committee's requests and feedback.

Additionally, Transit Services completed the LRT Action Plan in response to the OLRT Public Inquiry after completing 89 of 95 City-led recommendations. The six remaining recommendations are incorporated into ongoing City policies for implementation in future projects. Given the timely and comprehensive response to the public inquiry, Council determined that the mandate of the Light Rail Sub-Committee was met and elected to dissolve the committee as part of the 2022-2026 Mid-term Governance Review ([ACS2025-OCC-GEN-0001](#)) in January 2025. As a result, staff will now provide updates on the remaining recommendations to the Transit Committee as needed.

For this year's Roadmap update, Transit Services is closing two strategic initiatives that were noted as complete in the 2023 scorecard ([ACS2024-TSD-TS-0002](#)):

- Long-Range Operational Planning and Lifecycle Review (Our Finances)
- Bus Route Review (Our Service)

One new initiative is being added to the Roadmap this year, as part of the Our Finances pillar: the fare compliance initiative. As reported to Transit Committee in the Fare Compliance Initiative Update report ([ACS2025-TSD-SRTD-0001](#)) at the March 2025 meeting, fare compliance is essential to ensuring stability of revenues, the integrity of the fare system, and equity among riders.

This update to the 5-Year Roadmap shows that there have been improvements in many areas of OC Transpo service despite the significant obstacles faced by the department over the past year.

As presented to Transit Commission throughout 2024, OC Transpo has identified challenges related to the aging bus fleet, delayed delivery of new e-buses, bus and rail

operator recruitment, and a budget deficit.

As detailed throughout this report, staff developed strategies and mitigation plans in 2024 to address these challenges, as well as to provide a clear path forward in 2025. Accomplishments by the department have been substantial and correlate to advancing the Vision and Mission of Transit Services.

Our People

Strategic Recruitment

In 2024, as part of the ongoing recruitment campaign, OC Transpo hired and trained 261 operational staff, as well as an additional 121 recruits carried over from 2023. This included 42 new Diesel Rail Operators (DROs) for O-Train Lines 2 and 4, along with others onboarded from 2023 recruitment efforts.

OC Transpo participated in 36 recruitment outreach initiatives and events, connecting with communities and strengthening our efforts to attract top talent. This included a career fair hosted by Algonquin College, where staff engaged directly with graduating students from skilled trades and law enforcement programs to promote career opportunities in transit.

Training efforts saw 307 bus operators trained with 222 successfully graduating, as well as 12 Para Transpo operators trained and hired. Additional hires were made within Maintenance and Customer Service to support operations. Looking ahead to 2025, strategic recruitment initiatives will focus on attracting key operational staff including mechanics, Special Constables, and ongoing bus and rail operator recruitment to ensure OC Transpo continues to provide reliable and high-quality service to the residents of Ottawa.

Our Customers

Customer service improvements, including transforming communications

OC Transpo built on recent efforts to improve transit information at customers' fingertips, introducing multiple real-time information improvements on the Transit App. One key upgrade in early 2024 was an update to the app's real-time data, allowing customers to see real-time arrival predictions for bus trips that had yet to leave their first stop. Customers' use of the Transit App has grown significantly year-over-year since OC Transpo began close collaboration with the application's developers in 2023, with the following highlights in 2024:

- 46 per cent increase in number of users
- 184 per cent increase in the step-by-step travel planning navigator
- More than 21 million trips planned

Looking ahead in 2025, more real-time information screens will be available inside the new zero-emission buses, at major stations, and at key bus stops. Staff will bring updates to Transit Committee as these projects progress and come online.

Deliver Para Transpo enhancements

Transit Services introduced Para Transpo Talk, a customer engagement series taking place six times a year. Sessions take place in a mix of in-person and virtual events, depending on the season. Events are open to all customers and do not require customers to apply to be a part of the group. The goals of Para Transpo Talk are to help customers with questions they have, gather customer feedback, encourage participation from all customer demographics and usage levels, and promote Para Transpo services and initiatives. More than 400 total attendees took part in the October and November sessions. October focused on showing the new 6-metre minibus over four sessions. November's focus was on My Para Transpo online booking over four sessions. There were also two online meetings in February.

Para Transpo's aging minibus fleet is being completely replaced with new vehicles. The first new 6-metre minibus went into service earlier this year, with another five anticipated on the road in Q2 2025. An additional 76 new 7-metre minibuses will begin entering service as they arrive, with delivery expected to be completed by early Q2 2026.

My Para Transpo online services usage doubled in 2024 compared to 2023. Customers are adopting the self-serve system to quickly book, cancel, and track their trips. Early data from 2025 show that this number is continuing to increase in 2025. Para Transpo notifications for trip tracking was launched in March 2025, with more enhancements planned in 2025.

New Payment Options

O-Payment was expanded to accept debit cards on all OC Transpo vehicles and at station fare gates in mid-2024. Now, with monthly and daily fare capping, customers can tap their debit or credit card knowing that they can ride as much as they want without worrying about spending more than the price of a day pass or the price of a monthly pass. Earlier in 2025, O-Payment was activated on Para Transpo minibuses, providing

customers the option to tap their Presto card, credit card, or debit card themselves.

Our Service

Bus Route Review

OC Transpo's Bus Route Review was conducted in 2023 to ensure our transit network reflects current and future travel patterns and ridership levels. The review also aimed at improving service reliability and prepared connections to new O-Train stations to adjust to expanding rail in the south, east, and west. Given the implementation of New Ways to Bus in late April 2025, staff consider the Bus Route Review strategic initiative to be complete.

Stabilize Service Delivery and Increase Reliability

Despite an aging fleet and a competitive labour market, there were year-over-year improvements in key performance indicators associated with quality of service. Bus service delivery increased slightly from 97.8 per cent to 98.0 per cent and O-Train Line 1 service delivery increased from 97.1 per cent to 98.8 per cent. Bus operator availability exceeded the set target thanks to our extensive recruitment campaigns and strong commitment by our recruitment team, bus operators, maintenance, and operations staff.

The scorecard results also reflect challenges associated with an aging fleet; bus mean distance between failure has decreased and bus availability has only slightly improved. As new buses enter the fleet in the coming years, we anticipate more visible improvements in these areas.

Handover of Stage 2 from construction to operations

O-Train Lines 2 and 4 were handed over from the Rail Construction Program to Rail Operations on November 26, 2024, after a successful Trial Running that achieved 99.5 per cent service delivery in October. Staff kept Council informed on progress via daily Trial Running memos, Light Rail Sub-Committee meeting reports and presentations, and three technical briefings. The lines opened using a phased approach where service expanded gradually from 5-day service on January 6, 2025, 6-day service on January 25, 2025, to full 7-day service on March 16, 2025. Our staff and customers are eagerly awaiting the handover of the east extension of O-Train Line 1, expected later in 2025.

Our Assets

Bus Maintenance Action Plan

The Bus Maintenance Action Plan was introduced as one of three elements required to reach OC Transpo's goal of 99.5 per cent bus service delivery. Strategic recruitment of bus operations staff and bus operators was considered effectively complete in 2024, with ongoing hiring to maintain our staffing levels. OC Transpo is now establishing a strategic recruitment campaign in 2025 to attract and hire more mechanics. When New Ways to Bus is launched in late April 2025, the associated service changes are expected to increase service reliability and better reflect our customers' travel patterns and overall ridership.

There were significant milestones achieved in 2024 for the Bus Maintenance Action Plan. Two new Maintenance Manager positions were created and filled, training programs for apprentices and mechanics were refined, and a preventative bus maintenance backlog was cleared. Looking further into 2025 and 2026, ongoing work will focus on predictive maintenance, reducing heavy workloads through improved maintenance planning and scheduling, and replacing outdated technology to increase our efficiency.

Core Business Review

An update to OC Transpo's conventional fleet plan was completed in 2024. Based on this update, staff adjusted the growth and replacement plans for conventional buses. Through this work, staff were able to reconfirm a spare ratio of 20 per cent and reduce the high-capacity fleet ratio to 15 per cent. Fleet plan updates for Para Transpo and non-revenue vehicles are being made this year, and a comprehensive inventory of OC Transpo's bus shelters will be completed by late 2025.

Transition and Delivery of Zero-Emission Buses (including infrastructure)

There were four zero-emission buses in the OC Transpo fleet at the end of 2024. That number is steadily increasing in 2025, with a total of 30 expected to be in service in Q2 2025 and more to be added by the end of 2025. Bus manufacturer production and delivery delays continue to affect original timelines; this is a common theme across the industry, with demand for buses outpacing supply and manufacturing speeds.

Plans for a major expansion of OC Transpo's electric bus infrastructure were finalized in 2024. A large portion of the St-Laurent Garage complex will be renovated in 2025 to accommodate future e-bus storage, charging infrastructure, and maintenance activities.

Our Finances

Fare compliance initiative

Fare evasion is a trending issue across the transit industry, with evidence that more robust compliance strategies are needed to ensure the integrity of fare systems. In response, OC Transpo launched a focused fare compliance project in 2024 looking at problematic areas of the transit system, based on feedback from the public and staff. Based on positive initial results, the initiative was extended through 2024 and is now set to be formalized and extended to the end of 2025. As noted in the report to Transit Committee from March 17, 2025, staff intend to seek funding for permanent Transit Fare Enforcement Officer staff positions as part of the 2026 operating budget.

Develop financial models and prioritize major business lines by service area

In 2023 and early 2024, OC Transpo conducted a comprehensive process and cost review of its major business lines, resulting in the development of a prototype cost model. The primary objective was to provide a detailed analysis of current expenditures and key cost drivers for each business line over time, while also establishing a framework for assessing the potential financial impacts of future events or decisions.

This initiative was carried out in collaboration with subject matter experts from across OC Transpo and the Finance and Corporate Services Department as well as external experts. The cost model is continuously maintained and updated, to ensure its relevance and accuracy. Staff also provide ongoing recommendations to enhance the model and refine work processes to improve financial planning and decision-making.

Conclusion

The key performance indicators and initiatives identified within the 5-Year Roadmap allow staff, Council, and the public to track the department's progress in meeting its goals. As noted in this report, initiatives have been added to the Roadmap as new priorities arise, and other initiatives are removed as they are completed.

The long-term vision laid out in the Roadmap is guided by measurable priorities, and aligns with the 2022-26 Term of Council priorities, including:

- Long-Range Financial Plan

- Transportation Master Plan
- Climate Change Master Plan
- Comprehensive Asset Management

The KPIs within the Roadmap create broader transparency, resulting in gained trust from OC Transpo customers. This is the key to building a sustainable, reliable and safe transit system for residents, commuters and tourists.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Transit Affordability Model is continuously updated to reflect changes in operating and capital plans. The next update to the Transit Long Range Financial Plan will be aligned with the revised Transportation Master Plan in 2025. Any financial implications resulting from the Transit Services 5-year plan will be assessed within the affordability model to ensure alignment with the Long-Range Financial Plan to ensure the financial sustainability of transit services going forward.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receiving this report for information.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This is a city-wide report.

CONSULTATION

Transit Services Department staff continue to consult with customers, staff and Council regarding the projects and initiatives identified in this report. Consultation activities include ongoing Stage 2 public consultations, a Para Transpo customer working group, and Para Transpo Talk sessions.

OC Transpo continues to provide regular updates to Transit Committee and participates in the Transit Advisory Group that was established in 2024.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

One of OC Transpo's Mission statements, as outlined in the 5-Year Roadmap is: We promise to deliver safe, clean, dependable and accessible public transit. All components of the Stage 2 O-Train project, future bus procurement and Para Transpo services are consistent with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). OC Transpo adheres to the City of Ottawa's Municipal Accessibility Plan (COMAP) and the 2024-26

Accessibility Plan fulfils OC Transpo's federal obligations under the *Accessible Canada Act* (ACA, 2019), as services operate interprovincially.

Staff will ensure that any applicable accessibility legislation, standards and guidelines are adhered to during the execution of the projects and initiatives identified in this report. Staff will continue to engage people with disabilities and accessibility stakeholders to ensure that their perspectives are considered and incorporated, and to promote inclusion.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

OC Transpo's assets are identified as one of the five pillars in the 5-Year Roadmap. In the coming years, OC Transpo will be adding all the Stage 2 O-Train extensions and their associated properties, vehicles, infrastructure and technologies required to operate these new systems. As well, OC Transpo will be renewing its fleet of Para Transpo minibuses and progressively transitioning the conventional bus fleet to zero-emission vehicles.

CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

Ottawa's Climate Change Master Plan established greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets of 100 per cent by 2050 for the city as a whole and 100 per cent by 2040 for the municipal corporation.

The City of Ottawa has set a target to convert all OC Transpo buses to zero-emission buses by 2036. The opening of the Stage 2 O-Train extensions further east and west will provide sustainable and environmentally friendly public transit for all residents of the city.

INDIGENOUS GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

The Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap includes a strong focus on equity and builds on OC Transpo's commitment to create an equitable public transit system. As noted in the April 2023 Transportation Master Plan Update ([ACS2023-PRE-TP-0001](#)), an equitable transportation system is "one that enables everyone to access the destinations they need to reach and that helps to address systemic barriers to social and economic participation". Accordingly, OC Transpo, and the priorities outlined in this report, aim to improve access for people who experience transit-related barriers.

Following the City's Equity and Inclusion Lens, these transit improvements include

considering the mobility needs and constraints of women, children, older adults, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, Indigenous peoples, members of racialized communities, and other equity-deserving groups.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Risk management implications are outlined in the report.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

Rural implications have been taken into consideration in the development of the projects outlined in the Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap. The City's transportation network, including light rail transit, is designed to provide options for all residents.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

Technology implications are outlined in the 5-Year Roadmap and include implementation of the Zero-Emission Bus Program, Para Transpo Improvements, Fare System Improvements and Enhancing Oversight of O-Train Line 1.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The 2023-2026 Term of Council Priorities include:

- A city that is more connected with reliable, safe and accessible mobility options.
- A city that is green and resilient.

DISPOSITION

The Transit Services Department (TSD) will provide annual updates on the progress of KPIs identified in the 5-Year Roadmap. TSD also reports back on the progress and outcomes of many priorities outlined in the Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap as part of the OC Transpo Update at each Transit Committee meeting.

Document 1

Transit Services 5-Year Roadmap: Scorecard