

[REDACTED]
FROM: Adam White [REDACTED]

TO: CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG

RE: PETITION TO RESTORE PUBLIC TRANSIT TO WHAT IT WAS BEFORE APRIL 19, 2021.



Dear Mayor Cleveland and Councilors,

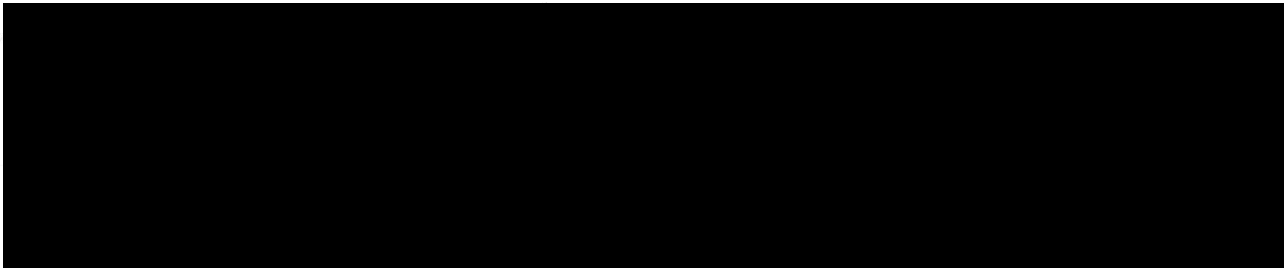
I created a petition in which I asked the community:

“Do you want to sign a petition to restore Cobourg’s public transit system to what it was before April 19, 2021?”

I included an abstract, so that petitioners could be more informed about the On-Demand Transit Service, barriers to public transit, and sign if they want Council to consider restoring fixed routes.

I met my target of 16 signatures for 6 days. It’s a small sample size, but it shows that residents want Council to consider restoring public transit to what it was before April 19, 2021.

P.S.



Cordially Yours,

Adam White

**DO YOU WANT TO
SIGN A PETITION
TO RESTORE
COBOURG'S
PUBLIC TRANSIT
SYSTEM
TO WHAT IT WAS
BEFORE
APRIL 19, 2021?**

Abstract:

June 14, 2021 - Cobourg's traditional public transit system (fixed routes) had switched into an On-Demand Public Transit Service without public consultation. It appears that Council felt it had a personal responsibility to change public transit operations due to a public health response from the Covid-19 pandemic.

2021 - Council approved the operating budget to provide On-Demand services for a one (1) year pilot commencing on April 19, 2021.

Council would essentially approve an experimental public transit service without community input that would transform resident's daily lives.

May 16, 2022 – Council reviewed the Engage Cobourg On-Demand Transit Service Survey (78 participants) and moved a resolution to implement a Fully-Access On-Demand, buy two buses, and negotiate transit operation services with Century for 2024. (OUT SOURCING)

RideCo, who provides the ridesharing software for On-Demand Transit Service - proposed three transit options:

Fully On-Demand Service means full integration of public transit (ridesharing and WHEELS) with RideCo's rideshared technology software (App), a call centre (limited business hours), and Council is considering buying two buses to add to fleet operated by Century.

Hybrid model which consists of On Demand Services as well as offering one (1) Limited Fixed Route system that serves conventional and WHEELS services.

Fixed Routes option will have the transit system revert back to the two route fixed conventional service and WHEELS service operating separately as they did prior to April 19, 2021.

January 9, 2024 – Council will consider what action to take with On-Demand Transit Service.,

Barriers to Public Transit

Council needs to be aware that On-Demand Transit Service is not sustainable and has accessible barriers - which have a negative impact on accessible transit services for students, seniors, labourers, tourists, parents with children, and persons with disabilities.

For example:

- 1. Attitudinal and Communication barriers:** residents and stakeholders not understanding how the system works, and not comfortable or have access to technology (a smart phone with a data plan);
- 2. Organization and System barriers:** discriminating against residents and stakeholders because of status (not having a car, homeless, lifestyle choices and livelihoods);
- 3. Privacy:** RideCo provides a rideshare service through an APP - which riders are required to submit personal information to register, and their transportation history is recorded (track and traced) for service improvements; However, riders still have option to use a call centre;

4. Financial Stewardship: The Town of Cobourg is growing, so an equitable, inclusive, and accessible transit service needed; Cobourg can continue to contract its transportation operations to Century or open bidding to offer 'economy of scale' transit because the operators have greater resources in the industry, more knowledge, and it is more efficient than hiring a full time dedicated staff for such a small operation.... supposed to be.

Restore the Gold Standard

The Town of Cobourg needs a viable transit system for the social and economic needs of its residents and stakeholders. The traditional route system has been the gold standard for municipalities, but Cobourg Council has opted for the current experimental On-Demand Transit System.

Life does not go like clock-work; Emergencies and circumstances happen without our control. A public transit system that is solely on-call is a barrier for fully participating in society and having a productive livelihood.

Ontario Human Rights Commission, Part 1. Transit and Human Rights:

"the Code emphasizes the importance of human rights in enabling each person to feel part of the community and to contribute fully to society. For many persons in Ontario, transit services are critical to their achieving these goals. Transit services are part of the public infrastructure, which provides access to basic goods and services, as well as to social and economic activities."

Roadmap to A Barrier-free Transit

It is of vital importance that accessible public transit policies and programs are made available to all residents and stakeholders in a fair and equitable way. By singling out residents with this experimental On-Demand Transit Service, it is causing anxiety and divisions in society

It is very important for Council to have a perspective on where we are going over the next three, five, and 10 years, not only for our own public transit operations, but how we are making every effort to have accessible and viable public transit.

I hope Council understands the gravity of the accessible public transit situation and treats all residents and stakeholders fairly. The public transit system should be restored to its original purpose, by exercising its public statutory function and human rights that enables "each person to feel part of the community and to contribute fully to society."

Kindly yours,

adam white