

Millennium Library

Saturday, January 14, 2017

Handi-Transit Information Session

Good afternoon everyone – it's 1:30 so we're going to start. I anticipate we will probably have a few coming in later, but we said 1:30 so we will start. Thank you all for coming. Before starting we have some housekeeping: I want to invite you to have coffee and water at the back. It is for you so feel free, if you get thirsty or anytime you want to it is there for you.

The bathrooms are out that door there to your left and then your right. Those are the closest here to us.

So that is it for housekeeping today. I want to thank you for coming out because this is about you. For those of you who are users of the service or stakeholders that provide service to those who use Handi-Transit, this is for you. We have heard you, we know you are not happy and that we have to make some changes, and this is why we are here today. We want your feedback, and you to tell us what the best way is for us to address your issues. I have to preface that by saying you know we have limited resources, a budget, and so we want to do everything we can within the parameters we have to work within. So I'm glad to see you here and that you chose to participate in this.

I will introduce who we have here today: Chris Sobkowicz, the advisor for the accessibility committee for the City, Colleen Neumann, Thor Sigurdson, a rep from the CPA, and one of our policy advisory committee members, Debbie, who is the manager of 1010 Sinclair, and Colleen Waters who works at the DIO but is here today for Colleen, so welcome to you too.

So welcome to all of you. And then we have three others here who will be doing the presentation: Alison Lecke, our quality assurance supervisor and project officer on the new software implementation. Darren Farr who I'm sure you recognize his name. his role is the supervisor of operations for Handi-Transit but he is also working as a project officer on this.

We also have Word for Word here today writing on the screen, as their indicates word for word what we are saying and after the session it will be posted on our website, so if you have questions later it will be there for you to see.

We also have somebody here that will provide sign language. We didn't have anyone identify that they need the service, is there anyone? If not I'm not sure – will you stay? Probably not. So

it's not that exciting for them okay gotcha. It's Saturday right I gotcha! We will ask them to stick around for a bit to see if anyone requires the service but if not we will let them go.

Why are we here today? Do you know? Yeah? Good. We are here to talk to you about a new software (excuse me...) that the City has bought to do the scheduling and client management of Handi-Transit registrants.

It has been a long time. Our current system was built for us in 2004. You know how quickly technology changes. So we haven't had any significant changes since then and it shows. In our ability to address some of your issues. That is why we are here today. I will be very strict with all of you in the time limits of this session. We have five topic areas we will cover, and I should tell you that we are going to talk to you about what we currently do, and then about what the system can do. So we want your opinion on what your preference is because we are going to give you a couple of options.

While we are telling you what the systems can do – no decisions have been made on which way we are going to go. On January 23rd is when we have the contractors, Route Match. Until then, nothing is set in stone and even after that I would dare say we will have flexibility to make changes. So we wanted to talk to you before we talk to them.

So five topic areas that we have heard from you are problems for you in accommodating your issues and providing you the flexibility you need to live your life well. One of the issues is scheduling, trip priorities, fair payment, a time policy in regards to the cancellation window, and at the end we will tell you about software enhancements that will make your and our lives easier. It's a win / win for everybody.

We will hold you to 20 minutes per topic, and even though they are big topics we will have to be speedy. And at the end we will give you about 10 minutes on. I understand you have rides booked and I know you have to be on time so if you have to go we understand.

So I think that the only other thing I will tell you is that this presentation is already posted on our website so if you want it you can go there. If you don't have access to a computer we have a few hard copies with us here today. But if you want one you can call our contact centre and we will mail one out to you.

The other thing we will create, or rather, have already, is an email address to receive feedback from you about this session, or other suggestions as we go forward creating this software. We ask that the email you use only for feedback. If you use it for complaints or anything else, we will only be looking at it periodically and it's hard to track your complaint that way.

The other thing I will ask you is – we have had a lot of people calling our contact centre and talking to the CSRs about the sessions. They weren't there, they are not here. They have access to the info on the website just as you do. You can ask them questions but they are not involved in the project at this point in time. They will be involved when we set it and they have to learn the rules but at this point in time your best bet is to go to the site.

We will have another session midway through the project so we can update you and get more feedback.

Taken up a lot of your time already.

Q: what is that email address?

We will put it up on the screen there and I will say it out loud for you when we get there.

Darren: I will mention at the conclusion we have copies of the presentation so if you want a hard copy we have them up front here. Only a couple and we will email them as well for those that want them

Let's start with the project description.

Q: We can't hear you in the back.

Darren: If I stand closer I'm going to hit the mic with my hand 100 times. Let me give you a brief description. The current software was built in-house in 2004, it has become quite outdated and reached the max of what it can do, and so we realized it is time to improve. RFP was put out and it was awarded, I just looked at a big camera out there, and companies could put bids in to be awarded the software package, route match was awarded, a competitive process, January 23 they are coming into town, nothing has been decided its all open for discussion

Q: We still can't hear you.

Darren: Sorry is that better like this, problem like this is I have to listen to myself. This new system will provide different options we don't have available to us as well as enhancements. Greater transparency and improve the overall service. Josie mentioned that we heard your concerns and we are confident that this new software will address the concerns. Unables, too tight and about the drivers. Allie if you don't mind it is not a topic but one thing we did do was make changes to the driver training.

A: We wanted to let you know that with regards to the driver training, we have heard your concerns and it has been re-vamped. It is now two instead of four days. It is done by myself. There is customer service and disability training in there, and some of the concerns that you have to make sure they are aware of them we did hear that and we are working on it.

Darren: On top of the new driver training we are giving the owners of all the contracts that training for a day as well as all the drivers currently working for us, they have to go through it as well it may be condensed but they will have to do it.

So I will start with the 1st topic. Scheduling, the current one the client calls in and all the requests are put into a file and at 11:00 the day before someone pushes a button and it schedules all the trip requests. Once that schedule is complete that is about it, it doesn't do any enhancing or optimizing from there. We have "unables" on a daily basis, we should also mention that the current system uses zones. With the zone scheduling it will give a time from point A to B, and it will give the driver 7 min to do that trip, it will give him 7 min in the middle of July on a Sunday afternoon and on a rush hour in February the same time, and so the new one will be address to address and be more accurate. The new system will be running continuously in the background it will schedule and keep running and enhancing and utilizing the runs better. If a driver gets a couple of cancels and there is an hour gap, the new system can utilize that and help out another vehicle or do an unable. Also with the new system there is going to be an option for a call out, by email text or phone call and it will remind the passenger of the upcoming trip and give a last min call out that your vehicle will arrive in 5-10 min. I will get into that more. With the new system we anticipate it will utilize the vehicles more, with passengers phoning in the same day requests and with the late vehicles, what we are running now and what route match will look like in the future.

Questions?

Q: I like to thank Handi-Transit, my question is the 15-20 min window, if you are having regular trips to work does that mean every day the time will be different.

D: It gets batched scheduled and then you phone the day before you get a time 1:10. The new system can do a window 1:00-1:20 that you have to be ready during that time. This gives the computer more options because it is running in the background. If it can move the trip back 5 min it can do more and make the schedule run more. It is a window but it provides that last minute call out so you don't have to sit, you get the message that the vehicle will be there.

A: you are talking about subscriptions, we can get your feedback on, you want a very set time, and everyone else gets a window or a hybrid of it that is something we will come up to in one of the topics. I'm going to put your comment here if you are concerned about.

Q: When you are trying to go to a meeting and there is a 20 min window and 1 hr driving and return you could be away for 3 hrs for a 1 hr meeting.

Q: We could do a hybrid of that.

D: We are going to get into trip priorities.

Q: The 20 minute window...

D: It's not definite it's an option.

Q: I don't understand how it works well. If it is 20 minute window are we going to have to wait? They wont wait for ME for 20 minutes.

J: The question was how is the 15-20 minute window going to work, they don't wait for me do I have to wait for them?

Right now you get an exact time. We say 2:00 is your time. So under our rules you have to be ready 10 min before, and if the car does not come to pick you up at 2:00 you have to wait 10 min before you call us. There is your 20 min window

Q: If you are given the time and your ride is on time or early then it works out fine but the other way the window of 20 minutes, when do I get ready, and if I'm waiting for a phone call that I don't want what am I waiting for. Sitting downstairs 5-10 min early for half hour. And if I have a 1:00 appointment and I have a half hour window then we book for 12:00.

J: This is why we are here -- this is an option that we have I want you to understand that.

Q: I don't understand it; my mind isn't wrapping around it.

J: We would say your trip, if we go to this model we may be able to confirm when you call. We will give you a window between 1:50-2:10 and you want a call 10 minutes before, and so we will give you a call get ready now your car is 10 min away. What that allows us to do it gives you the ability to confirm the trip and it allows us to say if we have a car in the area and you're not supposed to get picked up till 2:00 but we have a car in the area at 1:45 we can say please get ready your car will be there at 1:55, but we can't do that now. The driver has to wait until you're confirmed time before they can take you. Even if they want to...

I'm sorry Darren is doing this...

Q: Ok, I live in an apartment -- now I am told I call the night before they say your ride is coming for 2:00 let me tell you I leave my apt at 1:30 because I know they are early and they leave and that is a fact and so the point is I'm there, now I have a disability I'm in an apartment building I go down and so what I'm supposed to wait for a phone call I'm not near a phone it is upstairs in my apartment. No, no! Why would I wait and go downstairs -- that is a time frame. I go downstairs because sometimes the elevator is slow.

It doesn't make sense to me.

Q: It may take me 5-10 minutes to get to there.

J: I want you to understand these are options, I don't want you getting upset right now and I think that is what is happening, when we are giving you what the options are, not what we are

going to be doing. You are the ones that use the service if you are telling us that you want to stay with that exact time, then ok that is what we will do we have the option to do that as well. Don't get upset this wasn't meant to get you upset lets keep in mind these are options. You don't like the window show of hands...

Q: I'm not saying yes or no I just don't understand it.

D: When we give an exact time you come out and are already doing the window yourself, so you are already prepared. If that 2:00 driver showed up at 1:50 you are ready to go and that's all we're saying with the window. I think a lot of passengers do that.

Q: A suggestion for the overall system – it may be helpful, whether for curiosity or legitimate reason, I for one sometimes want to know where I went on a particular day and currently when I ask, I ask in person, she will go through my history and tell me but it would be good if we could access our records online.

D: You are ahead of us, that is one feature of the software which deals with transparency. You will have access to your account, current trips, past trips, and future trips. You will be able to see history, deductions and account info. That is one major enhancement. You will even have the capability to go through a secure web portal and cancel any upcoming trips.

Q: I think we should still be able to book by phone but...

A: One option is to book online.

D: It is absolutely still an option. We will learn more from the software company as to how that will work.

Q: I just want to confirm I have nothing against people booking online but you better not take away the phone because I'm on disability and do things by the phone.

D: Absolutely. When it comes to cancellations, you can cancel online but also the call line, 24 hours/day, with your phone no problem.

Q: A question – so, I know that you are saying all these things are just ideas and not written in stone but if we do the window thing and the call, would it be automated?

D: Yes.

A: It is an automated option but it's configurable so it could be a text or email. It is configurable to your needs. And there is an option for voicemail.

Q: That was part of my question is the new software automated or can you speak to a human being? Is it a phone menu?

A: There will always be a live CSR to take your calls.

Q: Because those with cognitive issues and memory issues, if it is just automated saying your vehicle is here...

D: Again you are ahead of us...

Q: They don't know what's going on when it's a menu. So if you just change it to...

D: It may even go one step further, that call could also be a reminder call. You can set it up on your account so on Wednesday it will call you to say you have a ride on Thursday.

C: We have three more minutes on this topic. Debbie's question.

D: With the window again -- one concern would be relying on (?), sometimes these schedules with Handi-Transit would be my concern.

Q: One question to express my gratitude – I have a few things to say but not a criticism so much. But I wish -- I don't know how much the scheduler knows about zoning because sometimes I'm

waiting – I talk to some ladies at appointments... they are going in the same direction I'm going, and then you will see a cab come to pick them up and right after that one to pick me up. If they knew because it's Henderson Highway, you make a right turn and you can drop me off. This way it will give access more to the vehicle and others...

D: Right. One of the areas our current system lacks is group scheduling and trips all to one place. Right now a big event like a Bomber home game, sometimes we get upwards of 12-15 trip requests. Right now the system if it booked those could very well send 5-6 vehicles. So what we have to do is physically unable those trips, not let the computer schedule them and manually book them. The new system will be much better with light and group trips – going to the IG field but also two people live in St Vital going in the same direction at the same time.

Q: Some of us would go for physio, like myself, and others are going to the same area in the same time frame – why send 3 to 4 vehicles?

D: Right sometimes we have big buses with just one passenger on board.

A: One more question on this and I'm sorry I have to be strict but we do have a time limit. It's not fair to have you here for a really long time, the gentleman in the back.

Q: Hi okay is this whole new system going to be based on zones? Or you talk about groupings but as the lady was saying, with people going to a similar place and a similar area, often with many vehicles, are you going to have zones set up so HT can say okay going from A to B or south end to ABC?

D: That is kind of our system now, but with the new technology we can use GPS based systems with address to address and it is more precise.

A: The new system will take into account addresses in the same area, people going the same way, track construction and speed limits, things we don't currently have. So the new system uses like Google Maps so will be much more enhanced.

D: I'm going to go to the next topic but the email address will be provided, and also at 3:00 we will stick around and you can talk to us after.

So the next topic is trip priorities. Can you all hear me better now? Good.

Our current practice was adopted and set by city council in 2007 to prioritize trips into three categories: 1 2 and 3. 1's are the highest, like work or medical. 2 is say something like therapy or an appointment at Pan Am or something, and 3's would be like visiting the casino etc. The current system allows those who have priority 1 trips get the most guarantee. I say we do priority 1's 100% of the time but we don't. But if we do have "unable" trips, the large majority of those are the priority 3 trips and not priority 1 trips. That is how our system now works. You can also get a subscription trip. So a priority 1 trips like to work or medical, if it is say 3 days/week, we will set you up with a subscription so you have a set times and don't have to continually phone in and confirm.

The new system, and again we are not trying to sell one feature over another – but it can go to a first come, first serve system. That would kind of be getting rid of the priority basis, and trips would be scheduled as they come in. Passengers would have to be diligent and make sure the trips come in. A priority system could also affect subscriptions ... priorities. We could have a hybrid of the two systems. Work trips and whether subscriptions and maybe everything else we do on a first come first serve basis. Across Canada the other systems are mixed. Most companies have the first come first serve systems. So whether Edmonton or York Region, they have that kind of system.

Trip priorities is something we can go to. Do you have questions or comments on that?

Q: Hi yeah. I have a question – again I know these are ideas but if we were going to do first come first serve would it be the same rules like before 11 or after 2?

D: Not necessarily. Maybe if you phone in today booking for next Friday, we could give you an exact time, or window, right then and there.

Q: And if I want to go somewhere later today can I book that way too?

D: With the system now, the same day requests are not accommodated too often. But if we go to first come first serve system, your chances are pretty slim I imagine because people have been booking for 7 days.

Q: That is what I'm thinking, if you go to first come first serve it knocks out your priority system?

D: We could do a hybrid system.

Q: Medical needs to be...

Q: If you are not first in line you lose your medial.

D: That could happen...

C: Ottawa just recently did a huge review on their system and they went out to the community as well, similar to what we are doing, and Ottawa picked first come first serve system.

D: Gentleman with the best hat in the room.

Q: I go to one place 3 days/week and I have a problem in that, I tell the operator that the building does not open up until sometime between 7 and 7:15, and yet I'll be dropped off at 6:30.

D: And your trip is it a volunteer?

Q: Work.

D: We do have that issue with our current system. You don't have a subscription? Okay so we like to know the time of your appointment so we can tell the computer, but if you want to get there at 8 you may get there are 7:20 and the building isn't open is that what you are saying?

Q: Yes it happens on a 95% basis.

D: Where we get you there too early. I don't recall Match addressing this issue but it isn't uncommon, we get it on Sundays with church services before the church is even open and with this climate that is not okay. We can instruct our drivers though not to leave them alone outside, whether you have to run late, sit with them or take them to a close by location do that, but our drivers should never be leaving a passenger alone.

Q: With myself I'm going on a 9 minute drive from residence to drop off point.

D: It is a good comment. I know it is an issue we have now. Ultimately it is getting too early to your destination and that is a problem we will bring up with the new company and hope they can correct.

Q: Shoot I cant remember it now. Yes I do... sorry... In terms of priority 1, if you get rid of that and it is first come first serve you are going to have serious medical issues, medications or whatever they aren't going to get up and go at 8am and also concerned that oh I'm sorry. I'm concerned with getting to work that people will get fired. And yes priority 1. If you have an emergency or quick you have to be able to have that bumped up to priority 1.

D: Yes if you get a doc appointment bumped up. With Route Match your likelihood of getting the last minute trip will be much better. Route Match will continually match you.

J: What would you say, priority 1 is work, medical and post secondary education. Ok we are going to write that, remember that you said it.

Q: Priority 3 have those first come first serve, we don't want to get bumped from work.

Q: Or even 2, for going to the Pan Am or going, to me I have to exercise 3-4 times a week when it's 40 below the only way I can do that is the gym or swimming and I can do that by Handi-Transit

Q: Like physio, are they late or cancelled you are out of the program and it takes a long time to get into the program. And Handi-Transit can take you one way but cant pick you up the other way.

J: That happens because we get in the vicinity of 2000 requests a day for trips and so when we get those, Darren was telling you about scheduling. Those 2000 requests get bundled up and into the system and booked. There is going to be one way and unabled and those that got what they wanted. So then what happens is that set, drivers get schedules for the next day, after it is set we have probably 300-400 people that cancel their trip. Those cancels we can't do anything with it, so that person that got only a one way but now we have space and our system doesn't allow us to fix it. With Route Match it gives us that ability. It refreshes, it is dynamic and ongoing. And so after, that is the day before the day of we have another 300-400 cancel again. So 2000 requests that we scheduled and we do 1300/1400 of them. So those cancels that we get every single day we can't do anything with and that is why people are only getting a one-way trip. The resources are booked up.

Q: But you call in the morning, or you get a friend or relative and they have their activities and I'm on a pension, and it's hard because I'm in a program I don't want to have Handi-Transit all my life.

J: And that is why we are here and that is why we are changing the software.

D: What I'm telling you is if we had individual for each of you, we could accommodate you all. We have X number of vehicles and 2000 requests and we have to mesh everyone in there and balance and right now the software doesn't allow us to do that.

Q: I appreciate how complicated the system is and the work you are doing isn't easy. You compared Edmonton and Ottawa. I would like to suggest don't dumb down to the lowest common denominator, strive to be the best. (applause)

Q: I have a question over when you took to your appointment and the doors aren't open and you say I'm not dressed to stand out in -40 weather and the driver says get out.

D: That is not at all how the drivers are trained. Our drivers are instructed not to leave a passenger outside. Not curb to curb.

A: Or a safe place.

Q: Same thing happened to me.

D: Can I touch into the drivers. Handi-Transit is contracted out there are 8 contractors providing work, they are not Handi-Transit or city employees. With that said we still do the training and we keep files on every driver. So every single complaint gets documented and put into a file and the proper dealing will happen but we do need to hear about the complaints

J: We are going to go onto the next topic of fare payment. If you didn't have time we will be sticking around after. What I heard from you is you want to maintain all priorities or 1 and 2. So we have a mix and so we have to go to some sort of a hybrid.

Q: My preference is P1 and P2.

J: Fare payment let's go.

D: To the lady in the back I will come see you after. Fare payment you know the current practice you can put your money into an account, online, phone, person phone our customer service rep and with a credit card. What happens after all the trips are done for the day the appropriate amount gets deducted, a no show doesn't get taken. Then the money is taking off in the night.

With the current system you can use the tickets they are here now but not forever and also cash payment. With the current system – you don't have to have a card to show the driver it gets deducted. With Route Match it offers, I don't want to call it an upgrade, but it could offer smart card technology, similar to Peggo. You load the card up and the vehicle has a reader on board, and you swipe the card and it deducts the trip at that point. It would be through a secure web portal to check the trips and see the balance. Your account history, upcoming trips you see that doesn't touch into fare payment. It would be similar to what fixed route transit system has with Peggo. The current system with payment from account and the new system with the technology of a swipe card

J: Or enhance what we have now except that you control the portal you set up your profile, it is part of the system, security and pin and then you would control what money you put in there, we don't have control of that and you go in every day and you see as your trips are deducted and your fare is deducted. Like online banking and you go in there anytime you want. From your trip history you can do that, and you could see upcoming trips and that is how the fare payment works.

Q: And frequent places.

J: If you book more than two times it then holds that address in the system and it's a favourite.

Q: Ok with Handi-Transit proposing to spend this money on the system this is going to take away the service for the people that need it so you can play with this thing on a computer this isn't fair to all the Handi-Transit users you're going to use that money to this documentation on computer instead of using it for more vehicles.

J: I have been with Handi-Transit since 2013 -- I have been working on getting funding since then -- it was approved last year and this is capital funding. This comes in and it doesn't touch the operational funding and that is the money we get to run Handi-Transit, it is totally separate

funding it took us three years to get it we aren't high priority and now that we have it we are going to make the best use of it.

Q: Make it run more efficiently.

J: It is not taking away from the budget in any way.

D: More trips and more reliable trips.

Q: So with the new system fares will not be reduced or increased?

D: Whatever the adult fare will be...

A: They are standardized. It has changed since 2014 and they are standardized with regular transit fares. And transit fares are set by council at the beginning of each year and we have no say in that. It doesn't impact us at all.

D: Even for seniors.

Q: I was staunchly against the payment on account but I'm on it now and I love it. Having a disability and having to go out somewhere to load a car means I'm booking a trip and doing the business of going somewhere and having a window so if there is a line up that could take an hour or whatever... in excess of doing the business, you have more to do at either end. For me that would be a hardship.

C: If we go to smart card technology you could load it online. But for the most part you are right, you would have to go load it, for those who don't have a computer. Gentleman in blue?

Q: How about the use of the regular monthly bus passes? Could those be used?

D: You can buy one but it is not transferrable. If you bought a regular transit pass you couldn't use it on Handi-Transit.

C: Now that we are moving to the Peggo card, they are getting rid of paper, we have no way on our vehicles to read those Peggo cards to know if you have funds in there or not.

Q: I put the tokens towards the cost of my next trip... will they take those?

A: We missed that question but we will take that tone after.

Q: We don't get smart cards for our volunteers so we have been using tokens.

Q: That is what I meant, we can still use tokens.

A: Yes. You can give the driver your token.

Q: My problem is that I use Handi-Transit and regular transit... I... now I get a HT bus pass. I can use it on either transit or... but I can't use fare payment. I have to go out and get it and they're not open on the weekend to go get that bus pass. I'm finding it difficult, I have to ask others to go get it, or go to the library.

J: Come talk to me afterwards and we will discuss.

Q: With smart cards you have eight different contractors.

D: That is one of my concerns too. 500 or so buses in the fleet.

J: 608

D: Wow. The city owns those buses so they get parked in the garage at the end of the night and they are in a safe, warm location, but there is a setting they have to do with them. We contract out and they take those vehicles home at night.

Q: Right because you can't put a smart card into each vehicle. You will have \$10 with each contractor and they have different systems.

J: If we go to that it would be one system. The readers would all be the same and we would give them to the contractors.

Q: That will cost extra money

J: We have a clause in the contract that the contractor is responsible for certain things.

Q: So in other words they are paying you for the smart card technology?

D: Similar to the cameras.

Q: Will it be usable on regular transit?

J: No.

Q: Why can't you have one Peggo for everything?

A: So – the Peggo card system is a system that is more than one piece of technology. One of the pieces is the fare boxes, another is the smart cards, and another piece is the web interaction and

web portal. So there are three different pieces that go along with the card. It has to be read on the fare boxes. Those boxes you see on the bus are the ones that read the card and tell the driver if you have money on that or not. The way they get that information – so this info is coming to the fare boxes from retailers, from our customer service centres, and two different ways of loading, and also from the website. The way the info is put in is it goes through the technology world and it goes to a particular server. And then, as the buses are coming in each night or midday, that fare box has contact with the server and that is how the info is transmitted. So the key is that, these buses have to come to the same location every single night in order to get uploaded with this info. It is not feasible to put them in our vehicles, 2nd of all, these fare boxes are costly and have to be continuously updated. Put your hands down – I see you! So the fare boxes have to be continuously updated, which is a huge cost. And our vehicles don't come to the same place each night. So with the same system as conventional transit the cost is prohibitive.

Gentleman in back?

Q: Just a curveball for you – with the fare payment – now, a person has the account, and happens to die. What happens to the money in the account?

J: The executor of the estate will call us and we will refund anything over \$10. Anything under it would cost us more so the city has a policy that it doesn't, but \$10 or more we refund it and it goes to your estate.

Q: Again, I'm not trying to sound anti-technology but with these cards I've heard people say there are problems with them now, but I'm going to be dealing with... I'm sorry and right now I'm using the account and I'm fine with it.

A: so your vote would be for the account.

Q: If you are proposing to do this with a card, again, that is going to complicate all the contracts because when a contractor decides he/she doesn't have a contract anymore they have to remove this if it's in the vehicle, and they are going to say thank you but no thank you.

D: To put it mildly. One of the things we like to do for our contractors is keep it simple. Fare payment they don't have to worry about cash etc. We want them to focus on the passenger and safety.

A: Fare payment from account? Smart card? I think fare payment... there was one question in the back.

Q: I just have a question about the Peggo cards – when will they come into effect for HT?

A: Good question. For those of you who have HT ID to ride conventional transit, your cards will be replaced with Peggo cards. They are called Peggo exempt cards – don't hold me to it because I've been waiting for them to work out kinks and bugs with technology as I don't want you to run into those problems but end of Feb or mid-March you will get your new cards in the mail. You don't need to do anything, we are transferring your info.

Next topic:

D: Cancellation time policy – this current systems asks for 30 minutes notice to cancel your trip. If you cancel within 30 minutes it is classified as a no show. The current system now you can cancel on the automated service 24 hours/day. You don't have to phone in to a person. And one of the issues with that 30 minute maximum 'window', it doesn't give us a lot of time to play with it. You have at rip today at 1:30 and cancel at 12:50, chances are we are not going to get something for that driver to do. It doesn't give us much time or flexibility. Josie mentioned about cancellations. We know they are a way of life and there will be a certain amount every day. With Route Match it will take more advantage of those empty spots in the run as a result of cancellation, and fill them. So as it's refreshing... I don't know about other cities, but what are your thoughts/ questions / concerns, if we took that 30 minute cancellation time and opened that up to 1-2 hours? That would give us more flexibility.

J: The thing I have to tell you about cancelations, on a daily basis 20% are cancelled and 1% of unables. You know what those are, those are what we call it when we cant give someone a trip thy ask for. It is booked on time but we don't have the resources 1% unable rate in our service. With that 30 min timeframe we right now the 20% of cancels we don't do anything with it we are still paying the contractors. The 30 minute time frame in the new system would add flexibility so if we could fill that 20% of rides we would have no unables. You could accommodate all the unables

Q: How would you notify the people to let them know that now there is a ride for them?

J: Phone call, text whatever they want...

Q: A waiting list of some kind?

J: Possible.

D: You will still be able to cancel all the ways you do now but also online through your own personal account now.

Q: I like the idea of being able to utilize and give other people rides, if you know your not going. If something happens or emergency happens am I going to be a no show if I phone with half an hour?

D: Originally we tell you we can't give you a trip.

Q: No I have to cancel my day so the rides I have cancel. I can do that at 9 am 8 am whenever I know I'm not going, but something happens, I could end up with diarrhea or upset stomach before trip pick up. Am I going to be penalized for that. How are you going to deal with that if the option of going to the hour or more?

D: If you cancel within 30 minutes.

Q: If I cancel under the 30 minutes I could be put as a no show and charged?

D: That would be a bit over haul to the policy we have to re visit that and say that we like the cancels early, it is a change to the policy that we have in place.

Q: I like the utilization and cancelling early but if you go over that you are charged for it sometimes things happen.

J: And that is what we are asking you. Do we keep 30 minute window we will be able to use maybe 10% of the cancels where if we had a larger window say an hour that you had to cancel an hour before then maybe we can fill 17%...

Q: Doesn't it sound strange and funny paying for trips that are not taken that are cancelled?

J: It is the way the contracts are set up when we send out the schedule to the contractors they have a day full of trips we booked or 2000 we are asking them to hold that vehicle and driver. It is not their fault that people cancel they can not be penalized if they get paid by the hour, and if they are in service they get paid.

D: From the driver's point of view on Monday night he gets Tuesdays run and then he gets cancelled. He is expecting that work we can't deduct him.

A: One more question.

Q: On her comment about the cancelation it happened to me and the only thing is as I cancelled I was being taken out by ambulance and I got charged. And I stated to the operator that I'm being taken out by ambulance...

D: And you still got a no show.

A: Call in and let us know, if there are extenuating circumstances call us.

Q: I phoned in and I heard nothing.

J: Come talk to us after if you don't mind.

J: We are going to go on to the next one. The next topic 30 minute window keep it? Extend it to an hour. So 50/50 again. You're not making it easy.

Q: We would all benefit if you extended it.

J: Put your hands down and give me a chance. I'm going to be real mean to you, but we are coming to you and asking for your suggestions, does that mean that we are going to do everything that everyone is saying and you understand that. We have to balance everyone's needs not just one individual and we have to balance all needs in order for the best service for

you. We had a 50/50 split a decision will have to be made, so I'm kind of don't be upset, if we don't kind of can't do exactly what you want.

Q: If someone books a ride and is told that Handi is unable and 30 minutes before saying there is a cancelation do you want the trip are they penalized?

D: And we wouldn't send one without confirmation.

The final software enhancements and this is summary regardless of the 5 topics. Which way we decide to go here are some enhancements.

It will give the passengers a web portal to get into the account with a password, account balance, trips, cancel abilities the ability to book trips in the future, it is going to do a better job of the group trips. We are sending 2-3 vehicles but maybe 1 would have been good. So it will make things better with that. It is going to book things in real travel time with GPS when your vehicle is running late and it is 15 minutes past and you phone your office then we make a bunch of calls and you find out it is 10 minutes but with the GPS we will be able to pinpoint where the driver is and we can say he is 8 blocks away give him 5-10 minutes.

A: With the GPS with the no show you have some contention he said you were there and you weren't. Now with GPS we will know who was where, the address how long they waited.

D: Quite often we are stuck in the middle this will help us investigating any complaints.

Q: I find that Handi is 100% correct and the client isn't.

D: And you know the drivers say the passengers are correct and we aren't.

Q: How many vehicles do you have on the road?

D: 65-70 because of the winter. That is a combo of cars/vans and buses.

Q: What CNIB bus passes aren't accepted on the busses?

D: I'm kinda familiar with fixed route transfer you get on for free but your saying on Handi you don't.

I'm not sure

J: Everybody on Handi pays for fare -- the only way you don't is if you are under six or have a mandatory attendant that we insisted on otherwise everyone pays for it regardless of your disability. You have a disability but so does everyone else.

Q: Question of no shows. Does it happen too frequently, some drivers say that someone no show when nobody comes. Or my ride is here and no show that happened twice.

J: And we know that happens and like Darren said and we are stuck. We have limited GPS but it is hard for us to determine who is there. We are unsure and we don't know we excuse the no show we excuse about 26% of the now shows, we have AVL which is automatic vehicle locator. We can go back and see where that car was, what time they got there when they left and it will help us in making that determination.

Q: I just have a question if you do excuse many of the now shows that is great, my question isn't about having no shows excused, even though that is important I have had times where I'm waiting inside the building and I'm blind, I cant tell when the driver comes and I can't see and I phone and I say my ride is late and they say I'm a no show but that is 40 minutes of my time. I was at the U of W and I got security to check the cameras and they noticed the driver did come, and the GPS saw it and the driver just sat in the car.

D: We know that happens. The driver is supposed to assist from door to door but chances are that you have good drivers and we have drivers that do the minimum. This will help us control this. And the number of rides we give to a driver will it get rid of the drivers that don't go that mile, but we do want to hear about it.

D: Not all the vehicles but the large majority. We are working at getting another 18 vehicles set up that way.

J: So we are at 3:00 which is the end of the session. So like I said, Darren Alison and I...

Oh right gosh look at that. I lost my shoe! I forgot this. This is important.

D: This came up with the changes – a possible change (sorry I was doing good!) looking at these changes we could possibly change the service name. HT started as a pilot project in 1977. That is the year I was born! It was given the name HT then. This gives us an opportunity to look at a different name of the service. Some suggestions are: Transit Plus, Specialty Transit, Go Transit, Mobility Plus. We'd like your feedback on what you think of a name change, and also if you have suggestions of names not on there.

Who wants the name changed? Do you want it changed from Handi Transit to something else? Okay wait a minute. Show of hands some are like yes!!! And others... to be honest this is surprising to me because the last session we did 90% asked for a name change. It is an antiquated name.

Q: I'm so used to it.

J: With the name HT, every other accessibility service out there uses the word Handi, and people get mixed up and think it's us. But others are using that word for accessible vehicles and that is a problem for us.

Q: Some of the names definitely eluded to disability – why couldn't we just call it Winnipeg Transit?

D: What about regular, so people can differentiate it a little bit like Winnipeg Transit Plus?

J: So we are going to get suggestions and pick the top three and send it to you and you can decide what it's going to be called.

Last question:

Q: One quick moment, everybody knows HT so if you change the name it will be very confusing but if you do, how much will it cost to change the vehicles?

J: We have x number of dollars in our funding for this project, some is for software, some of it is for staffing, hardware that we need for it, and also funds in that project to make those changes.

D: It wouldn't be an overnight change it would be gradual.

J: So here is the email address. It is all one word:

Handitransitsoftwarefeedback@winnipeg.ca

Our website, which is linked into the Handi component: winnipegtransit.com

When you get to the site, there will be a drop down for Handi Transit and another for information sessions, and that is where this information will be.

Q: Are these notes in a power point or in a document?

Powerpoint, transcript in PDF from last Wed and today, and notes for an email for you to send.

J: Thank you all for coming, for your feedback, and taking the time out of your days to participate in this. We hope to make you a little happier here.

Q: Thank you to you guys. It is not often as users that we get to have input and be heard, so at least for myself and I'm sure everyone here we really appreciate that you are listening, and we know things are being addressed.

J: Yes very much so we are trying.

Q: And your drivers 99% are fantastic. It is the 1% we have to take out.

J: I agree. Thank you for coming and for your participation. If you have issues please come on up and we will be happy to talk to you.