

**From:** Heidi Dempster  
**To:** Budget Committee  
**Subject:** 2025 Transit Budget Presentation Follow-Up Questions

The following memorandum provides additional information regarding the questions raised following the Transit budget presentation on January 13, 2025.

### **2025 Bus Purchases**

The 2024 budget identified \$89.7M in 2025 for the purchase of replacement and growth buses. The growth buses in the 2025 budget projection were based on Brampton Transit's Business Plan and intended to support the 78.8K service hours recommended for 2026.

In developing the proposed 2025 budget, Transit and Finance staff worked together closely to prioritize Transit's capital requirements within the funding available. This included allocating funding towards the replacement of end-of-life buses, before new growth buses. In addition, further to the national cap on study permit applications announced in early 2024, staff have been closely monitoring transit demand and have seen ridership growth has begun to slow in the second half of 2024. As a result, the number of growth buses was reduced in the proposed 2025 budget, which resulted in a lower request for Bus Purchases of \$55.3M.

It is important to note that staff are utilizing funding available from previously approved projects to procure approximately 40 growth buses, which are anticipated to be in service in late 2026. These growth buses, along with those proposed through the proposed 2025 budget, will increase the fleet by approximately 10% and enable higher service levels and frequencies to help meet growth in demand.

### **2025 Bus Refurbishments**

The 2024 budget identified \$15.5M in 2025 for Bus Refurbishments. As part of the 2025 budget process, staff reviewed all previously approved Bus Refurbishment capital projects and determined that there was sufficient funding available to continue with Transit's refurbishment programs into 2025. Rather than requesting additional funding at this time, staff will be utilizing what is already approved first and coming back to Council when additional funding is required.

### **Transit Innovation**

The Transit Innovation funding will be used to explore, implement and evaluate new and emerging technologies and proof of concepts to help make public transit in Brampton safer, more accessible and more efficient, while also reducing private vehicle trips and attracting new riders to the transit system. Technologies under consideration include:

- Implementing various technologies to support first and last mile transit trips while reducing GHG emissions and improving transit rider satisfaction.

- Leveraging AI to support Transit operations.
- Using technology to generate and publish real-time crowding information that would allow customers to make more informed decisions when riding public transit.

## **Züm Service Expansion**

The infrastructure to support Züm service along Chinguacousy Rd is being built and is scheduled to be completed in late 2025 or early 2026. The service is expected to be launched in the fall of 2026. As part of the 2024 DC update, staff had forecasted that Routes 18 (Dixie) and 7 (Kennedy) would receive Züm service in the short to medium term. Route 1 (Queen) and 5 (Bovaird) already have Züm services operating along their respective corridors.

The top five conventional (Non-Züm) routes operating today are as follows (in order of highest ridership):

- 4 (Chinguacousy)
- 18 (Dixie)
- 1 (Queen)
- 7 Kennedy)
- 5 (Bovaird)

While ridership demand plays an important role in when transit corridors receive Züm level of service, network connectivity, as well as route and ridership characteristics also play equally if not more important roles. For example, Züm Bramalea is the next planned Züm service to be launched. While the Route 15 (Bramalea) is not one of the highest non-Züm ridership routes, it performs well compared to other routes from a route performance perspective (rides/service hour). The route also connects to three other Züm routes, the Bramalea Transit Terminal and the Bramalea GO Station. At one point in time, Metrolinx had forecasted a significant increase in GO Train service to the Bramalea GO Station starting in 2026/27, however Metrolinx is now non-committal as to when these service increases will occur. This is one of the reasons that the funding originally planned for Züm Bramalea infrastructure in the 2025 budget has been deferred.

While Züm service along the Chinguacousy Rd and Bramalea Rd corridors are planned for the short to medium term, Transit staff are working with Transportation Planning staff on the development of the City's Mobility Plan. We are expecting that the Mobility Plan will outline all the higher order transit services that will be needed over the next 25 years, along with the recommended timing of how these services would be staged.