



20. Transit Services

WHAT IS THE SERVICE?

Public Transit Services provide citizens with an efficient and affordable means of traveling to their intended destination whether it is work, school, home or play. Greater use of public transit systems in a community results in eased traffic congestion and improved air quality.

An effective and efficient transit system places emphasis on the following:

- ▶ Quality of life - provides mobility options for all residents to ensure access to work, education, health care, shopping, social and recreational opportunities
- ▶ Sustainability - needs to be affordable for everyone in the community, be fiscally responsible to taxpayers and support the overall goal of improving the environment
- ▶ Economic development - important component of a community's 'economic engine,' supporting growth and prosperity. Its services and costs need to reflect and encourage the growth in each community's residential and commercial service areas

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES?

Issues facing the delivery of Transit Services are:

- ▶ Increased demand - rising fuel prices, a growing urban population, economic growth and increased awareness of environmental issues
- ▶ Funding - the ongoing need for a long-term, predictable revenue stream that can be utilized in conjunction with passenger fares to cover the costs of operation and replacement of aging infrastructure
- ▶ Urban planning - sprawl and low-density development have resulted in communities that pose a challenge to providing efficient and effective transit services
- ▶ The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) - has and will continue to increase the number and complexity of legislated accessibility obligations for municipalities

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

How often do people take public transit?

FIG. 20.1 Number of Conventional Transit Trips per Capita in Service Area

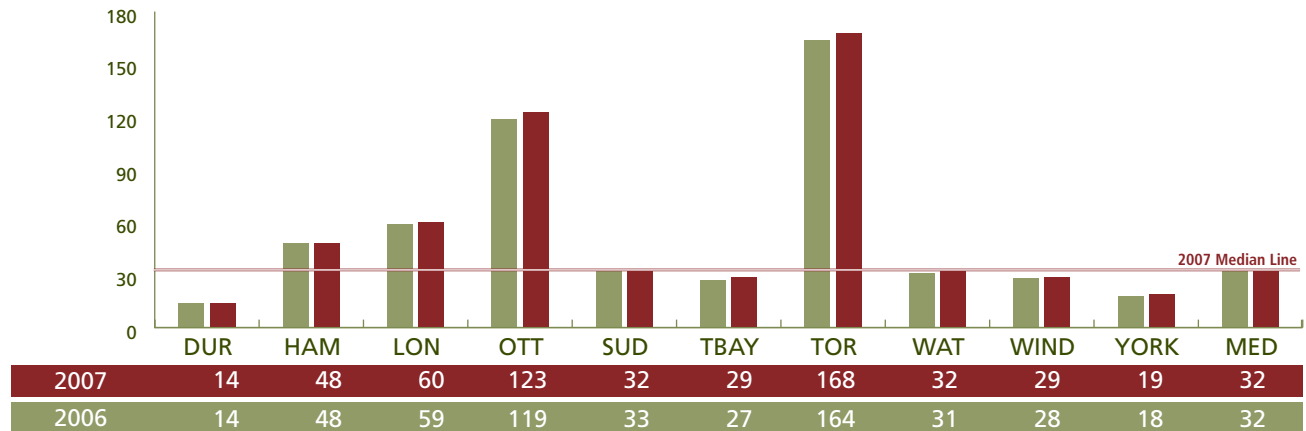
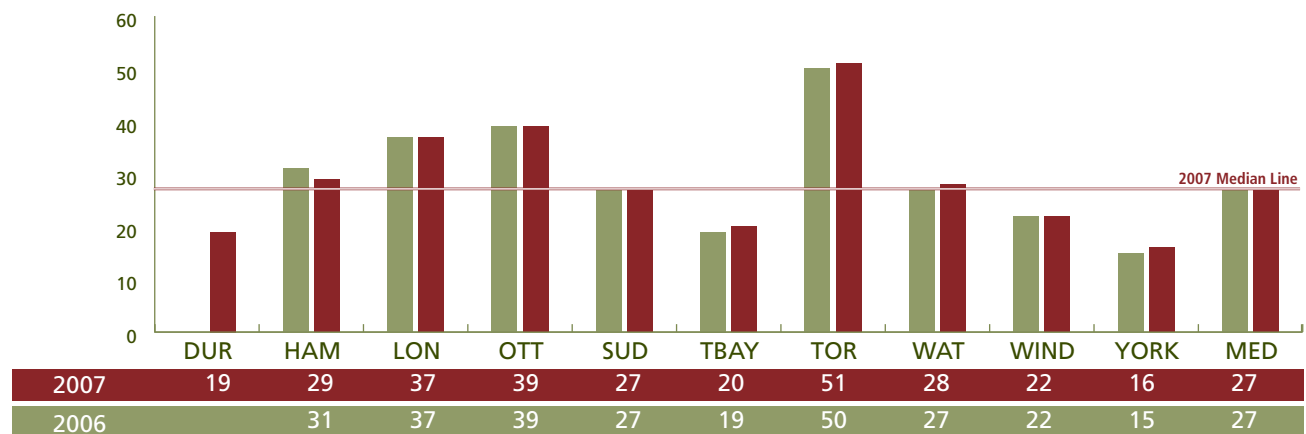


Figure 20.1 illustrates the extent of transit service utilization on a per capita basis. This measure includes conventional transit which includes all modes with the exception of specialized, door-to-door services for persons with disabilities.

Almost all municipalities experienced a rise in the number of transit trips taken per person in 2007 as compared to 2006. Toronto has the highest transit use per person due to their extensive transit system (including the subway) and hence residents are close to at least one mode of transit service. This combined with Toronto’s level of non-resident travel contributes to a high result in relation to the other municipalities.

How well utilized are transit vehicles?

FIG. 20.2 Passenger Trips per Total Vehicle Hour



Note: Durham data not available for 2006.

Figure 20.2 illustrates the overall utilization rate per hour of transit services. This measure can be influenced by the hours and extent to which a service is operated (e.g., service offered in late evening is less utilized than that offered during peak travel times) noting demands and priorities may differ between comparator municipalities.

Toronto’s results are higher than the other comparators given the nature of the service provided, primarily the subway system.

How much does it cost to provide a passenger trip?

FIG. 20.3 Operating Cost for Conventional Transit per Regular Service Passenger Trip

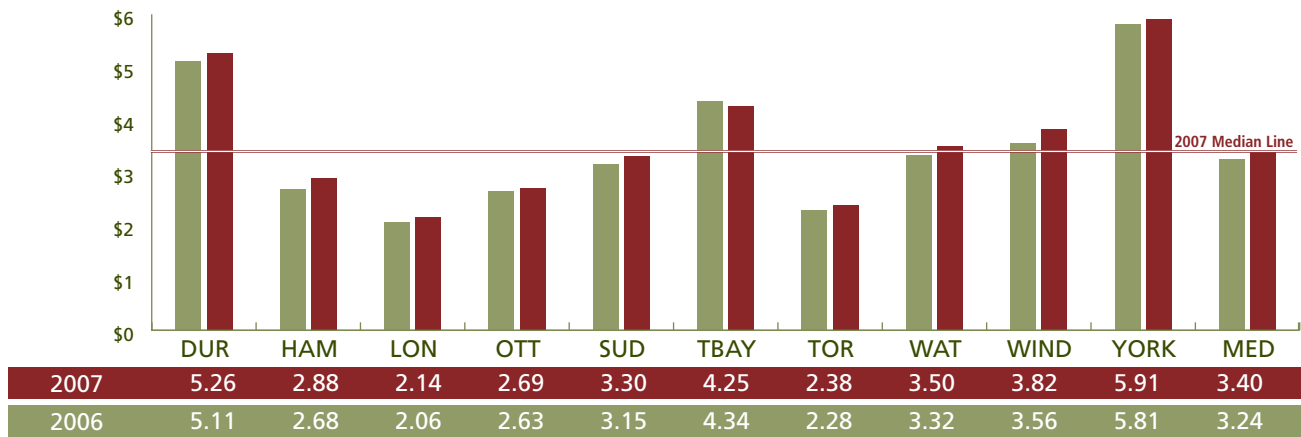


Figure 20.3 shows the overall efficiency of the transit service on a cost per trip basis. This measure can be influenced by the hours and extent to which the service is operated, and also by the current mode of operation (e.g., growth versus status quo).

The Regional Municipalities of Durham and York both have costs above the median as they are in a growth mode investing significant dollars to extend services and attract new passengers. As transit services become more utilized, the results for this measure should decline.

WHAT SHOULD YOU CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING THESE RESULTS?

Each municipality’s results are influenced to varying degrees by a number of factors, including:

- ▶ Size of service area and urban form within the service area - there tends to be a higher cost per capita to service large geographic areas with small populations; high density development corridors and continuous development contribute to a lower cost per capita; service and cost are also affected by type of development, topography, density and total population
- ▶ Demographics and socio-economic factors - higher average household income translates into higher auto ownership. Auto ownership rates, population age, high immigrant levels, lower average household incomes will also impact transit market share
- ▶ Nature of transit service design and delivery - number of routes, proximity and frequency of service, service coverage, and hours of operation can vary significantly among systems. Automated fare systems, Geographic Positioning Systems, traffic signal priority and dedicated bus lanes could be used to facilitate ‘express’ service

- ▶ Transit system type - composition of fleet (bus, subway or LRT), diesel verses natural gas, high floor verses low floor accessible and age of fleet
- ▶ Non-residents - catchment area for transit riders may extend beyond municipal boundaries
- ▶ Economic conditions - ridership growth, fare increases, fluctuations in commodity and energy prices, foreign exchange rates, magnitude of external contracting and contractual obligations with labour bargaining units

For more information about the results, contact the Municipality's representative listed in Appendix F, page 94.