

Background

Greater Sudbury Transit (Transit) is undertaking a number of initiatives and service reviews with a significant emphasis on enhancing customer experience by creating a transit system that is easily accessible, convenient, comfortable and enjoyable for all passengers. One of these initiatives consists of a review of security and safety practices both at the Transit Terminal and on board Transit buses. Safety and Security is an important aspect of service delivery, as actual or perceived lack of safety has a negative effect on use of Transit services, and affects employee's health and morale.

A Downtown Transit Area Working Group has been established to review current safety management practices and make recommendations to enhance safety and security for City Employees, passengers and residents. The Downtown Transit Area Working Group consists of members with expertise in CPTED audits, Security/Surveillance, Landscaping, Community Outreach, Police Services, Long Term Planning and Transit Services. This report is the outcome of the Downtown Transit Area Working Group's review.

Reasons for Safety Review

Reasons which have led to safety and security concerns and the need for a review:

- The Greater Sudbury Transit Terminal is located at a busy pedestrian intersection between Cedar Street and Elm Street in the downtown core. Located in this area is a number of frequently used health, social and commercial services which has resulted in a high traffic pedestrian area. Concerns have been received regarding a perceived sense of threat resulting from the behavior of some citizens accessing these services and the congestion and funneling of pedestrians that occurs around the Transit Terminal.
- Through the Transit Action Plan Engagement process, and a Greater Sudbury Transit employee survey, "safety and security" was identified as a priority requiring improvement.
- As a result of recent physical assaults on Transit Operators, the Transit Safety Task Force is also reviewing safety practices and security measures to improve safety for Greater Sudbury Transit employees.

Current Safety Management Practices

1. Collaboration Efforts

Building relationships and partnerships with groups who have similar interests and expertise provides an opportunity to better share information and provide cohesive and

complementary support. Greater Sudbury Transit collaborates and receives support from Greater Sudbury Police Services, Transit Safety Task Force and Community Outreach Services.

2. Technology

Greater Sudbury Transit is equipped with the following technology enabling communication, monitoring, and information which assist both the City of Greater Sudbury and Greater Sudbury Police in investigation of incidents.

- Automated Vehicle Location Systems
- Mobile Radio Units
- Surveillance Cameras on Buses
- Surveillance Cameras at the Transit Terminal

3. Security –Related Policies and Programs

The following security-related policies and programs are in place as part of Greater Sudbury Transit's operations.

- Driver Certification Program
- On the Job Training
- Refresher Training
- Incident Reporting and investigation
- After 6 p.m. Stop Request Policy
- Top 10 Rules of Conduct

4. Security Contract Service Level

Seven days per week between the hours of 8:00 am and 12:30 am, as overseen by the Manager of Security and By-law Services, the City of Greater Sudbury hosts one (1) contracted security guard at the Transit Terminal. The expectation of the security service is to provide a high level of customer service while actively monitoring for, and discouraging anti-social behavior witnessed on Transit property.

Security guards are directed to enforce the Trespass to Property Act, by asking a person to refrain from unauthorized behavior and/or leave the premises. If the individual refuses to comply, the guard may arrest and immediately call the Police.

With consideration for personal risk in mind and with obligations for a safe working environment as mandated by the Occupational Health and Safety Act, contracted security guards are coached to reserve any active use of force such as making an arrest. As only one guard is stationed at the Transit Terminal, coupled with the fact that they do not have the proper training or equipment, they are asked to call the Greater

Sudbury Police whenever there is an immediate level of danger for themselves or another person.

The lack of ability to enforce non-threatening incidents leads to issues of loitering and unwanted behavior on Transit Terminal property.

5. Transit Operator Compartment Barrier Pilot

In 2014, Transit Operator compartment barriers were tested, and a survey was conducted with the employees which revealed that the majority of Transit Operators were not in favor of the barriers. This unease of barrier use is typical of what other Transit Municipalities have heard from their Transit Operators, and in general, reasons provided for the lack of interest include reduced air flow, increased glare, the restricted ability to interact with customers, a false sense of security and the sense that the barriers may in fact provoke aggression.

In response to a physical assault which occurred in May 2017, the Transit Safety Task Force committee and Greater Sudbury Transit Services have agreed to review the use of barriers once again. A sample barrier has been ordered, and one bus will be retrofitted for the purposes of gathering information. Once the results have been reviewed, next steps will be identified and a report will follow to Community Services Committee for consideration.

Recent Improvements

1. Renovations at Downtown Transit Terminal

The Greater Sudbury Downtown Transit Terminal is the main hub of the route network where thousands of people converge to transfer from one route to another on a daily basis. Renovations are underway and are scheduled to be completed by end of November 2017. These renovations were made possible by the Canada-Ontario Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF). The Government of Canada is cost-matching a 2017 municipal capital investment of \$500,000 for a total of \$1 Million.

Prior to developing the scope of work for the renovations, a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) audit was performed.

The audit provided the following recommendations which were brought into the scope of work (Appendix A – Transit Terminal CPTED Audit):

- Improved and additional lighting
- Redesign of the garbage disposal area
- Additional anti-sit devices
- Adjustment and addition of security cameras
- Trim shrubs to provide better sightlines
- Remove structure/canopy entering Transit Terminal from Elm Street

- Remove pay phones
- Remove architectural features on the interior of the build to increase sightlines
- Fresh coats of paint on rusted metal

Along with these recommendations, further operational and customer comfort improvements are being undertaken (Appendix B – Transit Terminal Renovation Rendering):

- Repair asphalt throughout the property
- Repair curbs and paint yellow
- Create clear walking paths to minimize vehicle and pedestrian conflict
- Create parking for vans and buses
- Improve kiosk interior design for storage & safety improvements
- Wayfinding throughout property
- New tile flooring
- Fresh coat of paint throughout interior of building
- New accessible washroom fixtures
- HVAC and boiler replacement
- New sliding doors
- New and additional camera system

Safety Related Best Practices in Transit Industry

The Downtown Transit Area Working Group compared Greater Sudbury Transit's current safety management practices with those of other municipalities throughout Canada, and has identified several gaps.

1. Improve Perception of Transit Services

Perception plays an important role in decisions that an individual will make as it relates to Transit Services. Perception of Transit Services is influenced by many factors, such as comfort, courtesy, safety and security. The following programs and initiatives should be considered in order to build awareness, share information, and increase confidence in Greater Sudbury Transit Services.

Building Awareness on Mental Health: Through collaboration efforts with stakeholders, build programs aimed at de-stigmatizing mental health and/or to encourage at-risk individuals to seek help.

Public Involvement: Launch a "See Something, Say Something" public campaign to encourage passengers to report criminal behavior they observe on buses to the Transit Operator or other Transit representative, so that action can be taken.

Safety Culture - Display safety messages throughout the Transit Terminal, buses and shelters to provide reinforcement of the safety culture within the services.

Cleanliness - Provide a clean and well maintained environment for both passengers and Transit Operators. This includes buses, shelters and the Transit Terminal.

Transit Supervisor Assistance - Increase presence of Transit Supervisors both on board buses and on Transit Terminal Platforms. Visibility of Management promotes professionalism and provides additional customer service.

Public Art – Integrate art into Transit Services in order to contribute a positive experience for passengers, attract new riders, and provide a sense of community identity and vibrancy.

2. Create a Transit By-Law and Increase Security Service Level

There is a monthly average of sixty (60) higher risk interactions occurring at the Transit Terminal as reported by contracted uniformed security, with only the Trespass to Property Act to support enforcement. Fare evasion, loitering and unruly behavior are common issues, which are not adequately addressed through the contracted service. There is also a gap in hours of operations between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m.; Transit Employees arrive at the Transit Terminal by 6 a.m., and Security Guards arrive for their shift at 8 a.m.

Transit By-Law: While Greater Sudbury Transit has always requested that passengers behave in a safe and appropriate manner, a Transit By-Law should be considered similar to other Municipalities such as Sault Ste. Marie, Hamilton, Mississauga, York and Ottawa. A Transit By-Law establishes rules and regulations governing the use of the Transit system and provides the opportunity for enforcement officers to issue offence notices to those contravening the By-Law, thereby providing a deterrent to undesirable behavior. The By-Law would not only apply to the Transit Terminal property, but to other transit hubs within the City and on-board buses. The ability to deploy a Municipal Enforcement Officer offsite could become of increasing importance should the service move towards a multi hub system.

Municipal Enforcement Officers

In order to effectively enforce the Transit By-Law, the current security services should be replaced with the use of dedicated Municipal Law Enforcement Officers. This service would be required daily from 6:00 a.m. until 1:00 a.m., and would be best deployed with the use of two Municipal Enforcement Officers who would have the ability to support a mobile response for on-board bus incidents and provide adequate support to address occurrences at the Transit Terminal.

3. Develop a Transit Safety Plan

A Transit Safety Plan provides information on policies, programs, standard operating procedures, use of technology and security levels as they relate to delivering a safe environment for passengers and Transit Operators. Not all incidents can be prevented;

however, by preparing for the issues in a proactive manner, incidents can be responded to more quickly and effectively.

Equally important is to ensure that all involved in providing a safe and secure service understand their role and implications of their actions. A Transit Safety Plan is a guide which is typically distributed to all Transit Employees. It is a living document requiring updates and reviews as risks are identified and programs or policies are implemented.

Next Steps

Greater Sudbury Transit's objective is to continuously develop, implement and improve strategies and processes to ensure that Transit achieves the highest practicable level of safety and provides a comfortable, inviting and safe environment for passengers and Transit Operators. In collaboration with the Transit Safety Task Force, Greater Sudbury Transit will develop a Transit Safety Plan. Within this plan, programs will be initiated with an aim to improve the perception and existence of safety and security issues.

Resources Cited

Transit Supportive Guidelines

www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/transit/supportive-guideline/index.shtml

Canadian Urban Transit Association

<http://cutaactu.ca/en/advocacy/policy-issues-and-research>