

Oakville Transit

**Annual
Accessibility
Plan 2013**



OAKVILLE TRANSIT

The following document is Oakville Transit's Accessibility Plan for 2013. Although it is a stand-alone document, it should also be considered an integral part of the Town of Oakville's Annual Accessibility Plan and Multi-Year Plan.

1. Introduction

Oakville Transit expects that demand for its services will continue to grow and that in conjunction with this growth there will be increasing demands for improved accessibility. These demands will be driven by both customer expectations and the requirement to comply with existing and emerging legislation. In particular, the standards and regulations being developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005 will require that system accessibility be achieved within defined timelines.

On Friday June 3, 2011, the Ontario government enacted the Integrated Accessibility Regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. This regulation addresses the key areas of Information and Communications, Employment, and Transportation. The Transportation area specifically impacts the Transit industry, and will guide all accessibility improvements for Oakville Transit in the future. Currently, the Customer Service standards have also been approved as regulation, and the Design of Public Spaces (Built Environment Standard) draft regulation is outstanding.

If Oakville Transit is to offer itself as a viable means of transportation to the residents of Oakville then all residents should have access. Fully accessible buses are a major step in this direction, however, full system accessibility means much more. It includes service levels, facility access, walk-ways, landing pads, shelters, signage and access to information. For many residents, Oakville Transit is the only means of travel to and from work, school, medical appointments, to run errands, attend cultural and recreational events, and to participate in social activities. All residents will directly benefit as the accessibility of transit services is improved. In addition, improved accessibility will lead to increased use of Oakville Transit, contributing to continued ridership growth.

Oakville Transit is committed to:

- Continual improvement of access to public transportation premises, facilities and services for customers, as well as employees, with disabilities
- Inclusion of people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plan
- Provision of high quality accessible services to all customers and employees
- Optimizing use of public investment by making Oakville Transit's conventional services more accessible thereby encouraging care-A-van customers to use conventional transit whenever possible.

2. Internal Accessibility Planning Coordinators

The Director of Oakville Transit and the Manager of Planning and Accessible Services will act as Accessibility Plan Coordinators.

3. Oakville Transit's Profile

Conventional Services — 2012 Service Profile

Type of Service	Fixed Route – grid and local service	
Service area	Urban area – Town of Oakville	
Hours of service	Monday to Friday 6:00 am to 12:00 am Saturday 7:00 am to 12:00 am Sundays and Statutory Holidays 8:00 am to 8:00 pm	
Projected Annual boardings	3,862,000	
Projected Annual revenue service hours	210,000	
Projected Annual kilometres	5,502,400	
Number of routes	26 (regular routes)	
Types of services	Conventional service, school specials and senior's specials	
Fleet makeup	92 conventional buses	
Fare structure (effective July 1, 2011)	Cash fare	\$3.25
	Adult monthly pass	\$94.00
	Adult tickets	10/\$26.50
	Student monthly pass	\$60.00
	Student Freedom Pass	\$15.00
	Student tickets	10/\$21.50
	Senior monthly pass	\$50.00
	Senior tickets	10/\$17.50
	GO co-fare	\$0.65

Specialized Services — 2012 Service Profile

Type of Service	Shared ride, door to door, pre-booked service
Service area	Urban area – Town of Oakville
Hours of service	Monday to Friday 6:00 am to 12:00 am Saturday 7:00 am to 12:00 am Sundays and Statutory Holidays 8:00 am to 8:00 pm
Types of Services	Dedicated bus Private taxi
Fleet Make-up	5 Specialized high floor lift equipped buses and 2 ramp equipped buses
Registrants	1,986
Projected Annual eligible passenger trips	50,400
Projected Attendant/Companion trips	3,700
Projected Annual revenue service hours	14,015

Process for estimating demand for specialized services

Staff estimates the demand for specialized services through review and analysis of the following factors:

- Past ridership trends
- Ridership growth levels (both on conventional and on para transit)
- Any anticipated changes to policies and procedures which may increase the demand for services

Steps to reduce wait times for specialized services

Staff will continue to work on reducing wait times for specialized services. This will be done by the addition of more vehicles, and the addition of tools such as Intelligent Transportation Systems which will provide additional information to staff to assist in improving scheduling and operations.

4. Measures Oakville Transit Has Taken In Previous Years to Remove Accessibility Barriers

Planning

Oakville Transit drafted its first accessibility plan in 1992. Since that time we have been updating and revising this plan every year. Each update involves a review of barriers addressed in previous years, identification of remaining barriers to accessibility, development of a prioritized plan to address these barriers, and consultation with primary stakeholders.

Barriers Addressed in Previous Years

The following are some of the steps which have been taken to identify and remove barriers to people with disabilities:

- Relocation of the transit offices to the new fully accessible transit facility at 430 Wycroft Road (maintenance, administration, care-A-van and operations).
- Removing the requirement for an attendant/support person to pay a fare on both the care-A-van and conventional systems.
- Development of the Town of Oakville's multi-year plan
- Development of criteria, policies and procedures for "visitor" use on care-A-van.
- Establishment of accessibility policies (Corporate)
- Installation of shelters, landing pads and walkways at an additional 58 service stop locations in 2011.
- Oakville Transit replaced its last high-floor conventional buses in 2012. Currently 100% of our conventional fleet is low floor accessible.
- Provision of three Senior Specials - one day per week service to the residents of three senior residences
- Finalizing procedure on cycling of ramps by all transit operators during vehicle check
- Implementation of customer securement procedure for drivers on our conventional accessible service
- Implementation of emergency evacuation procedures for drivers of conventional accessible and care-A-van service
- Oakville Transit continues to provide Easier Access Training and/or Ambassador Training to existing and newly-hired bus operators.
- Integration of fares with GO Transit allows patrons who wish to use care-A-van to link with accessible GO Transit service.
- Priority and courtesy seating is available and clearly identified for persons with disabilities on all of Oakville Transit buses.
- Oakville Transit information is accessible on the website with a text-only option (www.oakvilletransit.ca) and is linked to the Town of Oakville website (www.oakville.ca)

5. Identification of Access Barriers to Oakville Transit for People with Disabilities

Oakville Transit recognizes that its infrastructure — including its bus stops, bus shelters, and vehicles — may present barriers to some people with disabilities. A table detailing identified barriers is attached at the end of this document.

The availability of resources is a major factor in determining the pace of progress in reducing or eliminating the barriers identified in consultation with people with disabilities. Resource constraints will mean that not all barriers can be addressed at once and as a result, prioritization of initiatives is required. While we remain focused on what remains to be done it is also important to recognize how far we have come in a relatively short period of time.

6. Identify, Prioritize and Develop a Plan to Remove and Prevent Accessibility Barriers in 2013

Oakville Transit is committed to the following actions on an annual basis:

- Consulting with people with disabilities to seek their advice on which barriers, and which remedial actions should have priority for the coming year
- Making provision in our capital and operating budgets to seek funding to address the highest priority barriers
- Taking advantage of opportunities to secure funding to extend or accelerate the removal of priority barriers
- Consulting with the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee, as well as other stakeholder groups, with respect to addressing barriers to accessibility.

Actions Planned for 2013

Oakville Transit will be ensuring that it complies with all regulations in the AODA Integrated Transportation Standard by the stated compliance dates. The list below highlights some of the actions planned in 2013 which will make Oakville Transit services more accessible:

- Working with other Town staff to provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards in the Integrated Standard and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities for:
 - a) All employees
 - b) All persons who participate in developing the organization's policies
 - c) All other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organizationAs appropriate to the duties of the above noted
- In addition, Oakville Transit shall conduct employee and volunteer accessibility training on:
 - a) The safe use of accessibility equipment
 - b) Acceptable modifications to procedures where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment on a vehicle fails
 - c) Emergency preparedness and response procedures that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities
- Implement updated procedures for the care-A-van eligibility application process
- Establish an independent appeal process for care-A-van eligibility
- Implement same day service booking process for care-A-van
- Accept booking requests for care-A-van up to three hours before the published end of the service period on the day before the intended day of travel
- Continue customer service training of all new operators
- Continued infrastructure improvements as identified in the bus stop facilities 5 year plan
- Continued integration of Oakville Transit bus stop infrastructure requirements with Town and Regional roadway improvement projects

For further identification of actions planned, please reference the Town of Oakville Multi Year Plan.

7. Consultations on the Content of This Accessibility Plan

In the preparation of this plan, Oakville Transit has conducted the following consultation activities:

- Consultation with the Town of Oakville's Accessibility Advisory Committee to ensure input is received from members of the Town's disabled community
- Consultation with Oakville Transit operating and support staff to ensure that those responsible for delivery of accessible service provide input.
- Consultation with the public through an open house meeting format

8. Communicating the Plan to the Public

Oakville Transit will communicate the accessibility plan to the public through the following actions:

- The Plan will be posted at our administrative office and at Town Hall.
- Copies of the Plan will be available at our administrative offices and Town Hall.
- The Plan will be published on our the Transit website (www.oakvilletransit.ca)

9. Ongoing Review and Monitoring of the Plan

Oakville Transit will monitor progress from the previous year's accessibility plan. Our accessibility plan coordinators will prepare an annual accessibility plan review. The review will list the objectives of the prior year's Accessibility Plan, actions taken to address them, and the results obtained.

This report will be a key document for consultations with persons with disabilities about the content of the accessibility plan for the coming year.

The review will be produced early enough in the year to enable consultations to be conducted, and recommendations formulated and costed in time for the preparation of Oakville Transit's budget for the next year.

Appendix A — Accessibility Features on Oakville Transit Vehicles

Procedures for dealing with accessibility equipment failures for conventional and specialized transit

Conventional

All driving staff is required to perform a pre-operations check of their vehicle prior to the start of their shift. This pre-operations check includes the cycling of the ramp.

Any minor vehicle malfunction in the normal course of operation is documented by the driving staff. This documentation is reviewed daily, and is then scheduled in for maintenance, prioritized by the Maintenance Manager and Maintenance Supervisors. Should the ramp of the conventional bus fail to operate electronically, the driver may manually deploy the ramp for customers to board.

The malfunction of any of the other accessibility features on the vehicle would be dealt with in the manner described above.

Para transit (care-A-van)

All driving staff is required to perform a pre-operations check of their vehicle prior to the start of their shift. This pre-operations check includes the cycling of the ramp, as well as review of belts, tie downs, etc.

Any minor vehicle malfunction in the normal course of operation is documented by the driving staff. This documentation is reviewed daily, and is then scheduled in for maintenance, prioritized by the Maintenance Manager and Maintenance Supervisors.

In the case of a failure of the accessibility equipment on a para transit vehicle, the driver immediately notifies the Supervisor and the dispatch office. The Supervisor will arrange for an immediate 'change off' of the vehicle, and any customers impacted will be contacted by the dispatch office.

The vehicle will immediately be scheduled for repair.

Identification of Barriers to Access to Oakville Transit for People with Disabilities

Barrier	Strategy/Action
Fleet Barriers	
<p>Conventional buses: ramps are not always functioning on low floor buses. Manual deployment is not always possible.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit has procedures for the cycling of ramps as part of the bus operator vehicle check. This program confirms functionality prior to the bus entering service each day. Operating procedures include a requirement to immediately notify a supervisor of any ramp deployment issues that may arise through the course of the day.</p>
<p>care-A-van buses: Current lift equipped para-transit vehicles present a visual barrier to customers with mobility challenges and can negatively impact customer dignity. Use of lifts also slows evacuation process in an emergency</p>	<p>Oakville Transit will continue to procure low floor ramp equipped vehicles. Staff feel that low floor vehicles offer enhanced accessibility and increased safety.</p>
Barriers at Shelters and Stops	
<p>Approaches: Delay in clearing snow and ice from bus stops and shelters.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit contracts the removal of snow from its stops and shelters. The agreement requires that all stops will be cleared within 48 hours. Transit supervisors also conduct specific checks of high priority locations to ensure snow, ice and windrows have been properly removed.</p>
<p>Landing pads: Boarding and alighting from buses is more difficult because many of the stops do not have a proper concrete landing pad. Such pads must also provide accessible connection to adjacent sidewalk.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit continues to make improvements at stops and shelters. A minimum of 20 locations are to be added in 2012.</p>

Barrier	Strategy/Action
<p>Shelters: A passenger may have to wait for a bus as long as a half hour or more. During inclement weather, the absence of shelter at the bus stop can be a barrier to using Oakville Transit.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit installs shelters on an annual basis. All existing shelters will be audited to ensure full accessibility. A minimum of 5 additional shelters will be installed in 2012.</p>
<p>Shelters: Have not been formally reviewed for compliance with minimum accessibility criteria. Shelters may be included in the pending Built Environment standards</p>	<p>Oakville Transit will undertake to review shelter accessibility criteria when finalized and develop a timeline for achieving full compliance.</p>
<p>Shelters: Bus shelters don't have street names on them. It would help customers with way-finding</p>	<p>Oakville Transit will investigate what would be required to add street names to shelters.</p>
<p>Bus stop locations: Bus stop locations should be as close to public buildings as possible</p>	<p>Oakville Transit adheres to the Service Standards which were approved by Council. These standards include guidelines and warrants for placement of stops and shelters.</p>
<p>Barriers at the Oakville Transit/GO Transit Stations</p>	
<p>Connecting time: The time available for a connecting passenger to travel between buses and trains may not be sufficient for some people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit will continue to review schedules to ensure scheduled connection times reasonably consider customers using mobility assistive devices.</p>
<p>Signage at the Oakville GO Station: Timetable signage is not easily readable by visually impaired persons, due to small print, insufficient contrast, or being located too high to be read from a seated position.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit will continue to review all posted printed material to ensure it meets the needs of customers with visual impairment.</p>
<p>Barrier for visually impaired at Uptown Core Terminal: no defined visual delineation between edge of platform and the roadway (Oakville GO Station has a painted yellow line to define edge, for example)</p>	<p>Oakville Transit will investigate adding a visual delineation at each bus platform in 2013.</p>

Barrier	Strategy/Action
Customer Information	
<p>Driver training: Conventional transit bus operators have not been trained to accommodate all disabilities, or may need periodic refresher training.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit continues to provide complete driving and customer service training, including select components of the Canadian Urban Transit Association sponsored Transit Ambassador program, to all new hires.</p>
<p>Accessible bus availability information: Timetables should indicate on which routes, and at which times, customers may encounter a high floor conventional bus.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit's is 100% low floor ramp equipped, therefore every route at every time will have a low floor, ramp equipped bus with accessibility features.</p>
<p>Legibility of printed material: Bulletins, schedules and system maps may be difficult for some people to read.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit continues to revise all printed material as it is produced. In 2012 Oakville Transit will be redesigning its printed schedules and maps.</p>
<p>Signage: The height, location and visibility of signs at terminals and service stops are barriers for some people.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit continues to review and monitor locations for improved and standardized placement.</p>
<p>Bus shelter and station maps: Are mounted too high, and printed too small to be readable from a sitting position, or by someone with a visual disability.</p>	<p>Future maps will be printed in larger more visible font. Placement of maps will be reviewed to optimize for all customers.</p>
<p>Teletypewriter (TTY): Routing and scheduling information should be provided in TTY.</p>	<p>The IS&S Department of the Town of Oakville is investigating a broader Town wide approach to TTY and other technologies.</p>
<p>Service Information for Inter-municipal and inter-regional travel: There is currently no integrated system for customer information on transit trips requiring transfer between service providers.</p>	<p>Oakville Transit is working with Metrolinx and other GTA service providers to develop an integrated customer service information centre. This will allow riders to obtain information on travel by transit throughout the GTA for a single source.</p>

Barrier	Strategy/Action
Road and Sidewalk Barriers	
Curb cuts: The walking and wheeling path to and from bus stops does not always have curb cuts at corners.	Wherever possible, transit will ensure an accessible link between pads and curb cuts.
Curb cuts: Where curb cuts exist they may be too low to provide a cue to a visually impaired person that he or she is about to step into the street.	Transit will investigate available means of addressing these conflicting accessibility initiatives.
Policy Barriers	
care-A-van eligibility policy: Some people with disabilities cannot use regular transit but are not eligible to use care-A-van because of the current criteria for eligibility.	Oakville Transit will update its eligibility criteria as indicated in the regulations for the Transportation Standard of the AODA.
Fare policies: Fares may be costly for seniors and persons on fixed incomes	Halton Region implemented the Subsidized Pass for Low Income Transit (SPLIT) pilot program in the fall of 2011 to assist customers with low incomes to obtain discounted transit passes. Oakville Transit will be removing the requirement for an attendant/support person to tender a fare in Q1 and Q2 of 2012.