HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 11.4.1 (ii)
Halifax Regional Council
July 10, 2012

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
by: Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair, Transportation Standing Committee

DATE: February 20, 2012

SUBJECT: **Metro Transit Universal Accessibility Plan**

ORIGIN

Motion approved at the Transportation Standing Committee meeting of January 9, 2012.

RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation Standing Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council approve in principle the Universal Accessibility Plan and direct staff to use the plan on a go-forward basis as guidance in the development and implementation of Universal Accessibility standards and policies for transit.

BACKGROUND

Please refer to the Background section of the December 12, 2011 staff report (Attachment "A") for detailed background information on the Universal Accessibility study and plan for Metro Transit.

DISCUSSION

The December 12, 2011 staff report was brought forward at the January 9, 2011 Transportation Standing Committee meeting. The Committee discussed the report with staff responding to questions.

More detailed information was requested by Committee members on the following:

- Real time schedule information
- Details of the "technology roadmap"
- Whether annunciation of transit stops could be made a priority and how related this technology would be to other transit technology issues.

Staff are preparing a supplementary report to Council with this information.

The Transportation Standing Committee approved the staff recommendation to recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve in principle the Universal Accessibility Plan and direct staff to use the plan on a go-forward basis as guidance in the development and implantation of Universal Accessibility standards and policies for transit.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this time. Any recommendations that have budget implications will be brought forward in future annual budgets for consideration by Regional Council.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Public consultation sessions and stakeholder meetings on the Universal Accessibility Plan were conducted by IBI Group and staff. Public sessions were held at the St. Andrews Community Centre, Halifax on March 9 and May 18, 2011, and at the Dartmouth North Community Centre on March 10 and May 19, 2011.

The final Universal Accessibility Plan will be made available to the public on the HRM website.

The Transportation Standing Committee is comprised of eight duly elected members of Council. Composition is made up of a member from each of HRM's six Community Councils, along with two members-at-large. Transportation Standing Committee meetings are held once a month and are open to the public, unless otherwise stated. Agendas, reports, and minutes from these meetings are posted online.

ALTERNATIVES

Halifax Regional Council may choose not to recommend the approval in principle of the Universal Accessibility Plan.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment "A" December 12, 2011 staff report "Metro Transit Universal Accessibility Plan", with attached "Universal Accessibility Plan Final Report November 2011".

A copy of this report can be obtained online at http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant, 490-6517

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Attachment "A"

Transportation Standing Committee
January 9, 2012

TO: Chair and Members of the Transportation Standing Committee

Original signed

SUBMITTED BY: Eddie Robar, Director, Metro Transit

DATE: December 12, 2011

SUBJECT: Metro Transit Universal Accessibility Plan

ORIGIN

Completion of the Metro Transit Universal Accessibility Plan by IBI Group (RFP #10-088).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council the approval in principle of the Universal Accessibility Plan and direct staff to use the plan on a go-forward basis as guidance in the development and implementation of Universal Accessibility standards and policies for transit.

BACKGROUND

On November 29, 2010, IBI Group was awarded RFP #10-088 to undertake a study with respect to Universal Accessibility for Metro Transit. Metro Transit has also recently completed a Strategic Plan for the Access-a-Bus system; this study was intended to compliment that plan, increasing the cohesiveness of the two systems. The study included the examination of several categories that jointly impact the provision of accessible transit service in HRM:

- Legislative Environment;
- Infrastructure and Technology;
- Operations; and
- Marketing and Communications.

The key objectives of this project were to:

- Examine current practices;
- Engage the public and various stakeholders in the examination of current and proposed policies with respect to universal accessibility;
- Identify current risks and gaps;
- Identify potential future risks and gaps based on an evolving legislative environment and public expectations;
- Develop plans to mitigate these risks and gaps and improve the overall accessibility of the fixed-route bus and ferry systems;
- Identify solutions that can by fully integrated across HRM/Metro Transit; and
- Prepare a prioritized list and implementation schedule for potential improvements.

While there is currently little legislation that governs the provision of accessible transit service in Nova Scotia, the trends across North America are increasingly moving toward strong legislation rather than voluntary compliance. As examples, the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* governs transit accessibility in the United States, and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* provides similar governance in the Province of Ontario. While universal accessibility is important regardless of any legislative requirements, it is reasonable to expect that similar legislation could become law in Nova Scotia in the future. Approval in principle of the Universal Accessibility Plan will allow Metro Transit to move forward with developing and implementing Universal Accessibility standards and policies.

DISCUSSION

IBI Group was tasked with engaging the community, HRM staff, and various stakeholders in discussions concerning the current state of Metro Transit's accessibility. The first round of public consultation sessions and stakeholder meetings were conducted in March of 2011. These sessions were open to all HRM residents who were interested in more information or wished

discuss barriers to accessibility. Stakeholder participants included representatives from the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) and the CNIB. A second, follow up round of consultations took place in May 2011, focusing on developing a strategic approach for improving accessibility.

In addition to the above, IBI Group also conducted an audit of Metro Transit's current accessibility, as well as reviewing existing industry standards in both Canada and the United States, and the legislative environment.

The resultant study recommends a variety of improvements and implementation strategies as well as estimated budget implications and suggested timelines. It should be noted that there is currently no budget for any of the recommendations outlined in this plan. Including any recommendations with budget implications in the five year budget plan would result in deferral of other capital projects. However, there are some no-cost improvements that could be implemented in the short term. The following is a summary of the recommended actions:

Summary and Suggested Timelines

Universal Design Element	Goal / Requirement	Timeframe	Potential Financial Impact
HRM *Municipal Design Guidelines*	Reference Section 5.4	Immediate	None – use of existing staff resources
Information & Communication			
Instructional Videos	Provide means for equal access to communication. For example, subtitles	Medium Term	Minimal – typically programming requirement
Public Address	Provide means for equal access to communication. For example, visual messages	Medium Term	Minimal – typically programming requirement
Bus Stop	Provide larger route information in addition to existing signs	Medium Term	<$100/sign + cost of installation
Route Schedules	Use low glare covers	Medium Term	<$100/sign + cost of installation
Telephones	Provide text and/or video phones	Medium Term	Approx. $300./each + cost of installation
Emergency Communication	Provide light that signals when call is answered (Woodside elevator)	Medium Term	Minimal
Tactile/Braille Signage	Use tactile/Braille signs to identify permanent spaces (e.g. toilet rooms). Such signs should be located on the wall adjacent to the latch side of the door	Medium Term	<$100/sign + cost of installation
Signage	Develop and implement a graphic standard	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources
Accessible Bus Stop Guide	Advise customers on serviceability of all bus stops	Currently Underway	None – use of existing staff resources
Real-time schedule information	Integration of schedule data with actual vehicle location data (via GPS) Maintain Go Time System in the interim	Medium Term	Potential for significant capital cost (GPS equipped vehicles & back office infrastructure) See *Note* below
Web Design	Reference Section 5.2	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources
Print Material	Reference Section 5.3	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources. Cost of print/production

Universal Design Element	Goal / Requirement	Timeframe	Potential Financial Impact
Bus Terminals			
Access from surrounding neighbourhood and/or dedicated parking areas	Provide paths of travel that are stable, firm and slip resistant. Running slope should be less than 5% (or treated as a ramp), cross-slopes less than 2% and running slopes of curb ramps less than 8.33% (1:12). Flared sides of curb ramps should be less than 10% (1:10)	renovations & new construction	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Access from parking	Provide accessible parking spaces and paths of travel to bus stops at all Park & Rides.	Medium Term	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Toilet rooms	Establish and implement accessible design standards	Medium Term	Renovations/retrofit. $5,000 to $8,000 per toilet room
Bus Stops			
Bus stop inventory	Currently underway Incorporate data in trip planning functionality	Currently Underway	Minimal – typically programming requirement
Minimum 1.5m (5') wide pad	To maximum extent feasible	renovations & new construction	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Level pads	To maximum extent feasible provide bus pads that are level (no slope greater than 2%)	renovations & new construction	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Bus stop spacing	Implement design guidelines (per Table 6-2)	Medium Term	Minimal – staff time & production costs
Bus Shelters			
Accessible path of travel into bus shelter	Provide accessible path of travel into all bus shelters on accessible routes	Medium Term	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Visibility	Develop and implement a standard graphic treatment for shelters that maintain visibility while providing some contrast for people with low vision.	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources
Wheelchair locations	To the maximum extent feasible provide bus shelters large enough so that a person who uses a wheeled mobility device is afforded protection from inclement weather	Medium Term	Develop standard (use of existing staff resources) Bus shelter: $5,000 to $10,000/each
Parking			
Access aisles	Provide designated accessible parking spaces that comply with guidelines similar to the Provincial building code or ADA Accessibility Guidelines	Medium Term	Minimal
Accessible path of travel (to an accessible entrance)	Provide a minimum 1 meter (3') wide accessible path of travel to terminal or facility entrance	Medium Term	Minimal

Universal Design Element	Goal / Requirement	Timeframe	Potential Cost Impact
Ferry Terminals			
Accessible entrance identified	Provide consistent identification of accessible entrances. This can be accomplished via graphics, colour and architectural elements	Medium Term	Minimal
Accessible path of travel	Provide a minimum 1 meter (3') wide accessible path of travel between drop-off, accessible parking and facility entrance	Medium Term	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Accessible toilet rooms	Provide designated accessible toilet rooms that comply with guidelines (similar to bldg. code)	Medium Term	Renovations/retrofit. $5,000 to $8,000 per toilet room
Buses			
Audible announcements	Interior & exterior audible announcements (no retrofitting of buses)	Medium Term (and new procurement)	See *Note* below
Bus route identifiers	Route numbers on front, side and rear of buses (retrofit on any vehicle expected to be in fleet for next five years)	Medium Term	Approx. $1,500/bus

Note: HRM/Metro Transit will be undertaking a comprehensive review of transit technology [Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications] in 2013. The transit technology review will identify further specifics including functional requirements and detailed costing for pertinent ITS applications.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications at this time. Any recommendations that have budget implications will be brought forward in future annual budgets for consideration by Regional Council.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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The final document will be available to the public on the HRM website.

ALTERNATIVES

The Transportation Standing Committee may choose not to recommend that Regional Council accept the Universal Accessibility Plan. This is not recommended as the approval in principle of the Plan is key to Metro Transit's ability to prepare standards and policies to improve the accessibility of the transit system.

ATTACHMENTS

Universal Accessibility Plan

A copy of this report can be obtained online at http://www.halifax.ca/boardsom/SCtransp/index.html then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by : Maribeth Wilson, Coordinator, Project Planning, Metro Transit, 490-6287

Original signed

Report Approved by: Dave Reage, Manager, Service Development, Metro Transit, 490-5138

METRO TRANSIT
UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

FINAL REPORT

November 2011

IBI GROUP

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1. INTRODUCTION

"A truly accessible transportation system is not designed to accommodate people with disabilities - it is designed to welcome everyone"
Attendee – Halifax Public Meeting (March 2011)

Universal accessibility is the goal of enabling all citizens to reach every destination served by their public street, transit and pathway systems. Travel by public transit (including ferry services), walking, or wheelchair to every destination is accommodated in order to achieve transportation equity, maximize independence, and improve community liveability. Wherever possible, facilities are designed to allow safe travel by young, old, and persons with a disability who may have diminished perceptual or ambulatory abilities. By using design to maximize the percentage of the population who can travel independently, it becomes much more affordable for society to provide paratransit services such as Access-a-Bus to the remainder who may be unable to use conventional transit services.

The importance of accessibility from design, policy and customer service perspectives has been growing and is expected to become of greater importance to the public and to organizations, locally, nationally and internationally. With this in mind, the Halifax Regional Municipality is seeking to improve the overall accessibility of its infrastructure including fixed route bus and ferry systems and ancillary considerations including marketing and communications (e.g., signage and wayfinding).

Taking Transit to the Next Level

Developing a Universal Accessibility Plan is important to the future growth and enhanced integration of both public transit in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and for Metro Transit (MT) as an organization capable of delivering future services required to meet the needs of users with varying disabilities. Metro Transit has seen unprecedented growth over the past 6 years and there are increasing demands and expectations on the municipality's public transit system to not only meet future needs but to lead the way.

The Region possesses unparalleled beauty derived from its location and geography as well as a diversified and exciting social fabric and character. It has been experiencing consistent and sustained growth and is an important economic centre for the Maritimes. It is a financial centre as well as the home to several major universities, Canada's The Royal Canadian Navy's Maritime Forces Atlantic and many other facilities of the Department of National Defence. At the same time, the geography of the Region and the Halifax peninsula in particular, present significant transportation and mobility challenges for planners, developers and residents. With limited access points to the peninsula and across the harbour, as well as the difficulty in constructing new roadways, the role of accessible public transit in meeting an increasingly higher percentage of trips, which includes those of older adults and users with varying disabilities beyond typical mobility challenges, has become increasingly critical to the continued growth and prosperity of the Region. For these reasons, Metro Transit needs to be proactive to meet and exceed these needs. Equally important is the need to demonstrate leadership in terms of

legislative and regulatory requirements, and formal compliance with accessibility standards that have been successful in other jurisdictions and/or are currently being embraced for future implementation (e.g., Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) legislation in the Province of Ontario).

1.1 Study Objectives and Work Program

HRM's stated objective is "to improve the overall accessibility of the Metro Transit fixed route bus and ferry system, moving toward a system that is universally accessible".

The work plan was subsequently designed to emphasize the importance that several areas contribute to an effective and accessible transit system, and are linked. A few examples include: the availability of accessible information; accessible communication methods; website accessibility; the accessible design of transit vehicles, stops, shelters and facilities; a high level of accessibility awareness among staff; an effective and accessible feedback and complaints process to assist in the identification of barriers to accessibility; staff knowledge of how to communicate with and accommodate people with disabilities; and the existence of policies, procedures and practices addressing the various aspects of providing accessible customer/rider service. All of these components are essential to address within the framework of a Universal Accessibility Plan.

Gap Analysis - To prepare Metro Transit for future accessibility requirements and address public expectations, the study work plan included the review of national trends around accessibility such as reforms related to Human Rights Legislation and the recognition that municipalities across Ontario, and in British Colombia have adopted formal accessibility guidelines and standards, going beyond 'minimum' requirements established within the National and Provincial building codes, for example. Particular attention will be given to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) which includes Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, as well as proposed accessibility standards on the topics of transportation, information and communication, and the built environment.

The key "types" of disabilities addressed throughout the study process are summarized as follows:

- Auditory Disabilities
- Emotional Disabilities
- Intellectual, Developmental and Learning Disabilities
- Mental Health Disabilities
- Physical Disabilities
- Visual Disabilities
- Universal Abilities (the public at large)

Overall, the intent has been to recognize and understand that everyone will experience variations in abilities throughout their lifespan. It is also important to recognize the variations in types of disabilities and how they are difficult to categorize – often referred to as 'cross-disabilities'. It is important to recognize that in a transit environment, users of all ages and abilities typically interact on a daily basis and form a significant part of HRM's population, using the ferry and fixed bus systems regularly. This cross-disability approach considers no formal distinction between people with or without disabilities, focusing on identifying opportunities for facilitating all users' experiences of Metro Transit services, facilities, amenities and infrastructure, with an emphasis on usability, safety and universal access.

The approach to the preparation of a Universal Accessibility Plan focused on integrating the concept of “universal design” and extending the ideals of accessible design to routinely under-serviced populations, like people of short stature, seniors, pregnant women, parents with children in strollers who may use Metro Transit, people who speak different languages and others – or ‘universal abilities’. This universal access approach recognizes the needs of people of all ages and abilities throughout different stages in one’s lifetime, including permanent, temporary and invisible disabilities.

With current and future accessibility legislation and public expectations in mind, Metro Transit's current practices had been reviewed relative to the following:

1. The principles of demonstrating respect for the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, providing goods and services to people with disabilities in a manner that is integrated with others, and providing persons with disabilities an opportunity equal to that provided to others.

2. The requirements of the ADA and the AODA, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, including understanding how to accommodate people with disabilities through the provision of goods and services; knowing how to interact and communicate with people with different disabilities who require the assistance of a support person, service animal or assistive device; providing notice of disruptions in facilities and services; an accessible feedback and complaints process about the manner in which goods and services are provided to people with disabilities; and accessibility awareness of staff and third parties.

3. The requirements of Ontario's Integrated Accessibility Standards.

    - Emphasis given to reviewing the current Metro Transit environment against Ontario's accessibility standards for transportation as this relates to operator responsibilities, disability awareness, training, the announcement of stops and delays, and policies and procedures.

    - Ontario's standards for information and communication were referenced for the review of Metro Transit's practices regarding information and communication including providing information (including marketing and communication materials) in alternative formats.

    - Review website accessibility against W3C Guidelines, the proposed website standard under the AODA.

4. Accessibility trends in other provinces.

5. The ability of riders and other customers with disabilities to access goods, services, and information through different service channels including in-person, by telephone, website, other electronic means, by mail or through other methods.

6. The ability of people with disabilities to plan rider trips and meet existing transit schedules.

7. Current training content and practices addressing accessible customer service; disabilities awareness; providing information in accessible formats; interacting and communicating with people with disabilities; and Metro Transit's customer service and accessibility related policies, procedures and practices.

8. Current and future transit users with regard to levels and types of disabilities as they affect current and future Metro Transit accommodation practices.

The *Accessibility Audit Process* evaluated Metro Transit systems based on an understanding of a typical "journey sequence" users with varying disabilities may take as users of Metro Transit facilities and infrastructure, as well as demonstrating key considerations of a user's experience related to the built environment in general as well as their ability to access services and information through multiple service channels.

Complementing the review of current practices and subsequently developing a strategic approach for moving forward, was a robust outreach and consultation process. This included multiple public outreach efforts to ensure that the appropriate community information is gathered and that the community in general and seniors and people with disabilities specifically were engaged in the assessment of universal accessibility barriers, gaps and opportunities. The outreach efforts provided insight and understanding of the perceptions, concerns, and knowledge base of the community (especially target stakeholder groups) with regard to barriers to accessibility and related issues as well as facilitated the gathering of information from a variety of stakeholders to inform recommendations related to programs and methods for the development of a plan for universal accessibility.

1.2 Report Organization

This report is organized as follows:

- Section 2 provides an overview of the demographics and how they will evolve over the next 10 to 15 years;
- Section 3 profiles the legislative and regulatory environments focusing on national and provincial perspectives, specifically Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in Canada and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the United States;
- Section 4 discusses the outreach and consultation process;
- Section 5 presents the results of the evaluation of existing processes, procedures, transit and ferry services and infrastructure; and
- Section 6 presents A Way Forward – setting strategic direction for universal accessibility.

Relevant text from legislation and regulations, including the AODA's Integrated Accessibility Standards and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are presented in Appendices A and B respectively. Presentation material from the series of outreach and consultation sessions is presented in Appendix C.

2. DEMOGRAPHICS

This section provides a demographic profile of persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia in general and in the Halifax Region Municipality, specifically.

As identified in the Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission's report *A Statistical Report 2010*, it was estimated that 4.4 million Canadians 15 years of age and over have some level of disability. This is a disability rate of 14.3 percent. The term disability rate refers to the total number of persons who reported activity limitations expressed as a percentage of the population. (Source: 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), Statistics Canada).

For Nova Scotia, the disability rate is reported to be 20 percent or 179,100 people in the Province reporting some form of disability. Generally, these statistics are based on a definition of disability, as individuals who have reported difficulties with daily living activities, or who indicated that a physical, mental condition or health problem reduced the kind or amount of activities they could do.

Combined with recognition of the number of people who identify as having a disability, statistics from the 2006 Census clearly shows the changing face of Canadian society. For the first time, the number of seniors aged 65 years and over surpassed the 4 million mark, or approximately 1 in 7 Canadians identified as a senior, or 13.7% of the total population. Additionally, statistics show that the number of people who are aged 80 years and over has surpassed the 1 million mark, and the number of people aged 100 years or over has also risen dramatically. It is projected that the number of seniors will continue to increase, from 4.3 million today, to 8 million by 2026, and will then account for 21.6 % of the total population.

Changing demographics (i.e., aging population), growth in population through migration, and changes in settlement patterns certainly affect the demand for transit, whether it be conventional or specialized transit services. These changes are, however, usually anticipated and, as such, are generally included in the HRM population projections used in this demand analysis. The projections from 2011 to 2021 take into account things such as an aging population. There are however, issues that are not as easy to project, and are almost impossible to include in a transportation demand model. These issues are usually more socio/political in nature and affect the need and use of many kinds of transportation services. They include, but are not limited to:

- Trends towards community-based living;
- Expansion of adult day programs;
- Health care restructuring;
- Social policy framework; and
- Changes to service standards and other operational policies.

Recent research commissioned by AARP (formerly known as the American Association of Retired Persons) suggests that the boomer generation, the first wave of which has reached 65 years of age in 2011, will typically be "healthier" than that of previous generations. With greater expectations for mobility, this somewhat more affluent boomer generation will be a product of a more health conscious age group, while experiencing medical advances unprecedented in medical history. Future directions suggest the incidence of disability with aging will not escalate at the same rate that we have seen over the past quarter century. The increase in older adults does not necessarily indicate a proportionate need for the current mix of transit services. As the "baby boom" generation ages, the older adult population will generally:

- Be healthier and more physically fit

- Have a higher level of education
- Have a higher disposable income
- Be less transit dependent with greater automobile ownership/access
- Be living independently
- Have a wider range of lifestyle preferences and higher mobility expectations

The following section profiles travel demand and trip rates specific to the transportation disabled populations in the Region. Data sources include: *Employment, Population and Housing Projections – Halifax Regional Municipality: An Update*. Prepared by: Altus Group Economic Consulting, July 28, 2009. Interestingly, this report's 2026 population projections by age cohort, observes that persons aged 75+ will have the largest share of the Region's population. Complementing the population and projection figures was the use of additional data sources focusing on the incidence of disability and transport disabled specifically, as presented in Figure 2.1. Data specific to the incidence of disability is from Statistics Canada's 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) and to a lesser extent, the *TransAccess*™ database (based on Statistics Canada's Health and Activity Limitation Survey); and the *Age-Friendly Cities Project – Halifax Site*, A Project of the World Health Organization (WHO), Summary Report, March 2007.

Exhibit 2.1: HRM Population and Transportation Disabled People

Year	HRM Population	# of Transportation Disabled People[1]
2011	385,255	15,410
2016	406,305	18,280
2021	425,060	21,250

[1] Transportation Disabled People is based on a self-declaration of some functional limitation that makes it difficult to use or unable to use fixed route transit services.

3. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

The section is intended to establish the broader framework and understanding of human rights based legislation that will inform the Universal Accessibility Transit Plan and HRM's commitment to providing an inclusive transit system for all users rather than develop a detailed comparison of national and international disability legislation. This legislative review focuses on key examples only, which were determined to be most relevant to the HRM's Metro Transit context and which also exemplify international accessibility trends.

3.1 A National Perspective

"When barriers get in the way of people with disabilities participating fully in society as a result of their disabilities, everyone loses."

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected under both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Nova Scotia's Human Rights Code. The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the equality rights section of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, (enacted in 1982), came about after lobbying by disability organizations. The Charter guarantees persons with disabilities equal protection and equal benefit of the law. This is considered the highest level, "overarching" legislation for protection of equal rights in Canada. This is then followed by Human Rights Act or Code legislation, at the national level, with provincial or territorial levels at the next level (e.g., Nova Scotia Human Rights Code).

As identified in Section 2 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA),* the purpose of the Act is:

"...to give effect... to the principle that all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as members of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices...."

In general terms, this legislation identifies 'disability' as one of the prohibited grounds of discrimination. Further, referred to as "the duty of accommodation short of undue hardship", is a fundamental principle of human rights law, especially with regard to the special needs of persons with disabilities. The 1997 Supreme Court decision in the case of *Eldridge v. British Columbia (Attorney General)* dealt with the duty to accommodate the needs of deaf citizens. The duty of accommodation is an important consideration for HRM relative to the delivery of public transit services regarding vehicles, transit infrastructure, service policies, customer service, etc.

The National Building Code of Canada (NBC) is a model building code which has been adopted, as is by some provinces and territories and modified by others. The NBC addresses primary building elements such as doors, ramps, stairs and washrooms, all of which are applicable to the Metro Transit operating environment. The Province of Nova Scotia developed their own Building Code (modeled after the NBC with few variations) with mandatory accessibility provisions (e.g., Section 3.8). It is recognized that Building Code provisions are typically "minimal" for implementing accessible/barrier free (or universal) design.

3.2 Provincial Legislation

The Nova Scotia Human Rights Act was enacted to protect human rights in the Province of Nova Scotia. This complaint driven statute is similar to other provincial human rights statutes in that it

strives to create an inclusive province with equal opportunities for everyone. It will be critical to position HRM and Metro Transit as a leader towards ensuring the needs of all users are met through the daily operations of the transit system, for both users with and without a disability.

Nova Scotia: Human Rights Act / Disabled Persons Commission Act

"Recognizes the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all…"

The Province of Ontario is currently recognized as the first province in Canada to initiate the formal process of enacting accessibility/disability legislation that also requires the development of standards for accessibility across all sectors of the economy, including transportation. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was enacted in 2005. It calls for the development of enforceable standards for accessibility that apply to public and private sector organizations in Ontario in the areas of customer service, transportation, information and communication, employment and the built environment. Currently, one standard has become law under the AODA, related to Customer Service. Accessibility Standards for Customer Service came into force back on January 1, 2008. This regulation applies to public and private sector organizations providing goods and services and that have at least one employee in Ontario. The Province of Ontario's *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Ontario regulation 191/11) requires transportation services to prevent and remove barriers so that people with disabilities can more easily access transportation services across the province. Conventional providers and specialized transportation service providers must start meeting the requirements of the transportation standards beginning July 1, 2011. Certain requirements have various other effective dates depending on the requirement and/or type of transportation covered under the standard. The *Integrated Accessibility Standards* are discussed further in Section 3.4 and are provided in their entirety in Appendix A.

Evolving Legislative Environment and Public Expectations - Public expectations regarding the rights of people with disabilities are rising. Now that accessibility standards have become law in Ontario and additional standards are in the process of becoming law, public expectations regarding accessibility will likely increase throughout Canada. It is widely held that other provinces will enact standards for accessibility in the future and there is expectation for a future 'national standard', similar to other jurisdictions around the world (e.g., USA, UK and Australia).

3.3 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed July 26, 1990 and became effective on January 26, 1992. The ADA is landmark federal legislation that opens up services and employment opportunities to the 43 million Americans with disabilities. The law was written to strike a balance between the reasonable accommodation of citizens' needs and the capacity of private and public entities to respond. It is not an affirmative action law but is intended to eliminate illegal discrimination and level the playing field for disabled individuals.

ADA legislation provides for detailed standards – setting of measures, policies and practices to remove and prevent barriers, addressing a full range of disabilities. Transportation sector standards address:

- Vehicles
    - Exterior/pre-boarding: symbols of access/sight/hearing loss; route or destination signage; pre-boarding announcements
    - Boarding/disembarking: lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates; boarding/disembarking assistance; steps; grab bars/handholds/stanchions; floor surfaces; indicators
    - On board: accessible aisle; allocated spaces; courtesy seating; lighting and colour contrasting; securement/storage of assistive devices; on-board announcement of stops and connections; stop request controls
- Policies and Procedures
    - Emergency preparedness and response
    - Notice of disruption of accessibility equipment
    - Retrofits
    - Personal care attendant fees
    - Maintenance
    - Availability of accessibility equipment and features
- Built Environment / Transportation Infrastructure
    - Boarding platforms, facilities/terminals, bus stops, bus shelters, etc.
- Information and Communications
    - Accessible information and communication
        - Print (signs, advertising, reports, agenda)
        - Verbal (public meetings, announcements)
        - Technologies (Web)
    - Multiple formats
        - Print (braille, large print, plain language, electronic, not requiring colour perception, audio)
        - Verbal (ASL)
        - Web (font size, colour, captioning)
    - Available upon request
    - Employee training

The law is comprised of five titles that prohibit discrimination against disabled persons within the United States. Titles I and II are the primary sections that affect local governments.

Title I prohibits employers, including cities and towns, from discriminating against qualified job applicants and workers who are or who become disabled. The law covers all aspects of employment including the application process and hiring, training, compensation, advancement, and any other employment term, condition, or privilege.

Title II prohibits state and local governments from discriminating against disabled persons in their programs and activities. Title II also sets forth the applicable structural accessibility requirements for public entities *(including public transit).*

Title III prohibits private enterprises who provide public accommodations and services (e.g., hotels, restaurants, and transit systems) from denying goods, services and programs to people based on their disabilities. Title III also sets forth the applicable structural accessibility requirements for private entities.

Title IV makes available telecommunications devices and services for the hearing and speech impaired. These regulations spell out certain mandatory minimum standards telephone companies must maintain to be in compliance with the ADA.

Title V includes some miscellaneous provisions that relate to the construction and application of the ADA, including alternative dispute resolution.

ADA public transit vehicle standards are presented in Appendix B.

3.4 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act – Transportation Standard

AODA's Transportation Standard requires transportation services to prevent and remove barriers so that people with disabilities can more easily access transportation services across the province. Requirements for accessible transportation apply to persons and/or organizations that offer transportation services to the public or employees, and that are responsible for or provide the following types of services:

What is an accessibility standard?
An accessibility standard is a rule (set of measures, policies & practices) that persons and organizations have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers.

- Conventional transportation
- Specialized transportation
- Public school transportation
- Other transportation services
- Ferry
- Taxi

Requirements do not apply to the following transportation services:

- Voluntary or faith-based transportation
- Federally regulated transportation

- Emergency response vehicles
- Amusement park rides

Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers must start meeting the requirements of the transportation standards beginning July 1, 2011. Certain requirements have various other effective dates depending on the requirement and/or type of transportation covered under the standard.

The *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Ontario regulation 191/11) document is presented in Appendix A.

The standard is extensive and sets out detailed transportation-specific operational practices and procedures that address the following topics. Note that under each transportation-specific operational practice and procedure listed below, written policies will be required to include how services and/or equipment and other will be provided in an accessible manner.

Accessibility plans:

Accessibility plans will indicate how:

- Accessibility is being achieved with respect to conventional and specialized services, where applicable
- Municipalities are making progress to meet the accessible taxi needs of their community
- Municipalities are making progress to increase the number of accessible bus stops/shelters
- Prior to publicly releasing accessibility plans, conventional transportation providers (including those that provide specialized transportation services) will be required to consult the public.

Emergency and public safety information:

Persons or organizations providing passenger transportation services will be required to establish, implement, maintain, and document emergency preparedness and response policy and procedures that provides for the safety of passengers with various abilities.

Operator responsibilities:

Persons or organizations providing passenger transportation services will be required to establish, implement, maintain, and document policies and procedures which require conveyance operators to perform duties such as:

- Provide assistance to persons with disabilities
- Use lifting devices
- Assist persons with boarding
- Provide route/destination information

Training

Persons or organizations providing passenger transportation services will be required to establish, implement, maintain, and document employee/volunteer accessibility training policies and procedures that are specific to transportation-related duties and developed in consultation with persons with disabilities.

Availability of accessibility equipment and features

Conventional transportation providers will be required to make available current information on accessibility-related equipment and features of their conveyances, routes and services.

Maintenance of equipment

Conventional transportation providers will be required to establish, implement, maintain, and document procedures to:

- Maintain accessibility-related equipment in good working order
- Ensure operators report any accessibility-related equipment failure to the transportation provider

If the accessibility equipment on a vehicle is not functioning, another vehicle with working accessibility features will be required to be dispatched.

Equal fares and fees

Where fares and fees are charged, persons or organizations providing conventional passenger transportation services cannot charge passengers with a disability:

- A higher fare than passengers without a disability, for the same trip at the same time of day
- A fee for the stowage of assistive devices

Treatment of support persons

- Transportation providers cannot charge a fare to a support person accompanying a passenger with a disability on conventional or specialized transit.

Fare parity for conventional and specialized transportation

Within a jurisdiction, the transportation provider will be required to apply the same:

- Base fare structure (e.g. for general passengers, students, seniors, etc.) to all conventional and specialized transportation services. This does not include promotional fares or charter rates that a service provider may employ from time to time
- Fare options (e.g. tickets, tokens, passes) to all conventional transit services

Transportation providers cannot charge a higher rate for specialized services than what is charged for conventional services in the same jurisdiction.

Accessible boarding/de-boarding

Conventional transportation providers will be required to ensure operators allow persons with disabilities to enter or exit the vehicle at the closest available safe location (as determined by the operator) that is not an official stop, if the official stop is not yet accessible or if there is a temporary barrier and the safe location is along the same route.

In determining where a safe stop location may be situated, the operator will give consideration to the preference of the passenger with a disability.

Operators will be required to report to the appropriate authority transit stops that are temporarily inaccessible or have a temporary barrier.

Storage of assistive devices

Conventional transportation providers will be required to ensure operators transport assistive devices in the passenger compartment within reach of the passenger, if safe stowage is possible.

If not possible, the operator may stow assistive devices in the baggage compartment of the conveyance on which the person is traveling. In these cases, the operator will store, secure and return assistive devices in a manner that does not adversely affect the safety of any passenger on the conveyance, including persons with disabilities, and does not cause damage to the assistive device.

Courtesy seating

Conventional transportation providers will be required to ensure there is clearly marked courtesy seating for persons with disabilities, as close as practicable to the entrance door. Signage will be required to indicate that passengers other than persons with disabilities must vacate their seats if its use is required by person with a disability.

Operators will be required to ask passengers who are not using a transportable mobility aid device to vacate wheelchair securement locations, if that securement location is needed by a person using a transportable mobility aid device.

Service disruptions

Where there is a disruption to a scheduled service, conventional transportation providers will be required to make available alternate accessible arrangements to transfer passengers with disabilities to their route destination where alternate arrangements for passengers without disabilities are inaccessible.

Information on alternate arrangements will be required to be communicated in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Pre-boarding route or destination announcements

For all services that do not require pre-booking, conventional transportation operators will be required to announce, verbally or by electronic means, the route or direction, or the destination or next major stop of the conveyance at the boarding point prior to boarding, upon request.

Where vehicles for more than one route serve the same stop, the conventional transportation provider will be required to provide a means by which a person with a visual impairment or other disability can identify the proper vehicle to enter or be identified to the operator as a person seeking a ride on a particular route.

Within six years of enactment, the transportation provider will be required to ensure that, for services that do not require pre-booking, all pre-boarding announcements are:

- Announced through electronic means
- Legibly and visually displayed through electronic means

- Visual displays of stop information will conform to Route and Destination Signage requirements.

On-board announcements of stops and connections

Conventional transportation operators will be required to announce, through verbal or electronic means, all destination points or stops for services that do not require pre-booking.

In six years of enactment, the transportation provider will be required to ensure that, for services that do not require pre-booking, all destination points or stops are:

- Announced through electronic means
- Legibly and visually displayed through electronic means
- Visual displays of stop information will conform to Route and Destination Signage requirements.

Route or destination signage

On a go-forward basis, transportation providers will be required to ensure the legible display of the route or direction, or the destination or next major stop, visible at the boarding point. Signage may include pictograms or symbols but must

- Be consistently located
- Have a glare-free surface
- Be positioned to avoid shadow areas and glare

Signage, including electronic display monitors, when used to give the same type of information within the same type of conveyance will be required to be consistently shaped, coloured and positioned, with text that is high colour-contrasted with its background and achieves the appearance of solid characters.

Boarding/De-boarding lifting devices, ramps, portable bridge plates

On a go-forward basis, the transportation provider will be required to ensure lifting devices, ramps, or portable bridge plates have:

- A colour strip that runs its full width, and is high colour-contrasted with its background
- A platform surface that is slip resistant
- Safety wheel guards along all exposed edges

Indicators

On a go-forward basis, the transportation provider will be required to ensure a visual amber warning lamp indicator be mounted on the exterior near the accessible entrance door(s).

The visual indicator shall be coupled with an audible warning alarm. The visual indicator and the warning alarm must function when the conveyance is kneeling, when the ramp is deployed or when the lift is in operation.

A door opening and closing visual indicator and audible alarm system will be required to be available.

Steps

On a go-forward basis, the transportation provider will be required to ensure the top outer edge of each step and all interior edges at raised floors be marked by a colour strip that is high colour-contrasted with its background, that runs the full width of the leading edge of the step and is readily apparent from both directions of travel.

Step surfaces will be required to be slip resistant and produce minimal glare. Steps will be required to have uniform, closed riser heights and tread depths, subject to the structural limitations of the conveyance.

Grab bars, handholds, handrails, stanchions

On a go-forward basis, the transportation providers will be required to ensure that grab bars, handholds, handrails, and stanchions:

- Are located in specific locations throughout the vehicle to support passengers with disabilities
- Do not interfere with the maneuvering space required for transportable mobility aids
- Are high colour-contrasted with their backgrounds
- Are sturdy, permit easy grasping and have slip-resistant surfaces

Floor surfaces

On a go-forward basis, the transportation provider will be required to ensure floor surfaces of conveyances produce minimal glare and are slip resistant.

Carpeted surfaces will be required to have a low, firm and level pile or loop, and be securely fastened.

Allocated transportable mobility aid spaces

On a go-forward basis, the transportation provider will be required to:

- Provide a minimum of two allocated transportable mobility aid spaces on the vehicle, each with a minimum clear space of 1220 mm by 762 mm
- Provide, as appropriate, securement devices

An allocated space may be used for other passenger purposes, if it is not required for use by a passenger with a transportable mobility aid.

Stop request and emergency response controls

Where applicable, on a go-forward basis, the transportation provider will be required to ensure accessible stop-request and emergency response controls are available throughout vehicles, including within reach of allocated spaces and seated passengers.

Stop-request and emergency response controls will be required to:

- Provide auditory and visual indications that the request has been made
- Be mounted no higher than 1220 mm and no lower than 380 mm above the floor
- Be operable with one hand and not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist

- Be colour contrasted with the equipment to which the control is mounted
- Provide tactile information on emergency controls

Lighting and colour contrasting

On a go-forward basis, the transportation provider will be required to incorporate colour contrasting and lighting features that promote independent boarding, on-board circulation and de-boarding for passengers with visual disabilities.

Any step well or doorway immediately adjacent to the driver will be required to have, when the door is open, an illuminance of at least 20 lux when measured on the step tread or lift platform.

Other step wells and doorways, including doorways in which lifts or ramps are installed, will be required to have, at all times, an illuminance of at least 20 lux when measured on the step tread, or lift or ramp, when deployed.

The vehicle doorways, including doorways in which lifts or ramps are installed, will be required to have outside light(s) which, when the door is open, provide an illuminance of at least 10 lux when measured on the street surface for a distance of 0.9 m perpendicular to the bottom step tread or lift outer edge. Such light(s) will be required to be shielded to protect the eyes of entering and exiting passengers.

Accessibility equipment and features will be required to have high colour-contrast with its background.

Ferries

The transportation provider will be required to provide ferry vessels that conform to the Canadian Transportation Agency Code of Practice for Ferry Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (1999).

Ferry vessels will be required to be exempt from requirements in AODA accessibility standards that are addressed within the Ferry Code of Practice.

3.5 Ferry Code of Practice

The Canadian Transportation Agency is a quasi-judicial administrative tribunal of the federal government. Under Canadian legislation, the Agency has the responsibility for ensuring that persons with disabilities obtain access to this country's federal transportation system by eliminating unnecessary or unjustified barriers. One way in which it can achieve this goal of accessible transportation is to develop and administer accessibility standards covering the transportation network under federal jurisdiction. The purpose of this Code of Practice is to improve the accessibility of marine travel for persons with disabilities.

Applicable accessibility criteria include:

Signage - Signage provided on a ferry to aid passengers should satisfy the criteria set out below. (Since safety and crew signage are regulated by the Department of Transport, they are not covered by these specifications.)

(a) Signage should be positioned at key decision-making points. It should be positioned over the path of travel at a height well above head level in high pedestrian traffic, but in a manner that it can be seen easily by a person in a wheelchair. Signage should be positioned to avoid shadow areas and glare. If signage is located at a doorway, it should be on the wall to the right of the door, with its centre at a height of 1500 mm plus or minus 25 mm above the floor.

(b) Letters, numbers, symbols and pictographs should be glare-free and presented in high contrasting colours (e.g. a light colour on a dark background or a dark colour on a light background, with light on dark being preferable for signage.)

(c) Illuminated signs where the text is lighted through a dark background should not be used.

(d) Letters and numbers should be sans serif, and numbers should be Arabic. Letters and numbers should have at least a width-to-height ratio between 3:5 and 1:1 and a stroke-width-to-height ratio between 1:5 and 1:10.

(e) For general orientation and specific information signage, letters, numbers, symbols and pictographs should be at least 200 mm high for a maximum viewing distance of 6000 mm, 100 mm high for a maximum viewing distance of 2500 mm and 50 mm high for a maximum viewing distance of 1500 mm.

(f) When tactile signage or markers are used, letters, numbers, symbols and pictographs should be raised at least 0.8 mm and should be between 16 mm and 50 mm high. If a tactile sign is mounted on a wall, its centre should be at a height of 1500 mm plus or minus 25 mm above the floor.

(g) If signage is supplemented with braille, it should be located at the bottom of the sign and presented in Grade One Braille that meets the standards of the Canadian Braille Authority in English and in Braille intégral that meets the standards of the Comité interministériel sur la normalisation du braille in French.

(h) If electronic signage is used, letters, numbers, symbols and pictographs should be slowly scrolled across the screen. Red letters on a black background should not be used.

Means to Communicate Verbal Messages - If a ferry operator makes announcements to passengers, such as those concerning delays, schedule changes, and on-board services, the operator should have the means onboard the vessel of visually and verbally providing these announcements to persons with disabilities.

Pen and paper should be made available at all points of contact between carrier staff and passengers in order to facilitate communication of a more individual nature.

Lighting - Lighting on a ferry, except reading and other lighting under the control of a passenger, should be directed and controlled so as to minimize glare and shadows.

Lighting should not result in any sharp contrasts in intensity throughout a ferry but should be used to accentuate stairs and their handrails.

Stairways - Stairs on a ferry should have uniform, closed riser heights and uniform tread depths. Where space permits, detectable, colour contrasting warning surfaces should be provided at the top of stairs and at landings.

The tread surfaces of the stairs and the landings should be firm and non-slippery and should not create glare. The top outer edge of each step should be marked by a contrasting colour strip that runs the full width of the leading edge of the tread and the vertical face of the nosing.

Stairways should have handrails on both sides, including at the landings.

If structural limitations of a ferry prevent any of the criteria concerning handrails and uniform riser heights and tread depths from being satisfied, and where an elevator is not provided or not available, a ferry operator should provide assistance, if requested, to a passenger with a disability in ascending and descending the stairs.

Handrails - Handrails on a ferry should be sturdy and of a height and length that permit use by all passengers including a person using a wheelchair.

Handrails should be continuous through the length of stairs, ramps, corridors or passageways, except where interrupted by other paths of travel or doorways.

Handrails should be rounded and free of any sharp or abrasive element. They should have an exterior diameter and a clearance from the wall surface to which they are attached that permit easy grasping. They should not have any obstructions that could break a handhold.

Handrails should be colour contrasted from their surrounding area or marked with a contrasting colour strip that runs the full length of the handrail.

Handrails should also return to the wall, floor or post in a smooth curve or have a tactile cue at the end. The method used should be consistent throughout the ship.

Corridors and Passageways - Corridors and passageways on a ferry should have a minimum clear headroom of 1980 mm from the floor. They should also have a minimum clear width that is maneuverable by a person in a wheelchair and not reduced by protruding fixed objects.

Any barriers, obstacles or projections should be colour contrasted from their surrounding area.

Floors - Floor surfaces on a ferry should be slip-resistant. Glare from floor surfaces should be reduced as far as practicable.

If carpeting is used on a ferry, it should be securely attached. It should have a short pile and a firm underpad or no underpad at all.

Doorways and Doors - Doorways on a ferry should be wide enough to accommodate a person in a wheelchair and should have enough space on both sides of the door to maneuver a wheelchair.

Full length glass doors or windows should be marked with colour contrasting decals.

Doors to cabins, washrooms and other enclosed spaces which have no other exit doors should not be equipped with deadbolts or other means of security which can only be manipulated from the inside. As an alternative they should be equipped with an easily manipulated push-lock door knob that can be released from the outside with a special tool or lock.

If door sills are necessary, they should be bevelled or ramped on a permanent or movable basis and should be marked with a colour contrasting strip.

Door handles, pulls, latches, locks and other operational devices should be operable with one hand and minimal force and should not require fine finger control, tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist. They should be mounted at a height that permits use by a person in a wheelchair and be colour contrasted from their surrounding area.

If sliding doors are used, these operational devices should be exposed and usable from both sides when in a fully-open position.

Crew members should be available to assist passengers with the use of watertight doors, and fire rated doors designed to meet Transport Canada standards.

4. OUTREACH / CONSULTATION

Community outreach and consultation was an integral part of the study process. The former included two rounds of public meetings – to engage the community in general and seniors and people with disabilities specifically in the assessment of universal accessibility barriers, gaps and opportunities. Additional consultation included two rounds of Focus Group meetings (including officials from agencies and organizations representing the elderly and disability communities) and multiple meetings with HRM/Metro Transit ferry staff and transit staff.

The outreach efforts provided insight and understanding of the perceptions, concerns, and knowledge base of the community (especially target stakeholder groups) with regard to barriers to accessibility and related issues as well as facilitated the gathering of information from a variety of stakeholders to inform recommendations related to programs and methods for the development of a plan for universal accessibility.

4.1 HRM/Metro Transit Officials

The following presents salient information discussed in separate meetings with staff responsible for Operator Training; Marketing and Communications; HRM Maintenance/Public Works; and Ferry Infrastructure and Crew Training.

Operator Training

Basic Operator Training (BOT) and Supervisor Training

- Operator training deals with customer service in general terms - dealing with complaints, irate customers, confrontational situations, how to tie down wheelchairs, etc.
- Accessibility Awareness Training is a component of the operator training program. Section 14 of the 'Metro Transit BOT Student Handbook addresses Special Needs Passengers; Accessible Low Floor Service; Blind Persons Rights Act 128; QStraint Operator/Driver Instructions and Wheelchair Ramps and Systems
- Exception - drivers are told to keep a pen and paper for communicating with people who are hard of hearing and deaf and are told to offer assistance to customers with disabilities as part of good customer service

Conventional Routes and Buses

- Group Home Transfers
    - Problems on buses when group homes transfer residents by bus.
    - Group homes are encouraged to call Metro Transit to inform them when they will be using buses for transfers but they often don't call.
    - As a result operators are not prepared to deal with transfers and residents who often display behavioural problems on buses which often results in concerns for health and safety.
- Accessible buses on *Non-Accessible Routes*
    - Public confusion when both accessible (ALF) and inaccessible buses use the same routes.
    - The availability of accessible buses is unpredictable on routes that are not labelled accessible. This results in public confusion/annoyance.
- Public information/understanding regarding accessible buses and accessible routes

    - Routes that are not labelled accessible may have some stops and/or some buses that are not accessible
    - Confusion because many stops and buses are accessible but people with mobility disabilities cannot be guaranteed an accessible ride at all times
- Scooters and Strollers
    - Some public frustration regarding large scooters and strollers on buses - taking up space and difficult to manoeuvre around.
    - Operators use discretion when allowing strollers on buses. They may refuse strollers due to concerns for overcrowding. They may ask riders to fold them and often riders will refuse because it is too awkward to carry baby, items and stroller.
    - Strollers must give way to people using assistive devices

Rural Bus Stops

- Rural areas often do not have accessible stops
- Difficulty with space for concrete pad, turning radius, and adjacent drop offs into ditches.
- Often inaccessible or possibly unsafe path to bus stops

Marketing and Communication

- No formal information and communication guidelines
- No formal alternative format policies but will provide them to the public upon request. Notice of this is not provided.
- Community mood is changing. The public has greater expectations for accessibility

CNIB Relationship

- Long term relationship with CNIB - free transit passes to riders who are blind.
- Metro Transit consults with CNIB on accessible print information and website accessibility

Website

- Metro Transit Website is controlled by HRM
- Call Centre staff do not receive disability awareness training. Contact Jane Young regarding staff training.

HRM Maintenance/Public Works

Snow Removal

- Snow removal of terminals, entrances, walkways, curb cuts is contracted out
- All transit facilities, bus stops, etc receive the highest priority for snow removal
- Community transit and most rural bus stops are cleared by the Province

Snow Removal Priority

- First Streets (24 hrs after snowfall)
- Second Bus Stops and Landing Pads (48 hrs after snowfall)
- Accessible Bus Stops are a higher priority than regular bus stops
- If the bus stop is not clear, accessible route services are suspended because Metro Transit cannot guarantee that stops are clear of snow and accessible.

Maintenance
- Snow removal, potholes, cracks
- Priority given to safety hazards

HRM Design Guidelines 2009
- Metro Transit design/construction standards

Ferry Infrastructure and Crew Training

Ferry operations are regulated by the federal government

Ferry Services and Metro Transit
- Policies and Procedures are the same as Metro Transit for fares, riders, service animals, etc.
- Metro Transit services are integrated throughout the system, including all Conventional Bus Services, Ferry services and Access A Bus

Emergency Evacuation Procedures
- All ferries will soon display MUSTER Lists (federal requirement that explains staff responsibilities and actions during an emergency)

Training
- Training does not include accessibility awareness/sensitivity training
- Currently developing training program

Terminal Disruptions
- Notice will be provided for elevators if they are not working – for maintenance or repairs (no specific time requirement before notice is provided)

4.2 Focus Group Sessions & Public Meetings

Two rounds of both Focus Group sessions and Public Meetings (in both Dartmouth and Halifax) were held as part of the study process:

- March 2011 - to introduce the study objectives and work program and acquire input regarding barriers to accessibility, what works and key areas in need of improvement; and

- May 2011 - to share the consultant's assessment of the current operating and built environments and opportunities for improvement. One focus of the May meetings was to engage the community in translating the opportunities and concepts into a strategic approach for a plan of universal accessibility.

4.2.1 WHAT WE HEARD

The following reflects comments heard at the Public Meetings as well as several comments submitted via e-mail.

March 2011

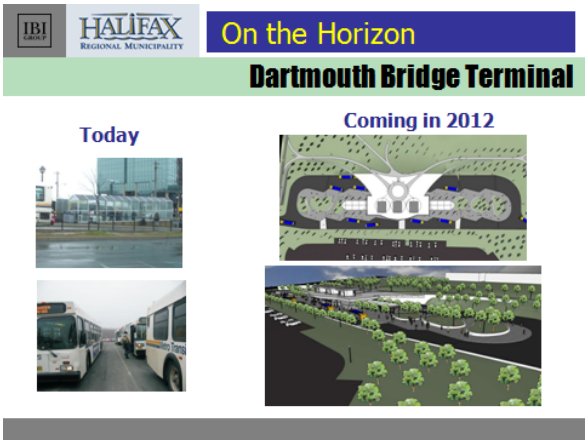
Buses

- Need for audible announcements – both interior & exterior of bus
- Need for route numbers/destination identifiers - signage on rear of buses

- Courtesy/priority seating – need for driver to enforce (request) passengers to vacate seat for elderly or person with a disability
- Operator training in disability awareness, the use of securement devices and providing assistance
- Need for standard wheelchair securement device/tie downs
- "Stop Request" would be easier to push a button rather than pull a cord

Built Environment/Infrastructure

- Size of bus shelters (depth/width) – too restrictive, unable to manoeuvre in wheelchair
- Lip on shelter entrance presents a barrier
- Need for more seating at bus shelters
- Priority seating should be included at seating at bus stops/shelters
- Placement of advertising in bus shelters obstructs view of arriving buses



- Signage at bus stops – need for larger numbers and better information regarding destinations
- Need to enhance program to address path of travel/access to bus stops. Many areas have no sidewalk access
- Need to ensure bus stops/routes receive priority snow removal
- Need for tactile markers at bus stops
- Need for dedicated bus bays for easier identification of specific routes
- Need for better lighting at terminals
- Bridge Terminal is not wheelchair accessible

Ferries & Terminals

- Boarding protocols / public information campaign recognizing needs of many passengers
- Dartmouth Terminal – outer door by Tim Hortons has a step

- Need for subtitles on in-terminal monitors
- Automatic door openers are not clearly marked
- Cycle time for automatic door openers too quick
- Halifax ferry terminal – poor signage (wayfinding) to bus terminal
- Reliability of elevators and wayfinding can present challenges

Information & Communications

- Available in alternate formats
- Unable to determine use of low floor/accessible bus in planning a trip
- Need for dedicated call-centre for transit information/trip planning
- Would like to see travel training program (may include web-based or available video/DVD)
- Would like to see text or e-mail alerts of service disruptions

- Need to address priority for mobility devices in cases of large strollers obstructing access or securement area
- Attendants should not be required to pay a fare
- Schedule information at terminals is difficult to read (under plexiglass) or is missing altogether
- Would like to see real time bus arrival information
- Need to communicate appropriate transit etiquette/public education (rules/regulations, rider's rights, travelling with a stroller, etc.)
- Integrate trip planning with Access-A-Bus

<u>May 2011</u>

There was general consensus/positive support for Metro Transit's initiative of preparing a Universal Accessibility Plan in general and the findings and concepts as presented. Recognizing that this is a longer term strategic approach, again consensus that the accessible "warm" and "hot" spots is the way to set priorities for moving forward.

Additional salient points included:

Bus Stops

- Create an accessible bus stop guide
- Bus stops need to be standardized in order to ensure consistency throughout
- Create an inventory of accessible bus stops
- The decision on whether or not to let a disabled passenger off at a non-accessible stop should be based on the equipment, not the customer – if the ramp can safely be deployed and the passenger wishes to alight, we should

not refuse. 'Do not make the operator the enforcement person.'

- We need to develop a standard for an accessible bus stop (i.e. location of garbage can, shelter, sign, etc)
- Shelters – many have lips on the pad – wheelchairs cannot get in or out easily
- Standardize length of time a bus stays at a bus stop before it departs
- More environmental clues at bus stops to aid visually impaired customers

Terminals

- Mumford Terminal – CNIB requesting that the stops be changed back to the way they were (designated location for each route)
- Complaints about bridge terminal design – not enough accessible elements
- Crossing lines at current bridge terminal need to be repainted
- Portland Hills accessible parking spots are not painted blue

Website/Print Material

- Website – errors appear when using screen readers
- Individual schedules cannot be read with screen readers
- Hire local people to be beta testers for screen reader applications
- Digital text for schedules – ensure all test runs from left to right with no tables
- Winnipeg Transit – their website has easy to read line maps
- Large print schedules – standard font is 14pt Verdana
- Colours on the route map are difficult to distinguish
- We need to educate all transit customers on accessibility issues

Buses

- New bus specs need to include the ability to add audible announcements
- Accessible logo should go on all accessible route destination signs
- Bus wraps are challenging for low vision customers as they cannot see 'landmarks' through covered windows
- Fare boxes are difficult for passengers who use a wheelchair to reach
- The yellow bell strip (?) is too low for some wheelchair passengers to use (should be raised by 6")
- All buses should be equipped with quick straps
- Requiring able-bodied customers to vacate accessible seats for disabled customers is an ongoing issue.

5. EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section provides the results of an assessment of existing conditions including:

- Web accessibility
- Print materials
- Architectural barriers
- Information & communications
- Bus terminals
- Bus stops
- Bus shelters
- Parking
- Ferry terminals
- Boarding systems
- Vessels
- Buses

5.1 Data Collection/Reference Points

The Province of Nova Scotia does not currently have enforceable standards for accessible design. Therefore, for use in the survey of existing conditions compiled checklists' were based on the following sources:

- Buses**:** PART 192 *ADA ACCESSIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES*, Subpart B-Buses, Vans and Systems.
- Bus Stops**:**
  - 2010 *ADA Accessible Design Standard*
  - *Quick Bus Stop Checklist* (Toolkit for the Assessment of Bus Stop Accessibility and Safety, Easter Seals Project ACTION)
- Ferries:
  - Vessels - *DRAFT Passenger Vessel Accessibility Guidelines*, U.S. Access Board (June 26, 2008)
  - Ship-to-Shore - Section 18 of 521 CMR, *The Rules and Regulations* of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board, Transportation Terminals.
- Terminals (Ferry & Bus) – KMA's Accessible Facility Checklist (references 2010 ADA Accessible Design Standard)
- Website Accessibility: *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0* (WCAG 2.0)

The assessment included the three ferry terminals, vessels, seven bus terminals (and associated Park & Ride lots), numerous bus stops (urban, suburban and rural), and representative buses. A comprehensive accessibility audit of each facility/element was not performed but rather a survey to identify typical systemic issues and some unique issues significant for a specific site.

5.2 Web Accessibility

For the purposes of this study, the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0* (WCAG 2.0) was used to evaluate the Halifax Metro Transit website. WCAG 2.0 are the second iteration of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines designed by the

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to make content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including people who are blind, deaf or have low vision or hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these disabilities. WCAG 2.0 has 12 guidelines (listed in table below) with testable requirements. The Metro Transit website was found to be generally accessible; however, small changes would result in significantly greater usability and navigability.

The website includes the option to download and use Browse Aloud, software to speech enable web sites for people with dyslexia and related learning disorders. After highlighting a section of text you click a button and the text is read to you – and word being spoken is highlighted. The program was not found to be easy to use as it does not support selecting whole sections of text or tables.

Four pages of the Metro Transit web site were selected to review:

- Home Page: http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/
- Accessible Services: http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/accessible_services.html
- Schedules & Route Maps: http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/Schedules/index.asp
- Passenger Safety: http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/passenger_safety.html

This review is not intended to be a comprehensive review of the Halifax Metro Transit website but rather to provide an overview of the accessibility of the Metro Transit website. Automated accessibility tools provide a snapshot of how accessible the website is. For example, the online tool may tell us that alternative text is missing for an image, but it cannot tell us if the existing alternative text for other images is clear and helpful. The review provides a starting point for a more thorough review of usability and HTML code compliance by Metro Transit's website designer. All of the web accessibility testing tools used are free and available at: http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/complete.

Resources:

- WCAG 2.0 Quick Reference Guide: http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/Overview.php?introopt=Y
- Web Accessibility Initiative: http://www.w3.org/WAI/
- Web Accessibility Evaluation Tools: http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools/complete
- WAVE: a free web accessibility evaluation tool provided by WebAIM: http://wave.webaim.org/
- Eclipse ACTF aDesigner: Scans individual web pages for ease of use for low vision and blind individuals:http://www.eclipse.org/actf/
- Photosensitive Epilepsy Analysis Tool (PEAT): http://trace.wisc.edu/peat/
- Total Validator: A 5-in-1 validation tool, comprising of a HTML validator, an accessibility validator (WCAG and US508), a spell checker, a broken link checker, and the ability to take screenshots with different browsers on different platforms: http://www.totalvalidator.com/

WCAG 2.0 Quick Reference List	Website Page	Testing Method	Errors
1.1 Text Alternatives[2] Provide text alternatives for any non-text content so that it can be changed into other forms people need, such as large print, braille, speech, symbols or simpler language.	Home Page	WAVE: a free web accessibility evaluation tool provided by WebAIM http://wave.webaim.org/	2 forms missing form label 1 linked image missing label 2 spacer images missing alternate text 1 image missing alternative text
	Accessible Services	WAVE (see above)	2 forms missing form label 2 linked images missing alternative text 1 empty heading (contains no text) 1 image missing alternative text
	Schedules & Route Maps	WAVE (see above)	2 forms missing form label 1 linked image missing label 1 image missing alternative text
	Passenger Safety	WAVE (see above)	2 forms missing form label 1 linked image missing label 1 image missing alternative text 3 headers that contain no content 1 spacer image missing alternative text

[2] The issue of alternative text for images, spacer images, and form labels is very important for users who are "viewing" the website with a screen reader or other piece of assistive technology. Without alternative text the viewer does not receive equivalent information.

1.2 Time-based Media Provide alternatives for time-based media. This includes media that is: • audio-only • video-only • audio-video • audio and/or video combined with interaction	Home Page		Not applicable[3]
	Accessible Services		Not applicable
	Schedules & Route Maps		Not applicable
	Passenger Safety		Not applicable
1.3 Adaptable[4] Create content that can be presented in different ways (for example simpler layout) without losing information or structure.	Home Page	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner: http://www.eclipse.org/actf/ Scans individual web pages for ease of use for low vision and blind individuals.	Complex data tables need title or summary
	Accessible Services	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner (see above)	Complex data tables need title or summary
	Schedules & Route Maps	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner (see above)	Complex data tables need title or summary
	Passenger Safety	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner (see above)	
1.4 Distinguishable Make it easier for users to see and hear content including separating foreground from background.	Home Page	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner: http://www.eclipse.org/actf/ Scans individual web pages for ease of use for low vision and blind individuals.	Listenability: 92/100 Foreground and background colours are too similar (Low Vision) No alt text for image = no text accessible by assistive technology. (Blind)
	Accessible Services	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner: (see above)	Listenability: 94/100 No alt text for image = no text accessible by assistive technology. (Blind)

[3] If time-based content is included on the website in the future, appropriate alternatives should also be provided.
[4] Due to the method in which some screen readers process HTML, providing titles for each table would facilitate understanding the organization of the page by a person using assistive technology.

	Schedules & Route Maps	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner: (see above)	Listenability: 96/100 No alt text for image = no text accessible by assistive technology. (Blind) 9 instances when absolute units are used vs. relative - difficult to resize pages and retain legibility.
	Passenger Safety	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner: (see above)	Listenability: 94/100 No alt text for image = no text accessible by assistive technology. (Blind)
2.1 Keyboard Accessible Make all functionality available from a keyboard.	Home Page	Manual testing	The web pages are substantially keyboard accessible. Due to the table layout of the web pages an individual must tab through the entire menu on the left side of each page before arriving at the body of the page. The drop-down menu is difficult to maneuver using the keyboard.
	Accessible Services		
	Schedules & Route Maps		
	Passenger Safety		
2.2 Enough Time Provide users enough time to read and use content.	Home Page		Users are allowed to complete any activity without a time limit.
	Accessible Services		
	Schedules & Route Maps		
	Passenger Safety		
2.3 Seizures Do not design content in a way that is known to cause seizures.	Home Page	Photosensitive Epilepsy Analysis Tool (PEAT): http://trace.wisc.edu/peat/	PASS
	Accessible Services		PASS
	Schedules & Route Maps		PASS
	Passenger Safety		PASS

2.4 Navigable Provide ways to help users navigate, find content, and determine where they are.	Home Page	Eclipse ACTF aDesigner: http://www.eclipse.org/actf/	Navigability: 56/100 Lack of sufficient heading and skip links (ex: skip to main)
	Accessible Services		Navigability:: 68/100 Lack of skip links (ex: skip to main)
	Schedules & Route Maps		Navigability: 59/100 Lack of skip links (ex: skip to main)
	Passenger Safety		Navigability: 66/100 Lack of sufficient heading and skip links (ex: skip to main)
3.1 Readable Make text content readable and understandable.	Home Page	Total Validator http://www.totalvalidator.com/ A 5-in-1 validation tool, comprising of a HTML validator, an accessibility validator (WCAG and US508), a spell checker, a broken link checker, and the ability to take screenshots with different browsers on different platforms.	The option to change text size is not provided. Primary natural language of the pages is not programmatically determined (HTML). Properly identified language allows people who use screen readers or other technologies that convert text into synthetic speech.
	Accessible Services		
	Schedules & Route Maps		
	Passenger Safety		
3.2 Predictable Make Web pages appear and operate in predictable ways.	Home Page	Manual Testing	Inability to use drop-down menu successfully with keyboard
	Accessible Services		
	Schedules & Route Maps		
	Passenger Safety		
3.3 Input Assistance Help users avoid and correct mistakes.	Home Page		Aside from the “search” option there are no forms to be submitted on the four pages KMA selected to review. Additional review would be appropriate.
	Accessible Services		
	Schedules & Route Maps		
	Passenger Safety		

4.1 Compatible Maximize compatibility with current and future user agents, including assistive technologies.	Home Page Accessible Services Schedules & Route Maps Passenger Safety	Total Validator http://www.totalvalidator.com/ A 5-in-1 validation tool, comprising of a HTML validator, an accessibility validator (WCAG and US508), a spell checker, a broken link checker, and the ability to take screenshots with different browsers on different platforms.	This guideline deals primarily with code. The Total Validator Tool provides a line by line error assessment. There are numerous parsing and HTML errors on all 4 pages.

In addition, it is suggested that Metro Transit consider:

- Consolidating several sections into an "Accessible Services" section to provide a single more visible portal.
- Adding information in the Park & Ride section regarding the availability of accessible parking spaces.
- Add information in the Contact Us section regarding contacting Metro Transit via text telephone. For the hearing impaired there is TTY (Hearing impaired teletypewriter users only): 902-490-6645
- Add information regarding t*raveling with Animals (pets as well as service animals)*

5.3 Print Materials

Four representative Metro Transit publications were reviewed (A. Bus & Ferry Route Map, B. Bus & Ferry Rider's Guide, C. Go Times & D. "Urban Express" Service Notice) for general legibility and access to people with limited vision. We reviewed the publications relative to six of the principles[5] for designing for people with partial sight and colour deficiencies developed by Aries Arditi, a senior fellow at the Arlene R. Gordon Research Institute at the Lighthouse International in New York City.

1. **CONTRAST:** Text should be printed with the highest possible contrast. There is good evidence that for many readers who are older or partially sighted, light (white or light yellow) letters on a dark (black) background are more readable than dark letters on a light background. However, the traditional dark on light may be aesthetically preferable.

2. **TYPE COLOUR:** Very high contrasts are difficult to achieve with colour combinations other than black and white. Printed material, generally, is most readable in black and white. Different colours may be important for aesthetic or other reasons, but it is better to use such combinations only for larger or highlighted text, such as headlines and titles.

3. **POINT SIZE:** Type should be large, preferably at least 16 to 18 points, but keep in mind that the relationship between readability and point size differs somewhat among typefaces.

4. **LEADING:** Leading, or spacing between lines of text, should be at least 25 to 30 percent of the point size. This is because many people with partial sight have difficulty finding the

[5] Designing for People with Partial Sight and Colour Deficiencies by Aries Arditi, PhD

beginning of the next line while reading.

5. **FONT FAMILY:** Avoid complicated, decorative or cursive fonts and, when they must be used, reserve them for emphasis only. Standard serif or sans-serif fonts, with familiar, easily recognizable characters are best. Also, there is some evidence that sans-serif fonts are more legible when character size is small relative to the reader's visual acuity.

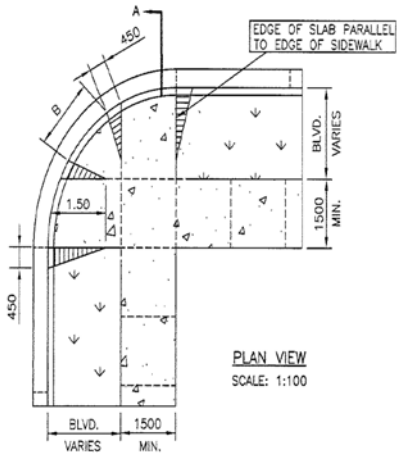
6. **DISTINCTIVENESS:** Visual impairment often makes it difficult to find a book or other document that is buried among similar publications, especially for sets with volumes that differ only in title or number. Use of distinctive colours, sizes and formats on the covers can be especially helpful to older individuals and those who are partially sighted.

The publications reviewed are designed and produced to substantially reflect four (#1, #2, #4, #5) of the six principles. The point size of the characters (#3) is small, although making the materials available in alternative formats (upon request) and appropriately alerting the public to their availability will provide equivalent access to the information.

5.4 HRM Municipal Design Guidelines

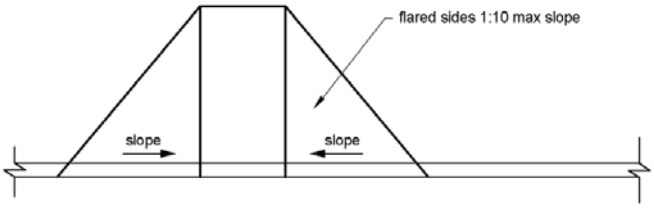
The HRM Municipal Design Guidelines (HRM Guidelines) clearly establishes the HRM's commitment to "comfortable and safe" pedestrian travel – including people with disabilities (5.1.4) as well as to "Design and operate transportation systems that can be used by persons with disabilities." Design and construction of pathways and street crossings free of hazards and barriers to the flow of movement is a critical component to achieving the HRM's stated goals. Given the current absence of enforceable standards, review and revision of the HRM Guidelines to expand the accessibility issues addressed, would enhance the accessibility of the infrastructure designed and constructed within the HRM.

The current HRM Guidelines could be expanded/updated to reflect the requirements for accessible elements currently in use or development by such entities as the International Code Council (ICC) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (recently updated by the US Access Board). For example, most of the curb ramps reviewed reflects HRM 44:

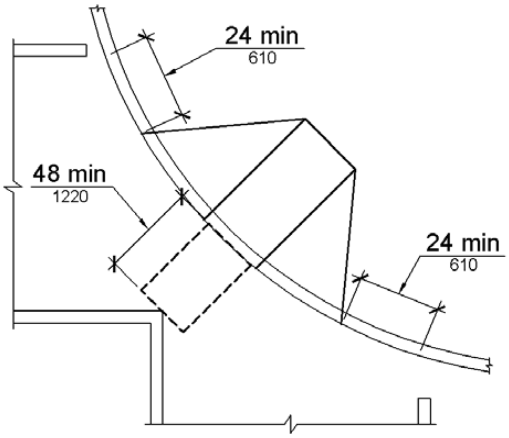


Although HRM 44 specifies a running slope of 8% which is similar to ICC/ADA, it permits significantly steeper flared sides. Both the ICC and ADA limit the slope of flared sides to 10% where

there is a minimum 3' deep level landing at the top and 8.33% where there is not a level landing. The purpose of limiting the slope of the curb ramp sides to enhance the safety of both pedestrians who are using wheeled mobility aids as well as those ambulating when travelling across the ramp:



ICC/ADA also require diagonal curb ramps to have a clear *space* 1220 mm minimum outside active traffic lanes of the roadway. Diagonal *curb ramps* provided at *marked crossings* must provide the 1220 mm minimum clear *space* within the markings.



Another element that would benefit from enhanced accessibility requirements is the designated accessible parking space.

Requirements could include:

- Designated parking space closest proximity to an accessible path of travel
- Designated access aisle

- Parking space and access aisle are level (no slope > 2%)
- Specified sign height so not obscured by parked vehicle
- Minimum number of van accessible spaces

Other accessibility requirements that should be considered for inclusion in the HRM Guidelines include:

- Pedestrian Access Route (i.e., The minimum continuous and unobstructed clear width of a pedestrian access route shall be 1.2 m (4.0 ft), exclusive of the width of the curb.)
- Alternate Circulation Path (i.e., to the maximum extent feasible, the alternate circulation path shall be provided on the same side of the street as the disrupted route.)
- Curb Ramps and Blended Transitions
- Detectable Warning Surfaces
- Pedestrian Crossings
- Accessible Pedestrian Signals
- Street Furniture
- On-Street Parking
- Call Boxes

5.5 Architectural Barriers

Both Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act's (AODA) *Integrated Accessibility Standards* and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provided a useful model for assessing existing conditions and the level of barrier removal that may be appropriate for a given site, area or element. Both the AODA and the ADA frame the overall obligation of a transit provider within the concept of *program access* – the transit provider should operate each program so that, "when viewed in its entirety, the program is readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities," unless it can demonstrate that required modifications would result in a fundamental alteration of the program or in undue financial and administrative burdens. *Program Access* does not require transit operators to make all existing facilities, or every part of the existing facility, accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, as long as the program viewed as a whole is accessible. It is important to note that many people associate the concept of program accessibility primarily with individuals with mobility impairments. However there are many more people with communication and other types of disabilities including cognitive, communication and/or people who are blind or have limited vision and people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Pro-active mitigation of architectural and communication barriers that are structural in nature is only required if other means for providing *program access* are not successful. Other means of providing

program access include operational and policy changes. While the concept of *program access* addresses a transit provider's obligation for the system, individual new construction and alteration projects are required to be compliant with the AODA's *Integrated Accessibility Standards* and the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). When new construction or alterations is undertaken, all affected elements are required to be compliant.

Different exceptions are provided for new construction versus alterations:

Structural Impracticability. In new construction, full accessibility is not required when it can be demonstrated that it is structurally impracticable – in rare circumstances when the unique characteristics of terrain prevent the incorporation of accessibility features.

Technically Infeasible. An alteration *that has little likelihood of being accomplished because existing structural conditions would require removing or altering a load-bearing member which is an essential part of the structural frame; or because other existing physical or site constraints prohibit modifications or addition of elements, spaces, or features which are in are necessary to provide accessibility.*

To the maximum extent feasible. *In alteration work, where providing full accessibility is technically infeasible, the alteration shall provide accessibility to the maximum extent feasible.*

Where barriers to accessibility were identified in the Metro Transit system, any mitigation strategy should consider multiple factors including:

- Program Access
- Technical Infeasibility
- User expert priorities
- To the maximum extent feasible
- Construction tolerances
- Accessibility achieved relative to cost

The following presents observations and mitigating measures to address Universal Design Goals[6] as they relate to:

- Information and Communication
- Bus Terminals
- Bus Stops
- Bus Shelters
- Parking
- Ferry Terminals, Boarding Systems and Vessels
- Buses

Photos are provided as appropriate, for each element discussed below. Some elements are compliant with Universal Design Goals and are indicated as such. In these cases, no Universal Design Goal is noted.

[6] All recommended design standards contained in this report are intended to meet or exceed any existing provincial or federal standards including the NS Building Code, Utility and Review Board and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

Information & Communication: Architectural

1. Instructional Videos

Safety videos are not accessible to individuals who are hard of hearing or deaf.

UD Goal: Provide means for equal access to communication. For example, subtitles.

2. Public Address

Where public address systems are used at ferry terminals, equivalent information is not available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

UD Goal: Provide means for equal access to communication. For example, visual messages.

3. Bus Stops

At terminals served by multiple routes the signage identifying where different routes stop is difficult to read – especially from a distance. The inability to differentiate the different stops from a distance can be especially detrimental for individuals with mobility limitations at sloped terminals.

UD Goal: Provide larger route information in addition to existing signs.

4. Route Schedules

Route schedules are often difficult to read because of glare.

UD Goal: Use low glare covers.

5.	Telephones	Public pay telephones are not accessible to people who are mute, deaf or hard of hearing and text telephones are not provided. UD Goal: Provide text and/or video phones.	
6.	Emergency communication	The emergency phone in the Woodside elevator does not provide a means for a person who is mute, deaf or hard of hearing to communicate. UD Goal: Provide light that signals when call is answered.	
7.	Tactile/Braille Signage	Permanent spaces are not identified with tactile/Braille signs. UD Goal: Use tactile/Braille signs to identify permanent spaces (e.g. toilet rooms). Such signs should be located on the wall adjacent to the latch side of the door.	

Bus Terminals

8.	Access from surrounding neighbourhood and/or dedicated parking areas.	Design and maintenance of curb ramps and cross-walks leading to several terminals presented numerous barriers. Curb-ramps have running slopes > 8.33% and many have significant lips at the bottom.  UD Goal: Provide paths of travel that are stable, firm and slip resistant. Running slope should be less than 5% (or treated as a ramp), cross-slopes less than 2% and running slopes of curb ramps less than 8.33% (1:12). Flared sides of curb ramps should be less than 10% (1:10)	

9.	Access from parking.	Most Park & Rides lacked designated accessible parking spaces and accessible paths of travel to the terminals. UD Goal: Provide accessible parking spaces and paths of travel to bus stops at all Park & Rides.	
10.	Level.	The islands at several terminals (e.g. Mumford, Bridge, Penhorn) have significant running slopes which represent significant challenges to be with limited mobility – including limited stamina. UD Goal: To the maximum extent feasible locate terminals on level sites.	
11.	Access from pad to vehicular way.	Most pads lacked a curb ramp to the vehicular way. UD Goal: Provide an accessible path of travel that ensures people do not need to go on the road (and make certain that pedestrians do not conflict with any vehicular traffic).	
12.	Toilet rooms	Portland Hills. Side grab bar does not extend a minimum of 54” from the rear wall. Towel dispenser obstructs front approach at lavatory. Toilet centreline/clearance > 18” from near side wall. UD Goal: Establish and implement accessible design standards.	

Bus Stops

Note: the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design minimum requirements for a newly constructed bus stop are: (altered bus stops are required to comply to the maximum extent feasible[7]):

- A firm, stable surface;
- A minimum clear length of 243.84 cm (96”), measured from the curb or vehicle roadway edge and a minimum clear width of 152.4 cm (60”), measured parallel to the vehicle roadway;
- A maximum slope (perpendicular to roadway) of 1:48 for water drainage; and
- Connection to streets, sidewalks or pedestrian paths by an accessible route.

13. Accessible path of travel between inbound and outbound stops**.**

Many stops on routes signed as having accessible bus service lacked an accessible route between stops on opposite sides of the street.

UD Goal: Provide an accessible route between inbound and outbound stops, where practical (recognizing that this may include travel to an accessible, marked or signalized crossing).

14. Minimum 1.524 meters (5’) wide pad

The pads at many bus stops are less than 1.524 meters (5’) wide.[8]

UD Goal: To the maximum extent feasible provide bus pads that are a minimum 1.524 meters wide.

[7] The ADA requires that when bus stops are altered, each altered element or space shall comply. Where compliance with applicable requirements is technically infeasible, the alteration must comply with the requirements to the maximum extent feasible.

[8] While accessible pads may already be 1.5 meters wide, it is important that this and other design standards be incorporated in the HRM Design Guideline publication.

15. Level pads.

The pads at many bus stops had slopes greater than 2% perpendicular to the curb. Other pads have changes in level greater than 1.27 cm (½").

UD Goal: To the maximum extent feasible provide bus pads that are level (no slope in any direction greater than 2%)

16. Accessible path of travel into bus shelter.

Some bus stops on accessible routes lacked an accessible path of travel into the shelter.

UD Goal: Provide an accessible path of travel into all bus shelters on accessible routes.

Bus Shelters

Note: the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design minimum requirements for a newly constructed bus shelters are:

- a minimum 76.2 cm (30") x 203.2 cm (48") clear floor or ground space entirely within the shelter.
- connected by an accessible route to an accessible boarding and alighting area[9]

17. Visibility

The clear sides of the typical shelters provide necessary visibility for safety. Most shelters also have some form of opaque band.

UD Goal: Develop and implement a standard graphic treatment (to ensure consistency) for shelters that maintain visibility while providing some contrast for people with low vision.

[9] Ibid.

18.	Wheelchair locations	Shelter size allows for a typical 76.2 cm (30") x 203.2 cm (48") wheelchair to be accommodated wholly within the shelter. However, where fixed benches are aligned parallel with the front of the shelter (See A) a person using a wheeled mobility device is limited to parking in front of the opening. Benches aligned perpendicular to the front of the shelter (See B) allow people using wheeled mobility devices to be more protected from inclement weather. UD Goal: To the maximum extent feasible provide bus shelters large enough so that a person who uses a wheeled mobility device is afforded protection from inclement weather.	A  B 

Parking

Note: the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design minimum requirements for a newly constructed parking spaces are:

- Number required[10]
- Accessible spaces must be located on the shortest accessible route from parking to an accessible entrance
- Vehicle Spaces. Car parking spaces – shall be 2440 mm (96 inches) wide minimum and van parking spaces shall be 3350 mm (132 inches) wide minimum, and be marked to define the width, and shall have an adjacent access aisle.
- Access aisles serving car and van parking spaces shall be 1525 mm (60 inches) wide minimum and extend the full length of the parking spaces they serve.
- Access aisles shall adjoin an accessible route but not overlap the vehicular way
- Access aisles shall be marked so as to discourage parking in them.
- Access aisles and parking spaces must be stable, firm and slip resistant without slope in any direction greater than 1:48

10

Total Number of Parking Spaces Provided in Parking Facility	Minimum Number of Required Accessible Parking Spaces
2 - 15	1
16 – 45	2
46 – 100	3
101 – 200	4
201 – 300	5
301 – 400	6
401 – 500	7
501 – 900	8
901 – 1,300	9
1,301 – 1,700	10
each increment of up to 400 stalls in excess of 1,700	one additional space
Source: Nova Scotia Building Code, Schedule C - Barrier Free Design	

- Parking space identification signs shall include the International Symbol of Accessibility. Signs identifying van parking spaces shall contain the designation "van accessible." Signs shall be 1525 mm (60 inches) minimum AFF measured to the bottom of the sign.

19. Access aisles

All designated parking spaces lacked access aisles.

UD Goal: Provide designated accessible parking spaces that comply with guidelines similar to the Provincial building code or ADA Accessibility Guidelines.

20. Accessible path of travel to an accessible entrance

Most designated parking spaces lacked a fully accessible path of travel to the facility entrance due to excessive running slopes and/or lips greater than 1.27 cm (½").

UD Goal: Provide a minimum 1 meter (3') wide accessible path of travel to terminal or facility entrance.

Ferry Terminals

21. Accessible entrance identified.

Though all three terminals have double doors where a single leaf does not provide a minimum 81.28 cm (32") clear, they all have entrances with automatic door openers. However, the accessible entrance is not identified in a consistent manner.

UD Goal: Provide consistent identification of accessible entrances. This can be accomplished via graphics, colour and architectural elements.

22. Accessible path of travel

The exterior approach to the Woodside terminal has a running slope that exceeds 5% and is not treated as a ramp.

UD Goal: Provide a minimum 1 meter (3') wide accessible path of travel between drop-off, accessible parking and facility entrance.

23. Accessible Toilet rooms

Some bathrooms that are signed as accessible are not fully accessible. For example (Woodside):

- Doors lack minimum required clear manoeuvring space on push and pull sides
- Flush valve is not on open side of toilet
- No rear or horizontal side grab bar.
- Lip of urinal > 43.18 cm (17") AFF

The single user toilet room at the Alderney terminal is signed as accessible, however, the lavatory obstructs the clear manoeuvring space on the latch pull side that is necessary for an individual using a wheelchair to exit – they can get in but can't get out.

UD Goal: Provide designated accessible toilet rooms that comply with guidelines similar to Provincial building code and ADA Accessibility Guidelines.

24. Signage

Inaccessible elements lack directional signage to accessible element (e.g. toilet rooms and entrances)

UD Goal: Provide directional signage at key elements.

25. Signage

Toilet rooms lack tactile/Braille signage mounted on wall adjacent to latch side of door.

UD Goal: Use tactile/Braille signs to identify permanent spaces (e.g. toilet rooms). Such signs should be located on the wall adjacent to the latch side of the door.

26. Signage

Sign system lacks consistency in graphic elements (e.g. colour).

Graphic design does not distinguish between categories of information

UD Goal: Develop and implement a graphic standard.

27. Protruding objects

There are elements that protrude into the circulation route.

UD Goal: Elements that protrude more than 10.16 cm (4") into circulation routes should have leading edges below 68.58 cm (27") AFF or above 203.2 cm (80") AFF

Boarding System

28. (compliant)

The boarding system from the fixed terminal facility to the vessel is the same at the three Terminals. There is a wide marine ramp (approx. 12.5 m [41'] long) with a transition plate to a floating structure. From the floating structure to the vessel there is a gangway (fixed to the vessel). All three components have usable handrails on both sides. The running slope, measured at several different tide conditions did not exceed 8.33%.

29. Changes in level

Barriers identified in the boarding system were limited to lips at the ends of some sections of gangways and/or transition plates.

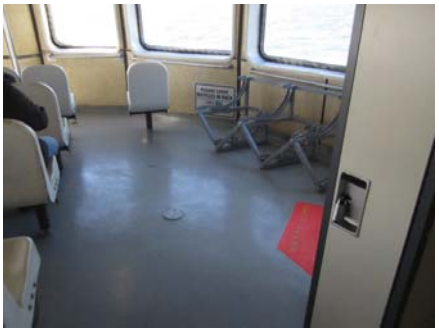
UD Goal: Changes in level along an accessible path of travel should not exceed 1.3 cm. Changes in level > 0.6 cm and 1.3 cm should be bevelled with at 1:2 minimum slope.

Vessels

30. Access to seating

The loading decks of the vessels are accessible (an accessible path of travel does not extend to some areas).

UD Goal: Ensure accessible path of travel to accessible seating options



Buses

31. (compliant)

The buses intended for use on accessible routes have mobility elements that are substantially compliant with AODA requirements for accessible buses – the major exception is the lack of use of the available public address systems.

32. (compliant)

Buses not intended for use on accessible routes have several features that benefit the general passenger population, including:

- High contrast handrails
- High contrast strips at changes in level
- Handrails that extend the full length of the vehicle

33. Signage

Signs related to priority seating lack a consistent graphic format.

UD Goal: Develop and implement a graphic standard

34. Stop Request Activator

In some buses the stop request activator is located behind the shoulder line of a person using the wheelchair location.

UD Goal: Develop and implement a standard location for stop request activator

5.6 Fleet Compliance Matrix

		New Flyer D30LF ..... Community Transit	GM cutaway ..... Metro X	New Flyer D40LF ..... Metro Link	Nova/New Flyer articulated	MCI/Nova Classic	Nova LFS	New Flyer D40LF
					Conventional			
Mobility Aid Accessibility								
1.	The vehicle provides a level-change mechanism or boarding device (e.g. lift or ramp).	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y
2.	If the vehicle is > 22' in length and accessible with at least two securement locations and devices are provided.	NA	N	Y	Y	NA	NA	Y
3.	Wheelchair locations are as close to the accessible entrance as feasible and has a clear floor area of 30" by 48".	NA	Y	Y	Y	NA	NA	Y
Seat Belt and Should Harness								
4.	The securement device provided has a seat belt or harness.	NA	Y	Y	Y	NA	NA	Y
Doors, Steps and Thresholds								
5.	All aisles, steps, floor areas are slip resistant.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
6.	Step edges, thresholds, and boarding edge of ramps have a band of contrasting color running the full width of the step or edge.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Priority Seating Signs								
7.	Signage indicates that seats in the front of the vehicle are priority seats for persons with disabilities.	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8.	Securement location has signage designating it as priority seating.	NA	N	Y	Y	NA	NA	Y

Mobility Aid Accessibility (cont.)								
		New Flyer D30LF …… Community Transit	**GM cutaway …… Metro X**	**New Flyer D40LF …… Metro Link**	**Nova/New Flyer articulated**	**MCI/Nova Classic**	**Nova LFS**	**New Flyer D40LF**
					Conventional			
9.	Handrails and stanchions are provided in the entrance of the vehicle and can be grasped from outside the vehicle.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10.	Handrail diameter is between 1 ¼" and 1½".	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
11.	If onboard fare collection is used and the vehicle is > 22' a horizontal passenger assist is located across the front of the vehicle.	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
12.	If vehicle is >22' there are continuous overhead handrails (except for gap at rear doorway).	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fare Box								
13.	Farebox does not obstruct traffic.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Public Information System								
14.	If vehicle is > 22' and used in multi-stop, fixed route service it is equipped with a PA System.	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stop Request								
15.	If vehicle is > 22' controls are provided adjacent to the securement location for requesting stops.	NA	N	Y	Y	NA	NA	Y
16.	System provides auditory and visual indications of request.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Destination and Route Signs								
17.	Exterior signage with destination or route information is illuminated on the front and boarding side of the vehicle.	Y	N (front only)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

5.7 Conclusion

Accessibility Score Card	
ALF Bus Fleet Acquisition / Deployment	***A-***
Ferry Vessels and Terminals	***B+***
Bus Transit Centres & Terminals	***B***
Wayfinding / Signage	***B-***
Customer information / Trip Planning	***C***
Bus Stops and Amenities	***C-***
Park and Ride Lots	***C-***

Accessibility and usability are dependent on the details of design and construction as well as broader policy and operations factors. An excessive lip at the bottom of a curb ramp can prevent a person who uses a wheelchair from reaching a bus stop and be a tripping hazard for people who are running to catch a bus. Improving the legibility of graphics or providing information via redundant sources makes a transit system easier to navigate by all users. Inconsistencies or non-fully accessible paths of travel and/or way finding/signage may have resulted in such a transit centre or terminal deemed *nominally accessible*, as illustrated below. Those observed as *nominally accessible* may present Metro Transit an opportunity, when combined with discussions with the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC), for priority accessible enhancements.[11] Metro Transit has many of the critical elements, e.g. vessels, buses and shelter design, necessary for a transit system to be accessible to passengers with varying abilities. The system's usability can be expanded by the development and implementation of Accessible/Universal Design standards.

On the Right Track

Metro Transit Buses

- ✓72% of the bus fleet are "ALF"
- ✓All buses newer than 1996 are ALF
- ✓100% ALF fleet by 2019

- ✓56% of bus routes have ALFs
- ✓67% will have ALFs in 2011
- ✓100% will have ALFs by 2019

Observations

Transit Centres & Terminals

Fully Accessible
- + Dal Terminal
- + MicMac Center
- + Portland Hills
- + Sackville

Nominally Accessible
- o Bayers Road
- o Cobequid
- o Highfield
- o Lacewood
- o Mumford
- o Penhorn

Not Accessible
- Bridge Terminal

[11] Within the context of accessibility *hot* and *warm* spots as discussed in Chapter 6.

6. STRATEGIES – *A WAY FORWARD*

6.1 Universal Design Goals

Universal Design is intended to create environments that are usable by all people and provide a higher level of access for people with disabilities. It accommodates the needs a variety of people; e.g., children, older adults, women and men, parents pushing strollers, travelers pulling luggage, the older man needing more time to cross a street - all benefit from features of universal design.

There are seven principles commonly accepted as forming the foundation of Universal Design:

1. **Equitable Use.** The design should make it equally usable by everyone.

2. **Flexibility in Use.** The design should allow people to use its design features in more than one prescribed way.

3. **Simple and Intuitive.** The design should make it easy for everyone to understand the purpose of each design feature and how to use it.

4. **Perceptible Information.** The design should provide all essential information in a variety of modes (e.g., written, symbolic, tactile, verbal) to ensure effective communication with all users regardless of their sensory abilities.

5. **Tolerance for Error.** Ideally, the design should eliminate, isolate or shield any features that could prove hazardous to or inconvenience any user.

6. **Low Physical Effort.** The design should employ features that require little or no physical force to use them.

7. **Size and Space for Approach and Use.** A design should provide an adequate amount of space that is appropriately arranged to enable anyone to use them.

When the focus is on a system as opposed to an individual element, to be effective, the principles of Universal Design must be applied in a structured and consistent manner. For example, detectable warnings provided at curb ramps or the graphic design that identifies important directional information. Therefore, a key strategy for incorporating the principles of Universal Design into the Metro Transit system will be the development and implementation of Accessible/Universal Design Guidelines[12] and management protocols.

Universal accessibility is intended to address the particular needs of HRM residents and visitors who have mobility limitations caused by a prescribed range of physical, mental and/or developmental disabilities, but who otherwise are able to function independently in the community drawing on additional support as available.

6.2 Universal Access

The Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) supports the concept of "*universal access"* to the Metro Transit system. Universal accessibility is intended to address the particular needs of HRM residents and visitors who have mobility limitations caused by a prescribed range of physical, mental and/or

[12] All recommendations contained in this report will not supercede any existing provincial or federal standards.

developmental disabilities, but who otherwise are able to function independently in the community drawing on additional support as available.

The primary components of the HRM's Universal Access strategy include:

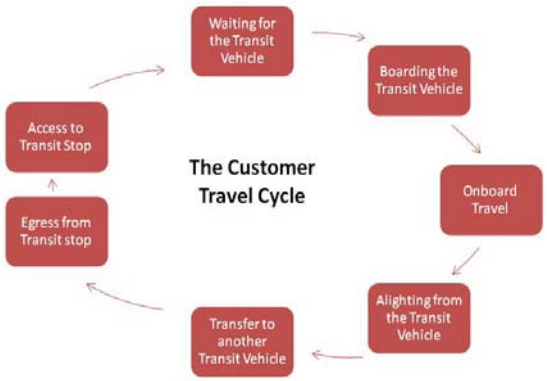
- Ensuring that 100% of the transit vehicles (ferries and buses) used to deliver Metro Transit services are "fully accessible" as defined.
- Eliminating remaining barriers to boarding and alighting transit vehicles at all ferry terminals, transit terminals and bus stops served by more than a single bus route over a longer term period (beyond a ten to fifteen year time frame).
- Where practical, upgrading conditions at Metro Transit bus stops consistent with a long-range goal of making the majority of bus stops[13] in the HRM accessible.
- Providing amenities such as passenger shelters, benches, static and real-time information displays located at Metro Transit terminals that are barrier-free and safe to use for all customers including those with mobility limitations.
- Connecting accessible bus stops to pedestrian networks available in various parts of the HRM through coordinated planning between HRM Transportation and Public Works and Metro Transit.

Universal accessibility offers important benefits for residents of the Municipality and to Metro Transit. From an operational perspective, the universal accessibility strategy will benefit Metro Transit through improved customer relations and fewer operator-customer conflicts resulting in reduced stress on employees, fewer accidents and incidents.

Achieving the vision requires a long-range perspective. It would be impractical to think that universal accessibility or anything close to it can be accomplished in context of a single project or short-term initiative. Therefore Metro Transit requires a long-term implementation strategy that reshapes existing policies, adopts formal standards, and provides a transparent method for identifying and prioritizing transit accessibility improvements over a period of decades.

6.3 Goals and Policies

The recommended implementation plan is based on a series of goals and policies:



Focus on Customer Needs Metro Transit customers and other stakeholders in the success of the universal accessibility strategy should be actively engaged in an ongoing process to identify and prioritize accessibility improvements. Progress towards universal accessibility begins with improving the customer travel experience in all phases of the transit trip cycle; from approaching the point of

[13] The intent is for every bus stop to be accessible except at locations where it would be physically impossible or cost-prohibitive to do so.

access, to waiting for the vehicle to arrive, to boarding, riding and alighting from the vehicle, and moving on from the egress point.

Systems Approach – A flexible and transparent process is needed to facilitate long-term progress toward a universally accessible transit system. Planned capital improvements to Metro Transit facilities and bus stops must be coordinated with HRM Transportation & Public Works.

Context-specific Investment – Future large-scale investments in transit system accessibility should take into consideration the prevailing land uses, street network design, development intensity and other community plan characteristics in the neighbourhoods in which project development would occur. Pedestrian network characteristics are tied to the prevailing land uses, density of development, and transportation infrastructure in the community. For example, the pedestrian network in downtown Halifax is inherently different from the pedestrian network in Lower Sackville. Investments should be prioritized in consideration of their contribution to a fully accessible transit system.

Geographic Targeting – Capital improvements should be concentrated initially in geographic "hot spots" and "warm spots" with intent to achieve universal accessibility in downtown areas and other high-activity locations around the HRM. Transit customers and the general public should be given a high degree of confidence that nearly all Metro Transit bus stops in these zones are serviceable by ramp-equipped vehicles and tied into a continuous network of sidewalks and crossings.

6.3.1 DEFINITIONS

- ***Fully accessible bus*** is defined on the basis of possessing the following features: Low-floor design; wide doors; operable ramp that can accommodate most scooters and wheelchairs; minimum two (2) securement positions; front, side and rear mounted electronic destination signs; audible exterior bus route identifier annunciation; interior "next stop" annunciation;

- ***Fully accessible bus stop*** is defined as a location designated by Metro Transit where transit customers may board or alight at a level, seamless concrete or asphalt surface where a bus ramp may be deployed safely; and that is directly connected the pedestrian network in urbanized areas, or to a paved road shoulder allowing pedestrians safe passage to subdivision streets, bicycle paths and other facilities as available.

6.4 Redefining Accessibility – System Access Points

A critical first step on the path toward Universal Accessibility is expanding the definition of a fully accessible transit system. Currently accessibility is measured largely on the basis of the vehicles utilized to provide bus and ferry service. To its credit, Metro Transit has made substantial progress within the limitations of this criterion. As of June 2011, the three-vessel ferry fleet and 72% of the bus fleet are accessible, and 67% of all bus routes are operated with accessible buses on a daily basis. Application of a single criterion over simplifies transit system accessibility however. The location and condition of ferry terminals, bus terminals and bus stops as points of access to Metro Transit vehicles are equally important. Similarly, the connectivity of bus stops to the surrounding pedestrian network is a significant ingredient to full access.

Observation of conditions in the service area reveal wide variations in the physical design and construction of bus stops, wayside amenities and pedestrian facilities along Metro Transit bus routes. Engineering and construction of concrete pads, shelters, curb cuts and pedestrian signals is not consistent, and numerous locations were observed where features that were intended to facilitate accessibility did not do so as such.

Understandably concerned about customer safety, Metro Transit implemented policies that limited the use of bus routes with less than 100% ALF vehicles, and also on bus stops where conditions might increase the risk of injuries or damage to the wheelchair ramp. Existing policy states:

"With Metro Transit's fleet now consisting of over 200 low floor buses, ALF buses operate on all conventional fixed routes. However, this does not necessarily mean that a route is accessible, as the stops, shelters, sidewalks or curbs may not offer suitable conditions for mobility-impaired passengers. Therefore, mobility-impaired passengers will not be permitted to travel on undesignated routes for safety purposes."[14]

The recent ruling by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (NSHRC) Board of Inquiry now mandates that Metro Transit expand the criteria that characterize transit system accessibility and refocus thinking based on the customer perspective. The Consent Order adopted by NSHRC reads:

"Passengers, who because of personal mobility disabilities are using wheelchairs or scooters, shall have the right to embark (according to the established Metro Transit policies for the size of these devices and other space or passenger number restrictions) or disembark a functioning ALF bus at any existing Metro Transit bus stop, provided that the accessible ramp can be deployed without risk of damage."[15]

To facilitate constructive revision of existing policy, the Consent Order further stipulates that "…all Metro Transit bus stops will be inventoried for accessibility and accessible designation signs placed on each stop that is designated accessible in or before November 2011."[16] The inventory should include all characteristics that contribute to an accepted standard for what constitutes a "fully accessible" bus stop. The following list (which is an enhancement over the Consent Order requirement) is suggested:

1. Location – Optimally bus stops should be located in pairs within sight of one another and typically on opposite sides of the street. There should be a safe crossing between inbound & outbound stops. This may include an adjacent intersection.

2. Connectivity - A bus stop should be connected to other pedestrian infrastructure, including sidewalks or wide road shoulders leading to crosswalks at intersections or entrances to destinations whenever possible. The value of an accessible bus stop is limited if it remains an "island of inaccessibility" (if the path of travel to the accessible bus stop is not accessible).

3. Pad Surface – Where new bus stop pads are constructed at bus stops, bays or other areas where a lift or ramp is to be deployed, they shall have a firm, stable surface; a minimum clear length of 2.4 meters (96 inches), (measured from the curb or vehicle roadway edge) and a minimum clear width of 1.5 meters (60 inches), measured parallel to the vehicle roadway to the maximum extent allowed by legal or site constraints; and shall be connected to streets, sidewalks or pedestrian paths by an accessible route. The slope of the pad parallel to the roadway shall, to the extent practicable, be the same as the roadway. For water drainage, a maximum slope of 1:50 (2%) perpendicular to the roadway is allowed.

   Where provided, new or replaced bus shelters shall be installed or positioned so as to permit a wheelchair or mobility aid user to enter from the public way and to reach a location, having a minimum clear floor area of .76 meters (30 inches) by 1.2 meters (48 inches), entirely within the perimeter of the shelter. Such shelters shall be connected by an accessible route to the boarding area.

[14] Metro Transit Accessible Service for Mobility-Impaired Customers brochure effective August 2010. Restated on www.halifax.ca/metrotransit.
[15] NSHRC Board of Inquiry – Appendix to June 29, 2011 Consent Order of the Parties. Paragraph 1
[16] Ibid. Paragraph 4.

4. Information and Signage – At all transit terminals static schedule information should be provided in large print format and placed behind non-glare plastic at a height level accommodative to persons of varying height, including those seated on scooters and in wheelchairs. At transit terminals real-time schedule information displays should be visible in all lighting conditions. Display terminals should use colors and contrast effectively to enable persons with limited vision to see electronic messages. Both audible and visual announcements should be used on the buses, vessels and terminals.

5. Amenities – Passenger shelters should be placed behind the sidewalk when possible rather than near the curb. Ideally shelters should have an opening facing the sidewalk that provides maximum useable covered space accessible to all persons including those using scooters and wheelchairs. A seamless threshold between the sidewalk and the entire shelter entrance should be maintained and free from obstructions including trash cans, newspaper boxes, etc.

6.4.1 TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY MAP

It is recommended that Metro Transit develop and maintain a *Transit Accessibility Map* as a means of recognizing the state of transit system accessibility at a given point in time. The map should provide a dynamic or flexible blueprint that shows existing transit accessibility conditions by location and highlights specific areas within the HRM as "high" and "moderately high" priorities for further investments in transit and pedestrian access improvements. The map should serve as a guide for municipal officials, planners and other stakeholders involved in prioritizing future capital investments on infrastructure in the HRM.

The process of creating a *Transit Accessibility Map* was initiated during project-related community meetings held in Halifax and Dartmouth during May 2011. Those who attended were asked to identify locations within the HRM that they regarded as of particular significance to residents with mobility limitations. They were asked to characterize each location as either as an accessibility "hot spot" (i.e., high priority) or "warm spot" (i.e., moderately high priority). Presumably these would become the locations in which the HRM will focus future investments in roadway and sidewalk improvements to achieve heightened accessibility conditions consistent with a strategic plan, and ultimately resulting in universal accessibility.

Participants were encouraged to suggest specific destinations and neighbourhoods to keep the zones relatively compact such that the priority designations have more significance. The group identified 12 areas of the Municipality as listed in Table 6-1 and shown in Figure 6-1. In addition to downtown Dartmouth and Halifax, most of the locations identified included major shopping malls and the Metro Transit terminal facilities situated in proximity to them. Most of the zones are of manageable size with the exception of the Central Halifax zone, which includes Downtown, QE II Health Sciences complex and extending south to Dalhousie University and St. Mary's University to include a large number of local residential streets.

As with any long-term effort, there must be an ongoing process both to monitor changes in accessibility conditions over time, and to refine priorities for carrying out accessibility improvements. It is suggested that Metro Transit engage the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) to actively participate in defining the boundaries of hot spots and warm spots.

Table 6-1: Suggested Accessibility Hot & Warm Spots[17]

Zone #	Zone Name	Primary Generators	Transit Centres Terminals / Park-Ride Lots	Zone Boundaries North	East	South	West
Hot Spots - High Priority							
1-H	Central Halifax	Downtown, QE II, Dalhousie, St. Mary's,	Scotia Square; Dalhousie	North St	Lower Water St	Inglis St	Oxford St
2-H	Mumford	Halifax Centre Mall, West End Mall, HRM Service Centre, Village at Bayers Rd	Mumford Terminal, Bayers Rd Terminal	Bayers Rd	Connaught Ave	Chebucto Rd	J. Howe Dr
3-H	Lacewood	Clayton Park Plaza; Park West Plaza	Lacewood Terminal	Radcliffe Dr	Dumbrack St	Willett St	Willett St
4-H	Central Dartmouth	Downtown shops, Dartmouth Common, Sportsplex	Alderney Bus Terminal, Dartmouth Ferry Terminal, Bridge Terminal	Victoria Rd	Prince Albert Rd	Windmill Rd	Boland Rd
5-H	Highfield	Dartmouth Community Centre; Gallery 1 Centre	Highfield Terminal	Joseph Young St	Highfield Park Dr	Victoria Rd	Highfield Park Dr
6-H	MicMac	MicMac Mall	MicMac Terminal	Circumferential Hwy	MicMac Blvd	MicMac Blvd	Woodland Ave
7-H	Penhorn	Penhorn Mall	Penhorn Terminal	Mall property line	Circumferential Hwy	Portland St	Mall property line
8-H	Woodside	Nova Scotia Community College; Dartmouth Hospital	Woodside Ferry Terminal	Marvin St	Halifax Harbour	Atlantic St	Neptune Circle
Warm Spots - Medium Priority							
1-W	Bayers Lake Business Park	Tenant business	---	Lacewood Dr	Bicentennial Hwy	Route 103	Chain Lake / Horseshoe Lake
2-W	Dartmouth Crossing	Tenant business	---	Wright Ave	Route 118	Circumferential Hwy (111)	Finlay Dr / Lamont Terr
3-W	Portland Hills	Cole Harbour Shopping Centre, Portland Hills Mall	Portland Hills Transit Centre	Cole Harbour Rd	Cumberland Dr	Hampton Gn	Caldwell Rd
4-W	Fisherman's Cove	Government Wharf Road	---	Halifax Harbour	Halifax Harbour	Halifax Harbour	Shore Rd

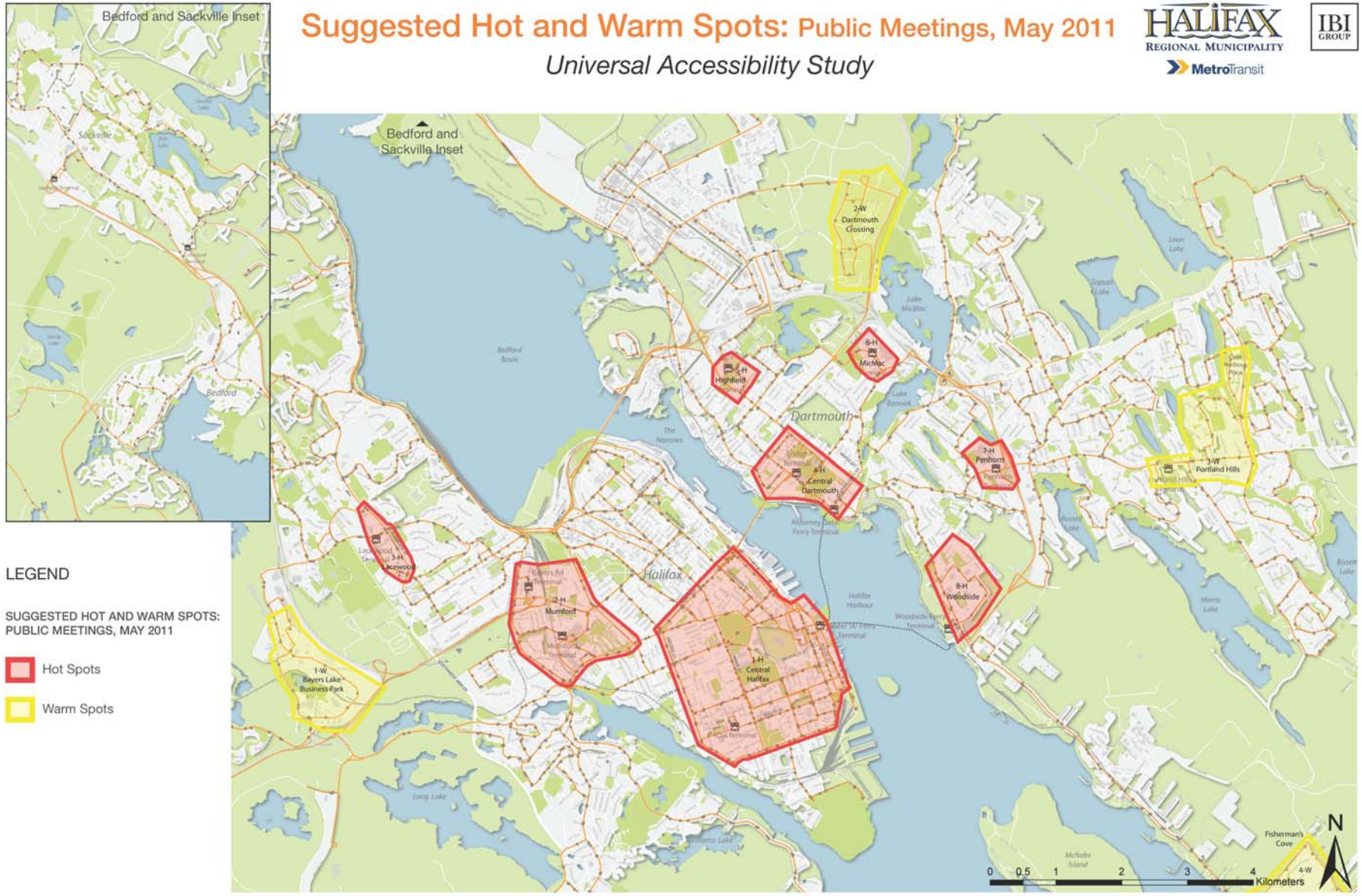
Accessibility "Hot Spots" typically are highly walkable locations where substantial pedestrian infrastructure either already is in place or will be constructed in the foreseeable future. These include central business and other major commercial districts containing regionally significant medical; academic and governmental institutions, shopping malls, and primary transit transfer hubs. Those attending the community meetings identified the immediate vicinity around the Highfield, Lacewood, MicMac and Mumford transit terminals as accessibility hot spots, as well as Nova Scotia Community College, Dartmouth General Hospital and the Woodside Ferry Terminal.

Generally hot spots also should include major and minor arterial streets running through higher density residential neighbourhoods, as well as some collector streets that have a Metro Transit bus route running on them. As a practical matter, it may not be possible initially to include most local streets within a high priority context.

Accessibility "Warm Spots" include generally walkable locations where pedestrian infrastructure is available although gaps may exist. Examples of areas within the HRM that could be designated as accessibility warm spots include neighbourhood commercial districts, medium and high density residential neighbourhoods, and in the vicinity of schools, community centers, parks and playgrounds. Those who attended the public meetings listed Bayers Lake Business Park, Dartmouth Crossing, Portland Hills Mall, Cole Harbour Shopping Centre, and Fisherman's Cove as potential "warm spots".

[17] As suggested by attendees at May 2011 Public Meeting

Figure 6-1: Suggested "Hot" and "Warm" Spots – *Developed by Attendees at Public Meetings, May 2011*



Design Guidelines and Standards - The HRM should enact and enforce design guidelines and construction standards for pedestrian facilities in designated hot spots. For example:

- Ensure priority treatment in the construction of sidewalks on both sides of the street on arterial and collector streets on which Metro Transit bus service is provided.
- Ensure priority treatment in the construction of curb cuts at intersections and maintained regularly.
- Safe pedestrian crossings should be provided at all intersections located within a one-half kilometre radius of all Metro Transit accessible bus stops, using an appropriate combination of traffic control devices, pavement markings and signage. Depending on traffic volumes and accident history, flashing yellow lights (RA-5 overhead crosswalk signs with flashing lights) may be warranted at larger intersections.

Bus Stop Spacing - New bus stop spacing guidelines are suggested to improve accessibility to all Metro Transit customers. As shown in Table 6-2, for each of five land use types[18] in the HRM a range is proposed for the average number of bus stops per route kilometre. The total number of bus stops as well as the number of accessible bus stops do not relate to levels of service and do not relate to prescribed (and Council approved) service standards.

The land use types are:

- Urban Core – downtown Halifax
- Urban District – immediate area surrounding the Core such as Dalhousie and St. Mary's and Central Dartmouth.
- Suburban Centre – examples include Mumford, Lacewood, Highfield, etc.
- Suburban – such as Dartmouth Crossing, Bayers Lake Business Park, etc.
- Rural Communities – including Tantallon, Springfield, etc.

Table 6-2: Proposed Design Guidelines -- Accessible Bus Stops per Route Kilometre

Service Area Characteristics	Total Bus Stops per Km.	Target Accessibility Threshold	Accessible Bus Stops per Km.
Urban Core	**4.0 – 5.5**	**90%**	**3.6 – 5.0**
Urban District	**3.0 – 5.0**	**75%**	**2.3 – 3.8**
Suburban Centre	**2.5 – 4.0**	**67%**	**1.7 – 2.7**
Suburban	**2.0 – 3.5**	**50%**	**1.0 – 1.8**
Rural Communities	**0.5 – 1.0**	**25%**	**0.1 – 0.3**

[18] Developed for the purposes of this Universal Accessibility Plan and differ from those presented in MT's Five Year Strategic Operations Plan.

6.4.2 CUSTOMER FOCUS

As previously noted, Metro Transit customers and other stakeholders in the success of the universal accessibility strategy should be actively engaged in an ongoing process to identify and prioritize accessibility improvements. Additionally, Metro Transit should more actively communicate to customers and potential customers about prevailing accessibility conditions around bus stops, transit centres and other facilities. In particular, ongoing improvements as they occur or are planned to occur should be communicated in a timely manner. Such information will help transit riders with a range of mobility issues to make best make use the system on a day-to-day basis.

Itinerary Planning - All Metro Transit customers should have equivalent opportunity to plan their transit trip - end-to-end (from their homes before they travel). Currently many Metro Transit customers with mobility limitations cannot plan their transit trip adequately before they travel due to a lack of information about accessibility conditions at transit facilities and bus stops. Customers need to know whether the bus stop they want to use is accessible, and whether (as determined by Metro Transit) there is safe pedestrian access to and egress from the bus stop. A web-based itinerary planning should be developed and HRM should make available open source code data and provide incentives to college students and others to develop PDA applications.

Accessible Bus Stop Guide - It is recommended that Metro Transit develop and distribute a Bus Stop Accessibility Guide to provide customers with up-to-date advisory information regarding the serviceability of all Metro Transit bus stops. The guide should be distributed primarily as a printable PDF from the Metro Transit website[19] to allow for frequent updating of details that reflect progress toward a universally accessible transit system.

Real-time schedule information - In the future, Metro Transit should move beyond the current Go Time system to the next generation of real-time schedule information based on integration of schedules data with actual vehicle location data gathered via GPS. In the interim, existing Go Time displays should be maintained and missing displays should be replaced. The visibility of information displayed should be considered when positioning Go Time displays to mitigate glare and poor contrast. Metro Transit should consult with the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) and vision impaired customers to determine sign colors and contrasts that enhance visibility and readability for most customers including those with vision impairments.

Metro Transit Website – Relatively minor improvements should be implemented in the immediate term to facilitate the use of large screen readers by persons with limited vision, and to provide a user option to change font size.

Employee Training & Public Education – Metro Transit should introduce enhanced training (including sensitivity and disability awareness) for its front-line employees who have direct contact with customers. These include not only bus operators, but also supervisors, information clerks and pass sales staff. Well trained and caring employees are a key part of an accessible transit system.

Information

a) Graphic standards that reflect prioritized categories of information. For example, directional signage is distinct from other signs (No Smoking).
b) Where information is provided over a public address system, provide equivalent information to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
c) Provide the information contained in the safety videos at the ferry terminals in an alternate format (e.g. closed captions).

[19] This does not preclude the need for Metro Transit to ensure website information is also compatible with screen reader technologies, as discussed below.

d) At inaccessible facility entrances, provide directional signage at locations that do not require individuals to back-track.

e) Use consistent signage to identify priority seating in buses. Consider providing priority seating on vessels.

f) Provide redundant lower route signs at bus stops to allow people with limited vision to approach the sign close enough to read.

g) At terminals, provide a means of identifying the location of stops for different routes from a distance.

h) Provide a public text telephone at all terminals with public pay telephones.

i) Consider providing video phones for people who use sign language.

j) Make available to the public information regarding procedures for people with disabilities in emergencies.

k) Include notification of the availability of accommodations for people with disabilities when announcing public meetings.

l) Provide route numbers on front, side and rear of buses.

6.4.3 VEHICLE ACCESSIBILITY – ADVANCING THE STATE OF THE ART

The definition of an accessible vehicle has evolved over the past 30 years and may be expected to continue to do so in coming decades. Metro Transit should keep abreast of innovations in vehicle and mobility device technologies in advance of each procurement of replacement vessels and buses.

In addition to the low-floor design, which reduces entry or exit to a single step, current state-of-the-art bus accessibility features include:

- ✓ A ramp to accommodate customers using scooters, wheelchairs, walkers or similar mobility devices deployable at the front door.
- ✓ A bus kneeling feature that lowers the front step of the bus to nearly level with the curb for customers who have difficulty climbing stairs.
- ✓ Priority seating immediately behind the bus operator.
- ✓ Two (2) wheelchair securement locations.
- ✓ Interior Features
  - o Wide interior aisle with continuous grab rails and stanchions running the length of the vehicle.
  - o Suitable lighting & colour contrast
  - o Accommodation of service animals
  - o Storage of assistive devices
- ✓ Vehicle Messaging Features

- Exterior electronic destination signs on the front and curb side, and route number on the rear of the bus.
- Exterior annunciation of route number, route name and direction of travel for waiting customers with impaired vision.
- Interior annunciation of "Next Stop" and "Transfer To" messages for alighting passengers with impaired vision.
- Interior demand-actuated sign indicating "Bus Stop Requested" for alighting passengers with impaired hearing.

6.4.4 BUS REPLACEMENT PLANNING

Effective 1999, HRM purchased only accessible low-floor (ALF) buses for the Metro Transit fleet. Now 12 years later, Metro Transit is entering the late stages of achieving full accessibility of its bus fleet. As Metro Transit continues to replace the aging high-floor buses that remain in the active fleet, the percentage of ALF buses will increase and is expected to reach 100% before the close of the decade. The following paragraphs summarize the current status of the conventional bus fleet relative to achieving 100% accessibility over the next ten years.

Standard-Heavy Duty (12.5m /40ft) Buses – The fleet includes 218 standard heavy-duty buses used to provide conventional transit service, including 159 accessible low-floor (ALF) buses purchased between 1999 and 2009, 14 low floor (but not ALF) buses purchased between 1999 and 2000 and 45 non-accessible high-floor buses purchased between 1987 and 1996. All of the non-accessible buses are due for replacement subject to funding availability.

Articulated (19.2m / 60ft) Buses – The fleet includes 34 articulated buses, of which 27 are relatively new ALF vehicles acquired since 2009. The remaining seven were acquired in 1992-93 and are approaching 20 years old. These buses are due for near term replacement subject to funding availability.

Metro X – The fleet includes 10 buses purchased in 2009 to provide commuter service primarily from park and ride lots located along 100-series highways in the HRM. These buses are high-floor vehicles equipped with a wheelchair lift located at the rear of the curb side of the bus. One wheelchair can be accommodated.

Metro Link – The fleet includes 20 buses purchased in 2005 to provide limited-stop commuter service on Routes 159, 165 and 185. These buses are 40' low-floor buses with high-backed upholstered seats, arm and foot rests, and a unique name and paint scheme intended to distinguish them for buses used in regular route service.

Community Transit - This fleet consists of three 30 ft New Flyer buses purchased in 1999. Vehicles are low floor but not accessible.

6.4.5 TRANSIT CENTRES, TERMINALS AND PARK & RIDE LOTS

The Metro Transit bus system interconnects 14 transit centres or hubs and terminals where multiple bus routes either pass through or terminate, and where customer transfers may occur. As shown in Table 6-3, the locations with the most daily passenger boarding and alightings include the Bridge Terminal, Scotia Square and Mumford Terminal. Public frustration with the pace of the Bridge Terminal replacement project was noted during community meetings for the Universal Accessibility project.

Table 6-3: Passenger Activity at Bus Transit Centres/Hubs and Terminals

Weekday Fall 2010					
Terminal	**On**	**Off**	**Total**	**Passing Through**	**Grand Total**
Scotia Square	6,480	5,778	12,258	11,248	23,506
Water Street	531	175	706	0	706
Mumford	5,188	4,971	10,159	4,193	14,352
Lacewood	2,255	2,242	4,497	2,088	6,585
Alderney	1,486	1,033	2,519	6,030	8,549
Mic Mac Mall	1,439	1,404	2,843	2,689	5,532
Tacoma Centre	380	274	654	2,018	2,672
Penhorn	1,087	1,146	2,233	4,053	6,286
Portland Hills	1,335	1,354	2,689	1,653	4,342
Highfield	827	760	1,587	2,713	4,300
Woodside Ferry	138	136	274	895	1,169
Sackville	1,152	1,116	2,268	0	2,268
Cobequid	1,115	1,241	2,356	1,467	3,823
Bridge	9,411	9,238	18,649	4,579	23,228
Grand Total	**32,824**	**30,868**	**63,692**	**43,626**	**107,318**

Facilities

Recommended improvements to Metro Transit facilities include:

a) To the maximum extent feasible, locate terminals and bus stops on level sites.

b) To the maximum extent feasible, separate pedestrian paths of travel from vehicular ways.

c) At inaccessible entrances, provide directional signage at a location that does not require back tracking.

d) Entrances should be identifiable from a distance. Preferable to use multiple cues; e.g. signage, architectural elements, colour.

e) When all entrances are not accessible, the accessible entrance should be clearly identified using the International Symbol of Accessibility. Directional signage should be provided at inaccessible entrances indicating the location of the accessible entrance.

f) Where automatic doors are used, mount switches in a manner that highlights their location.

g) Provide areas adjacent (but out of the path of travel) to the entrance and exit that can permit people with a wide range of preferences and abilities to pause, rest, wait for others or simply congregate.

h) Provide protection from inclement weather as well as intense light and heat changes at the entrance and exit to allow the person's senses to adjust to the contrasting indoor and outdoor conditions.

i) Where Park & Rides serve a terminal with accessible bus service, accessible parking, including an accessible route to the terminal, should be provided.

j) Major access routes should not exceed a 5% slope. Limit running slope of curb ramps to 1:12 maximum and provide detectable warnings where curb ramp slope

k) As an alternative to shorter direct routes with steep grades, indirect access routes that are relatively level (i.e., less than a 5% slope) should be available to users who are easily fatigued.

l) Stairs treads and other transitions should be clearly marked with differences in colour, texture or material to alert users.

m) Eliminate obstructions and hazards that intrude into the path of travel (e.g., drainage grates, signs, overhanging trees, manholes, light fixtures or benches).

n) Consider using detectable warnings at curb ramps with slopes less than 1:15

o) Provide some seats with backs and arms to assist individuals who have difficulty lowering into and rising out of seats.

p) Insure that stair treads do not have protruding nosings.

q) Provide level handrail extensions at the top and bottom of each run. Handrail extensions should be turned down or returned to the wall for safety.

r) Provide at least one full accessible toilet room (male and female or unisex) in each facility where public toilet rooms are provided.

6.4.6 BUS STOPS

a) Coordinate with HRM Municipal Operations to provide accessible paths of travel (ensuring no grade changes or obstacles) to bus stops (including developing minimum curb ramp and cross walk design.)

b) On designated accessible routes, provide an accessible path of travel between bus stops on both inbound and out-bound side to permit passengers to return to the location where their trip commenced.

c) Where possible, design the sidewalk adjacent to the bus stop platform to be wide enough for two wheelchair users to pass each other traveling in opposite directions when two-way traffic is frequent.

d) Where possible, an area the length of the bus for transit purposes provides a comfortable waiting, alighting and boarding area for both front and rear doors and denotes the transit agency's presence.

e) Place street furniture such as benches, newspaper vending boxes, and planters to create barriers from hazards. Highlight the existence of hazards by distinctive markings, signs and higher light levels where inadvertent exposure to hazards cannot be blocked.

f) Consider strategies to make curbside stops spatially and visually distinct from the pedestrian walkway.

g) Maintain an accessible path of travel around the shelter and between the shelter and other street furniture.

h) Locate the shelter as close as possible to the end of the bus stop zone.

i) Where possible, minimum shelter dimensions that are 2.7 m (9 feet) long and 1.5 m (5 feet) wide.

j) Design shelters with transparent sides for visibility and security, and mark glass panels with distinctive pattern such as horizontal contrasting strips or circles, to indicate the presence of the panels

k) Include transit route maps, schedules, and seating in shelters. Maps and schedules should be easily readable by persons using wheelchairs and, to the greatest extent possible, persons with visual impairments

l) If possible, provide wheelchair locations with equal protection from weather. Provide seating or surfaces to lean against if seating is not provided.

m) Maintain shelter openings to be a minimum of 914 millimeters (36 inches) clear.

n) Consider heated shelters at high ridership locations.

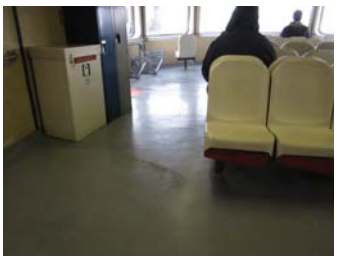
o) To prevent restricted sight lines from the interior of a bus shelter, advertising panels should be placed downstream of the traffic flow.

p) The following lighting enhancements are recommended to provide a safe waiting environment:

- Install lighting that provides between 2 to 5 footcandles.
- Illuminate bus patron's faces. Multiple sources of light are more resistant to vandalism and provide illumination that casts fewer intimidating shadows. Lighting that is too bright in bus shelters can also compromise personal safety, creating a fish bowl effect whereby the transit user can easily be seen by others but cannot see outside.[20]

6.4.7 VESSELS

a) Provide an accessible path of travel to at lease one window location. Provide amble space to accommodate a wheelchair at this window location.



[20] Vogel, Mary and Pettinari, James L., *Personal Safety and Transit: Paths, Environments, Stops, and Stations* Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota 2002.

b) Information provided on the vessel signs should be available to people who are blind or have low vision (a significant reduction of visual function that cannot be fully corrected by ordinary glasses, contact lenses, medical treatment and/or surgery. People with severe low vision may be classified as partially sighted and/or legally blind).

6.5 Summary and Recommended Timeframe

The following presents a summary of the salient universal design/accessibility detailed in the previous sections. Included is a recommended timeframe reflecting the following:

1. Improvements Already Implemented (already implemented or in the process of being implemented)
2. Immediate (Could be implemented immediately)
3. Short Term (could be implemented within approximately one year)
4. Medium Term (could be implemented over a one to five year timeframe)
5. Long Term (beyond a five year time frame)

Further, the summary also includes a commentary on potential financial impacts and range from minimal (use of existing staff resources) to significant capital requirements.

Universal Design Element	Goal / Requirement	Timeframe	Potential Financial Impact
HRM *Municipal Design Guidelines*	Reference Section 5.4	Immediate	None – use of existing staff resources
Information & Communication			
Instructional Videos	Provide means for equal access to communication. For example, subtitles	Medium Term	Minimal – typically programming requirement
Public Address	Provide means for equal access to communication. For example, visual messages	Medium Term	Minimal – typically programming requirement
Bus Stop	Provide larger route information in addition to existing signs	Medium Term	<$100/sign + cost of installation
Route Schedules	Use low glare covers	Medium Term	<$100/sign + cost of installation
Telephones	Provide text and/or video phones	Medium Term	Approx. $300./each + cost of installation
Emergency Communication	Provide light that signals when call is answered (Woodside elevator)	Medium Term	Minimal
Tactile/Braille Signage	Use tactile/Braille signs to identify permanent spaces (e.g. toilet rooms). Such signs should be located on the wall adjacent to the latch side of the door	Medium Term	<$100/sign + cost of installation
Signage	Develop and implement a graphic standard	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources
Accessible Bus Stop Guide	Advise customers on serviceability of all bus stops	Currently Underway	None – use of existing staff resources
Real-time schedule information	Integration of schedule data with actual vehicle location data (via GPS) Maintain Go Time System in the interim	Medium Term	Potential for significant capital cost (GPS equipped vehicles & back office infrastructure) See *Note* below
Web Design	Reference Section 5.2	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources
Print Material	Reference Section 5.3	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources Cost of print/production

Universal Design Element	Goal / Requirement	Timeframe	Potential Financial Impact
Bus Terminals			
Access from surrounding neighbourhood and/or dedicated parking areas	Provide paths of travel that are stable, firm and slip resistant. Running slope should be less than 5% (or treated as a ramp), cross-slopes less than 2% and running slopes of curb ramps less than 8.33% (1:12). Flared sides of curb ramps should be less than 10% (1:10)	renovations & new construction	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Access from parking	Provide accessible parking spaces and paths of travel to bus stops at all Park & Rides.	Medium Term	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Toilet rooms	Establish and implement accessible design standards	Medium Term	Renovations/retrofit. $5,000 to $8,000 per toilet room
Bus Stops			
Bus stop inventory	Currently underway Incorporate data in trip planning functionality	Currently Underway	Minimal – typically programming requirement
Minimum 1.5m (5') wide pad	To maximum extent feasible	renovations & new construction	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Level pads	To maximum extent feasible provide bus pads that are level (no slope greater than 2%)	renovations & new construction	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Bus stop spacing	Implement design guidelines (per Table 6-2)	Medium Term	Minimal – staff time & production costs
Bus Shelters			
Accessible path of travel into bus shelter	Provide accessible path of travel into all bus shelters on accessible routes	Medium Term	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Visibility	Develop and implement a standard graphic treatment for shelters that maintain visibility while providing some contrast for people with low vision.	Medium Term	None – use of existing staff resources
Wheelchair locations	To the maximum extent feasible provide bus shelters large enough so that a person who uses a wheeled mobility device is afforded protection from inclement weather	Medium Term	Develop standard (use of existing staff resources) Bus shelter: $5,000 to $10,000/each
Parking			
Access aisles	Provide designated accessible parking spaces that comply with guidelines similar to the Provincial building code or ADA Accessibility Guidelines	Medium Term	Minimal
Accessible path of travel (to an accessible entrance)	Provide a minimum 1 meter (3') wide accessible path of travel to terminal or facility entrance	Medium Term	Minimal

Universal Design Element	Goal / Requirement	Timeframe	Potential Cost Impact
Ferry Terminals			
Accessible entrance identified	Provide consistent identification of accessible entrances. This can be accomplished via graphics, colour and architectural elements	Medium Term	Minimal
Accessible path of travel	Provide a minimum 1 meter (3') wide accessible path of travel between drop-off, accessible parking and facility entrance	Medium Term	TBD: site specific cost considerations
Accessible toilet rooms	Provide designated accessible toilet rooms that comply with guidelines (similar to bldg. code)	Medium Term	Renovations/retrofit. $5,000 to $8,000 per toilet room
Buses			
Audible announcements	Interior & exterior audible announcements (no retrofitting of buses)	Medium Term (and new procurement)	See *Note* below
Bus route identifiers	Route numbers on front, side and rear of buses (retrofit on any vehicle expected to be in fleet for next five years)	Medium Term	Approx. $1,500/bus

Note: HRM/Metro Transit will be undertaking a comprehensive review of transit technology [Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications] in 2013. The transit technology review will identify further specifics including functional requirements and detailed costing for pertinent ITS applications.

Appendix A: AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards

Appendix B: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Vehicle Standards

Appendix C: Presentation Material

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ONTARIO REGULATION 191/11

made under the

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005

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INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

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PART I
GENERAL

Purpose and application

1. (1) This Regulation establishes the accessibility standards for each of information and communications, employment and transportation.

(2) The requirements in the standards set out in this Regulation are not a replacement or a substitution for the requirements established under the *Human Rights Code* nor do the standards limit any obligations owed to persons with disabilities under any other legislation.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this Regulation, this Regulation applies to the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, every designated public sector organization and to every other person or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario.

Definitions

2. In this Regulation,

"accessible formats" may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities; ("format accessible")

"communication supports" may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications; ("aides à la communication")

"designated public sector organization" means every municipality and every person or organization listed in Column 1 of Table 1 of Ontario Regulation 146/10 (Public Bodies and Commission Public Bodies — Definitions) made under the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006* or described in Schedule 1 to this Regulation; ("organisation désignée du secteur public")

"Government of Ontario" includes the executive of the government and operational branches, including every ministry of the Government of Ontario and the Office of the Premier; ("gouvernement de l'Ontario")

"large designated public sector organization" means a designated public sector organization with 50 or more employees; ("grande organisation désignée du secteur public")

"large organization" means an obligated organization with 50 or more employees in Ontario, other than the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly or a designated public sector organization; ("grande organisation")

"Legislative Assembly" includes the Office of the Assembly, the offices of members of the Assembly, including their constituency offices and the offices of persons appointed on the address of the Assembly; ("Assemblée législative")

"obligated organization" means the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, a designated public sector organization, a large organization and a small organization to which the standards in this Regulation apply; ("organisation assujettie")

"small designated public sector organization" means a designated public sector organization with at least one but fewer than 50 employees; ("petite organisation désignée du secteur public")

"small organization" means an obligated organization with at least one but fewer than 50 employees in Ontario, other than the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly or a designated public sector organization. ("petite organisation")

Establishment of accessibility policies

3. (1) Every obligated organization shall develop, implement and maintain policies governing how the organization achieves or will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements referred to in this Regulation.

(2) Obligated organizations, other than small organizations, shall include a statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner in their policies.

(3) The Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, every designated public sector organization and large organizations shall,

(a) prepare one or more written documents describing its policies; and

(b) make the documents publicly available, and shall provide them in an accessible format upon request.

(4) Obligated organizations shall meet the requirements of this section according to the following schedule:

1. For the Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, January 1, 2012.

2. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2013.

3. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2014.

4. For large organizations, January 1, 2014.

5. For small organizations, January 1, 2015.

Accessibility plans

4. (1) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations and large organizations shall,

(a) establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation;

(b) post the accessibility plan on their website, if any, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and

(c) review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

(2) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall establish, review and update their accessibility plans in consultation with persons with disabilities and if they have established an accessibility advisory committee, they shall consult with the committee.

(3) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall,

(a) prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy referenced in clause (1) (a); and

(b) post the status report on their website, if any, and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

(4) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations and large organizations shall meet the requirements of this section according to the following schedule:

1. For the Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, January 1, 2012.

2. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2013.

3. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2014.

4. For large organizations, January 1, 2014.

Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities

5. (1) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.

(2) If the Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly or a designated public sector organization determines that it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, it shall provide, upon request, an explanation.

(3) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, January 1, 2012.

2. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2013.

3. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2014.

Self-service kiosks

6. (1) Without limiting the generality of section 5, the Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

(2) Large organizations and small organizations shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

(3) The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the schedule set out in subsection 5 (3).

(4) Large organizations shall meet the requirements under subsection (2) as of January 1, 2014 and small organizations shall meet the requirements as of January 1, 2015.

(5) In this section,

"kiosk" means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Training

7. (1) Every obligated organization shall ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in this Regulation and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities to,

(a) all employees, and volunteers;

(b) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and

(c) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization.

(2) The training on the requirements of the accessibility standards and on the *Human Rights Code* referred to in subsection (1) shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons.

(3) Every person referred to in subsection (1) shall be trained as soon as practicable.

(4) Every obligated organization shall provide training in respect of any changes to the policies described in section 3 on an ongoing basis.

(5) The Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, every designated public sector organization and every large organization shall keep a record of the training provided under this section, including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

(6) Obligated organizations shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, January 1, 2013.
2. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2014.
3. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2015.
4. For large organizations, January 1, 2015.
5. For small organizations, January 1, 2016.

Exemption from filing accessibility reports

8. (1) Small organizations are exempted from the requirement to file accessibility reports under section 14 of the Act with respect to the accessibility standards in this Regulation.

(2) The following are the reasons for the exemption:

1. It is consistent with a phased approach to implementing the Act.
2. It allows the exempted obligated organizations to focus their efforts and resources on complying with the accessibility standards.

PART II

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

Definitions and exceptions

9. (1) In this Part,

"communications" means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received; ("communications")

"conversion ready" means an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format; ("prêt à être converti")

"information" includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning. ("information")

(2) The information and communications standards do not apply to the following:

1. Products and product labels, except as specifically provided by this Part.

2. Unconvertible information or communications.

3. Information that the obligated organization does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship, except as required under sections 15 and 18.

(3) If an obligated organization determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with,

(a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and

(b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

(4) For the purposes of this Part, information or communications are unconvertible if,

(a) it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications; or

(b) the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

Application

10. Sections 9, 11, 12 and 13 apply to all obligated organizations.

Feedback

11. (1) Every obligated organization that has processes for receiving and responding to feedback shall ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

(2) Nothing in this section detracts from the obligations imposed under section 7 of Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service) made under the Act.

(3) Every obligated organization shall notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

(4) Obligated organizations shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, January 1, 2013.

2. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2014.

3. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2015.

4. For large organizations, January 1, 2015.

5. For small organizations, January 1, 2016.

Accessible formats and communication supports

12. (1) Except as otherwise provided, every obligated organization shall upon request provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities,

(a) in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and

(b) at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

(2) The obligated organization shall consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

(3) Every obligated organization shall notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

(4) Every obligated organization that is required to provide accessible formats or accessible formats and communication supports by section 3, 4, 11, 13, 19, 26, 28, 34, 37, 44 or 64 shall meet the requirements of subsections (1) and (2) but shall do so in accordance with the schedule set out in the referenced section and shall do so only to the extent that the requirements in subsections (1) and (2) are applicable to the requirements set out in the referenced section.

(5) Obligated organizations shall meet the requirements under this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, January 1, 2014.

2. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2015.

3. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2016.

4. For large organizations, January 1, 2016.

5. For small organizations, January 1, 2017.

Emergency procedure, plans or public safety information

13. (1) In addition to its obligations under section 12, if an obligated organization prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes the information available to the public, the obligated organization shall provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

(2) Obligated organizations that prepare emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and make the information available to the public shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

Accessible websites and web content

14. (1) The Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly shall make their internet and intranet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA, and shall do so in accordance with the schedule set out in this section.

(2) Designated public sector organizations and large organizations shall make their internet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content

Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA, and shall do so in accordance with the schedule set out in this section.

(3) The Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, for both their internet and intranet sites, shall meet the requirements in this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. By January 1, 2012, new internet and intranet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than,

   i. success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live), and

   ii. success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded).

2. By January 1, 2016, all internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than,

   i. success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live), and

   ii. success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded).

3. By January 1, 2020, all internet and intranet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

(4) Designated public sector organizations and large organizations for their internet websites shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. By January 1, 2014, new internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A.

2. By January 1, 2021, all internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than,

   i. success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live), and

   ii. success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded).

(5) Except where meeting the requirement is not practicable, this section applies,

(a) to websites and web content, including web-based applications, that an organization controls directly or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product; and

(b) to web content published on a website after January 1, 2012.

(6) In determining whether meeting the requirements of this section is not practicable, organizations referenced in subsections (1) and (2) may consider, among other things,

(a) the availability of commercial software or tools or both; and

(b) significant impact on an implementation timeline that is planned or initiated before January 1, 2012.

(7) In this section,

"extranet website" means a controlled extension of the intranet, or internal network of an organization to outside users over the Internet; ("site Web extranet")

"internet website" means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is

accessible to the public; ("site Web Internet")

"intranet website" means an organization's internal website that is used to privately and securely share any part of the organization's information or operational systems within the organization and includes extranet websites; ("site Web intranet")

"new internet website" means either a website with a new domain name or a website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh; ("nouveau site Web Internet")

"new intranet website" means either an intranet website with a new domain name or an intranet website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh; ("nouveau site Web intranet")

"Web Content Accessibility Guidelines" means the World Wide Web Consortium Recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0"; ("Règles pour l'accessibilité des contenus Web'')

"web page" means a non-embedded resource obtained from a single Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) using Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and any other resources that are used in the rendering or intended to be rendered together with it by a user agent. ("page Web")

Educational and training resources and materials, etc.

15. (1) Every obligated organization that is an educational or training institution shall do the following, if notification of need is given:

1. Provide educational or training resources or materials in an accessible format that takes into account the accessibility needs due to a disability of the person with a disability to whom the material is to be provided by,

   i. procuring through purchase or obtaining by other means an accessible or conversion ready electronic format of educational or training resources or materials, where available, or

   ii. arranging for the provision of a comparable resource in an accessible or conversion ready electronic format, if educational or training resources or materials cannot be procured, obtained by other means or converted into an accessible format.

2. Provide student records and information on program requirements, availability and descriptions in an accessible format to persons with disabilities.

(2) For the purposes of this section and sections 16, 17 and 18, an obligated organization is an educational or training institution if it falls into one of the following categories:

1. It is governed by the *Education Act* or the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005*.

2. It offers all or part of a post-secondary program leading to a degree pursuant to a consent granted under the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000*.

3. It is a designated public sector organization described in paragraph 3 or 4 of Schedule 1.

4. It is a public or private organization that provides courses or programs or both that result in the acquisition by students of a diploma or certificate named by the Minister

of Education under paragraph 1 of subsection 8 (1) of the *Education Act*.

5. It is a private school within the meaning of the *Education Act*.

(3) Obligated organizations to which this section applies shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2013.

2. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2015.

3. For large organizations, January 1, 2013.

4. For small organizations, January 1, 2015.

Training to educators

16. (1) In addition to the requirements under section 7, obligated organizations that are school boards or educational or training institutions shall provide educators with accessibility awareness training related to accessible program or course delivery and instruction.

(2) Obligated organizations that are school boards or educational or training institutions shall keep a record of the training provided under this section, including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

(3) Obligated organizations to which this section applies shall meet the requirements in this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2013.

2. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2015.

3. For large organizations, January 1, 2013.

4. For small organizations, January 1, 2015.

(4) In this section,

"educators" means employees who are involved in program or course design, delivery and instruction, including staff of school boards; ("éducateurs")

"school board" means a board as defined in subsection 1 (1) of the *Education Act*. ("conseil scolaire")

Producers of educational or training material

17. (1) Every obligated organization that is a producer of educational or training textbooks for educational or training institutions shall upon request make accessible or conversion ready versions of the textbooks available to the institutions.

(2) Every obligated organization that is a producer of print-based educational or training supplementary learning resources for educational or training institutions shall upon request make accessible or conversion ready versions of the printed materials available to the institutions.

(3) Obligated organizations to which this section applies shall meet the requirements of this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. In respect of accessible or conversion ready versions of textbooks, January 1, 2015.

2. In respect of accessible or conversion ready versions of printed materials that are

educational or training supplementary learning resources, January 1, 2020.

Libraries of educational and training institutions

18. (1) Subject to subsection (2) and where available, the libraries of educational or training institutions that are obligated organizations shall provide, procure or acquire by other means an accessible or conversion ready format of print, digital or multimedia resources or materials for a person with a disability, upon request.

(2) Special collections, archival materials, rare books and donations are exempt from the requirements of subsection (1).

(3) Obligated organizations to which this section applies shall meet the requirements under this section in accordance with the following schedule:

1. In respect of print-based resources or materials, January 1, 2015.

2. In respect of digital or multimedia resources or materials, January 1, 2020.

Public libraries

19. (1) Every obligated organization that is a library board shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist.

(2) Obligated organizations that are library boards shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide the information in accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

(3) Obligated organizations that are library boards may provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections, rare books and donations.

(4) Obligated organizations that are library boards shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

(5) For the purposes of this section,

"library board" means a board as defined in the *Public Libraries Act*, a public library service established under the *Northern Services Boards Act* or a county library established under the *County of Lambton Act, 1994*, being chapter Pr31 of the Statutes of Ontario, 1994, the *County of Elgin Act, 1985*, being chapter Pr16 of the Statutes of Ontario, 1985, or *The County of Lennox and Addington Act, 1978*, being chapter 126 of the Statutes of Ontario, 1978.

PART III
EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Scope and interpretation

20. (1) The standards set out in this Part apply to obligated organizations that are employers and,

(a) apply in respect of employees; and

(b) do not apply in respect of volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

(2) In this Part, a reference to an employer is a reference to an obligated organization as an employer unless the context determines otherwise.

Schedule

21. Unless otherwise specified in a section, obligated organizations, as employers, shall

meet the requirements set out in this Part in accordance with the following schedule:

1. For the Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly, January 1, 2013.

2. For large designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2014.

3. For small designated public sector organizations, January 1, 2015.

4. For large organizations, January 1, 2016.

5. For small organizations, January 1, 2017.

Recruitment, general

22. Every employer shall notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.

Recruitment, assessment or selection process

23. (1) During a recruitment process, an employer shall notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process, that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

(2) If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the employer shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

Notice to successful applicants

24. Every employer shall, when making offers of employment, notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Informing employees of supports

25. (1) Every employer shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

(2) Employers shall provide the information required under this section to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.

(3) Employers shall provide updated information to its employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Accessible formats and communication supports for employees

26. (1) In addition to its obligations under section 12, where an employee with a disability so requests it, every employer shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for,

(a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and

(b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

(2) The employer shall consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Workplace emergency response information

27. (1) Every employer shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the

employee's disability.

(2) If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance and with the employee's consent, the employer shall provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the employer to provide assistance to the employee.

(3) Employers shall provide the information required under this section as soon as practicable after the employer becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

(4) Every employer shall review the individualized workplace emergency response information,

(a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;

(b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and

(c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

(5) Every employer shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

Documented individual accommodation plans

28. (1) Employers, other than employers that are small organizations, shall develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

(2) The process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans shall include the following elements:

1. The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
2. The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
3. The manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist the employer in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how accommodation can be achieved.
4. The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan.
5. The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
6. The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
7. If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee.
8. The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

(3) Individual accommodation plans shall,

(a) if requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and

communications supports provided, as described in section 26;

(b) if required, include individualized workplace emergency response information, as described in section 27; and

(c) identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Return to work process

29. (1) Every employer, other than an employer that is a small organization,

(a) shall develop and have in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work; and

(b) shall document the process.

(2) The return to work process shall,

(a) outline the steps the employer will take to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work; and

(b) use documented individual accommodation plans, as described in section 28, as part of the process.

(3) The return to work process referenced in this section does not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute.

Performance management

30. (1) An employer that uses performance management in respect of its employees shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities.

(2) In this section,

"performance management" means activities related to assessing and improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness, with the goal of facilitating employee success.

Career development and advancement

31. (1) An employer that provides career development and advancement to its employees shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities.

(2) In this section,

"career development and advancement" includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee's current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another in an organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level in the organization or any combination of them and, for both additional responsibilities and employee movement, is usually based on merit or seniority, or a combination of them.

Redeployment

32. (1) An employer that uses redeployment shall take into account the accessibility

needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.

(2) In this section,

"redeployment" means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated by the organization.

PART IV
TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

DEFINITIONS

Definitions

33. In this Part,

"bus" means a motor vehicle designed for carrying 10 or more passengers and used for the transportation of persons; ("autobus")

"commuter rail" means a class of rail-based transportation, which is multi-unit, used for public passenger transportation purposes, operated between an urban area and its suburbs and is provided on designated lines between stations; ("train de banlieue")

"conventional transportation service provider" means a designated public sector transportation organization described in paragraph 5 of Schedule 1 that provides conventional transportation services that operate solely within the Province of Ontario; ("fournisseur de services de transport classique")

"conventional transportation services" means public passenger transportation services on transit buses, motor coaches or rail-based transportation that operate solely within the Province of Ontario and that are provided by a designated public sector transportation organization described in paragraph 5 of Schedule 1, but does not include specialized transportation services; ("services de transport classique")

"inter-city rail" means a class of rail-based transportation, which is multi-unit, used for public passenger transportation purposes and is intended for express service covering long distances with routes connecting two or more distinct or major locations; ("train interurbain")

"light rail" means a class of rail-based transportation, which is multi-unit, used for public passenger transportation purposes, provided on designated lines between stations and is intended for light loads and fast movement; ("train léger sur rail")

"mobility aid" means a device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture, of a person with a disability; ("aide à la mobilité")

"mobility assistive device" means a cane, walker or similar aid; ("appareil ou accessoire fonctionnel de mobilité")

"motor coach" means a class of bus of monocoque design, designed to provide intercity, suburban or commuter passenger transportation service and equipped with baggage storage that is separate from the passenger cabin; ("autocar")

"rail-based transportation" means any single or multi-unit passenger transportation vehicle

operating exclusively on rail by a public transportation organization described in paragraph 5 of Schedule 1, and includes streetcars, light rail vehicles, subways, commuter rail and inter-city rail; ("moyen de transport ferroviaire")

"specialized transportation service provider" means a designated public sector transportation organization described in paragraph 5 of Schedule 1 that provides specialized transportation services that operate solely within the Province of Ontario; ("fournisseur de services de transport adapté")

"specialized transportation services" means public passenger transportation services that,

(a) operate solely within the Province of Ontario,

(b) are provided by a designated public sector transportation organization as described in paragraph 5 of Schedule 1, and

(c) are designed to transport persons with disabilities; ("services de transport adapté")

"streetcar" means a class of rail-based transportation designed to operate on a highway, as defined in the *Highway Traffic Act*; ("tramway")

"subway" means a class of rail-based transportation, which is multi-unit, designed to operate on a grade separated from highways, as defined in the *Highway Traffic Act*, and provides service on designated lines between stations; ("métro")

"support person" means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies the person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities; ("personne de soutien")

"taxicab" means a motor vehicle as defined in the *Highway Traffic Act*, other than a car pool vehicle, having a seating capacity of not more than six persons, exclusive of the driver, hired for one specific trip for the transportation exclusively of one person or group of persons, one fare or charge only being collected or made for the trip and that is licensed as a taxicab by a municipality; ("taxi")

"transit bus" means a class of bus which, while operated on a highway, as defined in the *Highway Traffic Act*, is designed and intended to be used for passenger transportation. ("autobus urbain")

CONVENTIONAL AND SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS, GENERAL

Availability of information on accessibility equipment, etc.

34. (1) All conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall make available to the public current information on accessibility equipment and features of their vehicles, routes and services.

(2) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall, upon request, provide the information described in subsection (1) in an accessible format.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

Non-functioning accessibility equipment

35. (1) If the accessibility equipment on a vehicle is not functioning and equivalent service cannot be provided, conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall take reasonable steps to accommodate persons with disabilities who would otherwise use the equipment and the transportation service provider shall repair the equipment as soon as is practicable.

(2) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by July 1, 2011.

Accessibility training

36. (1) In addition to the training requirements set out in section 7, conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall conduct employee and volunteer accessibility training.

(2) The accessibility training shall include training on,

(a) the safe use of accessibility equipment and features;

(b) acceptable modifications to procedures in situations where temporary barriers exist or accessibility equipment on a vehicle fails; and

(c) emergency preparedness and response procedures that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall keep a record of the training provided under this section, including the dates on which the training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided.

(4) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2014.

Emergency preparedness and response policies

37. (1) In addition to any obligations that a conventional transportation service provider or a specialized transportation service provider has under section 13, conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers,

(a) shall establish, implement, maintain and document emergency preparedness and response policies that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities; and

(b) shall make those policies available to the public.

(2) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall, upon request, provide the policies described in subsection (1) in an accessible format.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

Fares, support persons

38. (1) No conventional transportation service provider and no specialized transportation service provider shall charge a fare to a support person who is accompanying a person with a disability where the person with a disability has a need for a support person.

(2) It is the responsibility of a person with a disability to demonstrate to a transportation service provider described in subsection (1) their need for a support person to accompany them on the conventional or specialized transportation service and to ensure that the appropriate

designation for a support person is in place.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2014.

Transition, existing contracts

39. Where a conventional transportation service provider has, on June 30, 2011, existing contractual obligations to purchase vehicles that do not meet the requirements of sections 53 to 62, the transportation service provider may honour the existing contract.

Transition, existing vehicles

40. (1) Conventional transportation service providers are not required to retrofit vehicles that are within their fleet as of July 1, 2011 in order to ensure that the vehicles meet the accessibility requirements of sections 53 to 62.

(2) If a conventional transportation service provider modifies a portion of a vehicle to which subsection (1) applies in a way that affects or could affect accessibility on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure that the modified portion meets the requirements of sections 53 to 62.

(3) Where subsection (2) applies and the modification is with respect to matters referred to in section 53, 55, 57 or 61 or subsection 62 (2), the conventional transportation service provider does not have to meet the requirements of those provisions if the modifications would impair the structural integrity of the vehicle or the mobility aid accessible rail car.

CONVENTIONAL AND SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS, ACCESSIBILITY PLANS

Accessibility plans, conventional transportation services

41. (1) In addition to the accessibility plan requirements set out in section 4, in their accessibility plan, conventional transportation service providers shall identify the process for managing, evaluating and taking action on customer feedback.

(2) Every conventional transportation service provider shall annually hold at least one public meeting involving persons with disabilities to ensure that they have an opportunity to participate in a review of the accessibility plan and that they are given the opportunity to provide feedback on the accessibility plan.

(3) If the provider of conventional transportation services also provides specialized transportation services, the transportation service provider shall address both types of transportation services in its accessibility plan.

(4) Transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

Accessibility plans, specialized transportation services

42. (1) Specialized transportation service providers shall, in their accessibility plans,

(a) identify the process for estimating the demand for specialized transportation services; and

(b) develop steps to reduce wait times for specialized transportation services.

(2) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

Accessibility plans, conventional and specialized transportation services

43. (1) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall, in their accessibility plans, describe their procedures for dealing with accessibility equipment failures on their respective types of vehicles.

(2) Transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

CONVENTIONAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS, GENERAL

General responsibilities

44. (1) Conventional transportation service providers shall,

(a) deploy lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates upon the request of a person with a disability;

(b) ensure that adequate time is provided to persons with disabilities to safely board, be secured and deboard transportation vehicles and that assistance be provided, upon request, for these activities;

(c) assist with safe and careful storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices used by persons with disabilities; and

(d) allow a person with a disability to travel with a medical aid.

(2) Conventional transportation service providers shall, upon request, make information on the matters referred to in subsection (1) available in an accessible format.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers shall comply with the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

(4) In this section,

"medical aid" means an assistive device, including respirators and portable oxygen supplies.

Alternative accessible method of transportation

45. (1) Except where not practicable to do so, a conventional transportation service provider that does not provide specialized transportation services shall ensure that any person with a disability who, because of his or her disability, is unable to use conventional transportation services is provided with an alternative accessible method of transportation.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply where specialized transportation services are provided by a specialized transportation service provider in the same jurisdiction where the conventional transportation service provider provides transportation services.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers shall comply with the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

Fares

46. (1) No conventional transportation service provider shall charge a higher fare to a person with a disability than the fare that is charged to a person without a disability where the person with a disability uses conventional transportation services, but a conventional transportation service provider may charge a lesser fare for a person with a disability.

(2) Conventional transportation service providers that do not provide specialized transportation services shall make available alternative fare payment options to persons with

disabilities who cannot, because of their disability, use a fare payment option.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of subsection (1) by July 1, 2011 and the requirements of subsection (2) by January 1, 2013.

Transit stops

47. (1) Conventional transportation service providers, in respect of transportation vehicles to which this section applies, shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to board or deboard a transportation vehicle at the closest available safe location, as determined by the operator, that is not an official stop, if the official stop is not accessible and the safe location is along the same transit route.

(2) In determining where a safe location may be situated for the purposes of subsection (1), the conventional transportation service provider shall give consideration to the preferences of the person with a disability.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers shall ensure that operators of their transportation vehicles promptly report to an appropriate authority where a transit stop is temporarily inaccessible or where a temporary barrier exists.

(4) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

(5) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

Storage of mobility aids, etc.

48. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall, if safe storage is possible, ensure that mobility aids and mobility assistive devices are stored in the passenger compartments of its transportation vehicles within reach of the person with the disability who uses the aid or device.

(2) If safe storage of mobility aids and mobility assistive devices is not possible within the passenger compartment and the vehicle is equipped with a baggage compartment, a conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that mobility aids and mobility assistive devices are stored in the baggage compartment of the vehicle on which the person with the disability is travelling.

(3) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that operators of its transportation vehicles secure and return mobility aids and mobility assistive devices in a manner that does not affect the safety of other passengers and does not cause damage to the aid or device, where the mobility aid or mobility assistive device is stored in the baggage compartment of the vehicle.

(4) No conventional transportation service provider shall charge a fee for the storage of a mobility aid or a mobility assistive device.

(5) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(6) Subject to subsection (7), conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

(7) Conventional transportation service providers shall comply with subsection (4) by July 1, 2011.

Courtesy seating

49. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that there is clearly marked courtesy seating for persons with disabilities on its transportation vehicles and that the courtesy seating meets the standards set out in this section.

(2) The courtesy seating for persons with disabilities shall be located as close as practicable to the entrance door of the vehicle.

(3) The courtesy seating for persons with disabilities shall be signed to indicate that passengers, other than persons with disabilities, must vacate the courtesy seating if its use is required by a person with a disability.

(4) Every conventional transportation service provider shall develop a communications strategy designed to inform the public about the purpose of courtesy seating.

(5) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(6) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

Service disruptions

50. (1) Where a route or scheduled service is temporarily changed and the change is known in advance of the commencement of the trip, conventional transportation service providers shall,

(a) make available alternate accessible arrangements to transfer persons with disabilities to their route destination where alternate arrangements for persons without disabilities are inaccessible; and

(b) ensure information on alternate arrangements is communicated in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

(2) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by July 1, 2013.

Pre-boarding announcements

51. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that there are, on request, pre-boarding verbal announcements of the route, direction, destination or next major stop.

(2) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that there are electronic pre-boarding announcements of the route, direction, destination or next major stop on its transportation vehicles and that that these announcements satisfy the requirements set out in section 58.

(3) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(4) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of subsection (1) by July 1, 2011 and the requirements of subsection (2) by January 1, 2017.

On-board announcements

52. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that there are audible verbal announcements of all destination points or available route stops on its transportation vehicles while the vehicle is on route or while the vehicle is being operated.

(2) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all destination points or available route stops,

(a) are announced through electronic means; and

(b) are legibly and visually displayed through electronic means.

(3) For the purposes of clause (2) (b), visual displays of destination points or stop information shall satisfy the requirements set out in section 58.

(4) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(5) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of subsection (1) by July 1, 2011 and the requirements of subsections (2) and (3) by January 1, 2017.

CONVENTIONAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS, TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Requirements re grab bars, etc.

53. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles to which this section applies that are manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 are equipped with grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions that are provided where appropriate at,

(a) locations where passengers are required to pay fares;

(b) each mobility aid securement position;

(c) each courtesy seating area intended for use by persons with disabilities; and

(d) each side of any entrance or exit used by persons with disabilities.

(2) With respect to all transportation vehicles to which this section applies, every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions located at an entrance or exit used by a person with a disability are accessible from ground level and are mounted so that they are inside the vehicle when the doors are closed.

(3) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all vehicles to which this section applies meet the following standards:

1. The location of grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions must be distributed, as appropriate to the vehicle's design, throughout the vehicle to support independent and safe boarding, on-board circulation, seating and standing assistance and deboarding for persons with disabilities.

2. Grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions must not interfere with the turning and maneuvring space required for mobility aids to reach the allocated space from the entrance.

3. Grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions must be high colour-contrasted with

their background to assist with visual recognition.

4. Every grab bar, handhold, handrail or stanchion must,

i. be sturdy, rounded and free of any sharp or abrasive element,

ii. have an exterior diameter that permits easy grasping by the full range of passengers and sufficient clearance from the surface to which it is attached,

iii. be designed to prevent catching or snagging of clothes or personal items, and

iv. have a slip resistant surface.

5. Where grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions return to a wall or floor, they must do so in a smooth curve.

6. Brackets, clamps, screw heads or other fasteners used on grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions must be rounded or flush with the surface and free from burrs or rough edges.

(4) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(5) Despite subsection (4), this section does not apply to vehicles regulated under Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

(6) Despite subsection (1), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of a type referenced in subsection (4) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

(7) Subsection (6) does not apply if the installation of the grab bars, handholds, handrails or stanchions would impair the structural integrity of the vehicle.

Floors and carpeted surfaces

54. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 to which this section applies,

(a) have floors that produce a minimal glare and are slip resistant; and

(b) any carpeted surfaces have a low, firm and level pile or loop and are securely fastened.

(2) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(3) Despite subsection (2), this section does not apply to vehicles regulated under Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

(4) Despite subsection (1), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of a type referenced in subsection (2) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

Allocated mobility aid spaces

55. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 to which this section applies,

(a) have two or more allocated mobility aid spaces, with each space being a minimum of,

(i) 1,220 millimetres by 685 millimetres for vehicles designed to have a seating capacity of 24 passengers or less, and

(ii) 1,220 millimetres by 760 millimetres for vehicles designed to have a seating capacity of more than 24 passengers; and

(b) are equipped, as appropriate, with securement devices.

(2) Spaces on transportation vehicles that are allocated as mobility aid spaces may be used for other passenger purposes, if not required for use by a person with a disability who uses a mobility aid.

(3) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(4) Despite subsection (3), subsection (1) does not apply to vehicles that have two or more allocated mobility aid spaces and that are regulated under Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

(5) Despite subsection (1), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of a type referenced in subsection (3) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

(6) Subsection (5) does not apply if the installation of mobility aid spaces would impair the structural integrity of the vehicle.

Stop-requests and emergency response controls

56. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 to which this section applies are equipped with accessible stop-requests and emergency response controls that are located throughout the transportation vehicle, including places within reach of allocated mobility aid spaces and courtesy seating locations.

(2) Accessible stop-requests and emergency response controls must meet the following standards:

1. They must provide auditory and visual indications that the request has been made.
2. They must be mounted no higher than 1,220 millimetres and no lower than 380 millimetres above the floor.
3. They must be operable with one hand and must not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist.
4. They must be high colour-contrasted with the equipment to which the control is mounted.
5. They must provide tactile information on emergency response controls.

(3) With respect to stop-requests, this section applies to the following:

1. Transit buses.
2. Motor coaches.
3. Street cars.

(4) With respect to emergency response controls, this section applies to the following:

1. Subways.
2. Light rail.
3. Commuter rail.
4. Inter-city rail.

(5) Despite subsection (1), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of the type referenced in subsection (3) or (4) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

Lighting features

57. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 to which this section applies are equipped with lights above or beside each passenger access door that are constantly lit when

the door is open and that illuminate the lifting device, ramp, portable bridge plate or step nosings, as the case may be.

(2) The light above or beside each passenger access door must,

(a) when the door is open, illuminate the ground surface for a distance of at least 0.9 metres perpendicular to the bottom step tread or lift outer edge; and

(b) be shielded to protect the eyes of entering and exiting passengers.

(3) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.

2. Motor coaches.

3. Streetcars.

4. Subways.

5. Light rail.

6. Commuter rail.

7. Inter-city rail.

(4) Despite subsection (3), this section does not apply to vehicles regulated under Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

(5) Despite subsection (1), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of the type referenced in subsection (3) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

(6) Subsection (5) does not apply if the installation of the lights would impair the structural integrity of the vehicle.

Signage

58. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 to which this section applies display the route or direction of the transportation vehicle or its destination or next major stop.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), the signage displaying the route or direction or destination or next stop may include pictograms or symbols, but the signage must,

(a) be visible at the boarding point;

(b) be consistently located;

(c) have a glare-free surface; and

(d) be positioned to avoid shadow areas and glare.

(3) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that the signage displaying the route or direction or destination or next stop,

(a) is consistently shaped, coloured and positioned, when used in the same type of transportation vehicle to give the same type of information; and

(b) has text that,

(i) is high colour-contrasted with its background, in order to assist with visual recognition, and

(ii) has the appearance of solid characters.

(4) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.
2. Motor coaches.
3. Streetcars.
4. Subways.
5. Light rail.
6. Commuter rail.
7. Inter-city rail.

(5) Despite subsection (1), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of the type referenced in subsection (4) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

Lifting devices, etc.

59. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that all of its transportation vehicles manufactured on or after January 1, 2013 to which this section applies are equipped with lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates and that each of them has,

(a) a colour strip that runs its full width marking the bottom edge and that is high colour-contrasted with its background to assist with visual recognition;

(b) a slip resistant platform surface; and

(c) raised edges of sufficient height to prevent a mobility aid from rolling off the edge of the ramp during the boarding or deboarding of passengers.

(2) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.
2. Motor coaches.
3. Streetcars.
4. Subways.
5. Light rail.
6. Commuter rail.
7. Inter-city rail.

(3) Despite subsection (2), this section does not apply to vehicles that are equipped with lifting devices, ramps or portable bridge plates and that are regulated under Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

(4) Despite subsection (1), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of the type referenced in subsection (2) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

Steps

60. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that where transportation vehicles are equipped with steps, the steps meet the following requirements:

1. The top outer edge of each step is marked by a colour strip that is high colour-contrasted with its background, to assist with visual recognition, that runs the full width of the leading edge of the step, excluding any side edge mouldings, and can be viewed from both directions of travel.
2. The steps have surfaces that are slip resistant and that produce minimal glare.
3. The steps have uniform, closed riser heights and tread depths, subject to the structural limitations of the vehicle.

(2) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.
2. Motor coaches.
3. Streetcars.
4. Subways.
5. Light rail.
6. Commuter rail.
7. Inter-city rail.

(3) Despite subsection (2), this section does not apply to vehicles regulated under Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

(4) Conventional transportation service providers shall comply with the requirements of this section in respect of its vehicles to which this section applies that are manufactured on or after January 1, 2013.

(5) Despite subsection (4), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of the type referenced in subsection (2) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

Indicators and alarms

61. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider shall ensure that where its transportation vehicles have a ramp, lifting device or a kneeling function, each of them is equipped with a visual warning lamp indicator mounted on the exterior near the mobility aid accessible door and with an audible warning alarm.

(2) The visual warning lamp indicator and the audible warning alarm must function when the kneeling function, ramp or lifting device is in motion.

(3) If a ramp or lifting device is being manually operated, no warning lamp indicator or

warning alarm is required.

(4) This section applies in respect of the following:

1. Transit buses.
2. Motor coaches.
3. Streetcars.
4. Subways.
5. Light rail.
6. Commuter rail.
7. Inter-city rail.

(5) Despite subsection (4), this section does not apply to vehicles regulated under Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Passengers) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

(6) Conventional transportation service providers shall comply with the requirements of this section in respect of its vehicles to which the section applies that are manufactured on or after January 1, 2013.

(7) Despite subsection (6), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used vehicles of the type referenced in subsection (4) on or after July 1, 2011, the transportation service provider shall ensure the vehicles meet the requirements of this section.

(8) Subsection (7) does not apply if the installation of the warning lamp indicator or warning alarm would impair the structural integrity of the vehicle.

Accessibility, rail cars

62. (1) Every conventional transportation service provider whose transportation services include light rail, commuter rail or inter-city rail shall ensure that at least one rail car per train is accessible to persons with disabilities who use mobility aids.

(2) Every conventional transportation service provider whose transportation services include light rail, commuter rail or inter-city rail shall ensure that where washrooms are provided on the rail cars there is at least one mobility aid accessible washroom on the mobility aid accessible rail car.

(3) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of subsection (1) by July 1, 2011.

(4) Conventional transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of subsection (2) by January 1, 2013 with respect to trains that are using rail cars manufactured on or after January 1, 2013.

(5) Despite subsection (4), where a conventional transportation service provider enters into a contractual obligation to purchase new or used rail cars on or after July 1, 2011, it shall ensure that trains that are using such rail cars meet the requirements of subsection (2).

(6) Subsection (5) does not apply if the installation of the mobility aid accessible washroom would impair the structural integrity of the mobility aid accessible rail car.

SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

Categories of eligibility

63. (1) Every specialized transportation service provider shall have three categories of eligibility to qualify for specialized transportation services,

(a) unconditional eligibility;

(b) temporary eligibility; and

(c) conditional eligibility.

(2) For purposes of eligibility for specialized transportation services, specialized transportation service providers shall categorize persons with disabilities as follows:

1. A person with a disability that prevents them from using conventional transportation services shall be categorized as having unconditional eligibility.

2. A person with a temporary disability that prevents them from using conventional transportation services shall be categorized as having temporary eligibility.

3. A person with a disability where environmental or physical barriers limit their ability to consistently use conventional transportation services shall be categorized as having conditional eligibility.

(3) A specialized transportation service provider may deny requests for specialized transportation services to persons who are categorized as having temporary eligibility or conditional eligibility if the conventional transportation service is accessible to the person and the person has the ability to use it.

(4) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2017.

Eligibility application process

64. (1) If a person has completed an application for eligibility for specialized transportation services and the person's eligibility has not been determined within 14 calendar days after the completed application is received by the specialized transportation service provider, the person shall be considered to have temporary eligibility for specialized transportation services until a decision on his or her eligibility is made.

(2) A specialized transportation service provider shall not charge a fee to persons with disabilities who apply or who are considered eligible for specialized transportation services.

(3) A specialized transportation service provider may require a reassessment of the eligibility of temporarily eligible registrants at reasonable intervals.

(4) A specialized transportation service provider shall, upon the request of the person requesting specialized transportation services, make available to the requester all of his or her specialized transportation services eligibility application and decision information in accessible formats.

(5) A specialized transportation service provider shall establish an independent appeal process to review decisions respecting eligibility.

(6) A specialized transportation service provider shall make a decision on an appeal with respect to eligibility within 30 calendar days after receiving the complete appeal application, but

if a final decision is not made within the 30 days, the applicant shall be granted temporary eligibility until a final decision is made.

(7) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2014.

(8) A specialized transportation service provider shall have policies respecting the collection, use and disclosure of personal information collected for purposes of determining eligibility under this section.

(9) In this section,

"personal information" means personal information within the meaning of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Emergency or compassionate grounds

65. (1) Specialized transportation service providers shall develop procedures respecting the provision of temporary specialized transportation services earlier than in the 14 calendar days referred to in subsection 64 (1),

(a) where the services are required because of an emergency or on compassionate grounds; and

(b) where there are no other accessible transportation services to meet the person's needs.

(2) A person shall apply for the services described in subsection (1) in the manner determined by the specialized transportation service provider.

(3) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2014.

Fare parity

66. (1) Where conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services are provided by separate transportation service providers in the same jurisdiction, the specialized transportation service provider shall not charge more than the highest fare charged for conventional transportation services in the same jurisdiction.

(2) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of subsection (1) by January 1, 2017.

(3) Where a transportation service provider provides both conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services, the transportation service provider shall ensure that there is fare parity between conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services.

(4) Transportation service providers to which subsection (3) applies shall meet the requirements of that subsection by January 1, 2013.

(5) Where a transportation service provider provides both conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services, the transportation service provider shall ensure that the same fare structure is applied to conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services.

(6) Where a transportation service provider provides both conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services, the transportation service provider shall ensure that the same fare payment options are available for all transportation services, but alternative

options shall be made available to persons with disabilities who cannot because of their disability use a fare payment option.

(7) Conventional transportation service providers and specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of subsections (5) and (6) by January 1, 2013.

(8) In this section,

"fare structure" means the fare price determined by fare media, such as cash, tickets, passes and bulk quantity discounts and by fare category, such as adults, seniors and students, but does not include promotional fares that a transportation service provider may employ from time to time.

Visitors

67. (1) Every specialized transportation service provider shall,

(a) make specialized transportation services available to visitors; and

(b) consider as eligible,

(i) visitors who provide confirmation that they are eligible for specialized transportation services in the jurisdiction in which they reside, or

(ii) visitors who meet the specialized transportation services eligibility requirements of the specialized transportation service provider.

(2) Every specialized transportation service provider shall develop criteria to determine who falls into the category of visitor for the purposes of this section.

(3) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

(4) A specialized transportation service provider shall have policies respecting the collection, use and disclosure of personal information collected for purposes of determining eligibility under this section.

(5) In this section,

"personal information" means personal information within the meaning of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Origin to destination services

68. (1) Every specialized transportation service provider shall provide origin to destination services within its service area that takes into account the abilities of its passengers and that accommodates their abilities.

(2) Origin to destination services may include services on any accessible conventional transportation services.

(3) For the purposes of this section, origin to destination services refers to the overall package of transportation services that allows a specialized transportation service provider to provide, in a flexible way, transportation services in a manner that best meets the needs of persons with disabilities.

(4) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by July 1, 2011.

Co-ordinated service

69. (1) Where specialized transportation services are provided in adjacent municipalities within contiguous urban areas, the specialized transportation service providers shall facilitate connections between their respective services.

(2) Specialized transportation service providers to which subsection (1) applies shall determine the accessible stops and drop off locations in the contiguous urban areas that have specialized transportation services.

(3) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

Hours of service

70. (1) Where conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services are provided by separate transportation service providers in the same jurisdiction, the specialized transportation service provider shall ensure that it has, at a minimum, the same hours and days of service as any one of the conventional transportation service providers.

(2) Where a transportation service provider provides both conventional transportation services and specialized transportation services, it shall ensure that the specialized transportation services have, at a minimum, the same hours and days of service as the conventional transportation services.

(3) Specialized transportation service providers to which subsection (1) applies shall meet the requirements of subsection (1) by January 1, 2017 and transportation service providers to which subsection (2) applies shall meet the requirements of subsection (2) by January 1, 2013.

Booking

71. (1) Every specialized transportation service provider shall, where the specialized transportation services require reservations,

(a) provide same day service to the extent that it is available; and

(b) where same day service is not available, accept booking requests up to three hours before the published end of the service period on the day before the intended day of travel.

(2) A specialized transportation service provider to whom subsection (1) applies shall provide accessible means to accept reservations.

(3) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2014.

Trip restrictions

72. (1) No specialized transportation service provider shall limit the availability of specialized transportation services to persons with disabilities by,

(a) restricting the number of trips a person with a disability is able to request; or

(b) implementing any policy or operational practice that unreasonably limits the availability of specialized transportation services.

(2) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2014.

Service delays

73. (1) Every specialized transportation service provider, where the specialized

transportation services require reservations, shall provide information on the duration of service delays to affected passengers by a method agreed to by the specialized transportation service provider and passenger.

(2) For the purposes of this section, a service delay is a delay of 30 minutes or more after the scheduled pick-up time.

(3) This section does not apply in respect of delays in service that arise during the trip.

(4) Specialized transportation service providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

Companions and children

74. (1) Every specialized transportation service provider shall allow companions to travel with persons with disabilities if space is available and will not result in the denial of service to other persons with disabilities.

(2) Every specialized transportation service provider shall allow dependants to travel with a person with a disability who is the parent or guardian of the dependant if appropriate child restraint securement systems and equipment are, if required, available.

(3) Specialized transportation services providers shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

School transportation

75. (1) This section applies to every school board that provides transportation services for its students.

(2) School boards to which this section applies shall,

(a) ensure that integrated accessible school transportation services are provided for their students; or

(b) ensure that appropriate alternative accessible transportation services are provided for students with disabilities, where in the opinion of the board integrated accessible school transportation services are not possible or not the best option for a student with a disability because of the nature of the disability or safety concerns.

(3) School boards to which this section applies shall, in consultation with parents or guardians of students with disabilities,

(a) identify students with disabilities before the commencement of each school year or during the school year, based on the needs of the student with a disability;

(b) develop individual school transportation plans for each student with a disability that,

(i) detail student assistance needs for each student with a disability, and

(ii) include plans for individual student boarding, securement and deboarding; and

(c) identify and communicate to the appropriate parties the roles and responsibilities of the transportation provider, the parents or guardians of the student with the disability, the operator of the vehicle used to transport the student, appropriate school staff and the student with the disability.

(4) School boards to which this section applies shall meet,

(a) the requirements of subsection (2) by July 1, 2011; and

(b) the requirements of subsection (3) by January 1, 2014.

(5) In this section,

"school board" means a board as defined in subsection 1 (1) of the *Education Act*; ("conseil scolaire")

"transportation provider" includes an entity or person that has entered into an agreement with a board for the transportation of students under subsection 190 (6) of the *Education Act*; ("fournisseur de services de transport")

"transportation services" means transportation that a board provides under section 190 of the *Education Act.* ("services de transport")

Public sector organizations

76. (1) Designated public sector organizations described in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 1 that are not primarily in the business of transportation, but that provide transportation services, shall provide accessible vehicles or equivalent services upon request.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), transportation services do not include campus security services provided by a designated public sector organization described in paragraph 3 or 4 of Schedule 1.

(3) Designated public sector organizations referred to in subsection (1) shall meet the requirements of this section by July 1, 2011.

Ferries

77. (1) Designated public sector organizations that operate ferries that are under provincial jurisdiction shall do so in accordance with the Code of Practice entitled "Ferry Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities" ("the Code").

(2) Designated public sector organizations that operate ferries to which this section applies shall meet the requirements of sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13 and 3 of the Code by July 1, 2011.

(3) Designated public sector organizations that operate ferries to which this section applies shall ensure that its ferries that are manufactured on or after July 1, 2013 meet the requirements of sections 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.14, 2.15, 2.16, 2.17, 2.18 and 2.19 of the Code.

(4) The following sections apply, as of the date set out in the sections, with necessary modifications, to ferries to which this section applies:

1. Section 34 (Availability of information on accessibility equipment, etc.).
2. Section 36 (Accessibility training).
3. Section 37 (Emergency preparedness and response policies).
4. Section 38 (Fares, support persons).
5. Section 44 (General responsibilities).
6. Section 46 (Fares).

7. Section 48 (Storage of mobility aids, etc.).

8. Section 50 (Service disruptions).

(5) In this section,

"Code of Practice" and "Code" mean the document referred to as a Code of Practice entitled "Ferry Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities", published by the Canadian Transportation Agency and dated 1999; ("Code de pratiques", "Code")

"ferry" means a vessel providing passenger transportation services solely within the province of Ontario, transporting passengers only or passengers and motor vehicles, that may be used by the general public and that weighs 1,000 gross tonnes or more. ("traversier")

DUTIES OF MUNICIPALITIES AND TAXICABS

Duties of municipalities, general

78. (1) Any municipality that provides conventional transportation services shall consult with its municipal accessibility advisory committee, where one has been established in accordance with subsection 29 (1) or (2) of the Act, the public and persons with disabilities in the development of accessible design criteria to be considered in the construction, renovation or replacement of bus stops and shelters.

(2) Every municipality to which subsection (1) applies shall identify planning for accessible bus stops and shelters, including any steps that will be taken to meet the goal of accessible bus stops and shelters, in its accessibility plan required under Part I.

(3) Where a municipality has entered into arrangements with a person respecting the construction of bus stops and shelters in its jurisdiction, the municipality shall ensure that the person participates in the consultation and planning as described in subsections (1) and (2).

(4) Municipalities shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

Duties of municipalities, accessible taxicabs

79. (1) Every municipality shall consult with its municipal accessibility advisory committee, where one has been established in accordance with subsection 29 (1) or (2) of the Act, the public and persons with disabilities to determine the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community.

(2) Every municipality shall identify progress made toward meeting the need for on-demand accessible taxicabs, including any steps that will be taken to meet the need, in its accessibility plan required under Part I.

(3) Municipalities shall meet the requirements of this section by January 1, 2013.

(4) In this section,

"accessible taxicab" means an accessible taxicab as defined in section 1 of Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Vehicles for the Transportation of Physically Disabled Persons) made under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

Duties of municipalities, taxicabs

80. (1) Any municipality that licenses taxicabs shall ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs are prohibited,

(a) from charging a higher fare or an additional fee for persons with disabilities than for

persons without disabilities for the same trip; and

(b) from charging a fee for the storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices.

(2) Any municipality that licenses taxicabs shall ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs place vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxicab.

(3) Any municipality that licenses taxicabs shall ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs make available vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format to persons with disabilities who are passengers.

(4) The information in subsection (2) shall meet the requirements of subsection 58 (3).

(5) Municipalities described in this section shall meet the requirements in this section,

(a) by July 1, 2011, in respect of subsection (1); and

(b) by January 1, 2012, in respect of subsections (2) and (3).

PART V
COMPLIANCE

Application

81. This Part applies in respect of this Regulation and Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service) made under the Act.

Definition

82. In this Part,

"corporation" means any corporation with or without share capital wherever or however incorporated and includes a corporation with or without share capital that is incorporated or continued otherwise than by or under the authority of an Act of the Legislature.

Amount of administrative penalty

83. (1) For the purposes of paragraph 3 of subsection 21 (3), paragraph 2 of subsection 21 (4), subsection 21 (5) and paragraph 2 of subsection 33 (8) of the Act, a director shall determine the amount of the administrative penalty according to the following rules:

1. The director shall determine whether, in his or her opinion, the severity of the impact of the contravention is of a minor, moderate or major nature.

2. The director shall determine the contravention history of the person or organization over the current two reporting cycles period.

3. The director shall determine whether the person or organization is a corporation or an individual or unincorporated organization.

4. Based on the determinations made in accordance with paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, and subject to paragraph 5, the director shall determine the amount of administrative penalty using Schedule 2, in the case of an individual or unincorporated organization, or Schedule 3, in the case of a corporation.

5. In cases where the impact of the contravention is determined to be major and the contravention history of the person or organization is determined to be major, the director may treat the penalty determined in accordance with Schedule 2 or 3 as a daily penalty to a maximum of,

i. $100,000, in the case of a corporation, and

ii. $50,000, in the case of an individual or unincorporated organization.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph 1 of subsection (1), the severity of the impact of the contravention shall be determined by ranking the contravention as minor, moderate or major in the following manner:

1. A contravention is minor where it involves the contravention of an administrative requirement.

2. A contravention is moderate where it involves the contravention of a requirement for organizational preparedness.

3. A contravention is major where it involves the contravention of a priority requirement that includes, but is not limited to, a contravention that may pose a health or safety risk to persons with disabilities.

(3) For the purposes of paragraph 2 of subsection (1), the contravention history of the person or organization shall be determined by ranking it as minor, moderate or major in the following manner:

1. A contravention history is minor where there has been no more than one previous contravention within the current two reporting cycles period.

2. A contravention history is moderate where there has been between two and five previous contraventions within the current two reporting cycles period.

3. A contravention history is major where there has been six or more previous contraventions within the current two reporting cycles period.

(4) For purposes of this section and subject to subsection (7), the current two reporting cycles period is determined as follows:

1. A reporting cycle corresponds to the cycle within which a person or organization must file an accessibility report under subsection 14 (1) of the Act and begins on the first day the person or organization must file the report and ends on the last day before the next report must be filed.

2. Subject to paragraph 3, the current two reporting cycles period refers to the period that begins on the first day of a reporting cycle (“the first reporting cycle”) and ends on the last day of the next reporting cycle (“the second reporting cycle”).

3. The first reporting cycle in a current two reporting cycles period commences as an odd reporting cycle, as in the first reporting cycle, the third reporting cycle and the fifth reporting cycle, and the second reporting cycle in a current two reporting cycles period commences as an even reporting cycle.

(5) For purposes of determining contravention history in the current two reporting cycles period, on the first day of the first reporting cycle the contravention history of the person or organization is deemed to be zero and on the first day of every odd reporting cycle after that the contravention history of the person or organization is deemed to be zero.

(6) If a person or organization filed an accessibility report before July 1, 2011, the two reporting cycles period is calculated from the first day that the person or organization was required to file an accessibility report.

(7) For persons or organizations that are exempted from the reporting requirements of subsection 14 (1) of the Act, the two reporting cycles period consists of the 12-month period that begins at the earliest of the following and ends at the end of each 12-month period:

1. The first day that a director requests reports or information from the person or organization under section 17 of the Act.
2. The first day that an inspector requires a person or organization to produce a document, record or thing under subsection 19 (5) of the Act.
3. The first day that the person or organization receives or is deemed to have received a notice of order under subsection 22 (1) of the Act.

(8) For persons or organizations to which subsection (7) applies, their contravention history is deemed to be zero at the end of each 12-month period.

Review of order

84. For purposes of the review of an order under section 25 of the Act, the following apply:

1. If a person or organization seeks a review, the person or organization must provide a written submission requesting the review, including an explanation as to why the review is sought, within 30 days after the order was made.
2. The director who reviews the order must be a director other than the director who made the order.
3. If the director reviewing the order decides to vary it, the director may reduce the amount of the administrative penalty but shall not increase the amount of the penalty.
4. If the director reviewing the order finds that the amount of the administrative penalty is excessive or punitive in the circumstances, the director shall reduce the amount of the penalty.

Payment of penalty

85. (1) The person or organization that has been ordered to pay an administrative penalty shall pay the penalty within 30 days after the order was made, unless a longer period is specified in the order.

(2) Where a person or organization that has been ordered to pay an administrative penalty seeks a review of the order under section 25 of the Act or appeals the order under section 27 of the Act, the person or organization shall pay the penalty within 30 days after the order is dealt with in the review or appeal, unless a different period is specified in the order after the review or appeal.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2), where a person or organization both seeks a review of the order and appeals the order, the administrative penalty shall be paid within 30 days after the order of the Tribunal, unless the order of the Tribunal specifies a different period.

Designation of tribunal

86. The Licence Appeal Tribunal is designated as the tribunal for the purposes of section 26 of the Act.

Commencement

87. This Regulation comes into force on the later of July 1, 2011 and the day it is

filed.

SCHEDULE 1
BROADER PUBLIC SECTOR

1. Every district school board as defined in section 1 of the *Education Act*.
2. Every hospital as defined in section 1 of the *Public Hospitals Act*.
3. Every college of applied arts and technology established under the *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002*.
4. Every university in Ontario, including its affiliated and federated colleges, that receives annual operating grants from the Government of Ontario.
5. Every public transportation organization in Ontario, including any municipally operated transportation services for persons with disabilities, that provides services for which a fare is charged for transporting the public by vehicles that are operated,
   i. by, for or on behalf of the Government of Ontario, a municipality, a local board of a municipality or a transit or transportation commission or authority,
   ii. under an agreement between the Government of Ontario and a person, firm, corporation, or transit or transportation commission or authority, or
   iii. under an agreement between a municipality and a person, firm, corporation or transit or transportation commission or authority.

SCHEDULE 2
ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES FOR INDIVIDUALS OR UNINCORPORATED ORGANIZATIONS

Impact of Contravention:		Major	Moderate	Minor
Contravention History:	Major	$2,000	$1,000	$500
	Moderate	$1,000	$500	$250
	Minor	$500	$250	$200

SCHEDULE 3
ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES FOR CORPORATIONS

Impact of Contravention:		Major	Moderate	Minor
Contravention History:	Major	$15,000	$10,000	$5,000
	Moderate	$10,000	$5,000	$2,500
	Minor	$2,000	$1,000	$500

Français

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Subpart B: Buses, Vans and Systems

§1192.21 General.

(a) New, used or remanufactured buses and vans (except over-the-road buses covered by subpart G of this part), to be considered accessible by regulations issued by the Department of Transportation in **49 CFR part 37**, shall comply with the applicable provisions of this subpart.

(b) If portions of the vehicle are modified in a way that affects or could affect accessibility, each such portion shall comply, to the extent practicable, with the applicable provisions of this subpart. This provision does not require that inaccessible buses be retrofitted with lifts, ramps or other boarding devices.

§1192.23 Mobility aid accessibility.

(a) *General.* All vehicles covered by this subpart shall provide a level-change mechanism or boarding device (e.g., lift or ramp) complying with paragraph (b) or (c); of this section and sufficient clearances to permit a wheelchair or other mobility aid user to reach a securement location. At least two securement locations and devices, complying with paragraph (d) of this section, shall be provided on vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length; at least one securement location and device, complying with paragraph (d) of this section, shall be provided on vehicles 22 feet in length or less.

(b) *Vehicle lift*. - (1) *Design load*. The design load of the lift shall be at least 600 pounds. Working parts, such as cables, pulleys, and shafts, which can be expected to wear, and upon which the lift depends for support of the load, shall have a safety factor of at least six, based on the ultimate strength of the material. Nonworking parts, such as platform, frame, and attachment hardware which would not be expected to wear, shall have a safety factor of at least three, based on the ultimate strength of the material.

(2) *Controls*. - (i) *Requirements*. The controls shall be interlocked with the vehicle brakes, transmission, or door, or shall provide other appropriate mechanisms or systems, to ensure that the vehicle cannot be moved when the lift is not stowed and so the lift cannot be deployed unless the interlocks or systems are engaged. The lift shall deploy to all levels (i.e., ground, curb, and intermediate positions) normally encountered in the operating environment. Where provided, each control for deploying, lowering, raising, and stowing the lift and lowering the roll-off barrier shall be of a momentary contact type requiring continuous manual pressure by the operator and shall not allow improper lift sequencing when the lift platform is occupied. The controls shall allow reversal of the lift operation sequence, such as raising or lowering a platform that is part way down, without allowing an occupied platform to fold or retract into the stowed position.

(ii) *Exception*. Where the lift is designed to deploy with its long dimension parallel to the vehicle axis and which pivots into or out of the vehicle while occupied (i.e., "rotary lift"), the requirements of this paragraph prohibiting the lift from being stowed while occupied shall not apply if the stowed position is within the passenger compartment and the lift is intended to be stowed while occupied.

(3) *Emergency operation*. The lift shall incorporate an emergency method of deploying, lowering to ground level with a lift occupant, and raising and stowing the empty lift if the power to the lift fails. No emergency method, manual or otherwise, shall be capable of being operated in a manner that could be hazardous to the lift occupant or to the operator when operated according to manufacturer's instructions, and shall not permit the platform to be stowed or folded when occupied, unless the lift is a rotary lift and is intended to be stowed while occupied.

(4) *Power or equipment failure*. Platforms stowed in a vertical position, and deployed platforms when occupied, shall have provisions to prevent their deploying, falling, or folding any faster than 12 inches/second or their dropping of an occupant in the event of a single failure of any load carrying component.

(5) *Platform barriers*. The lift platform shall be equipped with barriers to prevent any of the wheels of a wheelchair or mobility aid from rolling off the platform during its operation. A movable barrier or inherent design feature shall prevent a wheelchair or mobility aid from rolling off the edge closest to the vehicle until the platform is in its fully raised position. Each side of the lift platform which extends beyond the vehicle in its raised position shall have a barrier a minimum 1-1/2 inches high. Such barriers shall not interfere with maneuvering into or out of the aisle. The loading-edge barrier (outer barrier) which functions as a loading ramp when the lift is at ground level, shall be sufficient when raised or closed, or a supplementary system shall be provided, to prevent a power wheelchair or mobility aid from riding over or defeating it. The outer barrier of the lift shall automatically raise or close, or a supplementary system shall automatically engage, and remain raised, closed, or engaged at all times that the platform is more than 3 inches above the roadway or sidewalk and the platform is occupied. Alternatively, a barrier or system may be raised, lowered, opened, closed, engaged, or disengaged by the lift operator, provided an interlock or inherent design feature prevents the lift from rising unless the barrier is raised or closed or the supplementary system is engaged.

(6) *Platform surface*. The platform surface shall be free of any protrusions over ¼ inch high and shall be slip resistant. The platform shall have a minimum clear width of 28-1/2 inches at the platform, a minimum clear width of 30 inches measured from 2 inches above the platform surface to 30 inches above the platform, and a minimum clear length of 48 inches measured from 2 inches above the surface of the platform to 30 inches above the surface of the platform. (See Figure 1)

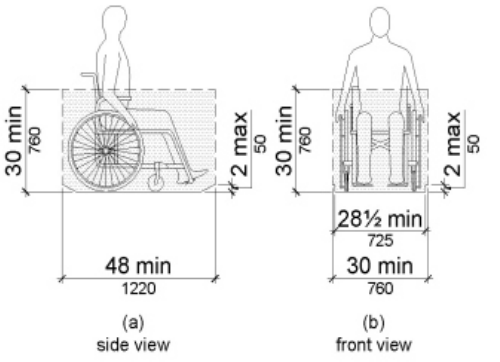


Figure 1
Wheelchair or Mobility Aid Envelope

(7) *Platform gaps*. Any openings between the platform surface and the raised barriers shall not exceed 5/8 inch in width. When the platform is at vehicle floor height with the inner barrier (if applicable) down or retracted, gaps between the forward lift platform edge and the vehicle floor shall not exceed ½ inch horizontally and 5/8 inch vertically. Platforms on semi-automatic lifts may have a hand hold not exceeding 1-1/2 inches by 4-1/2 inches located between the edge barriers.

(8) *Platform entrance ramp*. The entrance ramp, or loading-edge barrier used as a ramp, shall not exceed a slope of 1:8, measured on level ground, for a maximum rise of 3 inches, and the transition from roadway or sidewalk to ramp may be vertical without edge treatment up to ¼ inch. Thresholds between ¼ inch and ½ inch high shall be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2.

(9) *Platform deflection*. The lift platform (not including the entrance ramp) shall not deflect more than 3 degrees (exclusive of vehicle roll or pitch) in any direction between its unloaded position and its position when loaded with 600 pounds applied through a 26 inch by 26 inch test pallet at the centroid of the platform.

(10) *Platform movement*. No part of the platform shall move at a rate exceeding 6 inches/second during lowering and lifting an occupant, and shall not exceed 12 inches/second during deploying or stowing. This requirement does not apply to the deployment or stowage cycles of lifts that are manually deployed or stowed. The maximum platform horizontal and vertical acceleration when occupied shall be 0.3g.

(11) *Boarding direction*. The lift shall permit both inboard and outboard facing of wheelchair and mobility aid users.

(12) *Use by standees*. Lifts shall accommodate persons using walkers, crutches, canes or braces or who otherwise have difficulty using steps. The platform may be marked to indicate a preferred standing position.

(13) *Handrails*. Platforms on lifts shall be equipped with handrails on two sides, which move in tandem with the lift, and which shall be graspable and provide support to standees throughout the entire lift operation. Handrails shall have a usable component at least 8 inches long with the lowest portion a minimum 30 inches above the platform and the highest portion a maximum 38 inches above the platform. The handrails shall be capable of withstanding a force of 100 pounds concentrated at any point on the handrail without permanent deformation of the rail or its supporting structure. The handrail shall have a cross-sectional diameter between 11/4 inches and 11/2 inches or shall provide an equivalent grasping surface, and have eased edges with corner radii of not less than 1/8 inch. Handrails shall be placed to provide a minimum 1-1/2 inches knuckle clearance from the nearest adjacent surface. Handrails shall not interfere with wheelchair or mobility aid maneuverability when entering or leaving the vehicle.

(c) *Vehicle ramp*. - (1) *Design load*. Ramps 30 inches or longer shall support a load of 600 pounds, placed at the centroid of the ramp distributed over an area of 26 inches by 26 inches, with a safety factor of at least 3 based on the ultimate strength of the material. Ramps shorter than 30 inches shall support a load of 300 pounds.

(2) *Ramp surface*. The ramp surface shall be continuous and slip resistant; shall not have protrusions from the surface greater than ¼ inch high; shall have a clear width of 30 inches; and shall accommodate both four-wheel and three-wheel mobility aids.

(3) *Ramp threshold*. The transition from roadway or sidewalk and the transition from vehicle floor to the ramp may be vertical without edge treatment up to ¼ inch. Changes in level between ¼ inch and ½ inch shall be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2.

(4) *Ramp barriers*. Each side of the ramp shall have barriers at least 2 inches high to prevent mobility aid wheels from slipping off.

(5) *Slope*. Ramps shall have the least slope practicable and shall not exceed 1:4 when deployed to ground level. If the height of the vehicle floor from which the ramp is deployed is 3 inches or less above a 6-inch curb, a maximum slope of 1:4 is permitted; if the height of the vehicle floor from which the ramp is deployed is 6 inches or less, but greater than 3 inches, above a 6-inch curb, a maximum slope of 1:6 is permitted; if the height of the vehicle floor from which the ramp is deployed is 9 inches or less, but greater than 6 inches, above a 6-inch curb, a maximum slope of 1:8 is permitted; if the height of the vehicle floor from which the ramp is deployed is greater than 9 inches above a 6-inch curb, a slope of 1:12 shall be achieved. Folding or telescoping ramps are permitted provided they meet all structural requirements of this section.

(6) *Attachment*. When in use for boarding or alighting, the ramp shall be firmly attached to the vehicle so that it is not subject to displacement when loading or unloading a heavy power mobility aid and that no gap between vehicle and ramp exceeds 5/8 inch.

(7) *Stowage*. A compartment, securement system, or other appropriate method shall be provided to ensure that stowed ramps, including portable ramps stowed in the passenger area, do not impinge on a passenger's wheelchair or mobility aid or pose any hazard to passengers in the event of a sudden stop or maneuver.

(8) *Handrails*. If provided, handrails shall allow persons with disabilities to grasp them from outside the vehicle while starting to board, and to continue to use them throughout the boarding process, and shall have the top between 30 inches and 38 inches above the ramp surface. The handrails shall be capable of withstanding a force of 100 pounds concentrated at any point on the handrail without permanent deformation of the rail or its supporting structure. The handrail shall have a cross-sectional diameter between 11/4 inches and 11/2 inches or shall provide an equivalent grasping surface, and have eased edges with corner radii of not less than 1/8 inch. Handrails shall not interfere with wheelchair or mobility aid maneuverability when entering or leaving the vehicle.

(d) *Securement devices*. - (1) *Design load*. Securement systems on vehicles with GVWRs of 30,000 pounds or above, and their attachments to such vehicles, shall restrain a force in the forward longitudinal direction of up to 2,000 pounds per securement leg or clamping mechanism and a minimum of 4,000 pounds for each mobility aid. Securement systems on vehicles with GVWRs of up to 30,000 pounds, and their attachments to such vehicles, shall restrain a force in the forward longitudinal direction of up to 2,500 pounds per securement leg or clamping mechanism and a minimum of 5,000 pounds for each mobility aid.

(2) *Location and size*. The securement system shall be placed as near to the accessible entrance as practicable and shall have a clear floor area of 30 inches by 48 inches. Such space shall adjoin, and may overlap, an access path. Not more than 6 inches of the required clear floor space may be accommodated for footrests under another seat provided there is a minimum of 9 inches from the floor to the lowest part of the seat overhanging the space. Securement areas may have fold-down seats to accommodate other passengers when a wheelchair or mobility aid is not occupying the area, provided the seats, when folded up, do not obstruct the clear floor space required. (**See Fig. 2**)

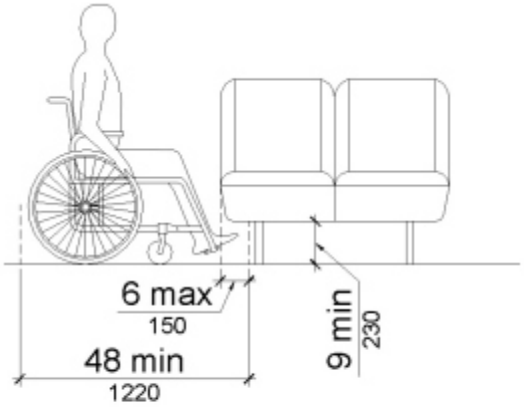


Figure 2
Toe Clearance Under a Fixed Element

(3) *Mobility aids accommodated*. The securement system shall secure common wheelchairs and mobility aids and shall either be automatic or easily attached by a person familiar with the system and mobility aid and having average dexterity.

(4) *Orientation*. In vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length, at least one securement device or system required by paragraph (a) of this section shall secure the wheelchair or mobility aid facing toward the front of the vehicle. In vehicles 22 feet in length or less, the required securement device may secure the wheelchair or mobility aid either facing toward the front of the vehicle or rearward. Additional securement devices or systems shall secure the wheelchair or mobility aid facing forward or rearward. Where the wheelchair or mobility aid is secured facing the rear of the vehicle, a padded barrier shall be provided The padded barrier shall extend from a height of 38 inches from the vehicle floor to a height of

56 inches from the vehicle floor with a width of 18 inches, laterally centered immediately in back of the seated individual. Such barriers need not be solid provided equivalent protection is afforded.

(5) *Movement*. When the wheelchair or mobility aid is secured in accordance with manufacturer's instructions, the securement system shall limit the movement of an occupied wheelchair or mobility aid to no more than 2 inches in any direction under normal vehicle operating conditions.

(6) *Stowage*. When not being used for securement, or when the securement area can be used by standees, the securement system shall not interfere with passenger movement, shall not present any hazardous condition, shall be reasonably protected from vandalism, and shall be readily accessed when needed for use.

(7) *Seat belt and shoulder harness.* For each wheelchair or mobility aid securement device provided, a passenger seat belt and shoulder harness, complying with all applicable provisions of 49 CFR part 571, shall also be provided for use by wheelchair or mobility aid users. Such seat belts and shoulder harnesses shall not be used in lieu of a device which secures the wheelchair or mobility aid itself.

§1192.25 Doors, steps and thresholds.

(a) *Slip resistance*. All aisles, steps, floor areas where people walk and floors in securement locations shall have slip-resistant surfaces.

(b) *Contrast*. All step edges, thresholds, and the boarding edge of ramps or lift platforms shall have a band of color(s) running the full width of the step or edge which contrasts from the step tread and riser, or lift or ramp surface, either light-on-dark or dark-on-light.

(c) *Door height*. For vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length, the overhead clearance between the top of the door opening and the raised lift platform, or highest point of a ramp, shall be a minimum of 68 inches. For vehicles of 22 feet in length or less, the overhead clearance between the top of the door opening and the raised lift platform, or highest point of a ramp, shall be a minimum of 56 inches.

§1192.27 Priority seating signs.

(a) Each vehicle shall contain sign(s) which indicate that seats in the front of the vehicle are priority seats for persons with disabilities, and that other passengers should make such seats available to those who wish to use them. At least one set of forward-facing seats shall be so designated.

(b) Each securement location shall have a sign designating it as such.

(c) Characters on signs required by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section shall have a width-to-height ratio between 3:5 and 1:1 and a stroke width-to-height ratio between 1:5 and 1:10, with a minimum character height (using an upper case "X") of 5/8 inch, with "wide" spacing (generally, the space between letters shall be 1/16 the height of upper case letters), and shall contrast with the background either light-on-dark or dark-on-light.

§1192.29 Interior circulation, handrails and stanchions.

(a) Interior handrails and stanchions shall permit sufficient turning and maneuvering space for wheelchairs and other mobility aids to reach a securement location from the lift or ramp.

(b) Handrails and stanchions shall be provided in the entrance to the vehicle in a configuration which allows persons with disabilities to grasp such assists from outside the vehicle while starting to board, and to continue using such assists throughout the boarding and fare collection process. Handrails shall have a cross-sectional diameter between 11/4 inches and 11/2 inches or shall provide an equivalent grasping surface, and have eased edges with corner radii of not less than 1/8 inch. Handrails shall be placed to provide a minimum 1-1/2 inches knuckle clearance from the nearest adjacent surface. Where on-board fare collection devices are used on vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length, a horizontal passenger assist shall be located across the front of the vehicle and shall prevent passengers from sustaining injuries on the fare collection device or windshield in the event of a sudden deceleration. Without restricting the vestibule space, the assist shall provide support for a boarding passenger from the front door through the boarding procedure. Passengers shall be able to lean against the assist for security while paying fares.

(c) For vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length, overhead handrail(s) shall be provided which shall be continuous except for a gap at the rear doorway.

(d) Handrails and stanchions shall be sufficient to permit safe boarding, on-board circulation, seating and standing assistance, and alighting by persons with disabilities.

(e) For vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length with front-door lifts or ramps, vertical stanchions immediately behind the driver shall either terminate at the lower edge of the aisle-facing seats, if applicable, or be "dog-legged" so that the floor attachment does not impede or interfere with wheelchair footrests. If the driver seat platform must be passed by a wheelchair or mobility aid user entering the vehicle, the platform, to the maximum extent practicable, shall not extend into the aisle or vestibule beyond the wheel housing.

(f) For vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length, the minimum interior height along the path from the lift to the securement location shall be 68 inches. For vehicles of 22 feet in length or less, the minimum interior height from lift to securement location shall be 56 inches.

§1192.31 Lighting.

(a) Any stepwell or doorway immediately adjacent to the driver shall have, when the door is open, at least 2 foot-candles of illumination measured on the step tread or lift platform.

(b) Other stepwells and doorways, including doorways in which lifts or ramps are installed, shall have, at all times, at least 2 foot-candles of illumination measured on the step tread, or lift or ramp, when deployed at the vehicle floor level.

(c) The vehicle doorways, including doorways in which lifts or ramps are installed, shall have outside light(s) which, when the door is open, provide at least 1 foot-candle of illumination on the street surface

for a distance of 3 feet perpendicular to the bottom step tread or lift outer edge. Such light(s) shall be shielded to protect the eyes of entering and exiting passengers.

§1192.33 Fare box.

Where provided, the farebox shall be located as far forward as practicable and shall not obstruct traffic in the vestibule, especially wheelchairs or mobility aids.

§1192.35 Public information system.

(a) Vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length, used in multiple-stop, fixed-route service, shall be equipped with a public address system permitting the driver, or recorded or digitized human speech messages, to announce stops and provide other passenger information within the vehicle.

(b) [Reserved]

§1192.37 Stop request.

(a) Where passengers may board or alight at multiple stops at their option, vehicles in excess of 22 feet in length shall provide controls adjacent to the securement location for requesting stops and which alerts the driver that a mobility aid user wishes to disembark. Such a system shall provide auditory and visual indications that the request has been made.

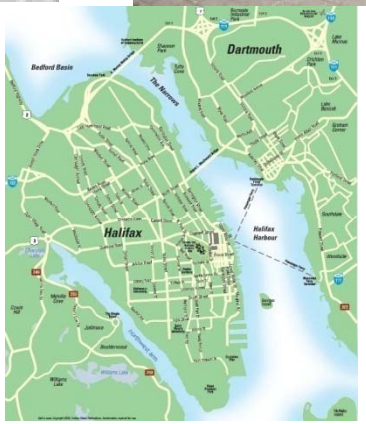
(b) Controls required by paragraph (a) of this section shall be mounted no higher than 48 inches and no lower than 15 inches above the floor, shall be operable with one hand and shall not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. The force required to activate controls shall be no greater than 5 lbf (22.2 N).

§1192.39 Destination and route signs.

(a) Where destination or route information is displayed on the exterior of a vehicle, each vehicle shall have illuminated signs on the front and boarding side of the vehicle.

(b) Characters on signs required by paragraph (a) of this section shall have a width-to-height ratio between 3:5 and 1:1 and a stroke width-to-height ratio between 1:5 and 1:10, with a minimum character height (using an upper case "X") of 1 inch for signs on the boarding side and a minimum character height of 2 inches for front "headsigns", with "wide" spacing (generally, the space between letters shall be 1/16 the height of upper case letters), and shall contrast with the background, either dark-on-light or light-on-dark.

Universal Accessibility Plan



ALF
Accessible Low Floor

March 2011

Presentation Outline

- Study Objectives & Work Plan
- Legislative/Regulatory Environment
- Service Standards
- Discussion:

***Your ideas and opinions* on *Universal Accessibility* of buses, ferries, infrastructure & communications**

Access to All

Universal Access = Inclusive and Universal Design

Not only for

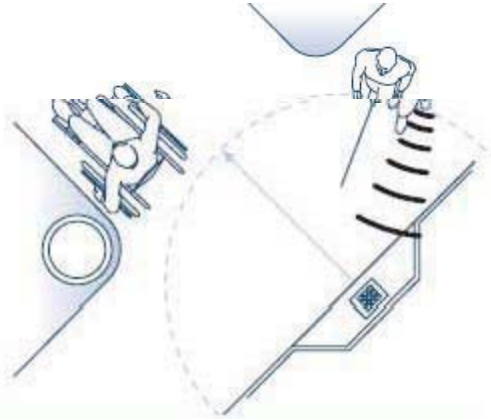
But also

Study Objectives & Work Plan

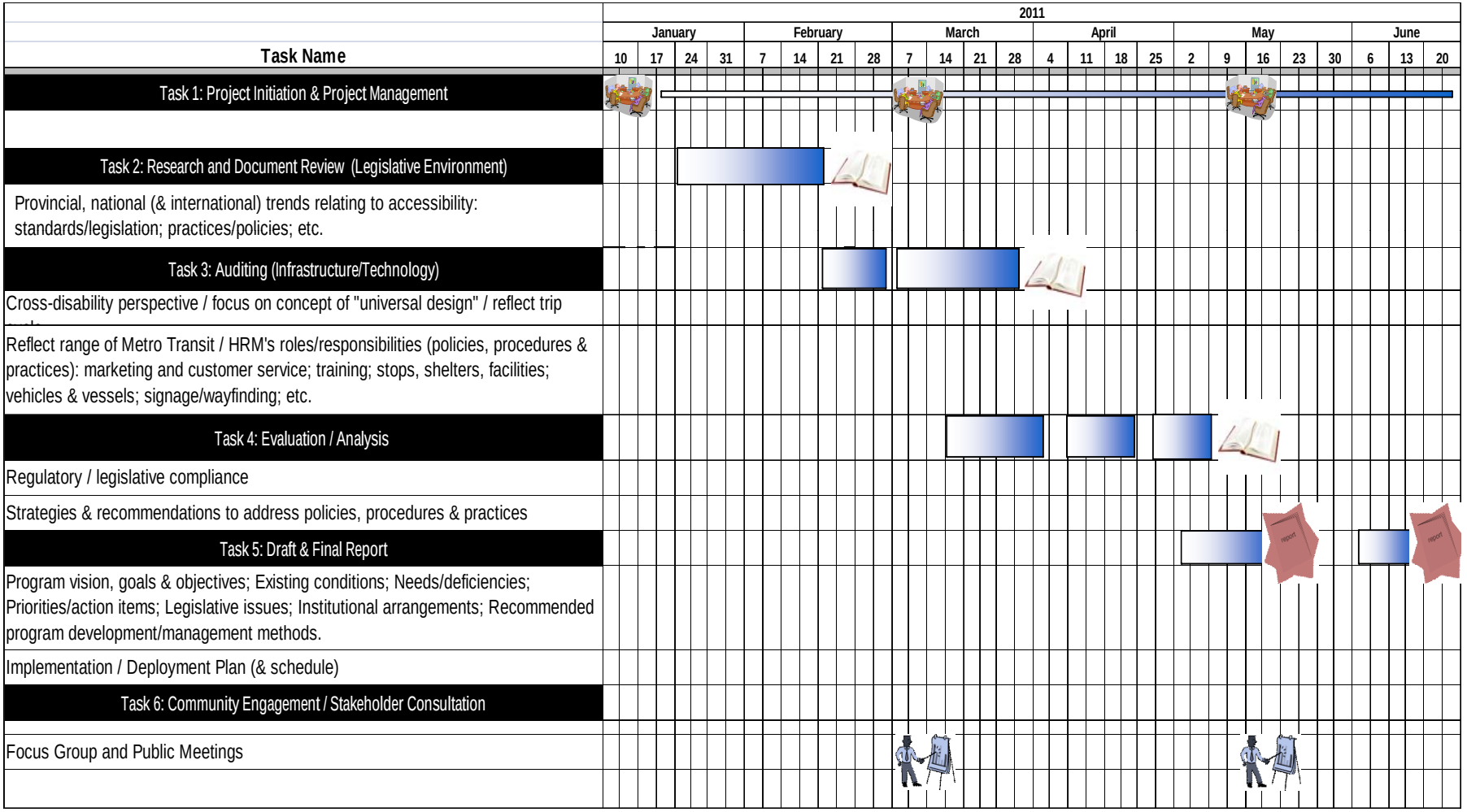
HOW TO IMPROVE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE TRANSIT SYSTEM

Metro Transit proactive in making it easier for the public to gain access to buses and ferries

- Legislative Environment – national trends
- Review/audit existing Metro Transit:
  - Infrastructure/Technology
  - Operations
  - Marketing & Communications
- Consultation important part of process



Study Work Plan & Schedule



Legislative Environment

"When barriers get in the way of people with disabilities participating fully in society as a result of their disabilities, everyone loses."

- Nova Scotia: Human Rights Act / Disabled Persons Commission Act
  - "Recognizes the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all..."
  - While addressing basic protections under law does not address specific standards or codes of practice for transportation services

Legislative Environment (cont.)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Comprehensive civil rights legislation
- Specific standards for transportation services

Ontario: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

- Specific standards for transportation services

What is an accessibility standard?

- An accessibility standard is a rule (set of measures, policies & practices) that persons and organizations have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers.

Transportation Standards May Address

- Exterior/Boarding
  - Route or destination signage
  - Lifting devise or ramps
  - Grab bars/stanchions
  - Pre-boarding announcements
  - Boarding assistance
  - Floor surfaces
- On Board
  - Accessible aisle
  - Courtesy seating
  - lighting & colour contrasting
  - stop request controls
  - Allocated spaces
  - Location of service animals
  - storage of assistive devices
  - On-board announcements of stops and connections

Transportation Standards May Address

- Built Environment
  - Streetscape elements: crosswalks, signals, sidewalks, lighting
- Transportation Infrastructure
  - Boarding platforms
  - Bus stops
  - Facilities/transit terminals
  - Bus shelters/benches
- Policies & Procedures
  - Emergency preparedness and response
  - Notice of disruption of accessible equipment
  - Personal care attendant fares
  - Employee/Operator training
- Accessible Information & Communication
  - Print (multiple formats) / Verbal / Web access

Metro Transit: Buses & Ferries

Accomplishments to Date:

- 72% of bus fleet accessible (100% within 10 years)
- 56% of bus routes accessible
- Transit centres accessible
- Advancements in accessible bus stops, shelters, benches, curb cuts, signage, etc.
- Ferries accessible & announcements
- Employee/operator training

DIALOGUE -- Questions? Comments?

Appropriate future service direction and policy initiatives?

- **Role Of Accessible Transit In Meeting the Mobility Needs Of The Region.**

Current bus and ferry services: What works well? And not so well?

- **ISSUES & CHALLENGES ?**
- **TRAVEL NEEDS & REQUIREMENTS ?**

Your Input!

What do you think about – accessibility & convenience of:

- Bus Stops, Benches and Bus Shelters
- ALF Buses
- Transit Centres
- Ferries and Ferry Terminals
- Signage & Wayfinding
- Park and Ride Lots
- Passenger information?
- Trip Planning?
- Transfers?

Anything else?

Universal Accessibility Plan

THANK YOU

ALF
Accessible Low Floor

March 2011

We Need your Input!

- About buses, ferries, terminals, bus stops and shelters
- About your ability to find and understand the information that you need including the accessibility and clarity of information brochures and guides; the clarity and placement of signs; and the ability to find your way around transit terminals and other service areas
- About current communication methods, the ability to find and understand the information on the Metro Transit website; suggestions for improving customer service for all riders; and suggestions for policies, procedures and practices that affect riders

Accessible Low Floor (ALF) Routes
(Including Conventional, MetroLink, MetroX, and Ferry Services)

Over 50% of all Metro Transit services are now designated as ALF, including:

- Route #1 Spring Garden**
- Route #3 Manors
- Route #6 Quinpool
- Route #7 Robie
- Route #8 Waterfront*
- Route #9 Barrington
- Route #14 Leiblin Park
- Route #15 Purcells Cove
- Route #16 Parkland
- Route #17 Saint Mary's (during school year)
- Route #18 Universities (during school year)
- Route #19 Greystone
- Route #22 Armdale*
- Route #51 Shannon
- Route #52 Crosstown*
- Route #53 Notting Park
- Route #54 Montebello
- Route #56 Dartmouth Crossing
- Route #57 Russell Lake*
- Route #58 Woodlawn*
- Route #61 Auburn/ North Preston
- Route #62 Wildwood*
- Route #63 Woodside
- Route #65 Caldwell (formerly Astral)*
- Route #66 Penhorn
- Route #72 Portland
- Route #87 Downsview
- Route #88 Duke
- Route #89 Bedford
- Route #159 Portland Hills Link
- Route #165 Woodside Link
- Route #185 Sackville Link
- Route #330 Tantallon MetroX
- Alderney, Halifax & Woodside Ferries

* New ALF Routes

**The Dartmouth Bridge Terminal is currently not wheelchair accessible; however, terminal improvements are scheduled in 2011-2012

• Due to street infrastructure, some bus stops along ALF routes are not wheelchair accessible. Customers are advised to only use the bus stops featuring the accessibility symbol

For more information, contact the HRM Call Centre at 490-4000, refer to a Riders' Guide or Route Map, or visit our website at **www.halifax.ca/metrotransit**

MetroTransit
HALIFAX
Regional Municipality

MetroTransit

ALF
Accessible Low Floor

Accessible Service for Mobility-Impaired Customers
(including wheelchair & scooter users)

Effective August 2010

What does an Accessible Low Floor (ALF) bus mean for me?

Accessible low floor buses offer mobility-impaired customers greater freedom and flexibility when travelling on conventional transit by offering many options and features including:

- No step entry and exit
- Bus lowers to curb level
- Entry and exit access ramp for quick and safe wheelchair access
- Two wheelchair safety secures per bus
- Electronically controlled heating system
- Extra wide passenger doors
- Easy to read electronic exterior destination signs
- Seating for 36 passengers with wider aisles

How do I find the ALF Service Schedule and Routes?

- Schedule and route information is provided in Metro Transit's Route Map & Riders' Guide, distributed throughout our retail outlets; by calling the HRM Call Centre at 490-4000 between 7 am and 11 pm; or by visiting www.halifax.ca/metrotransit
- For trip planning assistance, contact the HRM Call Centre at 490-4000
- For bus departure times from your bus stop, call the GoTime #

What is GoTime?

- GoTime is an automated telephone system that allows the customer to obtain bus arrival times servicing a specific bus stop
- To use the GoTime system, dial 480 + the four digit access code found on the bottom of the bus sign. Enter the bus route number followed by the "#" key and information on the next two scheduled buses will be provided

How do I use ALF Service?

When using the ALF service, customers are asked to respect the following guidelines:

- Wheelchairs must be no wider than 30 inches and no longer than 48 inches. Note that most manual and some electric wheelchairs can be accommodated
- Scooters must respect the following specifications:
  - 3 wheel scooters: 40" x 21.125" or less
  - 4 wheel scooters: 40.25" x 21.25" or less
- Note: All mobility scooters will require (4) anchor/tie down points to secure the device on the bus. These can be purchased at local drugstores or wheelchair/scooter dealers.
- Customers must be able to independently board and disembark the bus, deposit the fare, and manoeuvre into the allocated wheelchair space
- Wheelchairs must be in good condition, with a webbing loop attached to the main frame whenever possible, to enable the operator to properly secure the chair/scooter
- Operators are responsible for properly restraining the wheelchair/scooter, using the tie-down system
- If a passenger using a wheelchair/scooter requires further assistance, they must be accompanied by a companion who is required to pay regular fare
- Customers using scooters must be able to manoeuvre the scooter into the docking area and transfer to a fixed transit seat while travelling
- If both wheelchair spaces are occupied, or if the bus is full with a standing load of passengers and the operator cannot board a customer in a wheelchair/scooter, the operator will advise the customer to wait for the next ALF bus. The operator will notify the Transit Communication Centre of the situation to alleviate wait times
- The operator may ask another passenger to voluntarily vacate a designated accessibility seat for a wheelchair/scooter customer; however, the operator cannot displace another fare paying customer
- Mobility-impaired customers are reminded to board and disembark via the front door
- To arrange an orientation session, or if you are uncertain if your wheelchair/scooter can be accommodated, or if you will be able to manoeuvre it into the space provided, contact 490-4000

How do I know if it's an ALF route?

Look for the International Accessibility Symbol on the bus stop signs along designated ALF routes, and on all four sides of the bus

If I see an ALF bus on an undesignated ALF route, can I use it?

With Metro Transit's fleet now consisting of over 200 low floor buses, ALF buses operate on all conventional fixed routes.However, this does not necessarily mean that the route is accessible, as the stops, shelters, sidewalks or curbs may not offer suitable conditions for mobility-impaired customers. Therefore, mobility-impaired customers will not be permitted to travel on undesignated routes for safety purposes.

Mobility Scooters now allowed on ALF buses!

As of August 2010, mobility scooters are allowed on all designated ALF conventional bus routes.

Maximum size restrictions are: **3-Wheel Scooters: 40" L x 21.125" W**

4-Wheel Scooters: 40.25" L x 21.25" W

Note: All mobility scooters will require (4) anchors/tie down points to secure the device on the bus.

IBI GROUP

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

MetroTransit

Ferries & Buses

Universal Accessibility Plan

May 2011

IBI GROUP

Presentation Outline

- Study Objectives & Work Plan
- Legislative/Regulatory Environment
- Service Standards
- Existing Conditions /Observations
- Opportunities/Strategic Direction
- Discussion:

Access to All

Universal Access = Inclusive and Universal Design

Not only for

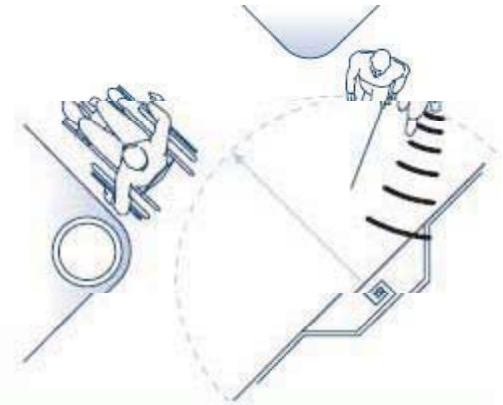
But also

Study Objectives & Work Plan

HOW TO IMPROVE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE TRANSIT SYSTEM

Metro Transit proactive in making it easier for the public to gain access to buses and ferries

- Legislative Environment – national trends
- Review/audit existing Metro Transit:
  - Infrastructure/Technology
  - Operations
  - Marketing & Communications
- Consultation important part of process



Legislative Environment

"When barriers get in the way of people with disabilities participating fully in society as a result of their disabilities, everyone loses."

- Nova Scotia: Human Rights Act / Disabled Persons Commission Act
  - "Recognizes the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all…"
  - While addressing basic protections under law does not address specific standards or codes of practice for transportation services

Legislative Environment (cont.)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Comprehensive civil rights legislation
- Specific standards for transportation services

Ontario: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

- Specific standards for transportation services

What is an accessibility standard?

- An accessibility standard is a rule (set of measures, policies & practices) that persons and organizations have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers.

Transportation Standards May Address

- Built Environment
  - Streetscape elements: crosswalks, signals, sidewalks, lighting
- Transportation Infrastructure
  - Boarding platforms
  - Bus stops
  - Facilities/transit terminals
  - Bus shelters/benches
- Policies & Procedures
  - Emergency preparedness and response
  - Notice of disruption of accessible equipment
  - Personal care attendant fares
  - Employee/Operator training
- Accessible Information & Communication
  - Print & signage (multiple formats) / Verbal / Web access

Transportation Standards May Address

- Exterior/Boarding
  - Route or destination signage
  - Lifting devise or ramps
  - Grab bars/stanchions
  - Pre-boarding announcements
  - Boarding assistance
  - Floor surfaces
- On Board
  - Accessible aisle
  - Courtesy seating
  - Lighting & colour contrasting
  - Stop request controls
  - Allocated spaces
  - Location of service animals
  - Storage of assistive devices
  - On-board announcements & signage of stops and connections

Existing Conditions / Observations

Task: to identify

- Existing conditions that may present obstacles
- Opportunities to improve accessibility through Universal Design

Observations:

- Many accessible elements including buses, vessels (& boarding systems), bus shelters and bus stops
- System usability can be enhanced by improving the accessibility of the path-of-travel between accessible elements

System Considerations

Program Access

"when viewed in its entirety, the program is readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities"

- Changes in policy & operations
- Architectural barrier removal

Opportunities for accessible design are different in New Construction v. Alterations

- Technical Infeasibility
- To the Maximum Extent Feasible

Accessibility Score Card

• ALF Bus Fleet Acquisition / Deployment	A-
• Ferry Vessels and Terminals	B+
• Bus Transit Centres & Terminals	B
• Wayfinding / Signage	B-
• Customer information / Trip Planning	C
• Bus Stops and Amenities	C-
• Park and Ride Lots	C-

On the Right Track

Metro Transit Buses

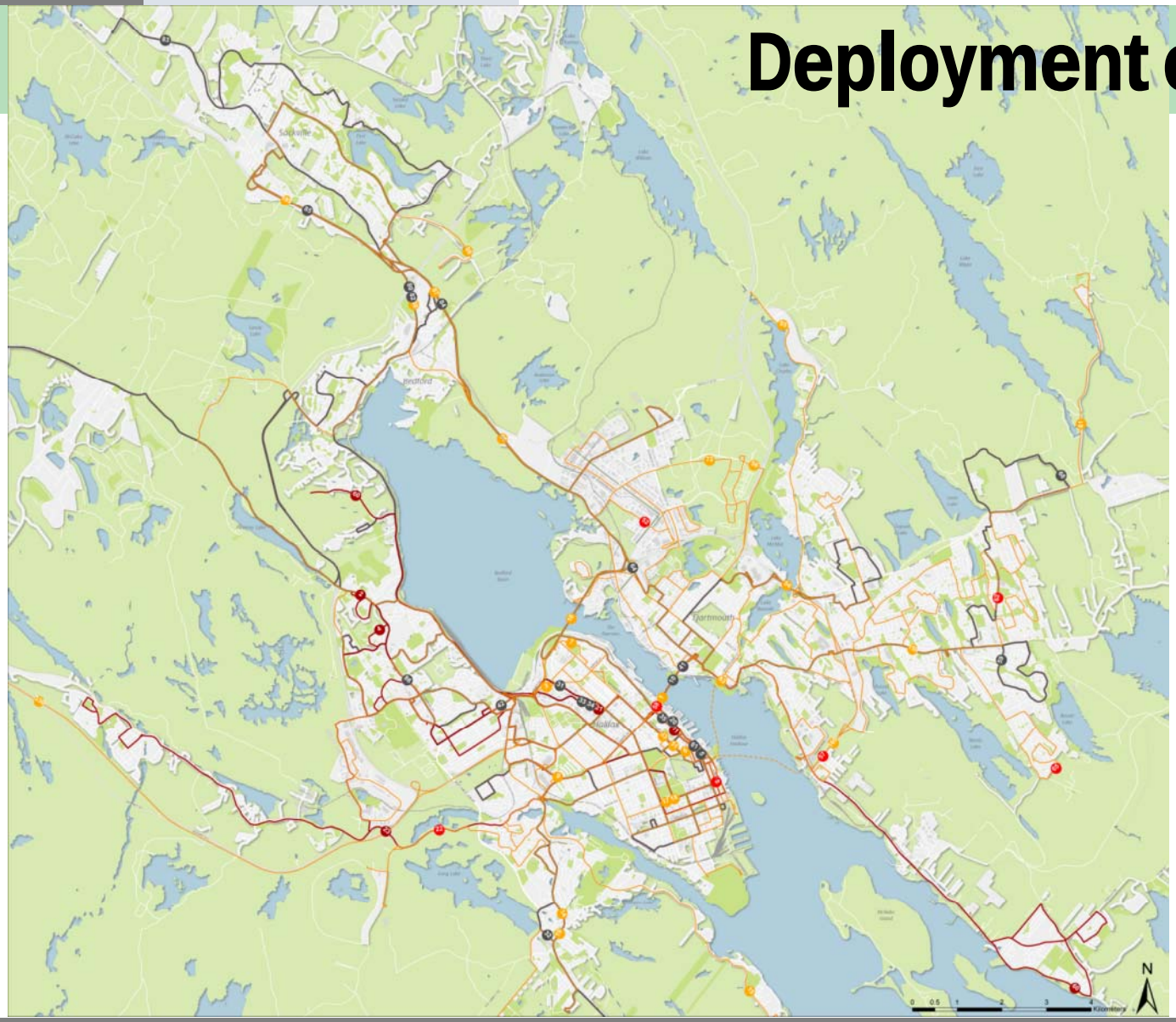
- ✓72% of the bus fleet are "ALF"
- ✓All buses newer than 1996 are ALF
- ✓100% ALF fleet by 2019

ALF
Accessible Low Floor

- ✓56% of bus routes have ALFs
- ✓67% will have ALFs in 2011
- ✓100% will have ALFs by 2019

Recent Accomplishments

Deployment of ALF Buses

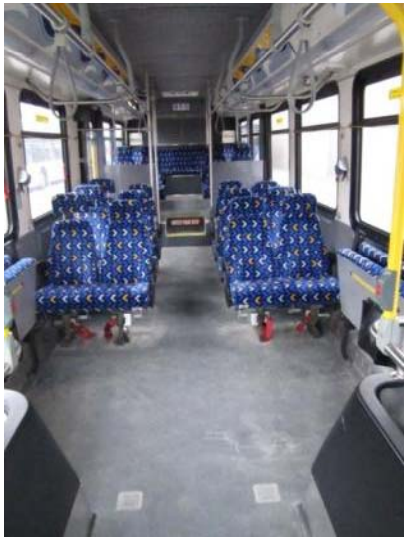


Accessible Design

ALF Bus Characteristics

Entrance
Ramp or Lift

Wheelchair locations
Forward & rear facing



Handrails
Full vehicle length

Signage
Priority Seating

Recent Accomplishments

Metro Transit Ferries

- Vessels are accessible

- Terminals
  - Water Street
  - Alderney Gate
  - Woodside

  (lack accessible restrooms & path of travel leading to the entrance of the Woodside terminal has excessive slopes)

- Audible announcements

  (no equivalent visual information provided)

Observations

Transit Centres & Terminals

Fully Accessible

+ Dal Terminal
+ MicMac Center
+ Portland Hills
+ Sackville

Nominally Accessible

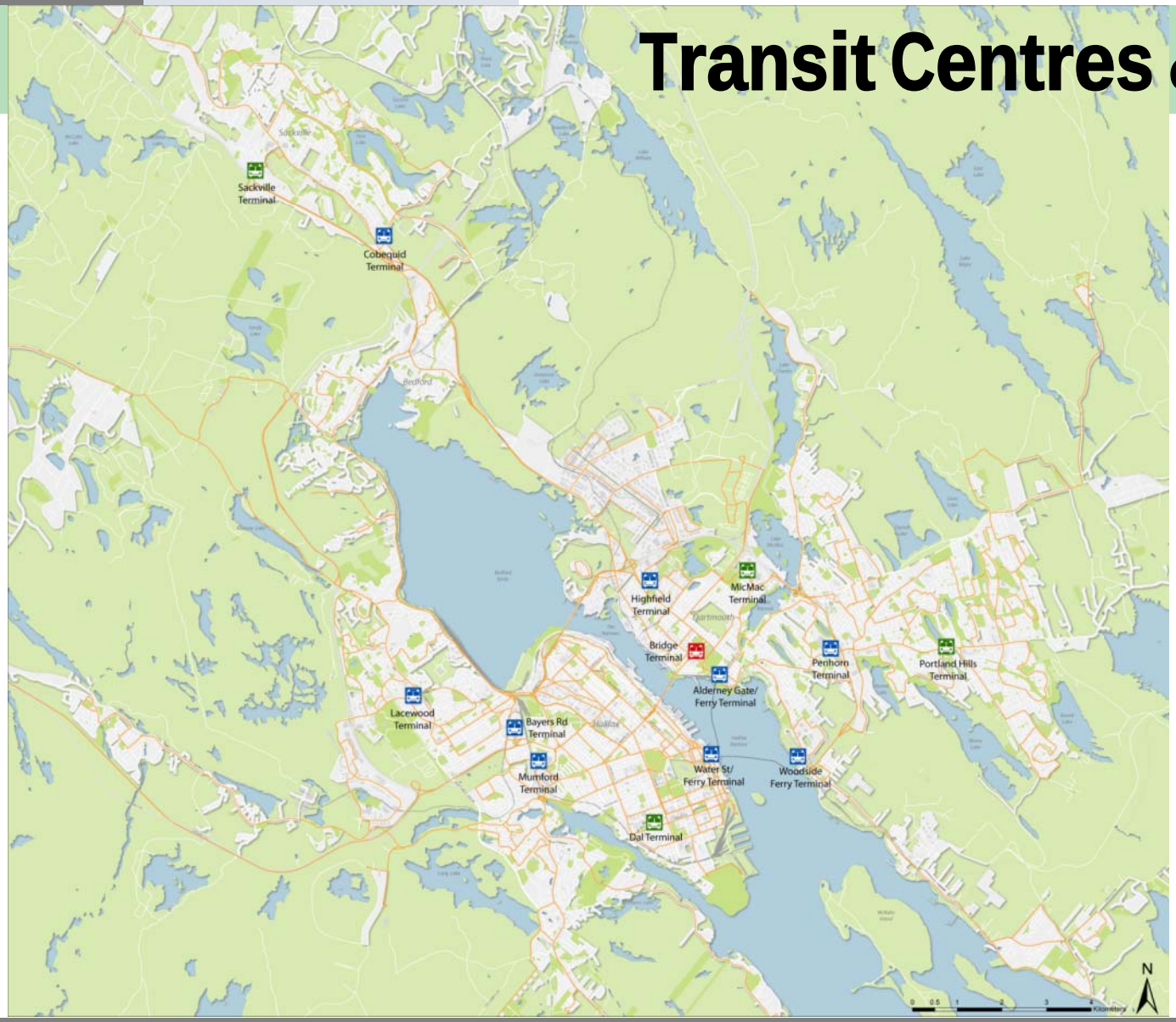
- o Bayers Road
- o Cobequid
- o Highfield
- o Lacewood
- o Mumford
- o Penhorn

Not Accessible

– Bridge Terminal

Observations

Transit Centres & Terminals



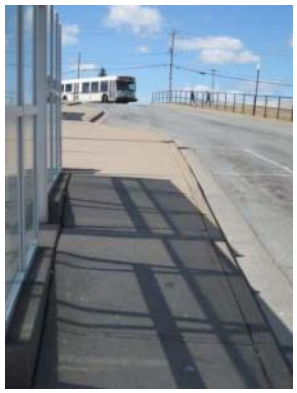
LEGEND

ACCESSIBILITY OF TRANSIT CENTRES AND TERMINALS

- Fully Accessible
- Nominally Accessible
- Not Accessible

Facility Location & Design

Transit Centres & Terminals



Location
on more level sites

Parking
Provide access aisles

Entrances
Highlight accessible entrance

Signage
Provide tactile & Braille

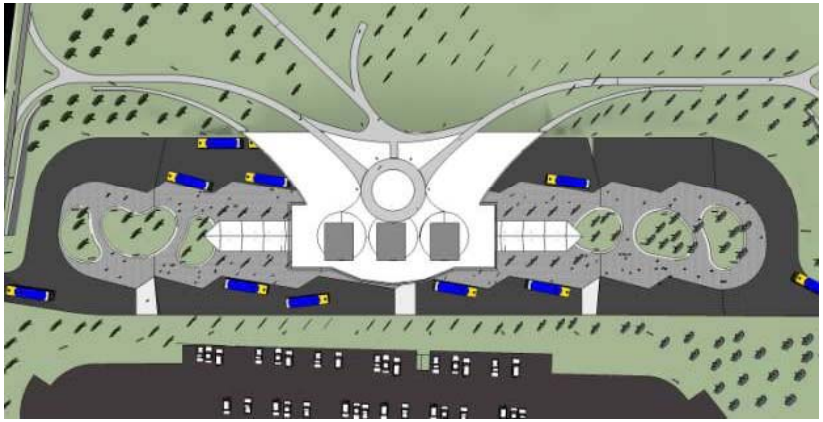
Restrooms
Provide 1 fully accessible restroom

On the Horizon

Dartmouth Bridge Terminal

Today

Coming in 2012



Observations

Wayfinding / Signage

A systematic approach to wayfinding and signage is needed.

Accessible Communications

Customer Information

Website

- Adjustments to facilitate screen readers
- Provide option to change font size

http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/

Print Materials

- Good colour, contrast, use of fonts
- Plan for alternative formats when requested

Bus Stop Timetable Information

- Some displays broken or removed

GOTIME

Telephone

- TTY Line for Access-a-Bus only

490-4000

Opportunity to Improve

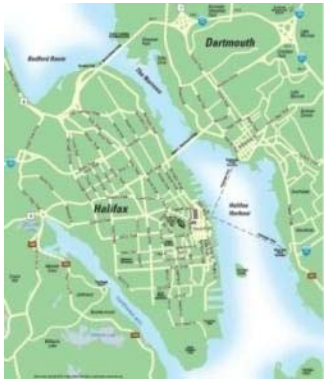
Customer Trip Planning

Issue: Customers with mobility limitations presently cannot adequately plan their transit trip before they travel.

Customers need to know…

? Whether the bus stop they want to use is accessible

? If there is safe pedestrian access to and egress from the bus stop



Proposed Solution: Bus Stop Accessibility Guide

✓ To provide customers with up-to-date advisory information regarding the serviceability of all Metro Transit bus stops

Opportunity to Improve

Park-Ride Lots

Common Issues Observed:

- Very few designated spaces
- Indirect routing between parking and bus stops (e.g., Penhorn)
- Generally poor wayfinding (e.g., Mumford)

Opportunity to Improve

Bus Stops & Amenities

There is wide variation in the physical design and condition of bus stops, shelters and pedestrian facilities along Metro Transit bus routes.

Design Standards

Bus Stops & Amenities

Context-specific investment

Coordinate with HRM Public Works streets & sidewalks replacement plan to prevent barriers on new facilities

Bus Stops

Ensure safe crossing between inbound & outbound stops

Passenger Shelters

Provide accessible path to shelter entrance

Progressive Agenda

Where do we go from here?

- ✓ Think strategically
- ✓ Reshape existing policies
- ✓ Adopt formal standards
- ✓ Prioritize accessibility improvements

Reshape Existing Policies

Current Policy:

"With Metro Transit's fleet now consisting of over 200 low floor buses, ALF buses operate on all conventional fixed routes. However, this does not necessarily mean that a route is accessible, as the stops, shelters, sidewalks or curbs may not offer suitable conditions for mobility-impaired passengers. Therefore, **mobility-impaired passengers will not be permitted to travel on undesignated routes for safety purposes.**" (emphasis added)

Source: Metro Transit Accessible Service for Mobility-Impaired Customers brochure effective August 2010; restated on www.halifax.ca/metrotransit.

Suggested Policy:

Most Metro Transit routes operate 100% accessible low-floor (ALF) buses, making it more convenient than ever for customers with mobility impairments to travel by bus. However, varying conditions exist at bus stops around the system and persons with mobility impairments are advised that not all bus stops are serviceable under all conditions. Metro Transit is working to eliminate barriers to mobility on a priority basis. Meanwhile mobility-impaired customers are encouraged to consider the condition of the bus stops they expect to use prior to traveling on routes that are not yet fully accessible. Contact Metro Transit for further information about bus stops where safe accessibility may be at issue.

Context-Specific Accessibility

- To be considered "fully accessible" the bus stop must be connected to a safe pedestrian network.

- Pedestrian network characteristics are tied to the prevailing land uses, density of development, and transportation infrastructure in the community.

  For example, the pedestrian network in downtown Halifax is inherently different from the pedestrian network in Lower Sackville.

- Metro Transit priorities must be coordinated with HRM streets and sidewalks planning.

Focus on Customers

Achieving Functional Accessibility

- Bus Stop Access & Egress
  - Number of Accessible Stops per one-way Route Kilometre
  - Accessible Bus Stop Guide
- The Waiting Experience
  - Safe location
  - Audible bus arrival announcements
  - Front, side and rear destination sign
  - Deployable Ramp
- On Board Travel
  - Accessible aisle
  - Grab bars/stanchions
  - Suitable lighting & colour contrast
  - Allocated spaces / Priority seating
  - Accommodation of service animals
  - Storage of assistive devices
  - Audible onboard announcement of bus stops and connections
  - Getting off bus stop request signals

Refine System Design

Measures, Targets & Standards

Proposed Design Guidelines

Accessible Bus Stops per Route Kilometre

Service Area Characteristics	Total Bus Stops per Km.	Target Accessibility Threshold	Accessible Bus Stops per Km.
Urban Core	4.0 – 5.5	90%	3.6 – 5.0
Urban District	3.0 – 5.0	75%	2.3 – 3.8
Suburban Center	2.5 - 4.0	67%	1.7 – 3.0
Suburban	2.0 – 3.5	50%	1.0 – 1.8
Rural	1.0 – 2.0	33%	0.3 – 1.3

Design Tools

Standard Definitions

What is a "Fully Accessible" Metro Transit Route?

- ✓ 100% accessible vessels and buses assigned and deployed
- ✓ Accessible bus stop at points of origin and destination
  - Physically connected to the community
  - Clearly designated path finding with signage
  - Safe serviceability by Metro Transit bus wheelchair ramp
- ✓ Customer Information for Trip Planning and Daily Travel
  - Real-time schedule information - Go Time
  - Accessible Bus Stop Guide
  - Well trained and caring employees

Forward Planning

Prioritizing Improvements

Accessibility "Hot Spots"

- Highly walkable
- Commercial districts and major malls
- Institutions – medical; academic; government
- Major transit destinations / transfer hub
- High density residential
- Pedestrian infrastructure

Accessibility "Warm Spots"

- Generally walkable
- Neighborhood commercial districts
- Medium and high density residential
- Parks and community centers
- Local schools

Forward Planning

Roadmap to Universal Accessibility

LEGEND

PROPOSED ACCESSIBILITY HOT AND WARM SPOTS

Hot Spots

Warm Spots

Universal Accessibility Plan

Your thoughts?

Universal Accessibility Plan

THANK YOU

ALF
Accessible Low Floor

May 2011