

# MILTON TRANSIT

## 2019 Transit Accessibility Plan



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## **Section 1 - Executive Summary**

Mobility needs for the Town of Milton continue to evolve relative to population and employment growth. As one of Canada's fastest growing municipalities, Milton Transit plays a key role in providing a reliable transportation option to residents and visitors. Additionally, a steady increase in ridership over the past several years has continued to yield demand for more conventional and specialized service, with improved accessibility. Driven by customer need and expectation, corporate policies and Provincial legislative requirements, a forward-thinking accessibility presence remains a priority in the delivery of public transit service in Milton.

### **Accessibility is for everybody!**

To build Milton Transit as a viable transportation option, all customers must have access. The commitment to purchase fully accessible transit fleet over the past eleven (11) years is a significant step in this direction. However, overall system accessibility consists of components beyond accessible transit buses, including but not limited to: increased service levels, facility access, improved pedestrian connections, bus stop surface pads - shelters - signage, snow clearing standards, wayfinding, availability of accessible transit information and supportive operational programs, policies and customer service. For many, Milton Transit is the primary means of travel to and from work, school, medical appointments, community events and social activities. As Milton Transit accessibility improves, everyone benefits, leading to improved connectivity and increased ridership.

The purpose of this accessibility plan is to identify barriers and establish strategies to address local accessibility issues and any regulatory requirements in 2019. Consistent with requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) 191/11, annual public consultation will be conducted to discuss and assess progress toward full system accessibility.

### **Milton Transit is dedicated to:**

- developing, improving and enhancing accessible transit services and associated facilities / infrastructure;
- including people with disabilities in developing / reviewing the annual accessibility plan, in parallel with the Town's annual accessibility plan;
- providing accessible services to customers, employees and contractors; and
- optimizing municipal investments to provide the right service for individuals (e.g. door-to-door specialized transit, accessible conventional services, etc.).

## Section 2 - Milton Transit Services Profile

Milton Transit provides both conventional and specialized transit services. Their respective profiles are as follows:

### Conventional Service - 2018 Service Profile

Table 1: Summary of Conventional Transit service

Criteria	Description
Type of service	Fixed route, interlined - radial service at the Milton GO Station terminal. Contracted operation provided by Diversified Transportation (PWTransit Canada) with Town-owned fleet.
Hours of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Monday to Friday 5:20 a.m. to 11:10 p.m.</li><li>Saturday 7:10 a.m. to 7:40 p.m.</li></ul>
Annual passenger boardings (forecast estimate)	570,000
Annual revenue service hours (forecast estimate)	48,080
Number of fixed routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 regular fixed routes</li><li>3 school special routes</li></ul>
Types of services	Conventional service, school specials, industrial specials, Trans-Cab, GO Drop-off shuttle service
Fleet composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>18 accessible heavy-duty, conventional buses</li><li>5 accessible medium-duty buses</li></ul>



## Specialized Service - 2018 Service Profile

Table 2: Summary of Specialized Transit service

Criteria	Description
Type of service	Shared ride, door-to-door, pre-booked service Registrants are able to book trips up to seven (7) days in advance. Trips, with the exception of subscription trips, are awarded on a first come first serve basis. There is no guarantee of trip availability. Contracted operation provided by Diversified Transportation (PWTransit Canada), subcontracting to Milton Taxi and PWTransit using small buses, sedans and accessible vans.
Hours of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Monday to Friday 5:20 a.m. to 11:10 p.m.</li><li>Saturday 7:10 a.m. to 7:40 p.m.</li></ul>
Registrants	984
Annual passenger trips (forecast estimate)	21,000
Fleet requirements	Fleet requirements are provided by contracted service providers, corresponding directly to demand and budget.

## Section 3 - Previous Accessibility Achievements

Milton Transit has implemented many accessibility initiatives over the last several years with development and enhancement of policies and procedures. As a result, many of the requirements set out in the ISAR 191/11 have been implemented ahead of regulatory compliance dates. Milton Transit continues to update policies, procedures and services to improve accessibility, reliability, connectivity and enhance customer mobility options.

The following improvements have been completed to identify and remove accessibility barriers:

### Conventional Transit

- Purchased fully accessible buses. All conventional transit buses have been 100% accessible since 2009. These buses include accessibility features such as high contrast stanchions / hand rails, illuminated external electronic destination signs, stop request buttons / pull cords, slip resistant flooring and the clear identification of priority and courtesy seating areas.
- Installed bus stops, shelters, landing pads at a variety of bus stop locations throughout the service area.
- Installed updated static departure / scheduling information at all bus stops.
- Installed accessibility infrastructure at the Milton GO Station.
- Installed a bus only lane on Drew Centre, at the Milton GO Station.
- Installed and implemented electronic visual and audible annunciation and pre-board annunciation equipment.
- Identified support persons and removed fare requirement.
- Made available accessibility equipment information on Milton Transit web page ([www.miltontransit.ca](http://www.miltontransit.ca)).

## **Specialized Transit**

- Rebranded Milton Paratransit Services to Milton access+ specialized services.
- Developed and implemented centralized reservation process, same-day booking process, and established no-show / cancellation policies.
- Aligned specialized transit service area with conventional service area, while maintaining access to all eligible residents within municipal boundaries
- Implemented updated eligibility procedures for the specialized transit application process.
- Introduced categories of eligibility as part of the eligibility process under the eligibility criteria for specialized transit services.
- Established an independent in person eligibility and appeal process
- Introduced specialized busing for some high demand service delivery and unique mobility device requirements.
- Committed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) specialized transit service providers to accept registrants and associated service connections (if / when connections are established).

## **Administration and Policy**

- Updated Milton Transit website design with greater opportunities for increased customer service and accessible display of transit information, policies and programs.
- Use of Milton Transit social media, including Twitter and Facebook.
- Implemented Metrolinx Trip Planner, centralizing all transit system trip information across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).
- Established corporate accessibility policies.
- Implemented emergency preparedness, response and evacuation procedures for operators of conventional and specialized transit service.
- Implemented fare and service parity in parallel with accessible conventional services, effective January 2012.

- Developed criteria, policies and procedures for service use by visitors and registrants from other municipalities for specialized transit services.
- Developed associated policies and procedures for the communication of service delays and travel with companions and children on specialized transit services.

## 2018 Work Plan Progress to Date

The 2018 Accessibility work plan consists of administrative, service-related and infrastructure rehabilitation projects. The following table provides a summary of actions and progress to date:

Actions	Progress to Date
1. Continue to improve infrastructure at bus stops and other related transit infrastructure. Install bus pads and shelters at various locations.	Completed. Bus pads installed at 70 locations. Shelter installed at Milton GO Station.
2. Roll-out Milton Transit brand on new bus stop signs, ensuring sign visibility and legibility.	In progress. Reviewing opportunities to incorporate regional identifiers with Metrolinx.
3. Update transit design guidelines to incorporate best practice bus stop accessibility improvements and other related standards	In progress. Part of 2019-2023 Transit Service Review and Master Plan Update.
4. Develop and implement a process to manage static customer timetable information at all bus stop locations, including trip departure and other relevant information.	Completed. All stops contain static departure information and incorporate information from electronic systems.
5. Develop and implement a process to manage static map information at all bus shelter locations, including but not limited to: system map, route identifiers and customer contact information.	In progress.
6. Implement service growth improvements to enhance coverage and availability, including: service to Willmott / Ford neighbourhoods and Derry Green Business Park (subject to timing of development).	Completed. New 10 Farmstead route launched in September 2018. Derry Green Business Park service postponed due to timing of development.



7. Review current and plan future service requirements via 2019-2023 Transit Master Plan Update and Service Review.	In progress through fall / winter 2018 / 2019
8. Implement real time electronic customer information via myMilton mobile app, Metrolinx Triplinx Trip Planner and Google Transit.	In progress.
9. Investigate low floor bus options for the delivery of specialized transit services.	Completed. Information Report approved by Council in September 2018, subject to 2019 budget approval.
10. Review opportunities for interregional specialized transit connections with Oakville.	In progress. Part of 2019-2023 Transit Service Review and Master Plan Update.

## Section 4 - 2019 Accessibility Work Plan

Milton Transit will ensure that it complies with all regulations in IASR 191/11 by the stated compliance dates. The following provides a summary of the actions planned in 2018 that will make Milton Transit more accessible:

- Continue to improve infrastructure at bus stops and other related transit infrastructure. Install bus pads and shelters at various locations.
- Finalize the roll-out of Milton Transit branding on new bus stop signs, ensuring sign visibility and legibility.
- Implement service improvements to maintain service reliability, improve coverage, etc.
- Implement new, dedicated specialized transit service delivery model to accommodate growth and enhanced customer service.
  - Purchase specialized transit vehicles
  - Update service policies
  - Develop new communication publications
  - Launch new service delivery
- Develop and implement a process to manage static map information at all bus shelter locations, including but not limited to: system map, route identifiers and customer contact information.

- Review opportunities for travel training to support service integration of specialized and conventional transit services.
- Implement an online public engagement tool for future Transit Accessibility Plan initiatives.
- Develop a Transit Service Review and Master Plan Update to enhance services and forecast future transit developments.
- Develop an Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) Strategy for implementation in 2020.

## **IASR 191/11 Transportation Compliance Initiatives**

There are no transportation compliance initiatives in 2019. For further details related to corporate IASR 191/11 compliance initiatives and subsequent workplans, please refer to the 2018 - 2023 Town of Milton Accessibility Plan.

It is important to note that the availability of sustainable resources is a contributing factor when assessing the pace of progress in reducing or eliminating accessibility barriers. Resource constraints will mean that not all barriers can be addressed at once. As a result, prioritization of initiatives is required. While it is important to focus on barriers to be removed, it is equally important to recognize the vast steps taken in a relatively short period of time.

## **Section 5 - Methodology for Plan Review and Update**

The 2019 Milton Transit Accessibility Plan is guided by the 2018-2023 Town of Milton Accessibility Plan, consistent with requirements established under the IASR 191/11. The annual plan will provide an update on accessibility initiatives that reflect IASR 191/11 compliance as well as forecasting initiatives that support the continuous removal of accessibility barriers. Improvements will be reported annually and will be used to measure progress and develop subsequent annual workplans.

There are two (2) key inputs to the annual accessibility plan, including:

11. Legislative and regulatory requirements and associated compliance timelines
12. Customer feedback and annual public consultation

The 2019 Milton Transit Accessibility Plan feeds directly into business practices as well as annual capital and operating budget submissions.

## **Section 6 - Process for Managing, Evaluating and Taking Action on Customer Feedback**

Feedback from customers can be generated by the customer or transferred internally via the service provider to Milton Transit staff. Generally, when Milton Transit initiates a feedback request, it is related to a specific issue. The methods for evaluating and taking action with respect to each method are described below.

### **Receiving Feedback (Customer Generated)**

Feedback from customers (positive, negative or indifferent) serves as key inputs to Milton Transit's service delivery and annual service plans, including those elements dealing specifically with accessibility.

Customer feedback with respect to service operations is directed to customer service information centre representatives at the Milton Transit service provider facility. Planning and administration related comments are forwarded to Transit staff at the Town of Milton for review and response. All customer comments are recorded and responded in alignment with corporate correspondence response policies. Comments are received from customers and members of the public via telephone, in person, mail, email, as well as the Milton Transit web site and corporate social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter).

In all cases, where a customer has indicated their desire for a response, and to the extent they have provided valid contact information, Milton Transit staff contacts the customer in the same manner the comment was received.

In terms of compliments, all Milton Transit employees (contracted or internal) who are identified in compliments received from customers are acknowledged in the form of an open memo or letter from the Operations Supervisor (or designate) for the quality customer service they have provided. Additionally, compliments are raised at regular operator meetings and retained in personnel files.

Requests received are generally related to service delivery (actual service operations, new service requests, requests for amenities, etc.) and are forwarded to the appropriate area for review and response. In the event that a request can be acted upon outside of the service planning process, appropriate action is taken and the customer is advised accordingly. These comments, along with the Transit Master Plan and other corporate strategic plans, help shape annual budgetary requests.

Complaints are recorded and forwarded to the service provider Operations Manager for investigation and action as appropriate. Customers who request a response to a complaint are advised that an investigation has taken place and the matter was dealt with accordingly.

Specifically, conventional transit service complaints are categorized and compared / contrasted with prior months / years. This summation allows Milton Transit to determine trends and whether new programs, policies and services have had an impact on customer contacts or require further examination.

## **Gathering Feedback (Milton Transit Generated)**

Milton Transit utilizes a number of methodologies to gather feedback from customers including:

- Online surveys via Milton Transit web page - as required
- On-board surveys - as required
- Town Committees - as required
- Peer consultations - ongoing
- Service Plan development and process - annually
- Service Reviews - as required
- Transit Master Plan development and process - approx. every five (5) years

All data and information collected assist in making decisions with respect to the topic being reviewed and assessed.

## **Section 7 - Process for Estimating Demand for Specialized Transportation Services**

The process to identify service demand requirements includes an analysis of factors and influences which can be variable over time. These factors include:

- Historic ridership trends and growth analysis on both conventional and specialized transit services
- Eligibility criteria for specialized services, noting given requirements under IASR 191/11 involving transition to categories of eligibility in 2017
- The level of accessibility of the conventional transit service offered, including accessible buses and stops and amenities as well as areas of the Town the service covers; this also includes the extent to which the service provider has implemented programs to encourage specialized transit customers to utilize accessible conventional service when possible as well as the level of service integration opportunity that exists between the conventional and specialized services
- The location of key origins and destinations within the Town and their proximity to one another, including the Milton GO Station, older adult homes, medical facilities, rehabilitation facilities, medical offices, Milton District Hospital and major retail areas, all of which tend to be primary origins and destinations for specialized transit customers
- Local demographic trends
- Anticipated changes to local policies and procedures

Detailed analysis is completed as part of the annual budget process based on the influence of these factors throughout the year. It is important to note that at any point in time, the impact level of these factors vary, and as such, determining demand for specialized services is an ongoing exercise.

## Section 8 - Steps to Reduce Wait Times for Specialized Transportation Services

Similar to conventional transit customers, specialized transit customers identify on time performance as a high priority in service delivery. As such, Milton Transit has a dedicated service contractor that provides on demand taxi services (within established time parameters) as well as Town-owned dedicated bus service, which include same day service.

However, given that the service is classified as a “shared-ride” service, there are a number of external factors that could influence performance against this target. These factors include, but are not limited to the following:

- Traffic conditions, which can be significantly influenced by weather conditions, road construction, delays caused by train crossings, etc.
- Designated drop-off location issues (i.e. automobiles parked in designated drop-off locations) which result in delays in dropping customers currently on-board
- Customers not ready for their pick-up
- Customers who do not take their scheduled trip and do not cancel in advance triggers the service provider to wait an additional five (5) minute past a scheduled reservation (policy driven), which may impact future consecutive trips

A contracted centralized reservationist approved and implemented in 2014 has provided further control and monitoring of scheduled trips, with emphasis in addressing trip no shows and other procedural obligations to minimize customer wait time impact. Additionally, the implementation of scheduling / dispatching software has provided additional information to assist in improving scheduling and subsequent operations, with the ability to measure system performance. Continued program management through the use of Town-owned dedicated specialized transit vehicles and trained contracted operators have been incorporated as part of the 2017 Budget and will continue in 2018.



## Section 9 - Procedures to Address Equipment Failures

### Conventional Transit Services

Conventional transit fleet requirements are determined based on the number of buses required during peak operating periods, including buses that are subject to required inspections and maintenance - referred to as spare fleet ratio. This ratio can vary significantly given factors of age and make / model of the fleet noting that while older buses may require higher levels of maintenance to keep them operating efficiently, newer buses tend to have more electronic-related failures.

There are a number of actions taken to mitigate in-service breakdowns, including the following:

- Daily bus defect reports are submitted to maintenance staff by the operator at the end of service day for follow-up prior to bus redeployment.
- Every evening when buses are serviced (refueled, farebox emptied, etc.), employees also check that bus features appear to be in working order. In the event that an issue is discovered / identified, the bus is either repaired immediately, or removed from service the following day until it can be repaired.
- Each day, prior to a bus pull out from the garage, operators complete a pre-trip inspection and circle check, ensuring that the bus is functioning properly. This check includes the various accessibility features on the bus (i.e. ramp, kneeling feature, mobility device securement equipment, etc.). If any features are found to be not functioning, operators will attempt to have it repaired prior to going into service. If the bus cannot be repaired in time, or an alternative equipment solution cannot be employed, a replacement bus is assigned.

While these actions mitigate in-service breakdowns, they do not eliminate them. When a bus defect disables the bus while in service, the following procedures are instituted:

- The bus operator contacts dispatch and relays the defect information.
- Dispatch determines the extent of the defect and identifies a change-off location and estimated time.
- In consultation with maintenance staff, dispatch arranges for a replacement bus to be dispatched.

It should be noted that these procedures may be impacted by severe weather events or other vehicle issues that could result in the inability to replace all buses that experience

difficulties in service (i.e. severe weather conditions impacting the functionality of the bus ramp or kneeling features).

## **Specialized Transit Services**

In accordance with municipal By-Law 94-2004 as amended, as well as the established demand responsive contract with the current specialized transit service provider, any accessible vehicle that incurs breakdown must be repaired as soon as practicable. Additionally, the service provider is required to request an accessible vehicle from another broker to accommodate the trip.