




Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	December 2, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton Street Railway Accessibility Delegation Response (PW24084) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

At the February 5, 2024 Public Works Committee meeting, Transit staff were directed to report back to the Public Works Committee respecting the concerns raised by two delegations respecting accessibility issues with the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR).

This report provides information encompassing responses provided, actions taken by the Transit Division, and next steps regarding accessibility on conventional transit service delivery.

INFORMATION

The delegations expressed accessibility concerns in six broad themes: compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (“AODA”); Transit Bus Operator (“Operator”) training, bus design and equipment, bus procurement, front door entry, and accessibility features on the website. The Transit Division has compiled information on the six key themes and this is presented in Appendix “A” attached to Report PW24084. The sum of the themes highlights the need for continued collaboration and improvement with respect to inclusion and accessibility on the transit system beyond legislative compliance, and to remove barriers where operationally possible, reinforce service

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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expectations with front line staff in the Operations section and continued work with partners such as Metrolinx and the bus manufacturers.

The prescriptive legislative document for Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, S.O. 2005, c. 11 can be found on the Province of Ontario's website, but for ease of reading, the Act establishes that:

- Municipalities must offer accessible transit and/or alternative transportation must be provided.
- The Transportation Standard defines that buses must have a ramp, kneel, external/internal annunciators, and be capable of carrying a standard size personal mobility device (30" wide by 48" in length).
- Fares charged must be the same on both conventional buses and specialized transportation vehicles, known as fare parity.

The City of Hamilton's Transit Division meets the requirements. Persons with disabilities who travel on conventional transit (HSR) are supported by low floor accessible vehicles which lower and have entry ramps, designated seating, priority boarding, and visual and auditory announcements. Personalized alternatives may include the ability to travel with a support person at no cost, travel orientation, and by requesting assistance from the Operator. Transit also works with the Human Resources Talent and Diversity Division to review and assess accommodation plans upon request when a request is made in order to determine reasonable accommodations. While conventional transit strives to be as inclusive and accessible as possible, it may not be possible to meet the unique needs of every rider through mass transit, and therefore, specialized transportation may be a more suitable mode of travel for some individuals.

The City of Hamilton offers specialized transit through the City's Accessible Transportation Services section of the Transit Division. Specialized transit services people with functional limitations due to disability or health conditions who are unable to use conventional bus service. Accessible Transportation Services include the door-to-door shared ride service delivered by a contractor (Disabled and Aged Regional Transit System, operating as "DARTS") and the Taxi Scrip program.

Subsequent to these delegations, and considering similar comments made from other delegates in the past several months, Transit has responded to and/or acted on concerns where possible, through a combination of approaches including individual contact, written correspondence and attendance at meetings with the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities or responses provided in open session at the Public Works Committee meetings. Transit continues to work to provide reasonable accommodation to address accessibility issues when they are raised either through

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individual contacts to customer service, through the AODA feedback mechanism or as may be raised through the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities.

Conclusion

The City of Hamilton's Transit Division regularly reviews opportunities to improve service delivery, inclusion and accessibility of both conventional and specialized transit services to improve the overall system for Hamiltonians and meets all legislative requirements. The Transit Division continually reviews customer feedback and remains committed to continuous improvement. Continuous improvement projects based on customer feedback are underway to improve the customer experience for persons with disabilities.

This Information Report fulfils the February 5, 2024 Public Works Committee motion that staff be directed to report back to the Public Works Committee by the end of Q3 2024, respecting the concerns expressed on February 5, 2024 by Delegations from the Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities respecting Accessibility Issues with the HSR.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" to Report PW24084 – Response to Delegate Themes