

Message from Mazin Aribi, Chair of ACAT

As the end of 2020 approaches, I'd like to highlight some of the improvements the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) members have been working on with TTC staff. Even during these unprecedented times of COVID-19, ACAT members and staff have been working on improving accessibility on Wheel-Trans and the conventional TTC service.

Members provided advice on: the new Wheel-Trans ProMaster 7-metre vehicle and testing the new Wheel-Trans mobile app. Members were also involved in the introduction of the new Self-Serve Portal, an online solution for Wheel-Trans applicants to fill out and submit a Wheel-Trans Eligibility application. ACAT members are providing advice to ensure that Easier Access Phase 3 is on track, in addition to having preliminary discussions regarding Phase 4. Members have also been involved in improving the Third Party Entrance Connection Policy and the impact of bicycle lanes on TTC/Wheel-Trans service.

In closing, we would like to wish all Wheel-Trans riders and their families a happy, healthy and safe holiday season on behalf of all ACAT members.

Stay safe, stay well.



Mazin Aribi
Chair of ACAT

Access



Wheel-Trans

Newsletter of the Wheel-Trans community

Winter 2020

Message from Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans

As another year comes to a close, we would like to use this opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments during 2020. While the pandemic has forced us to revisit the rollout of a number of initiatives related to the Wheel-Trans Transformation, it has also shown us how resilient and adaptable Wheel-Trans customers and staff are.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to quickly mobilize and introduce a number of procedures aimed at prioritizing customer and operator safety, many of which are still in place today. Some of the new procedures included: introducing mandatory face masks/coverings for customers and operators, conducting health screening questionnaires for all Wheel-Trans operators before they start their shift and for all customers before booking and offering solo rides.

While 2020 introduced a number of obstacles to the roll-out of some transformative initiatives, including Family of Services and mandatory re-registration, the Wheel-Trans team has worked tirelessly on the newly introduced Self-Serve Portal, the launch of the Mobile App pilot and the introduction of the new larger and improved ProMaster 7-metre bus.

On behalf of Wheel-Trans, I would like to wish you a happy and safe holiday season and thank you for your patience as we navigate these challenging times.



Dwayne Geddes
Head of Wheel-Trans



Wheel-Trans

580 Commissioners Street, Toronto, ON M4M 1A7



COVID-19 response

Wheel-Trans would like to take this opportunity to thank our customers for practicing physical distancing and for wearing a mask while travelling with the TTC. There is recognition that for many Wheel-Trans customers, Wheel-Trans is the only travel option available. Customer and operator safety are of the utmost importance to the TTC. For this reason, Wheel-Trans operators are pre-screened and provided with Personal Protective Equipment before their shifts and all Wheel-Trans vehicles undergo additional cleaning.

Presently, solo rides are provided and physical distancing is maintained aboard vehicles. However, as demand for service increases, this may no longer be possible. This means that Wheel-Trans will need to resume providing customers with shared rides, and you may not be the only rider onboard a vehicle. For all customers that are able to, continuation of wearing masks is appreciated. We all must do our part to ensure that we are all safe while travelling on the TTC.

Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy update

Conditional trip-matching update

Beginning in 2021, Wheel-Trans will be introducing Conditional Trip-Matching (CTM). When booking a trip, customers with conditional eligibility will only be provided with one trip solution that matches their conditions and abilities. If none of the registered conditions are present, they will be offered a Family of Services trip (e.g. a connection to the conventional TTC bus/streetcar or subway). However, if one or more of the conditions are present, they will receive a door-to-door trip from their origin to destination. Once CTM is implemented, conditionally eligible customers will no longer be able to decline a Family of Services trip in favour of a door-to-door trip.

In preparation for this, the Family of Services network has expanded to include key transfer stops along most of the major frequent service bus and streetcar routes, along with all accessible subway stations. Currently, there are 49 accessible subway stations, and all subway stations are expected to be accessible by 2025.

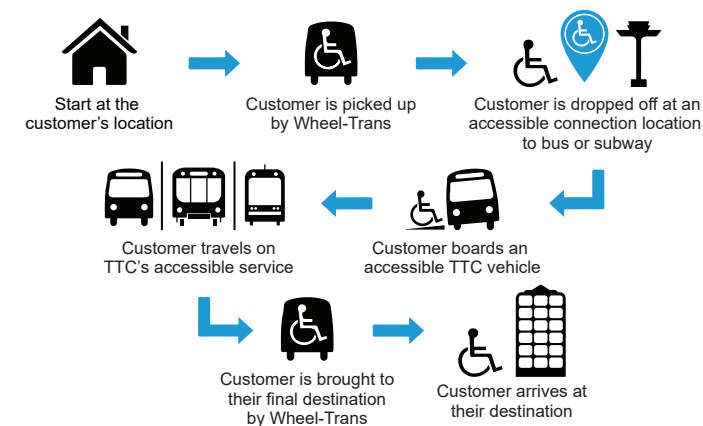
Re-registration

On January 1, 2017, in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA), Wheel-Trans introduced their new eligibility criteria and application process. Any customer with a disability that prevents them from taking conventional transit, some or all of the time, may register for service. For those customers who were registered before January 1, 2017, Wheel-Trans has begun the re-registration process; starting with customers who choose to voluntarily re-register. To date, over 6,300 customers have voluntarily re-registered.

Customers are encouraged to continue to submit their application form for re-registration. Once Wheel-Trans has completed the re-registration of voluntary customers, there will be a move towards the mandatory re-registration process, starting with customers who are frequent riders. More information regarding mandatory re-registration will be shared in 2021.

Mobile app pilot update

Great news! The pilot for the new Mobile App is being launched. This new app will give customers another option to book and track their trips. One of the app features, called "Where's My Ride?", will allow customers to track their ride on a map ten minutes prior to their trip. This feature currently tracks only Wheel-Trans buses, but will be updated to include contracted vehicles later in 2021. Stay tuned for more updates on the new app.



Introducing the new online Self-Serve Portal

Wheel-Trans has introduced a new online Self-Serve Registration Portal. This gives applicants and customers who are required to re-register, a convenient way to submit their application. The application can be filled out online and sent into Wheel-Trans staff through the online portal, eliminating the need to email, fax or mail any paper documents. For more information, please visit ttc.ca/WheelTrans or call Wheel-Trans Customer Service at 416-393-4111, Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.



Wheel-Trans also has a severe weather protocol in order to keep everyone safe. Customers will be advised when a severe weather advisory has been declared and customers are encouraged to cancel, without penalty, any unnecessary trips. Same day trip bookings are not available during a severe weather advisory.

Many facilities have reduced hours and closures over the holiday season. From December 20 to January 2, Wheel-Trans will cancel all regularly scheduled trips and provide life sustaining trips along with all occasional trips booked in advance.

During the month of December, Wheel-Trans will operate with one entrance service at all shopping locations. Some larger malls will be serviced through the following entrances:

- **Yorkdale Shopping Centre:** Shoppers Drug Mart mall entrance
- **Scarborough Town Centre:** TD Bank mall entrance
- **Fairview Mall:** Shoppers Drug Mart mall entrance
- **Cloverdale Mall:** Dollarama mall entrance
- **Sherway Gardens:** Shoppers Drug Mart mall entrance

Please remember to check each location for hours and any safety requirements. Customers are reminded that even during the holiday season, they are responsible for carrying their parcels, bags and boxes.

Regional Transfer Points will remain reduced during the holiday season. For the best trip results, please book your trip through Reservations to ensure that your trip transfer point is at the most convenient location.



Access Hubs

TTC's newly constructed Access Hubs are large, fully accessible, well lit, heated shelters that can more easily accommodate multiple customers using mobility devices who are travelling on the TTC's Family of Services. To ensure customer safety and comfort, the TTC has also secured snow removal contracts to remove snow within 24 hours of a snowfall.

Operations update

Safety first! As the holiday and winter season approach, please be reminded that it is your responsibility to keep personal entrances clear of ice and snow. If you require assistance and qualify for the Senior Assistance Home Maintenance Program, please contact the City of Toronto at tigp.org. You can also contact 311 if your street has not been cleared in a timely fashion.