

# Metrolinx Virtual Accessibility Public Consultation 2020-21 – Feedback Summary

## Improving the Customer Experience: Regional Specialized Transit Network

Question: Were you previously aware that you can book specialized transit trips across municipal boundaries (involving a transfer between transit agencies)?

Yes responses: 6
No responses: 1

Question: Are you aware of the “Family of Services” model, which gives you the opportunity to more easily connect between specialized transit and rapid transit modes (such as GO Transit, subway, Bus Rapid Transit)?

Yes responses: 4
No responses: 3

If you have used specialized transit for cross-boundary trips (into another municipality), please tell us about your experience.

I have not tried but would like to hear more about it - does it cost more money? How long does it take to go from Toronto to Oakville? And how long will the wait be between the two transit agencies especially for myself who is not able to take buses or subways but only is able to take a car service type vehicle?

What suggestions do you have to improve your cross-boundary journey? In your response, please consider possible improvements that could be made to the booking process, at the locations where you are waiting for your connecting bus and/or any other suggestions.

This is not about the trip itself, but rather letting people know that the cross boundary option exists. Also how to arrange a trip of this type would be helpful.

I would like to hear about the booking process - where and how do we book this?  
I only heard about the availability of the program but no further details.

Maybe an improvement would be better communication of services?

We've received feedback from numerous community members who have attempted to ride or have ridden Mobility Plus in York Region, that waiting times for drop-off and pick-up are long and inconsistent. This is extremely problematic for people with disabilities as they are left vulnerable in the community and their ability to gain employment is impacted because of their unreliable attendance.

## Improving the Customer Experience: PRESTO

What are we currently doing well (from an accessibility perspective) as part of your fare payment experience when using PRESTO? In your response, please consider what we're doing in stations, on trains and buses, in our communications, signage and wayfinding; and in our customer service offerings.

I do not visit stations, use trains or buses.
- new PRESTO devices (they're much better than the old ones!)
No comment, except to say continue to seek testing of new features with users.
Having the newer machines with louder audio tones
I only use the website. I would appreciate the faster processing rather than having to wait 24 hours for confirmation of payment.
The PRESTO system seems to have improved as the PRESTO machines on the buses are working more frequently now than when the system was first introduced.
While transit training students with special needs (physical/cognitive disabilities), it is appreciated that a second tap within a two hour window is free of charge. The online training videos are easy to follow along for our students. The Support Person Assistance Card is a wonderful program supporting individuals with special needs and we are happy to see this continue across all lines.
We have heard from clients that, overall, the PRESTO system does not currently pose too many accessibility challenges and is relatively easy to use.

What suggestions do you have to improve your fare payment experience (from an accessibility perspective) when using PRESTO? In your response, please consider your experience in stations, on trains and buses, in our communications, signage and wayfinding; and in our customer service offerings.

- credit & debit, and mobile payment please!  - the PRESTO devices that were implemented on buses are too bulky and unattractive, they should be smaller
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- their used to be a chime when you tapped your presto card that was very satisfying. Could you please provide a nice chime when the card is tapped? It would be much more pleasing and would improve accessibility for blind people (as it would act as a confirmation that they tapped their card).

Many of my clients with disabilities struggle with getting to a tap station to move their money over? I personally called and spoke to a Presto rep about this and cannot fathom why it is so difficult to put money onto the card and immediately begin using it. I loaded a card for one client and then he had to walk over an hour to get to the closest Presto machine to move over the cash funds so that he could take the bus. That seems completely ludicrous. Many of the persons with disabilities that I support do not have access to the technology (i.e. computer and internet) to be able to use the mobile features. It is concerning that the online and mobile features are replacing so much of the in-person experience they rely on.

Keep features consistent across the system.

Inconsistent payment method = confusing for user to remember (brain injury or seniors) whether one has to 'tap out' or not (if one bought point A to point B in bulk, you don't need to tap out; but than if you loaded your card you have to tap out). If you don't know which card was loaded with what, it also gets confusing. There needs to be a simpler way to load the card (Like Singapore).

It is not really from an accessibility perspective, but at a station such as Long Branch, if a person completes his/her journey and leaves through the station, then he/she needs to stop and turn around in order to tap off. Other stations, such as Danforth, allow you to tap off as you proceed through the tunnel. You are reminded to tap off as you pass by the PRESTO machines. Such is not the case at Long Branch.

Our students would benefit from specific PRESTO training, given the new technology updates. If you could provide online accessible training modules that they can access or in-person training (depending on level of need).

While the system is well-received overall, we have heard from some clients who have limited mobility in their arms or hands that tapping the PRESTO card can be difficult, particularly if they are also dealing with navigating onto a bus and finding seating while using a mobility device. In addition, it can be difficult to use the PRESTO card for those who have tremors and/or low muscle tone, as their arms often shake. As a result, it is challenging for them to hold the card in the same spot and it takes longer for the card to be read. This can create anxiety for our clients as there is often a long line of people waiting to enter the bus or station behind them.

Do you have any suggestions for new accessibility features or services for PRESTO?

- credit & debit, and mobile payment please!
- the PRESTO devices that were implemented on buses are too bulky and unattractive, they should be smaller
- their used to be a chime when you tapped your presto card that was very satisfying. Could you please provide a nice chime when the card is tapped? It would be much more pleasing and would improve accessibility for blind people (as it would act as a confirmation that they tapped their card).

Glad to see the loading of cards and payment are now available for iOS.

Suggest having a Presto machine at every elevator so those who have wheelchairs are able to tap while waiting for the elevator.

Have a service where someone is able to help wheel someone onto the train (Like at the airport) - and you can arrange ahead of time (can book on an app).

Please install a tap on/tap off PRESTO machine in the tunnel just before the stairs up to the station at Long Branch to ensure that both eastbound and westbound incoming passengers are reminded to tap off.

Are individuals who are blind able to independently use the PRESTO 'top up' machines? Could there be a machine at every subway station that a blind person could put in their card and then press a button to a call centre. The dispatch person at the call center (i.e., one dispatch person for the whole city of Toronto should suffice), could tell the blind customer their balance and if the customer puts in a debit/credit card, then the dispatcher could 'top up' the card for him/her. Alternatively, I guess the blind customer could simply ask the TTC employee in the ticket booth to assist them.

Given that our students have special needs and therefore will never get their driver's license, it would be fair and equitable to provide them with PRESTO passes at no cost much like the individuals who are registered with the CNIB as visually impaired.

If Metrolinx could collaborate with the Ministry of Education, the Special Education branch, GTHA students can complete applications for this support/special rider status which would continue into adulthood to support their independence and mobility.

Any features that would make tapping the card easier for those who experience the issues described above would improve their experience with PRESTO. Greater awareness among transit operators or fare collectors to provide support in these instances would also be helpful.

What other questions or comments do you have about the accessibility of PRESTO?

Our students with disabilities are often unemployed or underemployed after graduation, and as such the cost of PRESTO could be prohibitive. If the cost of a PRESTO card cannot be waived, then at the very least, a deep discount should be offered to this population. As AODA would note, companies can accommodate up to the point of undue hardship.

## Our Universal Design Principles

If you have experience with using tactile direction indicators (wayfinding/guidance tile pathways): What have you found to be helpful or challenging when using them?

Intuitive for wayfinding, though need to be consistently applied. Also if used in an outdoor environment, upkeep and durability must be paramount.

Gaps in the lines.

For the lines to be easy to follow they need to be continuous and take you from the doors of the train to the stairs or elevator. You should be able to follow the line from point A to point B without interruption. There also needs to be a different bigger texture difference marking stairs and the edges of platforms, now done in most stations, but some stairs are not marked.

Tactile Guidance Indicators

There is little opportunity to experience tactile direction indicator pathways since, in Toronto, the only place such indicators have been installed is on TTC center platforms and the material used was installed long before a standard was researched and developed. The TTC tactile guidance indicator materials are challenging to use because the raised surfaces do not have adequate height above the surrounding floor and the linear elements are too close together. The TTC pathways can only be discerned using a long white cane and while keeping the cane on the floor, not always a common practice, sweeping the cane back and forth in an arc in an attempt to feel vibrations and hear a noise caused by the cane passing over the tightly spaced ribs. In a transit environment any noise generated by the cane passing over tile ribs is often lost in ambient sounds. When tiles with low and closely spaced ribs are used it is difficult to find the path, discern direction and to feel the path underfoot.

I have not found the TTC tactile guidance indicator paths to be of any use due to the challenges the non standardized tiles present. In Toronto we are awaiting a full test of the ISO tactile guidance indicators that will be afforded us when the ECLRT opens and would appreciate an opportunity to experience the installation in advance of the opening i.e. as soon as it is safe to enter one of the currently almost complete stations such as Keele. Please advise when the AAC and TTC's ACAT DRS may test the ECLRT installations.

I think tactile direction indicators need to be incorporated more into communities so that they become common place.

If you have experience with using tactile signage and labels: What have you found to be helpful or challenging when using these?

Consistent placement though realize that locations and variety of stations make this somewhat of a challenge.

Finding where the label is.

I think tactile signage is important for accessibility. Where the signage is located is an important consideration. Is it in an intuitive location where someone will think to feel for it?

## New Subway Projects

If you have travelled on or read about other subway services (including existing subways in Toronto), what did they do well from an accessibility perspective? In your response, please consider what was done in their stations, on their vehicles, in their communications, signage and wayfinding; and in their customer service offerings.

- Designated waiting areas with seating
- Wayfinding
- Doors open/close chimes and train announcements
- Convenient and pleasing station announcements
- Anti-germ handlebars on the Toronto Rocket
- Interactive subway map (stations are lit red for previous, green for incoming, and yellow for interchange)

Singapore Subway is organized, clean, efficient, and always on time.

They have signage on the ground to have those entering onto the train to stand off to the side of the train door to allow those who are alighting to exit the centre

They have working elevators

Very clear signage on where the ticketing office is, where to upload the metrocard, easy access into the every subway station - clear signage on where the station is, easy entrance and exit into the train

The metrocard can be used for buying food as well

They have advertising on TV to reinforce the accessible seat on the subway train (which they have accessible signs for)

I find the layout of St. George station to be very good. It is easy to transfer trains the doors are well marked the elevator access is good, I would say it is well designed.

My experience is almost entirely with Toronto subways. The main thing about the TTC system is their corporate commitment to accessibility despite the challenge of having a system that was not designed with accessibility in mind. The TTC has relentlessly pursued a fully accessible system and is within sight of that goal by 2025. The TTC has meaningfully engaged with the accessibility community via ACAT and taken their advice in creating an accessible system. Vehicle and station design have been improved and altered where necessary to provide for the needs of all customers. Installation of tactile attention indicators at platform edges and stairs, stop & pre boarding announcements, power doors, elevators, wide fare

gates, removal of fare turnstile barriers at unmanned entrances and Wheel Trans integration with conventional transit are but a few of the items that have made for a more welcoming transit experience. Improvements in accessibility have made the transit experience better for all who experience any challenge in moving about Toronto, everyone can use the features that were brought about to provide for accessibility.

If you have travelled on or read about other subway services (including existing subways in Toronto), what could they have done to improve your customer journey from an accessibility perspective? In your response, please consider what was done in their stations, on their vehicles, in their communications, signage and wayfinding; and in their customer service offerings.

- Attractive and pleasing lighting (not industrial)
- Level boarding (wasn't done properly on the Toronto Rocket, with a slight rise in elevation as you enter the car)
- Regional wayfinding (using the new Metrolinx Wayfinding Standard)
- More comfortable seating
- Platform edge doors with integrated wayfinding, communications, and indicators for which cars are less packed (a good solution for overcrowding and to disperse riders)
- Beautiful and thoughtfully-designed stations (like the ones on the Eglinton Crosstown, and not like the ones on the Finch West LRT) that are well-integrated with the surrounding city
- Centre-platforms should be designed thoughtfully, as they are often dangerous for blind people
- Short walks from platform to bus stations (please don't build the Ontario Line Science Centre station far away from the currently under-construction Crosstown station, and instead build the OL platform underneath the Crosstown platform, to provide convenient and accessible transfers).

Singapore subway could use more elevators at the entrance of each of their subway stations.

Have better planning for service failures. Too many services have no consideration for disabled folks during a service failure.

If there is an emergency call option in the elevator, please, please, ensure that option will be staffed (too many times those just ring with no answer). Have your staff know about accessible alternatives and have them available -- I have had to

wait 3 to 4 hours for accessible connections during a subway shutdown on the TTC.

The subway station at York University is a new building and it was horribly designed. The distances between elevators and the overall layout is poor. Someone with limited mobility would have a difficult time because of how the elevators are arranged. The stairs are arranged at odd angles and the way finding is not consistent. There are odd gaps in the handrails. Considering the newness of the structure it was a huge disappointment.

The TTC while challenged by retrofitting elevators to existing stations will have only a single accessible path of travel in all stations by 2025. What is needed is redundancy in the path of travel so that everyone has equitable access to transit, no one will be stopped mid trip by a failure of equipment needed to provide the accessible path of travel that they require to complete their journey. The TTC needs to begin to address a second accessible path of travel initially with interchange stations where a failure can prevent transfer between lines and find ways to do the same at all stations.

Another issue that should be addressed is the crowding issue that can result in interchange stations where large volumes of customers can create safety issues on smaller platforms. e.g. Bloor/Yonge a second platform needs to be added similar to Union to provide the space needed in rush hours. Crowding is an accessibility issue because crowded platforms make it virtually impossible for persons using mobility devices to reach an elevator.

What other questions or comments do you have about the accessibility of subway services?

May I suggest having two elevators per platform? While it is not required, it almost eliminates the risk of making a platform inaccessible should the elevator go out of service.

My comment regards questions in this section is that the section is headed new subway projects however the questions are about other systems not the new projects. People want to give feedback about the new project designs but the questions do not facilitate such input.

1. In any subway / mass transit station and train design it needs to be recognized that space and service qualities that make for simple, direct and effortless connections between subway, LRT, streetcar, bus and other transit property services benefit all customers and particularly assist persons with an accessibility challenge.

2. Metrolinx designers of Ontario line, Scarborough and Yonge (line1) subway stations must make every effort to create a fully integrated transit network,

including connection to bus and streetcar services, with simple, direct and easy to use connections and not overlook connecting to transit properties outside the TTC.

An example of good planning is the direct cross platform connection for Ontario Line to GO at the East Harbour station, this type of connection is needed at the Exhibition station even if it is somewhat challenging as it will streamline the customer journey and improve accessibility.

At the Ontario Line King/Bathurst and Queen/Spadina stations the line intersects with four streetcar lines. To only have station entrances at the side of the road would restrict transfer routes between services by making it necessary for customers to wait for traffic signals to cross to and from the platforms. Consideration should be given to implementing a direct stair connection from concourse level to each streetcar line platform. While this would not provide level access it would serve the needs of many customers including ambulatory persons with a disability and would reduce general crowding at accessible entrance routes that make use of elevators and pedestrian crosswalks to reach the streetcar platform. Stair to streetcar platforms could be installed at the end opposite the crosswalk and would facilitate spreading out riders on streetcars while providing a fast weather protected connection.

The Ontario Line is intended to serve the Flemingdon Park area however stations at the west side of Don Mills Road near Gateway Blvd and the Science Centre station are on the perimeter of the area and have no direct entry from Flemingdon Park. Accessible entrances need to be provided to both stations via underground passageways that avoid the need to cross through traffic on either Don Mills Road or Eglinton Avenue.

Elevator access between station levels and the street needs to be designed to limit the number of elevators that one must take when transferring between lines, bus/streetcar and street. At no time should a customer be required to use more than two elevators to reach the street and all levels in a station. At the Science Centre station connection between ECLRT and the Ontario Line should only require two elevators and avoid the need to transition via the bus platform waiting area, the Ontario Line should have direct elevator connection to the ECLRT station concourse level.

The Ontario Line creates interchange situations at Pape, Queen and Osgoode stations, we have seen the crowding that can ensue in these situations. At each of these locations use of centre platforms could be a very real problem, the design must consider this and ensure platform space and vertical passenger pathways that will be more than adequate for projected future passenger volumes.

Finally we at this stage have not received adequate information on the new lines to make detailed comment. Metrolinx must engage in meaningful consultation with the TTC Advisory committee on Accessible Transit and their own Accessibility Advisory Committee reviewing, at all stages of design, all parts of these lines where customers will be present.

We have heard from clients that many of those with physical disabilities are hesitant to take the subway. One challenge they face is that not all stations are currently accessible. As a result, they may need to travel a stop further and then back-track to reach their destination.

In addition, the platforms at some stations are not large, which can make it difficult or unsafe to navigate for those with limited mobility. Many people often push in front of them when boarding the subway train, and the train doors close quickly, making it difficult for them to enter the train on time. It is important to continue to upgrade the accessibility of older stations, as well as raise awareness among able-bodied commuters about making space for those with disabilities.

Lastly, while not specifically regarding subway projects, we have heard from many of our clients about challenges using Wheel Trans as a parallel accessible transit system when accessible subway services are not available. Many of our clients experience issues with long wait times for service, as well as instances of poor customer service, such as being asked by drivers to “hurry up,” despite their mobility challenges. All persons with disabilities should be treated with dignity and receive service within a reasonable time frame when accessing public transportation.

## Improving the Customer Experience: Light Rail Transit (LRT)

If you have travelled on or read about LRT services in other cities, what did they do well from an accessibility perspective? In your response, please consider what was done in their stations, on their vehicles, in their communications, signage and wayfinding; and in their customer service offerings.

The most critical issue is the ability to egress from a vehicle or station in an emergency. Those of us who are incapable of running up two flights of stairs to escape, know that in a fire, flood or fleeing an attacker, we are going to die. No elevators, despite redundancies, will ever be fast enough or large enough to rescue all those who need assistance. We need above-ground systems, so we can self-rescue!!

- level boarding
- accessible stop request buttons
- fast trains that travel at a high speed limit (considering that they are in a protected, usually straight, right-of-way free of cars and protected by barriers).
- they always stop at stations, and at stops only when requested or when there is a passenger that waiting at the stop (or at least they don't open their doors at stops that aren't requested).
- yellow tactile strips and other accessibility features in the pavement
- station communications
- good wayfinding and lighting
- heated waiting areas
- ample space for wheelchair users (on the train and on the platforms)
- exterior platforms are not over salted in the winters and use alternatives like sand & pebbles

If you have travelled on or read about LRT services in other cities, what could they have done to improve your customer journey from an accessibility perspective? In your response, please consider what was done in their stations, on their vehicles, in their communications, signage and wayfinding; and in their customer service offerings.

- welcoming and pleasing stations

Please, be aware of the ramp height! For example, the TTC streetcars are impossible to board with a manual wheelchair, the ramp is too steep to use without assistance!

What other questions or comments do you have about the accessibility of LRT services?

Will there be ramps at stations and stops, to enable self-rescue?

Integrations with other transit services. this includes wayfinding, presto design, and consistent vehicles on regional lines. A person with vision loss may need to remember the layout of different vehicles on a single trip if using more than one transit agency for a single trip.

## Improving the Customer Experience: GO Rail and Bus

What are we currently doing well as part of your customer journey (from an accessibility perspective), in each of the following areas? In your response, please consider what we're doing in our train stations and bus terminals, on our trains and buses, in our communications, signage and wayfinding; and in our customer service offerings.

I'm happy with new yellow tactile indicators.
Union station when you get off the train from the accessibility car, it is always close to an elevator.
Right now, GO Train access has been very good (in stations equipped with elevators). The actual train service is quite solid!
When building new GO stations please plan and implement accessible connections between TTC and GO rail. This has not happened in Metrolinx building of the NEW Agincourt GO Station currently being built.
I appreciate all of the improvements in accessibility.
I am not a user living with disabilities but on behalf of others, your improvements with respect to clear, eye level accessible signs and friendly approachable staff/customer service support are helpful. I find it helpful to travel in the accessibility car when I have questions. Quiet areas in Go Trains are supportive of users who are living with dementia and need a quieter space.
We believe that a successfully integrated transportation system requires upgrading in four areas: vehicle access, station or terminal access, provision of required ancillary services for persons with disabilities, and improved staff understanding and willingness to assist travellers with disabilities. We are encouraged by the significant improvements to the GO system, including the increased number of accessible bus stops, as well as accessibility improvements to train and bus stations. We are confident these improvements will make a significant impact on the customer journeys of people with disabilities.

What suggestions do you have to improve your customer journey from an accessibility perspective? In your response, please consider possible improvements that could be made to our stations, on our trains and buses, in our communications, signage and wayfinding; and in our customer service offerings.

I believe that Metrolinx should roll out the new wayfinding standard immediately to all planned and under-construction transit project, as they are much more legible and accessible than the current GO signage. Metrolinx should also work with all transit agencies to replace their wayfinding with the new regional standard, to create a truly accessible and convenient customer experience (regardless of their transit agency). It is an amazing design initiative, and it should be rolled out to every transit agency's bus stops, shelters, terminals, and transit infrastructure.

GO Transit's station tunnels are important, but they've been built with a very unpleasant and no-frills design. They are unwelcoming, and should use bright colours and good materials to provide a good customer experience that encourages people to switch to transit. Lighting is too industrial and unwelcoming, and should be more aesthetically pleasing to provide welcoming tunnels for passengers. Also, proper ceilings and walls should be provided, and exposed pipes should be avoided.

Platforms should provide level-boarding everywhere (after the completion of GO Expansion), and not just for the accessible coach. This would be more convenient for users with disabilities and would make the service more attractive for everyone.

Elevators should be less industrial and metallic, and they should be more welcoming for all users.

Improve accessibility at Georgetown rail station.

Union station when getting off train from accessibility car - there needs to be signage on where the elevator is.

At Oakville GO station main entrance - accessibility door does not always work, When elevator 3 to access track 3 is out of order = what happens?! I am unable to climb stairs to access the train - there needs to be a solution to help me access the train to Toronto!! And there needs to be signage to let me know that that elevator is out of order before I make all the effort to get to it. Tracks need to be changed for those who are unable to access the tracks when this elevator is not in service!!

Bronte GO station - why is the accessibility elevator at the bus station location so excluded from everyone? I have to go into the bus station building to look at the train station train track arrival location, than have to come out to go all around the building to enter the elevator so that I can go down to access another elevator to go to the tracks?! That is so ridiculous?! Why can't they just make a door to go through the building to access the elevator!!! Very not customer thoughtful.

When making announcements at the train stations - please I beg of you to announce your words and speak clearly so people can hear what you are saying!! People have difficulty hearing already have a hard time understanding what you are saying, but those who don't even have any hearing problems find it extremely irritating to hear always mumbling of non-understandable phrases. Suggest announcing that there is an announcement to be made first to gain people's

attention, then make the announcement that is attended clearly - say it like you want people to hear you.

I find that the buying tickets counter are a little high when in a wheelchair.

The ramp in Union Station TTC that connects to Union GO station that is next to the convenience store? is ridiculously narrow and can only fit one accessible person at a time! If there are baby prams, and luggage - there is a long wait time to get to Union station!! I do not know who designed this narrow ramp!!

There is only one elevator to the Union station food court!! Which gets really busy and smells most of the time!!

It also would help if there were signs that told us which stores were open in the food court on the main level so we do not have to go down to find out.

Presto readers need to be able to be tapped by a wheelchair user -- some Presto card locations require maneuvering to get to a point where they can be tapped.

Further accessibility upgrades are required at non-accessible stations.

One issue that has come up: If there is a track change for a train, give time for people using mobility devices to make the track change. I have missed trains due to having to get back across a platform, down an elevator, up another elevator, and then back to where the accessible car boards. (This is especially true for platforms where the elevator is far from the where the accessible car boards). I would recommend a minimum of 10 minutes.

For busses, please, do not require us to inform you of trip times in advance if we're travelling with a mobility device. There are times I don't know exactly when I will be leaving an event. (I'm hoping this will be eliminated with the new ramp-equipped busses, as they have a designated wheelchair/scooter location, rather than having to remove chairs from the coach style buses).

Also, where Go Busses share stops with local transit, it's very difficult for someone with a visual impairment to flag down a Go Bus vs a Local bus. While I don't have a solution, this is something that needs to be considered. I have had GO busses not stop, because I didn't distinguish them in time to flag them.

Agincourt GO Station needs elevator for accessibility to and from TTC to GO Station. Pedestrian pathways to station needs to be better lit, provided security and pedestrian bridge across Sheppard Avenue where many fatalities have happened. i.e. Sheppard/ Kennedy and Sheppard/Midland.

I use the Long Branch GO train station and am frustrated by the lack of accessibility with my limited mobility. The station does not have a raised portion of the platform for easier access to the trains nor does it have any elevators.

On behalf of persons living with dementia, it would be helpful to have drivers, security and customer service staff who are aware of the needs and experiences

and challenges of people living with dementia. People living with dementia in the early stages eventually stop driving at some point and require safe options in order to live as well as possible. However, using public transit can be daunting and confusing. Transit systems are starting to explore the barriers faced by people living with dementia and making adjustments as part of their accessibility initiatives. Here's an example from Scotland  
<https://theknowledgeexchangeblog.com/2017/10/11/a-new-journey-creating-a-dementia-friendly-public-transport-system/>

We have heard from clients about issues with both boarding buses and use of priority seating on buses. They have found that ramps to enter buses are often quite narrow, especially for those who use powerchairs. While some drivers help individuals to navigate the ramp, not all do, which makes it difficult to board the bus. It is also often unclear to them whether they should enter the bus first as someone using the wheelchair ramp, or last, after other riders have boarded.

On the topic of priority seating, some have expressed concerns with having to ask for help in lifting the seat to make way for their wheelchair, as opposed to being offered the help proactively. In addition, for those using powerchairs, because they need to put their chair in a specific position, facing the back of the bus, it is difficult for them to turn and navigate towards the front door again when exiting the bus due to lack of space to turn around.

Do you have any suggestions for new accessibility features or services that could better support your customer journey?

I believe that Metrolinx should roll out the new wayfinding standard immediately to all planned and under-construction transit project, as they are much more legible and accessible than the current GO signage. Metrolinx should also work with all transit agencies to replace their wayfinding with the new regional standard, to create a truly accessible and convenient customer experience (regardless of their transit agency). It is an amazing design initiative, and it should be rolled out to every transit agency's bus stops, shelters, terminals, and transit infrastructure.

GO Transit's station tunnels are important, but they've been built with a very unpleasant and no-frills design. They are unwelcoming, and should use bright colours and good materials to provide a good customer experience that encourages people to switch to transit. Lighting is too industrial and unwelcoming, and should be more aesthetically pleasing to provide welcoming tunnels for passengers. Also, proper ceilings and walls should be provided, and exposed pipes should be avoided.

Platforms should provide level-boarding everywhere (after the completion of GO Expansion), and not just for the accessible coach. This would be more convenient

for users with disabilities and would make the service more attractive for everyone.

Elevators should be less industrial and metallic, and they should be more welcoming for all users.

Barrier tape on the floor to encourage people to stand to either side of the doors to allow those getting off the train to have space to alight and not be too crammed all the way to the elevator (This can also be done to all the doors of the train).

When entering Union station, they should have signage for ALL the gates and the wheelchair accessible gates on where they are located instead of have bits here and there not knowing where to go (have to realize some people never been to Union before).

There needs to be signage that elevators are encouraged for those with wheelchairs, accessibility needs or luggage.

Suggest having Train Track notification screen in the Bronte tunnel by the bus station location.

Suggest that similar to the TTC Support Person Card; where the support person goes with me for free, the GO should have a similar program for those with disability.

At times, the GO train accessibility car seats at times are hard to fold down for my elderly mother.

There is no spot for me to wait with my wheelchair while waiting for my train to arrive - everybody has a seat but I end up blocking people or sticking out because there is no spot for me to park my wheelchair at any station!

More shelters need to have automatic door openers.

Oddly enough, more public water fountains!

Agincourt GO Station needs safer accessible connections. Planning for Sheppard Subway and Agincourt GO station connections need to be made now while the new station is being built - not as an after thought!

Each GO train should be equipped at the accessibility coach with an extendable ramp for those stations that do not have a raised accessibility platform section. Alternatively, the ramp could be stored at the appropriate station platforms, such as Long Branch, and just used as needed.

Also, when you are running short trains, you should arrange for the train to stop as close as possible to the main/only stairs if there is no raised accessibility platform. At Long Branch, there is only one set of stairs at each platform (west end) and yet the short train stops at the far end of the platform (east end).

We have also heard that many able-bodied commuters are reluctant to move seats when requested to make space for those with mobility devices. Increased public awareness is important for improving the customer experience for those with disabilities.

What other questions or comments do you have about the accessibility of our services?

When arriving Union station from an Uber for the first time, you enter into a vast building that notes VIA train - no signage on where GO train station is = there should be signage on where to go to catch the GO train or TTC. Also, there needs to be signs to show where to buy ticket and where the ticketing office are or customer service.

Building safe accessible pathways and pedestrian/cycling access is critical to Agincourt GO Station where parking is limited and bus access does not exist. Feedback is requested.

In summary, Long Branch does not have a raised platform section for accessibility on either the eastbound or westbound platforms, no elevators and the short train stops at the far end of the platform for no reason.

Have you considered consulting with people with hidden disabilities such as dementia? Have you considered Dementia Friendly training for front facing transit staff to increase their awareness of dementia and how to respond to the needs of passengers with dementia? Thank you.

## Annual Accessibility Public Consultation - Contact Us

There was good safety precautions in place for COVID 2020.

I would like to sign up for the consultation, an email was sent to me about it. I can't find a link to register.

Any help you can give would be thankful.

I have previously provided a written informal accessibility audit of the Burlington GO station. It reported a number of major deficiencies in the design and construction of the station. I would appreciate feedback as to the status of Metrolinx work to correct those deficiencies.

I have had the unfortunate experience of having multiple drivers who think that they are in an F1 race and drive erratically, break abruptly, and I have ended up showing up to my therapy sessions so nauseated that I throw up and am not able to do therapy that day. This needs to stop - these drivers need to know that they are driving people who are disabled and have various sensitivities. We also had another driver decline to take us because we had a wheelchair even though we had booked Wheel-Trans with a wheelchair, and he drove off leaving us in the dark having to frantically call head office to send us another Wheel-Trans!?? My human right to get a ride home was rudely declined by a Wheel-Trans driver even though he had a van that could take my foldable wheelchair!!! What kind of service is this?!

On a separate note, I have had Wheel-Trans not show up at all to pick me up and left me out in the dark waiting for hours.

## Public Forum: Other Questions/Comments

What other questions or comments do you have about the accessibility of our services? Post your response in the forum below.

### Comments

Why are you adding stops to stouffville line and making our commutes longer?

Anonymous

Dec 31, 2020 - 12:57

Why the longer commute for the markham stouffville line?

- Likes this comment: 6
- Dislikes this comment: 8

### Answer

Metrolinx (Jeffrey)

Jan 6, 2021 - 16:41

We are building transit service that will be more accessible to all of our customers along the Stouffville corridor. More than a rush hour commuter service, GO will offer more service with faster trains, more stations and seamless connections to a regional rapid transit network.

In the future, GO Expansion on the Stouffville line will offer frequent electrified train service in both directions, with trains every 15 minutes or better, as well as access to four new stations and transit connections. Although this will mean a slightly longer commute for customers travelling between York Region and downtown Toronto, there will be more trips at every point along the line – from Stouffville to Markham, Scarborough, and Toronto. This will create opportunities to reach other communities along the Stouffville line that previously couldn't be easily accessed by GO. Service on the Stouffville line will increase 400% by 2025, including even more frequent service during middays, evenings and weekends.

- Likes this comment: 2
- Dislikes this comment: 12

### Distancing on GO and Regional Transit During Pandemic

Anonymous

Jan 1, 2021 - 11:51

What steps are you taking to protect at risk customers in terms of distancing while on Transit. I have recently traveled on GO Transit in my wheelchair and because of the proximity of wheelchair spots to the door, I have felt that people are not distancing when preparing to disembark the train and I feel vulnerable and unable to move away to keep my distance. I have also noticed that people are not always wearing their masks while waiting too closely to me on the platforms. What is being done to enforce mask wearing and distancing? I have brought this up with train staff, but they feel it is out of their control.

- Likes this comment: 10

- Dislikes this comment: 7

Answer

Metrolinx (Jeffrey)

Jan 6, 2021 - 17:19

Please be assured, at Metrolinx the health and safety of our staff and customers is of critical concern. While we understand consistent use of a face covering is critical in making people feel safer on their journey, we know that not everyone can wear face coverings for health or personal reasons, which is why this is something we cannot enforce. The following are some examples of what we have done to improve health and safety for everyone on our services:

- Conducting audits to better understand use of face coverings on our services, which indicate that up to 90% of our customers are complying with mask use on our vehicles;
- Face coverings are mandatory on our service/platforms/stations, with heavy education on this policy;
- Announcements are made on platform and trains to spread out along the platform, and about the mandatory face covering policy;
- We have health screening available at our Health Kiosks, includes taking temperature, testing your phone's cleanliness, etc.;
- Transit Safety walks around educating customers about social distancing and face coverings;
- Personal Protective Equipment vending machines are available at some stations;
- We are trying out 40 new safety measures on trains and buses. For instance, we are piloting plexi-glass seat dividers on 30 GO buses and 30 railcars (five trains) and testing one-way directional arrows on our trains to limit the amount of face-to-face contact;
- Stickers have been placed on trains and platforms to mark where a customer should stand to spread out.
- Likes this comment: 6
- Dislikes this comment: 6

What are you doing or what efforts are you making to make your p

Anonymous

Jan 1, 2021 - 21:20

- Likes this comment: 9
- Dislikes this comment: 5

Answer

Metrolinx (Jeffrey)

Jan 6, 2021 - 17:22

Using the "Additional details" section of the comment form, please provide further details, as your question cannot be seen in full above. Thanks!

- Likes this comment: 3
- Dislikes this comment: 12

## Accountability of your partners through out the GTA ?

Anonymous

Jan 1, 2021 - 21:28

What steps are you taking in order to hold other transit authorities accountable for not complying with their obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005? Compliance is not being met. 2025 is not that far away! People with disabilities are still faced with barriers to public transit.

- Likes this comment: 14
- Dislikes this comment: 2

## Answer

Metrolinx (Jeffrey)

Jan 6, 2021 - 17:29

The Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). We encourage you to visit the Province's website and submit feedback.

Metrolinx continues to work closely with municipal transit agencies, facilitating regular discussions to improve cross-boundary travel and connections between our services for customers who use specialized transit. This ties in to clause 69(1) ("Co-ordinated Service") under the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards. Please visit the Regional Specialized Transit Network section of this consultation for further details about these cross-boundary travel discussions: <https://www.metrolinxengage.com/en/content/apc-improving-customer-experience-regional-specialized-transit-network>

- Likes this comment: 11
- Dislikes this comment: 3

Reality is always overlooked or pushed aside.

Anonymous

Jan 7, 2021 - 14:15

Jeffrey, I have heard this before, same old, same old. Please read David Onley's Third Legislative Review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and learn what is really happening, or should I say "not happening".

Nice try though!

- Likes this comment: 5

- Dislikes this comment: 6

Answer

Metrolinx

Jan 7, 2021 - 16:59

To add to the above and provide clarification, Metrolinx does not have jurisdiction over other transit agencies.

We will continue to work with municipalities to improve cross-boundary travel for all customers, including customers with disabilities.

- Likes this comment: 7
- Dislikes this comment: 5

Safety Equipment and certain designs needs updating

Anonymous

Jan 18, 2021 - 19:47

I am the Chairman of the Canadians with Disabilities of B'nai Brith Canada and would like to add these life saving suggestions, Some are design suggestion and others are lack emergency evacuation equipment.

For Emergency Evacuation I don't see, at any metro location a device to safely and quickly get a person with a disability quickly out of harms way. I suggest equipping all areas with the Evac+Chair system, for the following examples:

A-If I am underground and elevators/escalators are out, how do I go up the stairs? I recommend having the Evac+Chair 800 'stair climber' for such scenarios. it a self powered unit and can easily be operated by anyone.

B-For above ground on 2nd or higher floors with stairs, not all areas have safe way of getting out during an emergency when the elevators are not working the Evac+Chair 300 Evacuation Chair works perfectly.

C-There may be safe areas, but its not fair that everyone else can get out and myself being mobility impaired gets stuck inside waiting for help. Also, at times some of these 'waiting areas are used for 'storage' which, in an emergency, is life threatening.

As for Design suggestions:

A- using 'Bollard' Door opener switches increases the ease of use, regardless the type of disability, because by a simple 'tap' anywhere on the meter long switch will activate the door to open. Even the 'wave' button is useless if a disabled person is not able to extend to reach the area that activates the button.

B-In the washroom or accessible stall, I suggest adding a 'PT' Grab Bar on the opposite side of the wall mounted garb bar so that support is available on either side, regardless of the persons 'strong or weak' side that needs the stability.

C-Handicap Parking Space: I suggest installing a 3.5 meter 'Post or Sign' On the Hash Lines to prevent a third car parking in the wide space used to exit/enter the handicap vehicle ie. ramp area.

I will be happy to discuss these and many more innovations/suggestion to improve accessibility, that my committee has expertise in making our society better for all.

I thank you for this opportunity,

EDWARD 'EDDIE' RICE

Chair: CWDBBC

- Likes this comment: 2
- Dislikes this comment: 0

Answer

Metrolinx

Jan 25, 2021 - 16:45

Thank you for providing these detailed suggestions, which will be shared with other teams at Metrolinx for consideration.

- Likes this comment: 1
- Dislikes this comment: 1

Suggestions: Safety Equipment and certain designs needs updating

Anonymous

Jan 18, 2021 - 19:53

I am the Chairman of the Canadians with Disabilities of B'nai Brith Canada and would like to add these life saving suggestions, some are design suggestion and others are lack emergency evacuation equipment.

For Emergency Evacuation I don't see, at any metro location a device to safely and quickly get a person with a disability quickly out of harms way. I suggest equipping all areas with the Evac+Chair system, for the following examples:

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B: For above ground on 2nd or higher floors with stairs, not all areas have safe way of getting out during an emergency when the elevators are not working the Evac+Chair 300 Evacuation Chair works perfectly.

- Likes this comment: 1
- Dislikes this comment: 1

Answer

Metrolinx

Jan 25, 2021 - 16:46

Thanks again - these suggestions will be shared with other teams at Metrolinx for consideration.

- Likes this comment: 1
- Dislikes this comment: 1