

Burlington Transit Accessibility Plan

2025 - 2026



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1. Burlington Transit Accessibility Plan (BTAP)

Burlington Transit is committed to identifying, reducing, and preventing barriers that affect people with disabilities. This plan serves as a roadmap for creating an inclusive transit system, helping to ensure that all members of the community can fully take part in everyday life. Our goal is to ensure that every resident, regardless of age or ability, can access Burlington Transit safely, efficiently, and with dignity.

The Burlington Transit Accessibility Plan (BTAP) works with the City's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and the City's Accessibility Design Standards, forming an integral part of the City's overall strategy to improve accessibility and inclusivity.

1.1 Compliance with Accessibility Legislation

Burlington Transit Accessibility Plan (BTAP) is developed in compliance with the requirements set out in Ontario Regulation 191/11: *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)*, under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*. Burlington Transit is committed to reducing and eliminating identified barriers that affect people with disabilities by continually working to improve access for everyone.

1.2 Community Commitment

The BTAP will include annual updates highlighting actions taken to identify, remove, and prevent barriers. These updates promote transparency and ongoing improvement. The plan also encourages regular consultation with the public through the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee to gather valuable input and perspectives. This collaborative approach supports the City's commitment to ensuring that people of all ages and abilities enjoy equal opportunities to take part fully in community life.

Burlington Transit recognizes that demand for accessible services will continue to grow with an aging population. Achieving full system accessibility involves enhancing service levels and ensuring access across all elements of the transit system, including facilities, walkways, landing pads, shelters, signage, customer service, and information accessibility.

2. Burlington Transit Service Profile (Conventional and Specialized)

Conventional Transit refers to a fixed-route bus service that operates on a regular schedule on a pre-established route. These routes are strategically located to provide connections to key destinations such as schools, workplaces, shopping centers, and medical facilities. Additionally, Burlington Transit offers connections to Oakville Transit, Hamilton (HSR) Transit, and GO Transit, enabling travel between neighboring communities and broader regional access.

As part of the Burlington Transit Strategic Plan (2020 -2024), service expansion was achieved through the purchase of 16 conventional buses which enabled increases to services through the development of a frequent transit network. Table 1 demonstrates changes to the number of routes providing 15 minutes or better service. Increased service has also led to increased ridership as noted in table 2. In 2021, the pandemic impacted transit service in Burlington and is not recorded in this table.

Number of Routes / Year	2018	2019	2022	2023	2024
Number of routes running 15 mins or better during the weekday peak (~6am to 9am & 3pm to 6pm)	1	2	4	4	6
Number of routes running 15 mins or better service on Weekdays (~6am to 6pm)	0	0	2	4	4
Number of routes running at least 30 mins, 7 days a week	4	4	6	7	7

Table 1: Burlington Transit Route Frequency

Ridership / Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
Annual Ridership	1,567,005	2,223,173	3,074,561	3,644,031
Annual Boardings	1,961,446	2,707,168	3,674,844	4,296,549
# of Fixed Routes	16	16	16	16

Table 2: Conventional Transit Statistics

Specialized Transit is door-to-door, shared ride, pre-booked service offered to persons with a disability. This service is available through an eligibility program for registered customers who are unable to use a conventional bus. From 2020 to 2024 Burlington Transit purchased an additional 3 specialized transit vehicles to support growth to this service. Table 3 outlines the statistics related to specialized transit.

Specialized Service	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Active Registrants	910	1,018	1,169	1275
Eligible Passenger Trips	34,542	47,023	57,703	66,551
Support Person Trips	3,580	5,888	8,668	10,950

Table 3: Specialized Transit Statistics

3. Burlington Transit Fares

Burlington Transit's fare concessions and pricing are the same for conventional and specialized transit.

Updated fare information can be found on the Burlington Transit website at <https://www.burlington.ca/en/transit/fares-and-passes.aspx>.

3.1 Fare Programs

To limit financial barriers and ensure access to transit is available to everyone, Burlington Transit has implemented several fare programs including:

- **Seniors (65+)** travel for free, every day. To access this benefit, seniors must tap their PRESTO card when boarding.
- **Youth (13–19)** can ride for free on weekdays after 6 p.m. and all day on weekends. A PRESTO card is needed.
- **Children (12 and under)** ride for free when they tap their PRESTO card or are traveling with a parent or guardian

3.2 Low-Income Subsidy: SPLIT Program

The Subsidized Passes for Low Income Transit (SPLIT) program, in partnership with Halton Region, provides free transit passes for Burlington residents aged 13 to 64 who meet low-income criteria. Individuals must apply through [Halton Region's SPLIT](#) program online service.

4. Previous Accessibility Initiatives

Burlington Transit has undertaken several initiatives over the past years to enhance accessibility. These efforts reflect a commitment to inclusive transit services for all users, particularly individuals with disabilities. The following initiatives have been implemented. Below is a summary of actions already taken to remove barriers for people with disabilities

4.1. Policy and Training

Burlington Transit continues to develop policies and training to support accessibility. The following key initiatives have been completed.

- Adopted region-wide common eligibility and application forms to streamline access to services for specialized transit, which included an improved eligibility application form for specialized services to enhance clarity and consistency.
- Conduct training for all operators on AODA requirements and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

- Provided employee training on:
 - Safe use of accessibility equipment.
 - Modifying procedures when temporary barriers exist, or accessibility equipment is inoperable.
 - Emergency preparedness with specific protocols for persons with disabilities.

4.2. Customer Service Enhancements

Burlington Transit aligns with the City of Burlington's Customer Experience Vision. Transit specific initiatives include:

- Designated priority and courtesy seating, clearly marked, for persons with disabilities.
- Ensured accessible online information:
 - Text-only format available at burlingtontransit.ca.
 - Information also linked through the City of Burlington website.
- Centralized customer service feedback through the City's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which is used to communicate and document customer feedback.
- Customer feedback and touch points for both conventional and specialized services are received (intake) by phone, email, in-person, social media, websites (burlingtontransit.ca and burlington.ca) and via Service Burlington. Customer Service Representatives manage customer comments item including intake, collecting information from staff when required, and responding to the customer.
- Issues are forwarded to the appropriate city staff member for investigation and actioned accordingly.

4.3. Technological Improvements

Burlington Transit continues to leverage technology to make services more inclusive, ensuring riders with disabilities can travel with greater ease, independence, and confidence. Key examples include:

- Introduced larger fonts on route and ride guides (2018) for easier readability.
- Implemented pre-boarding audio announcements on fixed-route buses for persons with visual impairments.
- Deployed real-time destination announcements to keep passengers informed of upcoming stops.
- Route notifications on exterior of bus when doors open
- Updated the Specialized eligible customer online booking system with features such as text message ride notifications.

- MagnusCards to support customers with cognitive disabilities using visual step-by-step guides.

4.4 Infrastructure Improvements

Improvements to transit infrastructure is a priority for Burlington Transit. Ensuring bus stops are accessible for riders in all seasons is critical. The following enhancements have been made since 2021.

- Ongoing enhancements to infrastructure at bus stops and transit facilities to improve physical accessibility. Upgrades include expanded concrete pads to ensure all riders can safely board and exit the bus from either doors.
 - 2021 – 10 bus stops were upgraded
 - 2022 – 118 bus stops were upgraded
 - 2023 – 7 bus stops were upgraded
 - 2024 – 11 bus stops were upgraded
- In 2025, major improvements are being made to bus stops on Fairview Street to enhance the accessibility at the bus stop.



Figure 1: Fairview Street Bus Stop Accessibility Enhancements

There are over 70 bus stops within the City of Burlington that are considered standard A with limited accessibility. These bus stops are on roads that do not have sidewalk infrastructure, which ensures accessibility. Transit staff continue to monitor usage and potential upgrades, which usually align with corporate infrastructure projects.

4.4. Accessibility Plan Responsibility and Update Methodology

The Burlington Transit leadership team are responsible for this plan. The Manager, Transit Planning and Business Services and the Manager of Transit Operations will act as Accessibility Plan Coordinators for Burlington Transit. This plan is supported across the transit department and staff are consulted to support initiatives and build recommendations into the plan, with a focus of supporting accessibility within the community.

The plan is a living document and will be updated annually. Each year, Burlington Transit will review the plan and update the status of previously identified action items and include additional items for the coming year, as needed.

The Burlington Accessibility Advisory Committee (BAAC) will be consulted each year to provide input on the proposed current year plan, as part of annual updates to the plan. Any items that require funds to implement, will be included in the proposed budget for the following year as part of the city's budget process.

4.5. Plan Consultation

Burlington Transit collaborates and consults with following:

- City of Burlington Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Burlington Transit's staff
- City's Accessibility Coordinator
- Public through a Burlington's Accessibility Advisory Committee

5. Process for Estimating Demand

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

- Past ridership trends
- Review of incremental annual increase in demand
- Ridership growth levels (both conventional and specialized)
- Local demographic trends
- Forecasted population growth, new developments and intensification
- Anticipated changes to legislation, policies, procedures and complimentary fare pilots may increase demand for services

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 varies, and as such, determining demand for specialized transit is an ongoing exercise.

6. Continuous Improvement

6.1. Specialized Service

Burlington Transit continues to work on reducing wait times and improved tools for added customer service. In 2024, the following improvements were made:

- Upgraded system to support online bookings, text and email notifications of specialized transit arrival times

In 2025 Burlington Transit the following continuous improvement initiatives have been identified:

- Supplement Specialized Service - an RFP is being issued with an implementation timeline of Q4 2025 to seek out qualified companies to provide supplemental specialized service. This will help with the increased number of registrants and enable a shorter booking window and same day bookings.
- Continued Enhancements to Online Passenger Portal Transit staff continue to work with the software vendor at making improvements to the customer portal, allowing for more self-service options.

6.2. Conventional Service

Burlington Transit continues to provide accessible transit service on conventional transit. To support accessibility, all buses have ramps, low floors, kneeling capabilities, visual and audio announcements, and priority seating. Burlington Transit continues to improve conventional service through the following initiatives:

- Real time bus schedule information on myride.burlingtontransit.ca and on Google maps
- Text message notifications for bus arrival times and service disruptions via myride.burlingtontransit.ca
- Communication to riders via social media and City's communication channels
- Updated Burlington Transit Network Map that helps visualize route frequency using accessible colour schemes

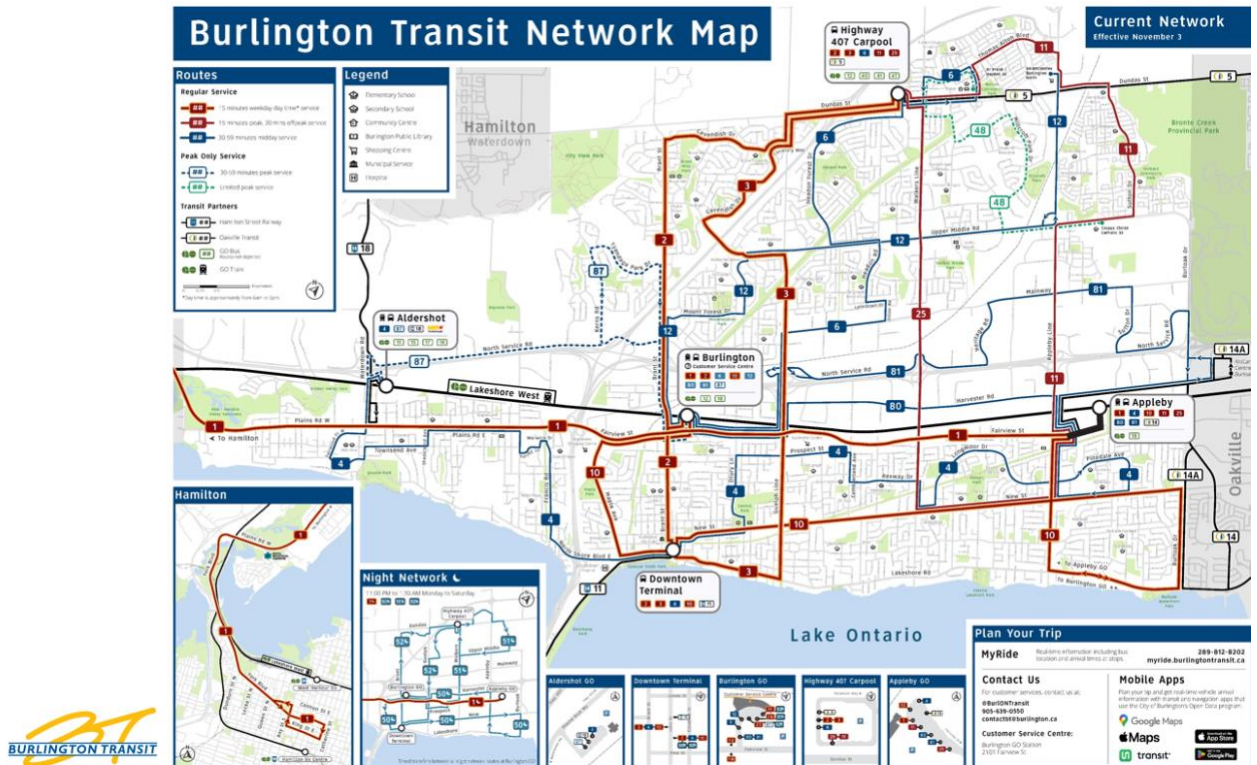


Table 4: Accessible Route Map

7. Ongoing Commitments

Burlington Transit is committed to the following actions on an annual basis:

- Consulting with customers with disabilities to seek their advice on which barriers, and which remedial actions should have priority for the coming year.
- Making provision in capital and operating budgets to seek funding to address barriers in a priority-based manner
- Consulting with the City's Accessibility Coordinator, Accessibility Advisory Committee, and other stakeholder groups, with respect to addressing barriers to accessibility
- Continue customer service and accessibility training of all new operators.

8. Communicating the Plan

Burlington Transit will communicate the accessibility plan to the public through the following actions:

- The Plan will be available at our administrative office at 3332 Harvester Road and at City Hall at 426 Brant Street.
- The Plan will be published on Burlington Transit's website at www.burlingtontransit.ca

Appendix A: Progress Report for Actions Identified in Previous Plans

The table below highlights the progress of the action items planned in 2019 and 2020 to support Burlington Transit's commitment to accessibility:

Progress Report for Action Items - New and Ongoing

Item #	Identified Barriers	Year Identified	Status
19-2	Conduct outreach events to educate/inform about Burlington Transit services. Direct hands-on familiarization exercise on board a bus.	2019	Ongoing
19-3	Develop and implement a first-trip package for new customers.	2019	Target: Q3 2025
19-4	Update all accessibility policies.	2019	Target Q4 2025
19-5	Implement a new bus stop upgrade program for infrastructure improvements at conventional bus stops, including integration with the City of Burlington's roadway improvement projects. This program is based on the Bus Stop Upgrade Process. Criteria for upgrade scores will be included in the Plan. Stop upgrades would be to bring stops to Burlington Transit Bus Stop Design Standards that were developed and presented to BAAC in 2019.	2019	Ongoing
19-6	Increase communications to enhance public knowledge of the transit service. This would focus on the service information, service options, and fare payment. This includes online tutorial videos with captioning.	2019	Ongoing
19-8	Review improved links with surrounding municipalities.	2019	Ongoing
20-2	Continue working with Metrolinx on improving accessibility at GO stations.	2020	Ongoing
20-5	Investigate technology options for enhancing accessibility including enhancements to the specialized transit booking and cancellation system.	2020	Ongoing
20-6	Make all bus stops accessible. This is based on the Burlington Transit Bus Stop Design Standards that were developed and presented to BAAC in 2019. If a stop does not fit within a design standard, or if it is Std A (not accessible) then it will be included	2020	Ongoing

Item #	Identified Barriers	Year Identified	Status
	in the bus stop improvement program. As of July 2025, there are around 75 stops that are considered Std A.		
24-1	Supplemental service for specialized transit – this includes an RFP to obtain the services of a qualified vendor with proper vehicles to support Burlington Transit.	2024	In Progress
24-2	Enhance schedule information, delays, detours, and more using technology.	2024	Pending
25-1	Collaborate with BAAC to explore ways to improve consultation on transit accessibility plan.	2025	Not started
25-2	Enhance and improve transit operator training to include disability awareness, and inclusive communication techniques. Investigate and prepare an implementation plan to participate in the Green Ribbon initiative.	2025	Not started

Progress Report for Action Items - Completed Items

Item #	Identified Barriers	Year Identified	Status
19-0	Change to grid-like network route system in the urban area, improved frequency, and connections within the City of Burlington, increasing customer's choices for travel.	2019	Complete
19-1	Addition of media screens with real-time information at the Burlington GO, Appleby GO and Downtown Terminal. Note: Shared suggestion with Metrolinx.	2019	Removed
19-7	Participate in development of PRESTO solution for specialized transit.	2019	Complete
20-3	Evaluation of bus stop upgrades beyond the current bus stop design guidelines	2020	Complete
20-4	Increased signage on bus shelters. This signage will include bus stop etiquette points, customer service contact information, and "no smoking" and "no vaping" provincial signage.	2020	Complete

Item #	Identified Barriers	Year Identified	Status
20-7	Map of Burlington Transit bus stops. This is based on the Burlington Transit Bus Stop Design Standards that were developed and presented to BAAC in 2019. The map will be online on Burlington GIS Centre. It will be updated annually.	2020	Complete
20-8	Implement Free65 Program that offers seniors access to free transit 2019 Seniors fare free pilot was introduced for time-of-day travel during off peak hours during weekdays 2023 Seniors fare free pilot adopted and expanded to allow free travel during all hours, every day.	2019	Complete
21-1	Added one specialized vehicle to provide additional service capacity	2019	Complete
22-1	Priority and courtesy seating available and clearly labeled for persons with disabilities on all Burlington Transit buses	2022	Complete
22-2	Fare Integration (Co-Fare Agreement) established between Metrolinx and Burlington Transit	2022	Complete
24-2	5 bus stops received accessibility improvements	2023	Complete
24-3	Destination signs outline direction of travel with representation of N, S, E, W along with route number	2023	Complete