

City of Greater Sudbury Transit

2024 Annual Accessibility Status Report

With over 5,000,000 annual rides, GOVA Transit understands that accessible community mobility is essential to reach the goal of making the City of Greater Sudbury fully accessible.

To achieve this goal, GOVA Transit is committed to developing, improving, and enhancing accessible transit services, associated facilities, and infrastructure across all its services.

Through collaboration with the Accessibility Advisory Panel and accessibility stakeholders in our community, the needs, and voices of persons with disabilities are both heard and reflected in the development and review of transit service accessibility plans, provision of accessible services to customers and in the optimization of municipal investments in transit.

Background

In the 2022 – 2027 Strategic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan the Accessibility Advisory Panel identified five key priorities which align with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations* as found in *Regulation 191/11 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*:

1. Accessible Communication
2. Accessible Education and Awareness
3. Accessibility by Design
4. Accessible Community Mobility
5. Access to Recreation

These five priorities include strategic recommendations from the Panel and provide a roadmap for the City of Greater Sudbury as it continues to plan for future accessibility initiatives.

The following Annual Status Report provides an update to the public regarding GOVA Transit's progress towards achieving success in Priority 4 - Accessible Community Mobility.

Status Report: Priority 4. Accessible Community Mobility

The Accessibility Advisory Panel has identified, through the 2022-2027 Strategic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, the following areas as being essential to removing barriers and achieving an accessible community.

1. Continuing to improve farebox upgrades and retrofitting transit vehicles: Ongoing

- Replacement and improvement of farebox technology to provide increased payment options to allow payment with smart card and tap/pay with credit card or mobile device.
- All conventional system GOVA buses have low floor entries, automated ramps, priority seating and audio-visual next stop alerts.
- Conventional GOVA buses purchased after 2018 and all newly purchased buses will include features such as:
 - Wider aisles in the Priority and Courtesy seating areas near the front of the bus, providing more room for passengers with wheelchairs, or scooters to maneuver into position.
 - Safer, rear-facing seating for passengers using wheelchairs with timesaving one-strap safety restraint systems.
 - As of 2024, there are 26 buses with these features in the fleet with an additional 6 on order to be placed into service by the end of the year.
- To improve passenger comfort and reduce boarding times, improvements have been made to GOVA Plus buses. Buses purchased after 2019 and all newly purchased buses will be equipped with automated ramps instead of lifts for boarding.

2. Improve wayfinding, maps and technology that assist residents with navigation: Ongoing

- GOVA Transit has worked with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) and the Accessibility Advisory Panel to improve signage at bus stops for residents with visual impairments. Some highlights of this project include:

- Changes made to all 1,100 bus stops in the summer of 2024.
- Changes to the signs include, larger bus stop numbers and each sign will have a QR code directing passengers to the My Bus app which gives users access to track buses in real time, trip planner, route maps, schedules, and other GOVA-related information.
- The QR code can also be used to view advisories that may affect their travel, such as detours or service updates.
- In the fall of 2024, a new app for GOVA Plus passengers, will be introduced which will provide users with the ability to book trips and pay fares directly through the app and track the bus as it moves towards their location.

3. Continuing to ensure that GOVA Transit meets and exceeds compliance in accessible requirements: Ongoing

- GOVA Transit recognizes that accessibility is a comprehensive goal that encompasses numerous considerations. GOVA Transit is dedicated to continuing to meet and exceed legislative requirements as set out in the *AODA, Regulation 191/11 – The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations, Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990*.
- Use and tracking of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and the introduction of new scheduling software to assist in estimating the demand for GOVA Plus services. Should the data indicate there are prolonged wait times, policies and practices which may include service level changes will be revisited as required.
- Due to GOVA and GOVA Plus maintaining a 20% vehicle spare ratio, any equipment failure can be timely dealt with by switching out vehicles so as not to affect service.

4. Continue to review GOVA Transit policies and practices for specialized transportation: Ongoing

- New policy to formalize the process for accepting applications and determining eligibility for GOVA Plus ridership.
- Existing policies and practices will continue to be reviewed and updated as required to reflect changes in service, legislation, best practices, and industry standards.

- Existing By-laws related to transit services are currently and will continue to be reviewed to ensure that they are reflective of existing transit services and values. Those that do not will be repealed and where necessary replaced with a new by-law or operational policy.
- Improving accessibility on the conventional and specialized transit systems for people sensitive to chemicals or fragrances by using a harm reduction approach with education/awareness.

5. Continue to consult the public, persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Panel on best practices for community mobility: Ongoing

- Representatives from GOVA and GOVA Plus have and will continue to consult the public, passengers, Accessibility Advisory Panel and accessibility community stakeholders regarding their experiences, feedback and concerns and will take these into account during any reviews or changes to GOVA Transit policies and practices for community mobility.
- GOVA Transit will endeavour to have representation at Accessibility and Older Adult Advisory Panel meetings to ensure that questions or concerns can be addressed quickly and efficiently, and any required consultations can take place in a timely manner.
- There are several options for providing and collecting feedback regarding GOVA Transit services that are all provided for on the City of Greater Sudbury website.

6. Continue to improve on the transit Main Line and services expansion: Ongoing

- GOVA service increases and return to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels August 2024, which includes:
 - 11,000 annual service hours added to the conventional GOVA Transit system.
 - Added service during peak time: Route 1N Main Line New Sudbury.
 - Added frequency to post-secondary routes: Route 3 Laurentian via Regent and Route 11 Donovan/College Boreal.
 - Added weekend early departures across the network.

- New route introduced: Route 106 Valley-Dominion servicing Val Caron/Val Therese, and Hanmer via Dominion/Elmview during peak time.
- Increased peak time frequency from 90 minute to 45-minute service to Route 102 Garson and Route 103 Coniston.

Looking Ahead

GOVA Transit recognizes that accessibility is an ongoing journey. The key areas identified remain ongoing in status as efforts to enhance accessibility will change based on the needs of our community, legislative frameworks, and enhancements to transit service delivery.

Resources

Information regarding accessibility at the City of Greater Sudbury, including the Strategic Multi-Year Transit Accessibility Plan, and Annual Status Reports can be found on the City of Greater Sudbury's website: <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/city-hall/accessibility/>

Legislation

- [*The Accessibility for Ontarians with a Disability Act \(AODA\)*](#)
- [*Regulation 191/11 – The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations*](#)
- [*Human Rights Code, 1990*](#)

Contact Information

For more information, comments, questions, or concerns relating to accessibility please contact:

Greater Sudbury GOVA Transit

311 or 705-674-4455

311@greatersudbury.ca

This information is also available in hard-copy and accessible formats upon request.