

Accessible Transit Services Handbook

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BWG Transit



a Better Way to Go

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Overview

BWG Transit provides conventional bus service within the urban area of the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury and provides shared-ride taxi services to the rural area of Bond Head. Public transit is important to link residents to work, appointments and amenities. All BWG Transit routes are served by accessible buses. Accessible enhancements further improve the ability for residents to use the transit system. We are committed to providing accessible service for customers with disabilities, including customers using mobility aids and assistive devices - wheelchairs, scooters, canes, walkers or crutches. We want to make your travel experience easy and convenient, and through the provision of accessible equipment and policies we are making our service safer for passengers to use.



We recognize that a fully accessible transit service requires accessible information, buses, bus stops, schedules, shelters and benches. This handbook provides BWG Transit users with information about the accessibility of our service including the equipment and features of our vehicles, routes and services, as well as our progress to date and future plans for compliance with the requirements outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“AODA”) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation O. Reg. 191/11 (“IASR”).

How to Obtain Information

Customer information regarding bus routes, fares and general inquiries can be accessed in a variety of ways.

By telephone:

Our bus operations provider, Switzer-Carty Transportation, provides telephone assistance from Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.
Call: 905-775-7770

Electronically:

Website: TownofBWG.com/transit
Email: bwgtransit@switzer-carty.com
Twitter: [@townofbwg](https://twitter.com/townofbwg)
Facebook: facebook.com/betterwaytogo

Bus Features and Equipment

All riders, including those with disabilities and those using mobility aids and assistive devices, will find it easy and safe to board, ride and exit the buses.

Accessible features of bus fleet

Each of the buses used for BWG Transit has the following accessibility features:

- ramps with audible and visual warning indicators
- Forward-facing wheelchair/mobility aid spaces (two on each bus)
- easily reachable stop request buttons within the Priority Seating area
- highly visible electronic route information on the front and back of the bus
- space to safely store mobility aid devices

In order to ensure the safety of all BWG Transit riders, we ask that those using mobility devices kindly refrain from attaching objects that project from the device (e.g. flags).

The ramp is able to support a combined weight of wheelchair/scooter and passenger not exceeding 800 lbs (362 kg).

Non-functioning equipment during non-emergency situations

Unexpected failures of equipment can occur at any time. BWG Transit together with their service provider will implement interim measures and repair the malfunction as soon as reasonably practical. Some situational examples are:

Audible beep when deploying the ramp:

In the event that the audible warning indicator malfunctions the bus driver will notify riders near the ramp deployment area of its deployment and to stand clear of the immediate area. If another bus is available, the bus will be replaced as soon as reasonably possible and the equipment will be fixed.

Stops and Shelters

BWG Transit is committed to creating an accessible transportation system and is working to ensure bus stops, shelters and integrated seating are accessible.

Location of bus stops

When planning for transit stops the following criteria were considered:

Placement of Stop:

- Located to minimize walk distances
- Convenient location to amenities
- Convenient and safe for bus operator to stop
- Adjacent to side yard of residential properties (where practical to do so)

Pedestrian access:

- Route to stop as direct as possible with access from sidewalk
- Connecting path free of obstructions
- Low impact on adjacent properties
- Grade of road does not impede accessibility

Visibility

- Bus operator's sight lines not obstructed by trees, shrubs, poles, buildings, etc.
- Bus does not restrict the visibility of traffic signals
- Proper lighting at stops

Driveways

- If impractical, ensure full visibility for vehicles exiting driveways and locate stops on far side of driveway
- Consider volume and turning movements of other vehicles

Bus stops

Each bus stop will have the following attributes:

- A hard surface linking between the existing pathways and sidewalks to the bus pad
- A curb to reduce the angle of the ramp when lowered
- No obstructions such as hydro poles, newspaper boxes and garbage cans that would hinder the mobility of a person boarding the bus

Bus stop design guidelines include the following elements:

- Concrete surface at front door of bus at all bus stops
- Concrete connection to existing pathways or sidewalks
- Provisions for future shelter placement offering sufficient room to manoeuvre mobility aids and assistive devices

The following circumstances are examples of where a bus stop may be deemed unsafe:

- where a curb does not exist but where a paved driveway slope is such that when a bus ramp is deployed, and the ramp angle is too steep to deboard safely
- a hard grassy area lacks curbing
- inclement weather affects the condition of the stop

Bus operators will promptly report to the Town any stops that are temporarily inaccessible or the existence of any temporary barriers. An investigation will take place and actions will be taken as soon as reasonably practical. In the event a temporary barrier exists BWG Transit will take reasonable care to mark hazards until such a time that the barrier can be permanently removed.

Bus shelters

When determining the location of bus shelters, the following criteria are considered:

- number and frequency of outbound trips at the stop
- space available for construction
- demographics of area and riders
- proximity to major centres
- weather conditions (e.g. likelihood of high winds, drifting snow, direct sunlight)
- adjacent land uses and compatibility
- adequate lighting for safety

Routes and Schedules

In an effort to implement an accessible transit system, BWG Transit's two routes use accessible buses, provide adequate time for all passengers to safely board and deboard the bus, and use bus stops designed with accessibility in mind.

As BWG Transit is committed to creating a fully accessible transit experience, efforts will continue that remove barriers for passengers with disabilities or using mobility aid devices.

Planning your trip

To plan your trip using the transit system, route information can be accessed in both print and online formats. Route maps and schedules are located Town owned facilities and are online at Town of BWG Transit/transit.

Alternative formats are available upon request.

Accessible Services and Policies

Fares

BWG Transit has standardized published fares rate for all passengers and the same fare rate applies to a person with a disability. For more information on fares please visit Town of BWG Transit.

There is no charge for the storage of mobility aid or mobility assistive devices on our buses.

Cash fares or an easyPASS will be accepted onboard the bus. The easyPASS can be purchased and reloaded at the three Town facilities listed below. To buy or top-up your easyPASS, please visit one of the following facilities:



Administration Office

100 Dissette Street
Units 7 and 8
Bradford, ON

Treasury Building*

61 Holland Street East
Bradford, ON

** credit cards not accepted at this location*

BWG Leisure Centre

471 West Park Avenue
Bradford, ON

Alternate fare payment options may be available for those who are not able to use the above noted options. To arrange for an alternate payment option, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator. Contact information is provided on page 12 of this guide.

Support person pass

Support persons travelling with a rider who requires assistance while using transit are not required to pay a fare. Individuals who need a support person are required to apply for the Support Person Pass. This individual will receive a card and must present it in conjunction with their regular fare when travelling with a Support Person. A passenger is only considered a support person while accompanying an individual who requires assistance to ride the bus.

An application form and more information are available online, or by contacting the Accessibility Coordinator.

Alternative transit services

Any person with a disability who – because of their disability – is unable to use BWG Transit buses can apply for alternative transit services. Individuals would be required to meet eligibility criteria and have a healthcare professional complete a portion of the application form. Alternative transit services would require that the passenger pay a cash transit fare of \$3.00 to reach their destination. For more information about the program, visit our website or contact the Town's Accessibility Coordinator.

Trained bus operators

BWG Transit – together with Switzer-Carty Transportation, our service provider – ensures that all bus operators have been specially trained to provide accessible transit service. Training includes:

- The safe and proper techniques for the operation of ramps and the securement of accessible equipment
- Emergency preparedness and procedures
- Instruction on the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Instruction on policies for accessible customer service and transportation requirements

Temporary service disruptions

Temporary disruptions in transit service may occur due to reasons outside of BWG Transit's control or knowledge. Together with our service provider we will provide notice of the disruption to the public which will include:

- The reason for the disruption
- The anticipated duration of disruption
- A description of alternate services that may be available

Where service disruptions are planned, reasonable efforts will be made to provide the notice in advance of the disruption. Where disruptions are not planned, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

Depending on the nature of the service disruption, notice may be provided in a variety of methods, including but not limited to:

- Postings at bus stops

- Postings inside the bus
- Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury website
- Social Media (Twitter and Facebook)
- Other means that are reasonable and applicable under the circumstances

Request Stops for Safe Arrival

The Stops for Safe Arrival initiative allows riders travelling after dark to request the bus operator to stop closer to their destination. The initiative also allows persons with disabilities to request to board or deboard at the closest available safe location. Safe locations will be determined by the operator and will be along the transit route.

Priority Seating

BWG Transit's Priority Seating policy is intended to make the buses safe and accessible to all passengers. The priority seating areas are located in designated areas clearly marked with appropriate signage.

The seating area is intended for:

- Passengers with mobility limitations, especially those using wheelchairs, scooters or walkers
- Passengers with disabilities

All passengers should note that:

- Wheelchair users have priority
- A person with a disability occupying a priority seat is not required to move for another customer with a disability; use of these seats is on a first come, first served basis
- You are not required or expected to leave a transit vehicle in order to make room for a customer with a disability
- Bus drivers/operators will not intervene to enforce the requirement; we ask, however, that you show consideration for those whose need is greater than your own



Courtesy Seating

Courtesy Seating is intended to provide additional seating for people who will benefit from having a seat near the front of the bus including:

- Seniors
- Expectant mothers
- Adults traveling with infants or small children
- Any other passenger who may benefit from a seat

Service animals

Service animals accompanying persons with disabilities are welcome on BWG Transit. No other pets or exotic animals will be permitted on the bus.

In some circumstances, an operator may ask for confirmation that the service animal is required for reasons relating to a disability.

Safety and Emergency Preparedness and Response

The following section outlines BWG Transit's emergency preparedness and response policies provided to help ensure the safety of our passengers.

Bus maintenance and emergency equipment

All BWG Transit buses are maintained to a high standard that meets or exceeds the Ministry of Transportation Guidelines. All buses are equipped with:

- A 911 emergency button
- Radio access to a transit supervisor at all times
- Fire extinguishers
- Emergency first aid kits
- Emergency reflectors to safely divert traffic in the event of breakdowns or accidents

Bus operators conduct a daily inspection on every bus before it is put in service for the day. The pre-trip inspection identifies any operating defects and includes an inspection of the condition of passenger seats, floor, handrails, the audio announcement system, and a confirmation that accessible equipment (e.g. straps, harnesses) are present and functioning.

Emergency situations

BWG Transit is committed to providing safe conditions for our passengers. An emergency can happen at any time. While no one can control weather conditions, unexpected vehicle breakdowns, accidents or passenger illnesses, BWG Transit bus operators are trained and prepared for these possibilities. Bus operators will make first aid kits available for use; however, they are not required or expected to administer first aid. The following situations have been identified as risks based on the most probable emergency situations that may be encountered.

Vehicle breakdowns and unavoidable stops:

In the event of a mechanical malfunction or vehicle breakdown, if possible, the vehicle will be safely guided onto the right shoulder or into a parking area. The transit supervisor will be notified immediately by the bus operator. If the vehicle is unable to continue, another vehicle will be sent to the designated location. In the interim, the bus operator will advise passengers to remain on the bus unless it is unsafe to do so. The bus operator will work to ensure passenger safety at all times.

Vehicle accidents and personal injury:

The safety of passengers and the public is a bus operator's first consideration. Bus operators are trained to exercise constant vigilance to prevent injury and to practice defensive driving at all times. In no case will the bus operator leave an injured person unattended.

If involved in an accident, the bus operator will:

- Call 911 if personal injury occurs or if evacuation assistance is required
- Advise the 911 operator if disabled passengers are on board who require special assistance
- Notify the supervisor or dispatch
- Provide access to the first aid kit if appropriate
- Remain at the scene and wait for emergency personnel to arrive

Vehicle fire:

At the first indication of fire on the vehicle, the bus operator will proceed as follows:

- Pull over to a safe location, stop the vehicle immediately, open all doors, shut off the engine and contact dispatch to request emergency services assistance
- Advise passengers that emergency services have been notified and instruct passengers who do not require assistance to deboard in an orderly manner
- Assist passengers with disabilities to deboard; if necessary, solicit help from other passengers
- If possible, use the fire extinguisher located on the vehicle to extinguish the fire
- If fire cannot be controlled by the fire extinguisher, advise passengers not to re-enter the vehicle
- Await emergency services assistance

Difficult, disruptive or threatening passengers:

To ensure the safety of passengers and staff, any passenger who is threatening, creating a disturbance or affecting the safe operation of a transit vehicle will be dealt with promptly.

The bus operator will:

- Advise the difficult/threatening passenger to stop their behaviour immediately or risk being denied a ride
- Advise dispatch of the circumstances
- Call 911 directly or engage the 911 Emergency button for police assistance if the passenger behavior is not corrected and there is risk of harm to anyone on the vehicle

Medical Emergencies:

In circumstances where a medical emergency arises, the bus operator will:

- Assess the seriousness of the situation
- Radio the supervisor or dispatch for assistance; dispatch will arrange for assistance, emergency or non-emergency, if required
- Call 911 directly for immediate assistance
- Provide access to the first aid kit, if appropriate

Some symptoms or illnesses may be alleviated if the passenger exits the bus. In this circumstance, bus operators must communicate to the passenger the exact deboarding location. The bus operator will ask the passenger if any assistance is required.

If assistance is required, the bus operator will advise dispatch. A supervisor will report to the designated location and provide direction to the bus operator regarding the continuation of the route and assist the passenger.

Natural Disasters:

BWG Transit management diligently monitors weather warnings and provides instruction to ensure passenger and bus operator safety. In the case of severe weather, transit services may be suspended. In the event of flash floods, bus operators are required to notify dispatch and not to attempt to cross roads or bridges that are flooded. If the vehicle stalls due to high water, it is generally safer to stay in the vehicle. The bus operator will radio for emergency help.

Bradford West Gwillimbury is seldom subjected to extreme weather conditions; however, should such a situation arise, our team is trained to respond to the situation.

Summary

BWG Transit, together with our service providers, is committed to offering an accessible transit service and to meeting and/or exceeding regulations. Our commitment to creating an accessible transit system includes working to ensure everyone is able to experience a convenient and safe ride.

Inquiries

For further information about the information contained within this document, please contact:

BWG Transit
Accessibility Coordinator
100 Dissette Street, Units 7 & 8
Bradford, ON, L3Z 2A7
Telephone: 905-775-5366 x.1105
Fax: 905-775-0153
Email: accessibility@townofbwg.com

Appendix A – Accessible Features of Bus Fleet

The following chart outlines the accessible features of the BWG transit fleet and the corresponding section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

AODA Section	Accessible Features	Date Required	Compliant
59	Buses are low floor, equipped with a ramp and wide aisles.	Jan 1-13	Yes
44	The ramp can be lowered at the request of any person. Adequate time to be provided to ensure riders have to safely board, be secured or seated and to disembark.	Jan 1-12	Yes
59	The ramp has a slip resistant surface with minimal glare and raised edges that are highlighted with contrasting colors.	Jan 1-13	Yes
61	Ramp device is equipped with an audible warning alarm as well as visual indicator lights.	Jan 1-13	Yes
52(1)	Onboard and next stop announcements system provides:	July 1-11	Yes
52 (2)	a) audible verbal announcements	Jan 1-17	
56	b) both audible and visual identifications through electronic means	July 1-11	Yes
56	c) Accessible stop requests are mounted no higher than 1,220 millimetres (47 inches) and no lower than 390 millimetres (15 inches) above the floor; located within reach of allocated mobility aid spaces and courtesy seating locations and through the bus.	July 1-11	Yes
56	d) Controls to be operable with one hand.	July 1-11	Yes
56	e) Controls to be high-colour contrasted with the equipment to which it is mounted.	July 1-11	Yes
51 (1)	f) Pre-boarding verbal announcements of the route, direction, destination or next major stop are available on request.	July 1-11	Yes
53	Grab bars, hand holds, and handrails are high colour-contrasted and located near the fare box, mobility aid securement position, courtesy seating area and each side of the entrance and exit. These features are distributed throughout the vehicle to support independent and safe boarding, on-board circulation, seating and standing assistance and disembarking.	Jul 1-11	Yes

AODA Section	Accessible Features	Date Required	Compliant
54	Floor surfaces produce minimal glare and are slip resistant.	Jan 1-13	Yes
55	Each bus has 2 spaces that can be utilized for the storage of mobility aids.	July 1-11	Yes
44	Upon request, bus operators are to provide assistance with boarding and deboarding, provided the assistance can be performed in a manner that is safe for both the bus operator and the passenger (at the discretion of the bus driver).	Jan 1-12	Yes
48	Bus operators to secure and return mobility aids and mobility assistive devices.	Jan 1-12	Yes
58	All buses to have easy to read electronic exterior route or destination signage. Signs to be designed with high colour-contrast that assists with visual recognition, consistent in shape, glare free, and have the appearance of solid characters.	Jan 1 -13	Yes
35	For non-emergency related occurrences, BWG Transit and their service provider will implement interim measures and repair the malfunction as soon as reasonably practical.	July 1-11 Jan 1-14	Yes Yes
51	Electronic pre-boarding announcements of the route, direction, destination or next major stop to be provided.	Jan 1-17	

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Available in alternate formats upon request