Accessibility on the TTC

Fall 2019 Newsletter

The TTC strives to deliver a reliable, safe, clean and welcoming transit experience for all customers. Its commitment to a barrier-free and accessible system is at the core of the Five-Year Corporate Plan (2018-2022). All customers should enjoy the freedom, independence and flexibility to travel across the network.

The TTC’s Easier Access Program is on track to making all subway stations accessible by 2025.

The launch of the Wheel-Trans Family of Services initiative and improved customer service through better on-time service delivery with improved shared rides, and same day bookings will improve system accessibility.

These related initiatives will help the TTC achieve its vision of a seamless, barrier free transit system that makes Toronto proud.

TTC’s Vehicle Fleet Update

The TTC’s bus fleet is entirely wheelchair and scooter friendly, as are all bus routes. The subway train fleet is accessible.

The TTC’s new streetcars are accessible with a ramp, no internal steps and two onboard positions for wheelchairs and scooters. They have greater capacity, are air-conditioned and provide a more comfortable ride.

The TTC is in the final stages of retiring its 40-year-old CLRV streetcars and will provide accessible rides on all streetcar routes by January 2020.

The TTC is working on retrofitting its Line 3 trains for improved accessibility. This is an interim measure until the Line 2 East Extension opens. Retrofit work on Line 3 includes the removal of eight seats on each car to install multi-purpose seating areas that can better accommodate customers using mobility devices; new pull down handholds at the multi-purpose areas; and improved lighting and aesthetics throughout. The first 14 cars were completed in 2018. The remaining 14 cars are expected to be completed by the end of 2020.
TTC’s Bus Stop Improvement Program

The TTC began a city-wide program in late 2017 to upgrade up to 2,500 bus stops. These improvements make many more stops accessible to customers using mobility devices, accommodate articulated buses and bring the stops to a state of good repair. In some instances, new concrete pads are being constructed where none existed before.

This program fulfills the objectives of TTC’s Accessibility Plan, the City of Toronto’s Seniors Strategy and legal obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Since December 2017, 533 stops have been upgraded, including 43 stops completed in 2019. These upgrades are partly funded by the Government of Canada through the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund.

On Wednesday, September 25, 2019 the TTC held its annual Public Forum on Accessible Transit to hear from customers about the accessibility of conventional TTC and door-to-door (Wheel-Trans) public transit services in Toronto. The event provided the opportunity for customers to speak publicly and candidly about their experiences on the TTC, and to provide feedback, concerns and other comments directly to a panel which included Kirsten Watson, Deputy CEO – Operations; Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans; Mark Mis, Manager – Service Planning, and Mazin Aribi, 2019 ACAT Chair. In addition to the many TTC customers who attended, others followed a live webcast of the event. The panel responded to questions throughout the night and all of the feedback received will be used to inform the TTC’s ongoing accessibility planning initiatives.

Photos of the 2019 Public Forum on Accessible Transit Event held on September 25, 2019.
Easier Access Program

The TTC’s Easier Access Program will make all subway stations accessible to everyone. Building an accessible system requires retrofitting stations that were originally constructed in the 1950s to 1980s. Modernizing stations involves numerous complexities in design and construction, including dealing with aging utilities, power upgrades and property implications. What makes a station accessible? Elevators, easier access fare gates, automatic sliding doors, signage improvements and associated modifications to architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical components.

As of October 2019, 45 stations are accessible. The TTC is on track to make all subway stations accessible by 2025. In order to meet the 2025 completion date, the TTC must retrofit an average of three stations per year. Construction is ramping up across the subway network to deliver accessibility.

2019 Status for the Easier Access Program

- 45 stations are accessible.
- Stations under construction in 2019:
  - Royal York Station is scheduled for completion in December 2019.
  - Bay, Chester, Runnymede, Wellesley, Wilson and Yorkdale stations are scheduled for completion in 2020.
  - Lansdowne, Keele and Sherbourne are scheduled for completion in 2021.
- The next set of stations scheduled to begin major Easier Access construction are:
  - College, Donlands, King, Rosedale and Spadina.

Stations in progress…

Design renderings of the future elevators at Keele Station.

Keele Station Update

Construction began this summer at Keele Station with the two new elevators expected to be operational by the end of 2021. In September, a temporary prefabricated platform and protective hoarding was installed at the station as the majority of the work will take place in the bus loop.

The bus loop will be closed in 2020 for approximately six months in order to upgrade/repave the bus roadway, bus platforms and to complete some preliminary underground work. During this time, TTC riders will board buses at street level or at a High Park Station. A detailed transit service plan will be provided closer to the time of the closure with updated signage in place.

As a thank-you to customers that use Keele Station, TTC and the contractor Kenaidan, hosted a customer appreciation event the morning of Friday, October 11 at the Keele Station front entrance.
Dupont Station Update
Work to make Dupont Station accessible, with new elevators, is progressing under the new lead contractor.

The removal of hoarding within the traffic lane restrictions is expected in late 2019. Construction/fencing will continue in 2020 at street level to build Elevator 1 and its canopy and other related activities will take place underground inside the station. Dupont Station is scheduled to become accessible in 2020.

Lansdowne Station Update
Construction began this summer at Lansdowne Station with elevators expected to be operational by the end of 2021. The project includes significant improvements: three new elevators, two accessible fare gates, a barrier-free path to all levels of the station from the main entrance, an automatic sliding door to enter station, improved signage and security cameras along the accessible pathway. In September, a new pedestrian walkway and station entrance were installed for customers to safely travel around construction.

Royal York Station Update
The bus roadway at Royal York Station was resurfaced and service in the loop was restored on May 24, 2019. The TTC is now in the homestretch of the project with scheduled completion by year’s end. Part of the Toronto Parking Authority lot required during construction will be repaved by the end of September.

Runnymede Station Update
Construction at Runnymede Station is progressing on schedule. Overnight work is required to keep bus service moving. The station will become accessible within 2020.

The public art for Runnymede Station is up now, and information about the artist, Eliscer Eliot, was shared on the TTC’s Instagram account. Called “Anonymous Somebody” it captures snippets of the city’s bustling Bloor West Village.
Sherbourne Station Update

Construction is set to begin at Sherbourne Station this year with elevators scheduled to be in service by 2021. Upgrades to the station have already begun, including the installation of a series of 39 ceramic tile mosaic panels titled “The Whole is Greater than the Parts” by artist Rebecca Bayer. Communications with local residents started this summer with a pop-up at Sherbourne Station. The TTC shared information on the start of Easier Access construction at the station and took questions from the public. Outreach will continue to keep local residents, businesses and stakeholders informed as work progresses.

Yorkdale Station Update

Construction is proceeding at Yorkdale Station with elevators expected to be operational by the end of 2020. This project includes other significant improvements, including a complete transformation and update of the station façade, sheltered bike parking and a glass canopy. Called “Arc-en-Ciel” the art installation will also be completed by the end of the year. A rainbow of light will illuminate the canopy over the platform as trains enter the station. The concept is being resurrected from an earlier installation by the same artist, Michael Hayden. The new technology is expected to provide superior performance and durability for all to enjoy.
Spadina Station Update

Preliminary field testing at Spadina Road and Lowther Avenue began in August 2018 as part of TTC’s goal of making Spadina Station on Line 1 accessible. The work involved drilling test holes into the ground to obtain soil samples and data. Information obtained from the assessment is required for the design work of the future elevator project.

Communications continue in 2019 with all local stakeholders. Spadina Station is scheduled to be accessible in 2022.

College Station Update

Improvements to College Station are expected to begin in 2020. The work includes the construction of a new concourse south of the existing one and creating new connections to this vibrant and bustling area of the downtown core. The concourse will combine new elevators and a second exit/entrance through College Park.

Communications and outreach have begun for this project with an Open House held in June 2019.