



**The Corporation of The Town of Cobourg
Accessibility Advisory Committee**

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

10:00 A.M.

Electronic Participation

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96410719309?pwd=SHVnRm9uSE00K1NKbEUyNVZieVV5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 964 1071 9309

Passcode: 011952

Dial-In:

+1 647 374 4685

+1 647 558 0588

Rescheduled Meeting Site Link:

https://cobourg.escribemeetings.com/Accessibility%20Advisory%20Committee_Jan20_2021

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. TRADITIONAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Town of Cobourg respectfully acknowledge that we are located in the traditional and treaty territory of the Michi Saagiig (Mississauga) and Chippewa Nations, collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, which include: Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Alderville, Scugog Island, Rama, Beausoleil, and Georgina Island First Nations.

The Town of Cobourg respectfully acknowledge that the Williams Treaties First Nations have been stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters, and that today remain vigilant over their health and integrity for generations to come. We are all Treaty people.

3. APPROVAL/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Action Recommended:

THAT the Agenda dated January 20, 2021 be approved as presented/amended.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

5. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Action Recommended:

THAT the minutes dated December 16, 2020 be adopted as presented/amended.

6. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

7. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

7.1.	Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility regarding Supporting Seniors and People with Disabilities During Provincewide Shutdown Link here: https://news.ontario.ca/en/bulletin/59932/supporting-seniors-and-people-with-disabilities-during-provincewide-shutdown	11
8.	<u>REPORTS</u>	
8.1.	Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works, and Renee Champagne, Engineering and Public Transit Administrator, regarding the Wheels policy and procedure update.	13
9.	<u>NEW BUSINESS</u>	
9.1.	Discussion at large around Accessible Taxis.	40
10.	<u>UNFINISHED BUSINESS</u>	
11.	<u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	



The Corporation of The Town of Cobourg

Accessibility Advisory Committee

MINUTES

December 16, 2020, 10:00 a.m.

Electronic Participation

Members Present: Jerry Ford
Susan Caron
Elizabeth Sheffield
Aaron Burchat
Kathryn Richards
Troy Mills

Staff Present: Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works
Jamie Kramer

Staff Absent: Brent Larmer, Municipal Clerk/Manager of Legislative Services
Krystal Christopher

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sue Carron called the Meeting to Order at 10:01 A.M.

2. APPROVAL/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Moved by Elizabeth Sheffield

THAT the Agenda dated December 16, 2020 be approved as presented.

Carried

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

There were no Declarations of Interest Declared by Committee Members.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by Jerry Ford

THAT the minutes dated November 25, 2020 be adopted as presented.

Carried

5. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

6. COMMUNICATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

6.1 Email from Ted Williams, Cobourg resident, regarding the accessibility of the Town of Cobourg's website.

J. Kramer read the letter aloud for the Committee. It was discussed about what changes could be made and how the website could be updated by members. J. Kramer noted she would forward the concerns to the Manager of Communications and work with her and eSCRIBE to find a solution.

Moved by Troy Mills

Motion to accept the letter for information purposes.

Carried

Moved by Elizabeth Sheffield

Motion to provide this letter to Council for information purposes.

Carried

7. REPORTS

7.1 Jamie Kramer, Accessibility Coordinator, regarding the Town of Cobourg's application to the Inclusive Community Grant through the Province of Ontario.

J. Kramer outlined the Grant application for the Inclusive Community Grant through the Government of Ontario that the Town of Cobourg will be submitting.

The Government is providing funding for seniors and/or Persons with Disabilities up to \$60,000 under the [Inclusive Community Grant](#). The Town of Cobourg is making a quasi-joint application with Allison Greer, the Recreation Coordinator for Seniors Programming, the Cobourg Public Library, and Community Living-West and would include the Accessibility Advisory Committee as well.

The project overview is to educate all persons, especially seniors and persons with disabilities, on how to engage and interact with the municipality through the tools that the Town of Cobourg is currently using (Bang The Table) as well as understanding other ways to reach these communities. From here, the Town will pilot the information into creating a public engagement process for accessibility in the downtown area of Cobourg to ensure that all persons are able to access and use the downtown area including the shops and parks.

Moved by Elizabeth Sheffield

Motion to support the application for the Inclusive Communities Grant for the citizens of Cobourg and Northumberland county.

Carried

7.2 Jamie Kramer, Accessibility Coordinator, regarding the 2021 Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule.

J. Kramer outlined the meeting schedule for 2021, including all months and the option for special or extra meetings as necessary.

Aaron Burchat joined the meeting at 10:00 am.

7.3 Laurie Wills, Director of Public Works, regarding Cobourg Transit Options.

- L. Wills provided an overview of the report:
 - Met with transit suppliers and what On-Demand and micro transit moving forward.
 - Talked to half a dozen different companies that provide either the software or transportation themselves.

- PWT is the parent company of Century and has their own department of On-Demand transit and L. Wills and R. Champagne met with them to see how this could be done in Cobourg.
- RideCo provides this in smaller communities and Via who provides software and both provided quotes but RideCo was the pilot option because of their work with smaller communities.
- Recommendation is a 12 month pilot project to see information and data for the entire year because of how seasonal the ridership is.
 - Throughout the 12 month period, there are several phases to roll this pilot out.
 - First, need Town Council approval to do something like this and provide funding.
- Expect that it will be small increments at the beginning and then once it starts to grow and there is an uptake in On-Demand calls, we will proceed with Phases as needed.
- The Wheels service will stay the same throughout the pilot (as much as it needs to be for booking in advance) but as it rolls out, you will have both options: Wheels and On-Demand.
 - The call-in service will still be available, even with the roll out of an app.
- Still use the fixed route stop locations, even though they will not be following that route. People will have to call and be picked up from those stops.
- For areas outside the fixed route, there will be "virtual" stops that will be mapped out in advance.
 - For example, New Amherst will have a virtual stop about 400 m from where they are, typically at bigger intersections.
- Planning to use the Wheels and Conventional buses, which means no new buses need to be purchased to run the pilot.
- Once the pilot is complete, it will be possible to get smaller vehicles for a cheaper amount of money than replacing the bus.
- Following Council approval, it will take approximately 2 months to roll out the process with the programming of software and marketing of this to get the information out there.

- S. Carron: Will the bus continue to do the regular route?
 - L. Wills: It will continue to do the regular route and we'll use it when it's not booked. The beginning of the pilot, the fixed route will continue but by the end of the pilot we are hoping to not use that fixed route service anymore.
- E. Sheffield: Can we have an in-person contact if someone doesn't have a phone?
 - L. Wills: Yes, there could be times when it is only on demand using technology but during office hours there will be someone to answer the phone. This is another detail to work through and identify this need as it comes up.
 - E. Sheffield: Clarifying, could someone at the Town book for them if they don't have a phone.
 - L. Wills: That would be a challenge because we are closed right now and have someone who could do this as part of their job, but it would be unreliable to offer this. The Library is always available to book something.
 - E. Sheffield: Are there some dedicated spots for people to know where they can get to in order to get home? The more high-tech we get, the more we leave people behind.
- S. Carron: If we don't have a fixed route, and I have an emergency appointment, how can I get the bus to get me there in the right time frame?
 - L. Wills: On Demand will be faster than the fixed route, you will be picked up within 10 minutes. But sometimes there is an emergency and the on-demand will be more convenient than the fixed route.
- E. Sheffield: Considered about the people who have developmental issues because they currently know the bus route and this will be a barrier for them. They don't have technology or cell phones. People will be able to learn but it will be longer than typical.
 - S. Carron: Hold special program of training for those persons who need it, which can be a part of the grant?
- Councillor Burchat: How is the Wheels going to operate in the system?

- L. Wills: It will be incorporated as well without diminishing the service we already have, with the On-Demand you'll be able to call and get a ride.
- Councillor Burchat: Have there been discussions with the app developer about the technology that can be placed at the bus stops that can be a "hailling" system?
 - L. Wills: I don't know and might cause vandilization.
 - E. Sheffield: That would work incredibly well for persons with developmental issues.
 - L. Wills: We can look for these special locations to assist with this. Technically down the road we won't have stops, but within 250 to 400 m from your home to be picked up.
- L. Wills: This will be coming back to Council and open up to public input after that.
- S. Carron: Want to make sure that the transit system is accessible and safe for all. If I'm going to do an On-Demand bus, will they be able to accommodate me from Point A to Point B.
- T. Mills: Having an issue with the buses now to make sure these vehicles are ready when they are needed?
 - L. Wills: The buses are ready for replacement and want to get through the pilot before purchasing new vehicles to see what the best option moving forward is for the purchase of new buses.
- T. Mills: Has Jamie looked into size of the vehicles?
 - J. Kramer: Not to the extent to provide commentary on this.
 - T. Mills: Could we purchase accessible vans?
 - L. Wills: We could look into that once the pilot is done to see how many we need to purchase and it could be smaller vans or up to 12 passengers. The biggest we would ever get is 12 passengers.
- S. Carron: Will they be COVID safe?
 - L. Wills: They won't be purchased until 2022 at the earliest but we can determine the precautions at the time when necessary.
- E. Sheffield: When is the pilot proposed to start? Is it when the pandemic is over and people feel safe to travel?

- L. Wills: It is slated for next year and the data we can collect about calls. So even if we don't have the On-Demand at that time during the pilot, it will show how many vehicles we need, when we need them, and how we can move forward after this.
- E. Sheffield: As we open up, we may show an increase but it might be skewed at the beginning.
- L. Wills: Can ask the software if there is a way to aggregate other data but as we grow, we can add more vehicles.
- T. Mills: Is this just in the Cobourg area or are there other destinations?
 - L. Wills: Only within the town of Cobourg.
 - E. Sheffield: Could this be integrated with a County-wide option?
 - L. Wills: Likely not because this is a tax-based cost, it has to be in the town of Cobourg limits. The County could take it on but they would have to pay for it. We don't want to double pay the County for the service.
 - E. Sheffield: What responsibility does Cobourg bear being the County seat? Maybe the County will take it over for all of us.
 - L. Wills: Community Care does a great job with bringing people from the rural area into Cobourg but transit is very expensive to provide service outside of an urban area.
- E. Sheffield: Will there be more people cost with more buses?
 - L. Wills: We are not sure, there could be a change in the future but having one extra driver would trade-off with having to pay the maintenance costs.
- T. Mills: When we will have to pay for transit again?
 - L. Wills: Currently preparing a report to Council and haven't talked to members about reimplementing fees or not but will discuss again on January 4th. If they do, we will give plenty of notice and help people get their passes again.

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9.1 Discussion Re: Accessible Transportation in the Town of Cobourg

- L. Wills discuss the letter from Legion Village and provide a brief summary:
 - A booking was made for a return trip on a Saturday and we checked the GPS for the bus to see what happened.
 - The bus was at the pick up location from an hour before to 15 minutes after their pick up time.
 - Advised the Legion Village how this works and they received the response and how it works.
 - Will provide handouts or posters for their residents to make sure this doesn't happen again.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Kathy at 11:03 a.m.

Municipal Clerk B. Larmer

Mayor J. Henderson

BULLETIN

Supporting Seniors and People with Disabilities During Provincewide Shutdown

January 13, 2021

[Seniors and Accessibility](#)

As Ontario declares a second state of emergency, the government is reminding everyone about the resources available to help seniors and people with disabilities in need throughout this period.

Supports and services available to seniors and people with disabilities include:

- The Ontario Community Support Program, which helps provide deliveries of food, medicine and other essentials to low-income seniors and people with disabilities in need. You can request a delivery by visiting the [COVID-19 Community Support Finder](#), dialing 211 or calling toll free: 1-877-330-3213/ TTY: 1-888-340-1001.
- [211 Ontario](#), which also helps connect seniors and people with disabilities to a range of other social and community services. Help is available over the phone or online through email or live chat.
- Seniors can contact their local [Seniors Active Living Centre](#) to learn more about local social, cultural or educational programs that may be offered virtually or by telephone.
- [The Seniors Safety Line](#), a 24-hour crisis and support line for seniors in Ontario who have experienced any type of abuse or neglect, which offers callers emotional support, safety planning, information and referrals in over 200 languages.
- [ConnectABILITY.ca](#), a website and virtual community that offers information and resources to support individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Ontario is also helping organizations, including those serving seniors and people with disabilities, to access the resources they need. Organizations that are looking for volunteer support can post opportunities on [Spark Ontario](#), and local companies offering personal protective equipment (PPE) can be found through Ontario's [Workplace PPE Supplier Directory](#).

Quick Facts

- Ontario announced a [provincewide shutdown](#) that went effect at 12:01 am on December 26, 2020.
 - Ontario is continuing the Ontario Community Support Program, with a total investment of \$16 million over two years, to connect people with disabilities, older adults and others with underlying medical conditions who are self-isolating, with meals, medicines and other essentials while they stay at home.
 - Since the program was launched in April 2020, more than half a million deliveries of food, medicines and other essentials have been made.
 - On December 30, 2020, Ontario released an [Ethical Framework](#) for COVID-19 vaccine distribution which was developed in partnership with the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force to guide vaccine prioritization and distribution across the province.
 - [COVID-19: Supports for seniors and people with disabilities](#)
-

Media Contacts

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TOWN OF COBOURG

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

'WHEELS'

2021

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

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WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

Introduction

The Town of Cobourg operates conventional as well as specialized transit service called WHEELS. WHEELS is an origin-to-destination service for those who, due to a functional limitation are not able to utilize the fixed route accessible transit system for the following reasons:

- Unable to board/disembark the accessible bus without assistance
- Unable to ride the accessible bus without assistance
- Unable to travel to/from a fixed route Transit stop

The WHEELS Service is:

- A scheduled pre-booked bus, shared ride, origin-to-destination service
- A service intended for people who, because of their disability, cannot ride the regular fixed-route service
- Only for those riders who are travelling within the town limits of Cobourg
- Suitable for customers using a wheelchair, scooter, cane, walker and most types of mobility aids

The WHEELS Service is NOT:

- A taxi service
- A medical carrier
- Meant to replace Cobourg Transit's regular fixed route service when it is not operating or not convenient
- A service for seniors without a disability

A Shared Ride is defined as:

- Other riders may be on board during the trip to your destination;
- The route of travel may be altered so another rider(s) can be accommodated;
- The vehicle may stop and pick up other riders as it travels to your destination in order to maximize the transportation needs of all WHEELS members. For this reason, travel times may be similar to conventional transit.

Eligibility / Application Process

WHEELS Specialized Transit is intended for persons who, due to a functional limitation, would be physically unable to board a conventional transit vehicle, ride a conventional public transit bus without the ability to hold on for support, or travel a distance of 175 meters (approximately 575 feet or a city block).

Eligibility is not based on a particular disability, age, income or lack of available public transit in an applicant's area. Eligibility is not for those who find it more difficult or are

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

unwilling to use a regular conventional fixed route public transit system. Specialized Transit is not an attendant care service. Passengers whose medical conditions require specific transportation (i.e. extreme fragility requiring transportation below regular speeds or inability to remain on the vehicle for up to one hour or inability to maneuver their own mobility device) need to contact a non-emergency medical carrier for transportation.

If you are considering your eligibility for Specialized Transit, please note that the WHEELS service is limited in capacity and intended for those with the least amount of ability. Please consider that you may be able to use Cobourg Transit's conventional accessible fixed-route system. Cobourg Transit offers accessible buses on all conventional routes. Accessible features include kneeling capability and ramp deployment, low-floors, on-board next stop announcement, call/display system, hand rails and priority seating with space for two wheelchairs.

In order to be eligible for WHEELS, all users must first submit an application form which will be reviewed by the Public Transit Administrator, in compliance with the approved Categories of Eligibility, which are as follows:

There are three (3) categories of eligibility for which the Applicant can apply for which include:

1. **Unconditional:** A Person with a Disability that prevents them from using the accessible conventional transportation services,
2. **Temporary:** A Person with a Disability that prevents them from using the accessible conventional transportation services on a temporary basis (ex. a person having knee replacement surgery),
3. **Conditional:** A Person with a Disability where environmental or physical barriers limit their abilities to consistently use conventional transportation services, such as persons with a visual disability, persons who use assistive devices for mobility, especially during the winter conditions, and/or Persons with Disabilities that may have periods when their condition worsens.

If your application has been approved, you will be eligible to book trips on WHEELS. People who are permanently disabled and are eligible for WHEELS receive a permanent registration, with renewal required every 3 years.

However, others who may only need WHEELS during a period of rehabilitation may submit an application. If approved, they would be registered on a temporary basis for a specific period of time at the end of which their registration and eligibility will also end. An extension will be granted pending a re-application.

Persons wishing to use WHEELS service must submit a WHEELS Application (Appendix A) which is available at Victoria Hall or the Public Works Joint Operations Facility or online at www.cobourg.ca

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

Once completed, the application can be submitted to the following locations:

Town of Cobourg
Victoria Hall
55 King Street West
Cobourg, ON
K9A 2M2

Public Works Joint Operations Facility
740 Division Street
Building #7 Northam Industrial Park
Cobourg, ON
K9A 4L1

Once the Application is reviewed by staff, you will be contacted by letter of your approval/denial for using the service.

DRAFT

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

Appeals Process

An appeal process is available to any person who is denied eligibility for WHEELS services, or who disagrees with an eligibility decision. All appeals must be filed in writing to the Town of Cobourg municipal office.

Appeals must be made within sixty (60) days of the receipt of Cobourg WHEELS letter advising of eligibility for WHEELS service.

Appellants are encouraged to note in their appeal letter, reasons why they believe that the decision does not accurately reflect their ability to use conventional transit services (Cobourg Transit).

Visitors

Cobourg WHEELS will provide service to any person visiting Cobourg who meets the eligibility requirements and is an active registrant of another accessible system. Verification of eligibility and registration with another accessible system is required.

Hours of Operations

To book a ride, please call Century Transportation at 905-373-0582 during the following dispatch service operating hours:

7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday
8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Sunday

The WHEELS bus service is operational as follows:

6:15 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday to Friday
8:15 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Saturday
8:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Sunday

Reservations / Bookings

The Town of Cobourg will make every effort to accommodate your trip request. Bookings are offered on a first come first serve basis and must be made at least 24 hours in advance, where possible. WHEELS bookings have a 30 minute window, for example if you need to arrive at a location by 3:00 p.m. the dispatch service will book your pick up time anywhere between 2:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. Please be sure to tell dispatch the time that you need to arrive at your destination.

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

There are three (3) kinds of trip bookings that can be made:

1. Subscription/Pre-Booked: These are regular trips that occur at the same time of day, on the same day, for a minimum of at least 4 weeks. Examples of this type of trip are dialysis, therapy appointments, or any appointment that repeats each week on the same day at the same time.

2. Reservation: These are trips not taken regularly and require an advance booking of 24 hours up to two (2) weeks in advance. Examples are weekly shopping, etc. Exceptions will be made for medical appointments.

3. Same Day Trips: Passengers may use Same Day Trips for unplanned outings. Wheels does not guarantee rides on short notice but endeavors to provide accommodation should vehicle capacity or scheduling allow or when cancellations occur. To book a Same Day Trip request, passengers may call WHEELS during regular dispatch service operational hours as noted above.

When booking a ride on WHEELS, please have the following information ready:

- Your Name (first/last)
- Date you need transportation
- Requested arrival time at destination (ie. Appointment time)
- Address of pickup and accessible entrance (specific location required)
- Address of destination and accessible entrance (specific location required)
- Will you be bringing a companion?
- If your application indicates that an attendant or hand to hand attendant is required, will the attendant be available at the time of your booking?
- Whether you will be using a wheelchair or other mobility device
- Pickup time for your return trip

Notifications

When applying for WHEELS you will be asked to provide a primary phone number to receive notifications regarding your trip. You will be contacted the day before your scheduled ride; at this time you will have the option to cancel your trip if necessary. This will help eliminate no shows or cancellations. You will also receive a notification phone call the day of your scheduled trip to let you know the Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) of the WHEELS bus which may have changed slightly based on other bookings.

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

Late Cancellations / No Shows

Given the high demand for specialized transit service, it is crucial that customers call and cancel their trip as soon as they no longer require it. A same day cancellation up to three (3) hours before your scheduled pick up time is considered a late cancellation. Your consideration to cancel well in advance will allow us to accommodate other passengers in need. Persons who do not respond within five (5) minutes of the WHEELS driver arriving at the door shall be deemed a “no show”.

Excessive cancellations with less than 24 hours notice and/or failing to show for a scheduled bus may result in progressive actions up to and including limitations on booking privileges.

**** Note:** When a passenger is a “No Show” for a scheduled bus, their remaining trips for the day are automatically cancelled.

Passengers are to be ready 15 minutes before their scheduled pick-up time. Drivers may arrive within a “window” of 5 minutes BEFORE or AFTER your booked pick-up time. To ensure other passengers are not inconvenienced, drivers are not required to wait more than 5 minutes at pick up locations provided the bus arrives within the allowable “window” time.

Drivers do not accompany passengers inside the building entrance, nor are they required to ring a buzzer or doorbell to inform riders of their arrival, nor search when the passenger is not at the exterior entrance. The passenger is to be ready at the exterior door or curbside including having any coats, boots etc. already on.

Rider Attendants / Companions

A Personal Attendant ("PA") is a mandatory support person who is capable of providing the rider with care and assistance beyond what the driver is required to provide.

A rider will require a PA to accompany them on the bus under these conditions:

- If the passenger is unable to travel independently beyond the door of the pick-up or drop-off location
- If the passenger is unable to be left alone
- If the passenger requires supervision on board the vehicle during transport
- If there is a risk of the passenger leaving the vehicle while the driver is escorting other passengers to and from the vehicle
- If the medical professional has deemed on the application that the client requires an attendant

All PA's travel at no charge, but must board and disembark at the same location as the passenger, and travel with the passenger at all times. WHEELS drivers are not Personal

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

Attendants. WHEELS passengers cannot be Personal Attendants for another WHEELS passenger.

A Hand-to-Hand Attendant is required for riders who need supervision at the point of departure and arrival but are able to travel safely on the bus alone. The Hand-to-Hand Attendant must be present to assist riders with all boarding and disembarking at the point of departure and arrival, they are not required to ride the bus.

A Hand-to-Hand Attendant is required under these conditions:

- If the passenger cannot maneuver his or her wheelchair on his or her own
- If the medical professional has deemed on the application that the client requires a Hand-to-Hand Attendant

The need for a PA or Hand-to-Hand Attendant must be identified on the application form. In the event that the WHEELS operator is not able to provide the required assistance to the rider or the rider's function changes enough to require an attendant, the Town reserves the right to request the rider to resubmit a new application with updated information. If a rider is identified as needing a PA to ride the vehicle and he/she is not accompanied by a PA upon arrival of the WHEELS vehicle, or the PA is not qualified (e.g. too young), then the driver will not be permitted to allow the rider to board the vehicle. The driver will immediately notify dispatch for instructions.

Specialized Transit Operators are not personal Attendants – if an applicant requires extra support getting on and off of a bus, they must provide their own attendant

Companions

In addition to an attendant, you may also travel with a companion (voluntary spouse, partner, friend or family). If a companion will be accompanying you, please notify the dispatcher when you make your trip reservation as they must reserve a seat for the companion as well. A companion is required to pay their own fare when traveling with you. Companions may travel when permitted space is available and when it does not result in other WHEELS members being denied service.

Fares

WHEELS and fixed-route accessible transit fares are attached in Appendix B.

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

Shared Rides

The Town of Cobourg through its paratransit demand software optimizes trips based on appointment times and locations in order to accommodate more riders per trip. Shared rides will occur and riders should expect to be on the WHEELS bus for up to 45 minutes.

Driver / Passenger Responsibilities

Drivers Will:

- Be responsible for the safe and efficient operation of specialized transit vehicles.
- Make their presence known at the pick-up locations.
- Provide light assistance such as walking with you to and from the bus and to the closest accessible exterior door, opening doors.
- Verbally guide you with the positioning of your mobility aid on the vehicle lift/ramp and operate the lift/ramp.
- Safely secure your mobility aids and all belts and/or seatbelts.
- Ensure they arrive at the proper accessible entrance at your pick-up location.
- Maintain their schedule as best possible.

Drivers Do Not:

- Assist clients to get on or off transit vehicles and/or maneuver, push or pull wheelchairs and/or scooters and do not park on private driveways.
- Make repairs or adjustments to mobility aids.
- Help go up or down flights of stairs, carry parcels, baggage, personal effects or heavy articles.
- Lift wheelchair or scooters up or down stairs.
- Report to reception, specific stations or other medical locations to find you.
- Unlock doors, enter private homes or wait for someone to arrive to open the door.
- Wait more than 5 minutes past your scheduled pick up time.
- Assist you with fare payment by looking into bags, backpacks, coats or other.

Passenger Responsibilities:

- Must be ready at the nearest accessible door 15 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time. You are expected to board the vehicle once it has arrived. Remain seated while the vehicle is in motion.
- Must have your pass displayed or exact fare ready for the Operator when boarding.
- Must cancel rides well in advance. If you are not able to make your trip time or you must cancel, please do so as soon as possible. This will avoid Late Cancellations / No Shows service suspensions and allow others to use the time.

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

- Be on time. If you are more than 5 minutes late, the bus will have to proceed to the next scheduled ride and a Late Cancellations / No Shows service suspension may be implemented.
- Expect to share your ride with other passengers and expect a longer ride than if travelling by taxi or car, up to 45 minutes (similar to conventional transit system).
- Inform medical professionals that you are using the service, so that they may assist by keeping you on time.
- Be considerate and courteous of the Driver and other passengers at all times.
- For the health and comfort of staff and riders kindly avoid excessive odors or scents. Odors may include but are not limited to scents related to unlaundered clothing, lack of bathing, uncontrolled bowels, and excessive perfumes. Failure to comply may result in suspension of service.
- Have a clear accessible path to your door before pick-up and drop-off times, even in the winter months. Safe access to your property is your responsibility. Inaccessible paths may result in refusal of service.
- Keep all personal and health information up to date, including your phone number and address.
- Keep groceries/parcels and personal belongings to a safe, manageable amount and maximum of two (2).
- Profanity or abusive language/conduct will not be tolerated on WHEELS vehicles. Failure to comply may result in a suspension of service.
- If you must travel with an Attendant, you must provide your own Attendant for all trips. One Attendant is permitted to travel at no cost.

Specialized Transit Drivers are not Personal Attendants – if an applicant requires extra support boarding and disembarking a bus, they must provide their own attendant.

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

APPENDIX A – WHEELS APPLICATION

DRAFT

WHEELS Service – Policies & Procedures

APPENDIX B – RIDERSHIP FARES

WHEELS cash fares are \$2.00 per trip.

The following are the prices for monthly passes:

Passes	Pricing
Adult	\$60.00
Student	\$50.00
Senior	\$30.00
After school pass – after 2:30 pm on weekends; all day on weekends	\$15.00



WHEELS Application Form

The *Accessible WHEELS Services* (“WHEELS”) transit system is a door-to-door shared ride accessible public transit service intended for persons unable to use Cobourg Transit’s accessible fixed-route system due to a disability.

WHEELS is intended for those persons who, due to a function limitation, cannot:

- Board,
- Disembark,
- Ride, or
- Travel to and/or from a fixed route accessible Cobourg Transit bus.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact *WHEELS* at:

COBOURG TRANSIT
740 Division Street, Building 7
Cobourg, Ontario K9A2M2
Phone: 905 372 4555
Fax: 905 372 0009
Email: transit@cobourg.ca

How to Apply for WHEELS Service

1. **Part A** of the application must be read and each page initialed by the Applicant. By initialing the bottom of each page you acknowledge that you have read and understood the requirements outlined.
2. **Part B** must be completed by the Applicant or designate and contains questions about your everyday mobility and ability to use Cobourg Transit’s accessible fixed-route transit services.
3. **Part C** must be completed by your registered health care professional. The health care professional completing the application must have the appropriate knowledge, skill, and evaluate the specific abilities of the Applicant. The Town reserves the right to contact the health care professional for clarification purpose.
 - a. If there is a fee associated with receiving the completed form, please contact us about reimbursement for a successful application.
4. Return the completed application (Parts A, B, and C) to Cobourg Transit.
5. WHEELS will notify you of your eligibility within fourteen (14) business days of submitting your application.
 - a. If we require additional information, you may be requested to come in for an interview to provide us with more information about your disability and how it affects your use of Cobourg Transit’s accessible fixed-route transit services.



- b. If you have not been notified within fourteen (14) business days of submitting your application, please contact us by phone, email, or in person.

Note: All information on this application form will be kept confidential and will be used for the purposes of determining eligibility for the WHEELS service only. Personal information contained in this form is collected pursuant to the “Municipal Transit Manual for Specialized Services” issued by the Ministry of Transportation and will only be used for the purpose of processing the application. All personal information is protected under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection Act, 1989.

Failure to completely fill out the application will delay the application process. All three (3) parts (Parts A, B, and C) need to be completed in full for your application to be considered.

Part A

Introduction

This guide provides you with what you will need to know about WHEELS Specialized Transit service.

The WHEELS Service is:

- A scheduled pre-booked bus, shared ride, origin-to-destination service,
- A service intended for people who, because of their disability, cannot ride the regular, accessible fixed-route service,
- Only for those riders who are travelling within the town limits of Cobourg, and
- Suitable for customers using a wheelchair, scooter, cane, walker, and other types of assistive devices for mobility.

The WHEELS Service is not:

- A taxi service,
- A medical transportation service,
- Meant to replace Cobourg Transit’s regular, accessible fixed-route service when it is not operating or not convenient, or
- A service for seniors without a disability.

Shared Ride means:

- Other riders may be on board during the trip to your destination, and/or
- Your route of travel may be altered so another rider(s) can be accommodated, and/or
- The vehicle may stop and pick up other rider(s) as it travels to your destination in order to maximize the transportation needs of all WHEELS members.

For this reason, travel times may be similar to the times of the accessible fixed-route Conventional Transit system in Cobourg.



Categories of Eligibility

There are three (3) categories of eligibility for which the Applicant can apply for which include:

1. **Unconditional:** A Person with a Disability that prevents them from using the accessible conventional transportation services,
2. **Temporary:** A Person with a Disability that prevents them from using the accessible conventional transportation services on a temporary basis (ex. a person having knee replacement surgery),
3. **Conditional:** A Person with a Disability where environmental or physical barriers limit their abilities to consistently use conventional transportation services, such as persons with a visual disability, persons who use assistive devices for mobility, especially during the winter conditions, and/or Persons with Disabilities that may have periods when their condition worsens.

People who are permanently disabled and are eligible for WHEELS receive a permanent registration, with renewal every three (3) years.

Persons who may only need WHEELS during a period of rehabilitation may submit an application. If approved, they would be registered on a temporary basis for a specific period of time at the end of which their registration and eligibility will also end. An extension will be granted on a case-by-case basis pending a re-application.

More Information about Eligibility

WHEELS Specialized Transit is intended for persons who, due to a functional limitation, would be physically unable to board a Conventional Transit vehicle, ride a conventional public transit bus without the ability to hold on for support, or travel a distance of 175 meters (approximately 575 feet or a city block) to reach a Conventional Transit stop.

Eligibility is not based on a particular disability, age, income, or lack of available public transit in an Applicant's area. Eligibility is not for those who are unwilling to use the accessible conventional fixed-route public transit system. Specialized Transit is not an attendant care service. Passengers whose medical conditions require specific transportation (i.e. extreme fragility requiring transportation below regular speeds or inability to remain on the vehicle for up to one hour or inability to maneuver their own mobility device) need to contact a non-emergency medical carrier for transportation.

If you are considering your eligibility for Specialized Transit, please note that the WHEELS service is limited in capacity and intended for those with the least amount of ability. Please consider that you may be able to use Cobourg Transit's conventional accessible fixed-route system. Cobourg Transit offers accessible buses on all conventional routes.

Accessible features include:

- Kneeling capability and ramp deployment,



- Low-floors,
- On-board next stop announcement,
- Call/Display system,
- Hand rails, and
- Priority seating with space for wheelchairs.

In order to be eligible for WHEELS, all users must first submit an application form which will be reviewed by the Public Transit Administrator, in accordance with the approved Eligibility Criteria.

Using the WHEELS Service

If your application has been approved, you will be eligible to book trips on WHEELS.

Please refer to the Town of Cobourg WHEELS Service - Policies & Procedures (enclosed) for detailed information regarding hours of operation and how to book a ride on WHEELS.

Cost of the Service

Please refer to Appendix B of the Wheels Service – Policies & Procedures for a list of available rates.

Rider Attendants

A Personal Attendant ("PA") is a mandatory support person who is capable of providing the rider with care and assistance they require beyond what the driver is required to provide.

A rider will require a PA to accompany them on the bus under these conditions:

- If the passenger is unable to travel independently beyond the door of the pick-up or drop-off location
- If the passenger is unable to be left alone
- If the passenger requires supervision on board the vehicle during transport
- If there is a risk of the passenger leaving the vehicle while the driver is escorting other passengers to and from the vehicle
- If the medical professional has deemed on the application that the client requires an attendant

All PA's travel at no charge, but must board and disembark at the same location as the passenger, and travel with the passenger at all times. WHEELS drivers are not Personal Attendants. WHEELS passengers cannot be Personal Attendants for another WHEELS passenger.

A Hand-to-Hand Attendant is required for riders who need supervision at the point of departure and arrival but are able to travel safely on the bus alone. The Hand-to-Hand Attendant must be



present to assist riders with all boarding and disembarking at the point of departure and arrival, they are not required to ride the bus.

A Hand-to-Hand Attendant is required under these conditions:

- If the passenger cannot maneuver his or her wheelchair on his or her own
- If the medical professional has deemed on the application that the client requires a Hand-to-Hand Attendant

The need for a PA or Hand-to-Hand Attendant must be identified on the application form. In the event that the WHEELS operator is not able to provide the required assistance to the rider or the rider's function changes enough to require an attendant, the Town reserves the right to request the rider to resubmit a new application with updated information. If a rider is identified as needing a PA to ride the vehicle and he/she is not accompanied by a PA upon arrival of the WHEELS vehicle, or the PA is not qualified (e.g. too young), then the driver will not be permitted to allow the rider to board the vehicle. The driver will immediately notify dispatch for instructions.

Specialized Transit Operators are not personal Attendants – if an applicant requires extra support getting on and off of a bus, they must provide their own attendant

By initialling this page, you are confirming that you have read the Town of Cobourg WHEELS Policies and Procedures.



Part B: Applicant Information

Please type or print clearly.

General Information

1. Name:
2. Address (Including Postal Code):
3. Daytime Phone Number:
4. Evening Phone Number:
5. TTY/TDD Number (If applicable):
6. Email (If applicable):
7. Phone Number for Reminder Call:
8. Date of Birth:
9. Will you use any of the following when you ride *WHEELS*?
(Check all that apply):
 - ☐ Manual Wheelchair
 - ☐ Oxygen Bottle
 - ☐ Walker
 - ☐ Guide Dog
 - ☐ White Cane
 - ☐ Communication Board
 - ☐ Powered Wheelchair
 - ☐ Powered Scooter
 - ☐ Hearing Aid
 - ☐ Cane
 - ☐ Prosthesis
 - ☐ Crutches
 - ☐ Other (Please specify):

10. Do you have any health care needs that the transportation service provider should be made aware of? (Check all that apply):

- ☐ Seizures
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ Heart Condition
- ☐ Dementia/Alzheimer
- ☐ Respiratory
- ☐ Communicable Disease
- ☐ Other (Please specify):

Travelling on the Transit System

1. In order to travel unaccompanied on WHEELS, you must be able to check **all** of the following boxes:

- ☐ I can recognize my destination and communicate to the vehicle operator (verbally or with an augmentative device, in writing or with an alternative method of communication) if I am about to be dropped off at the wrong location.
- ☐ I can get help if I was dropped off at a wrong location.
- ☐ I can be safely left unattended on the vehicle with other customers when the vehicle operator is away from the vehicle (i.e., I am not at risk of exiting the vehicle and wandering).
- ☐ I can maneuver my mobility device (if I currently have one) to travel to the bus, get on and off the vehicle, and into the building at destination.

Note: *If any of the above boxes relating to independence were left unchecked, the customer must provide their own Personal Attendant. The Personal Attendant must be capable of meeting the customer's care needs during travel and getting to and from destinations.*

2. Do you require an Attendant when you travel?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. Do you require a Hand to Hand Attendant when you travel?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. Please check **only one** of the following boxes regarding your ability to travel to a bus stop:

- ☐ I can always get to and from a bus stop.



- ☐ I can sometimes get to and from a bus stop.
- ☐ I can never get to and from a bus stop.
- 5. I can get to and from a bus stop only if (Please check all the boxes that apply):
 - ☐ I have an Attendant with me.
 - ☐ The distance travelled to/from the transit stop is less than 175 meters (approximately 575 feet or a city block).
 - ☐ I am familiar with the area.
 - ☐ There are curb cuts along the route to the stop.
 - ☐ There is a sidewalk.
 - ☐ The ground is level or only slightly inclined.
 - ☐ The path is free of ice, snow, or debris.
- 6. Please check **only one** of the following boxes regarding your ability to wait at bus stops:
 - ☐ I can generally wait outside at a bus stop.
 - ☐ I cannot wait outside at a bus stop.
 - ☐ I can wait outside at a bus stop only if (check those that apply):
 - ☐ There is a bench.
 - ☐ There is a shelter.
 - ☐ The wait is no longer than a certain amount of time.
 - ☐ Other (Please specify): _____

Cobourg Accessible Conventional Transit System

- 1. Regarding the use of Cobourg's accessible conventional fixed-route transit (Not the WHEELS service). Please check only one box:
 - ☐ I can independently recognize my destination and leave the vehicle.
 - ☐ I cannot independently recognize my destination and leave the vehicle.
 - ☐ I can recognize my destination and leave the vehicle only if (check those that apply):
 - ☐ I receive travel training (not provided by Town).
 - ☐ The stops are announced.
 - ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- 2. I can ride an accessible conventional fixed-route transit bus only if (check all that apply):
 - ☐ I have an Attendant with me.
 - ☐ I am familiar with the route.
 - ☐ Every bus on my route is accessible.
 - ☐ A seat is available.
 - ☐ I have received travel training (not provided by Town).
 - ☐ Other (Please specify): _____



3. Can you transfer to a car without assistance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

4. How does your disability affect your ability to use Cobourg's accessible conventional fixed-route transit system? Please provide any additional information that has not been included in the application.

Answer:

In Case of Emergency Contact Information

1. Name:

2. Phone Number:

3. Relationship:

Signature

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information given above is correct and I authorize the health care professional named in Part B to provide information to *WHEELS*. If *WHEELS* receives new information regarding a change in my functional ability, my eligibility status may be reviewed and revised.

Signature of Applicant:

Date:

If you are not the Applicant, but have completed this application on the Applicant's behalf, you must provide the following information:

- **Name:**
- **Address:**
- **Daytime Phone Number:**
- **Relationship to the Applicant:**



I certify that to the best of my knowledge that the information provided above is correct.

Signature:

Date:

***When Part A has been completed, take or mail Parts A and B to your health care professional.
When Part C has also been completed, return Parts A, B, and C to:***

COBOURG TRANSIT
740 Division Street, Building 7
Cobourg, Ontario K9A2M2
Fax: 905 372 0009
Email: transit@cobourg.ca



Part C: To Be Completed by the Treating Registered Health Care Professional under the Ontario Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991.

Certification Process: You may be contacted by the Town if any questions remain. The application must be filled out completely in order to be processed.

Eligibility Criteria: Eligibility is considered on a case by case basis for persons unable to use Conventional Accessible Transit due to a disability.

I have read PART A and PART B in its entirety.

INITIALS:

I agree with the information provided in PART B.

INITIALS:

If you do not agree with Part B, please explain:

Answer:

Functional Limitations

Applicants must have at least one of the following physical or functional limitations to be eligible for the WHEELS service:

- ☐ **Cognitive:** Applicants with cognitive disabilities which impact functional or physical ability to use Conventional Transit, including: emotional disabilities, brain injury, intellectual or learning disabilities, Applicant attend day programs.
- ☐ **Physical:** Applicants are unable to walk a distance of 175 meters (575 feet or a city block).
- ☐ **Sensory:** Applicants experiencing sensory motor area conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, which impact physical ability to use conventional public transit.
- ☐ **Visual:** Applicants who are legally blind and have undergone travel training through an approved agency such as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) and are still unable to use conventional public transit, or Applicants who have been deemed unsuitable for travel training. Applicant must provide supporting document from CNIB.



Functional Abilities

Please answer yes or no to all questions “A” through “J” to enable us to process the application promptly. Please base your evaluation solely on the Applicant’s ability or inability to use an accessible conventional fixed-route public transit service: all conventional transit buses are equipped with ramps, audio and visual next stop announcements, hand rails, and priority and courtesy seating.

- A. Does the Applicant’s disability prevent (not make difficult) them from using accessible conventional transit safely and independently?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is the Applicant able to?

- B. Travel up to 175 meters (approximately 575 feet or a city block) safely and independently?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- C. Get on/off Cobourg Transit’s Conventional accessible buses unaided? (All vehicles have a ramp, and handrails for accessibility)

☐ Yes

☐ No

- D. Navigate a transit system using transit technology, destination and number signs, audio announcements, and complete transfers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- E. Present a fare or take a transfer upon boarding?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- F. Communicate with the Driver should they need assistance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- G. Safely remain unattended on the bus?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- H. Maneuver their mobility aid and/or assistive device to travel to and from the vehicle independently and while at their destination?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- I. Independently able to recognize their destination and leave the vehicle safely?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- J. Is the Applicant at risk of falls or has balance/gait concerns?

☐ Yes

☐ No



Attendants

WHEELS Specialized Transit Drivers are not personal Attendants – if an Applicant requires extra support getting on and off a bus, they must provide their own Attendant.

- Drivers do not push or pull wheelchairs.
- Drivers provide light assistance such as walking beside a client to and from a bus and to the closest accessible exterior door.
- Applicants unable to present a fare upon boarding, communicate with the Driver, safely remain unattended on the bus, maneuver their mobility aid, recognize their destination, and are a great risk of falls must travel with a Personal Attendant.
- Registered clients cannot be Personal Attendants.
- Clients must provide their own Attendants and Attendants must be present on all trips and ride the bus with the client.
- The Attendant rides free as they ensure the safety and well-being of the Applicant.
- Applicants who attend a day program or work placement and require supervision at the point of departure and arrival but are able to travel safely on the bus alone may have a Hand-to-Hand Attendant.
- The Hand-to-Hand Attendant must be present to assist clients with all boarding and deboarding at the point of departure and arrival, they do not ride the bus.

Please assess Applicant and indicate if the Applicant requires a Personal Attendant or Hand-to-Hand Attendant.

A. Does this Applicant require a Personal Attendant while traveling?

☐ Yes

☐ No

B. Does this Applicant require a Hand-to-Hand Attendant?

☐ Yes

☐ No



Categories of Eligibility

Based on the Applicant's disability, how long will Specialized Transit's origin to destination service be required? Please check only one.

- ☐ **Unconditional/Permanent** disability with no expectation of improvement.
- For example: The Applicant has a permanent disability that prevents them from boarding/deboarding and/or travelling on the Accessible Conventional Transit safely.
- ☐ **Temporarily** up to one year or an expected short term duration.
- For example: The Applicant suffered a stroke, a surgery, an injury and requires Temporary Eligibility due to their temporary disability while they recover as they are unable to access Conventional Transit
- ☐ **Conditional/Seasonal Barrier** which is **Winter** (October to April) or **Summer** (May to September).
- For example: The Applicant is not able to access a bus stop in winter as a result of a vision impairment due to snow.

Please Include details of Conditional/Seasonal Barrier:

Health Care Professional Application Certification

Name and Official Capacity of Health Care Professional:

Telephone Number:

Email:

Address:

In accordance with the eligibility criteria on Page 1, I hereby certify that the information within this document is true.

Signature:

Date:

Stamp, License, or Certification Number:

Thank you for your assistance!

Please return this application to the person seeking WHEELS certification, or with the person's permission, forward it directly to Cobourg Transit.

January 8, 2021

Cobourg Accessibility Advisory Committee

In the recent past we have been made aware of a problem with a person being stranded at the mall. Recently Troy Mills of this committee encountered a similar problem which he has reported to this committee since the last meeting. I also have experienced this, requiring me to spend a night in the hospital instead of at my home. I went to emergency as instructed by my doctor, using Wheels, and my situation was resolved after 8 PM with no way to get home.

All of these situations are different, but they do have one common element: people were at a significant disadvantage because of their disability. People without a disability do not face these problems, and we need to address this imbalance. This is not a theoretical problem that can be added to our list of things that it would be nice to have, it is an urgent necessity that must be fixed before a serious problem develops.

The preferred solution would be accessible taxis, but that is not economically viable because there is not a critical volume of need. For this reason it is also impractical to consider the solution is to be found in our transit system.

I request that this be added to our agenda for the January meeting.

Sincerely,

Jerry Ford