

General Manager's Report

November 17th, 2022

1. COVID Update

October was another record month exceeding October 2019 by 16.9%. At 381,913 rides, it's the highest month on record. GoBus ridership is approximately 74.3% of 2019.

2. RFP – GoBus Service

A preliminary meeting was held with Tok Transit representatives on October 13th in which they outlined the work they've done to date and an overview of the transition process. Our Manager, Accessible Services, is maintaining regular contact with Tok on the transition process.

3. Status of ICIP Funding Applications

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Replacement of Paratransit Fleet | Tender awarded |
| 2. Ten Accessible Bus Shelters | Tender awarded |
| 3. Replacement Shelter Van | Tender closed – no bids received. Quotes requested from suppliers. |
| 4. Replacement Community Bus | Approval of funding received. Recently notified that a hybrid bus is not currently available. A scope change to purchase a gas bus has been requested. |
| 5. Hybrid buses (8) 40-foot | Application submitted May 25 th , 2022 |
| 6. Stop Announcement System | Application submitted July 12 th , 2022 |
| 7. Radio System Upgrade | Application submitted September 13, 2022 |
| 8. Farebox System Replacement | Application submitted September 30, 2022 |
| 9. Smart Card Validator Upgrade | Application submitted September 30, 2022 |

4. Delivery – Eighteen (18) New Paratransit buses for GoBus

Latest update is that delivery will be mid-December to mid-January.

5. Accessibility Plan

A draft terms of reference is attached for your information.

Due to other demands on staff, additional work has been on hold. To move this plan forward, Donna Power will be lead for this project.

6. Shelter Update

Two new shelters have been installed: Kenmount Road by Steele Mazda and near the roundabout at the airport. A third shelter, scheduled to be installed this week on Topsail Road across from Jungle Jim's, was delayed due to parts of the new shelter missing. Parts on order.



Metrobus Accessibility Plan Draft Terms of Reference

ACCESSIBILITY ACT – NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

The province's Accessibility Act became legislation on December 3, 2021. This enabling legislation allows the government to outline the principles and goals for an accessible province. The Accessibility Act will improve accessibility by identifying, preventing, and removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from full participate in society.

An Accessibility Standards Advisory Board has been established. This board will be responsible for advising and making recommendations to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities regarding the establishment and content of accessibility standards and the time periods for implementation.

OVERVIEW & STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The St. John's Transportation Commission oversees the operation of public transit services – both Metrobus and GoBus – for the City of St. John's and partnering municipalities. The Commission has long been committed to responding to the needs of the community, including persons with disabilities, and continually reviews services to identify efficiencies and improvements which can be implemented to ensure all passengers can utilize the service. The Commission is committed to ensuring the highest quality service for all customers.

TEAM APPROACH & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

To develop the most comprehensive plan which will enable the greatest level of accessibility, all stakeholders must be represented. An Accessibility Working Group will be established and shall be comprised of management, employees, disability organizations and customers with disabilities. The group will bring expertise from various departments within the organization and expertise from customers and consult with the broader community as required. The group shall meet regularly to support the development of the Accessibility Plan and to review and monitor its effectiveness.

The Accessibility Working Group will also work together with the Disability Policy Office and the Accessibility Standards Advisory Board to support their work in developing regulations, specifically those related to transportation.

Metrobus’ Accessibility Plan will be presented to both the Paratransit Working Group and the Inclusion Advisory Committee for their input prior to finalization and will be posted online for public viewing once completed. Alternate formats will be made available upon request.

PURPOSE & SCOPE

The purpose of this work is to look at the present-day Metrobus and GoBus services and apply a broad disability lens. The plan shall include a continuum of initiatives by Metrobus towards accessibility – what has been done in the past, what is currently ongoing, and what commitments are already in place for future improvements.

The plan will outline steps that the Commission will take to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities by:

- recognizing any existing and potential barriers to access
- identifying actions to remove those barriers
- outlining methods to examine policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on the accessibility of persons with disabilities
- implementing procedures to evaluate if actions are having the intended effect

The Accessibility Plan will encompass all aspects of the Metrobus and GoBus services. Broadly, categories including the following will be reviewed through a disability lens:

- Customer Service
- Information & Communication
- Built Environment/Public Spaces
- Policies & Practices

Within each category, we will examine where barriers exist and how we can work to prevent and/or remove those barriers so that we are not preventing anyone with a disability from accessing public transit services. Sub-categories will be identified for each area of service to ensure a more thorough and detailed analysis is completed. A sample of these may be as follows:

| Customer Service | Information & Communication | Built Environment/ Public Spaces | Policies and Practices |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On board buses - Call centre - Customer feedback - Emergency preparedness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website and mobile apps - Social media - Commission meetings/live streaming - Advertising - Public events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transit depot - Buses - Shelters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education/training - Employment - Employee wellness - Procurement - Governance - GoBus eligibility and registration |

Throughout the development of the plan, consultation shall take place with persons with disabilities.

TIMELINE

The plan will prioritize actions and identify timeframes for them to be implemented. Consideration will be given to resources such as budget and staff availability. The plan itself will be developed before December 2023 as prescribed by the Accessibility Act.

As provincial regulations are developed, the plan will be reviewed and updated to ensure compliance.

The Working Group will develop a detailed work plan, identifying appropriate timelines and required resources, for each category within the scope of the plan.