



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Improvements to Off-Peak Services – More Frequent and Less Crowded

Date:	July 29, 2015
To:	TTC Board
From:	Chief Executive Officer

Summary

This report is a follow-up to the August 19, 2014 report, *Opportunities to Improve Transit Service in Toronto*, which was approved by the TTC Board, and subsequently funded by City Council as part of the 2015 City Budget.

The service improvements described in this report complement other service improvements which have been presented to the Board in recent months, including the expansion of overnight service, the provision of all-day, every-day service across the city, and the creation of a ten-minute-or-better service network. Improvements to off-peak services are another step in making transit an ever-increasingly attractive and convenient way to travel around Toronto. Other initiatives, including peak-period service improvements and improvements to the express bus network, will be detailed at a later date.

The off-peak service improvements in this report refer to reducing off-peak crowding on the TTC's more-frequent services. This report describes these changes and the resulting 33 routes on which service levels will be improved at off-peak times. Waiting times and crowding levels will be reduced on these busy bus and streetcar routes by adding more buses and streetcars. Customers will have shorter waiting times, less crowding, and a better chance of getting a seat. This investment will benefit a large number of existing customers, and will attract new customers to the system because of an overall perceptible improvement in service quality.

Service increases are being made on these routes starting in Fall, 2015 so that, by the end of the year, all of the identified routes will have increased service at off-peak times, and reduced off-peak crowding.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board forward this report to the City of Toronto Planning Department.

Financial Impact

This service initiative was included in the 2015 TTC Operating Budget, which was approved by City Council on March 11, 2015.

Funding in the amount of \$3.2 million is included in the TTC's 2015 Operating Budget to operate this improved service from September to December, 2015. This additional expense will be partially offset by an increase in fare revenue in 2015, from increased ridership, of up to \$1.2-million. The improvements will increase operating costs by approximately \$9.9 million annually, in 2016 and beyond. Increased ridership attracted by this service improvement will partially offset additional operating expense, with an annual increase in fare revenue of \$3.6 million.

The cost of this improvement is included in the \$95 million in additional funding which City Council approved for TTC services and assets.

The Chief Financial & Administration Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

Decision History

At its August 19, 2014 meeting, the TTC Board adopted the report, *Opportunities to Improve Transit Service in Toronto*. Among the recommendations was to increase service on busy bus and streetcar routes to reduce wait times and crowding, and thereby improve the quality and attractiveness of TTC service.

http://www.ttc.ca/About_the_TTC/Commission_reports_and_information/Commission_meetings/2014/August_19/Supplementary_Reports/Opportunities_to_Improve_Transit_Service_in_Toronto.pdf

On March 11, 2015, Toronto City Council passed the 2015 City Budget, which confirmed funding for this initiative, among others.

https://www.ttc.ca/About_the_TTC/Commission_reports_and_information/Commission_meetings/2015/February_2/Reports/2015_TTC_AND_WHEEL_TRANS_OPERATING_BUDGETS.pdf

Accessibility Issues

All TTC bus services are operated using accessible, low-floor buses, so all of the bus routes with off-peak service improvements will be accessible. Streetcar routes will become accessible as the TTC's new accessible streetcars are delivered in 2015 – 2019.

More-frequent and less-crowded bus and streetcar services encourage and support more-spontaneous trip-making, which is an important part of making the conventional system attractive to potential new customers, such as Wheel-Trans registrants, and to all travellers in Toronto. This supports the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) objectives of more-spontaneous travel options for customers with disabilities, and the City’s Poverty Reduction Strategy of making transit more accessible and attractive to everyone.

Comments

A simple and direct way to improve service for customers is to invest in improved service on existing routes by adding vehicles so that the routes run more frequently. This would benefit a large number of existing customers, and would attract new customers to the system because of an overall perceptible improvement in service quality. Customers would have shorter waiting times, less crowding, and a better chance of getting a seat. One of the important initiatives now underway at the TTC is to reduce the TTC’s vehicle crowding standard – the business metric which governs when and where more service should be added. This will result in the addition of more service to routes that are already busy and popular.

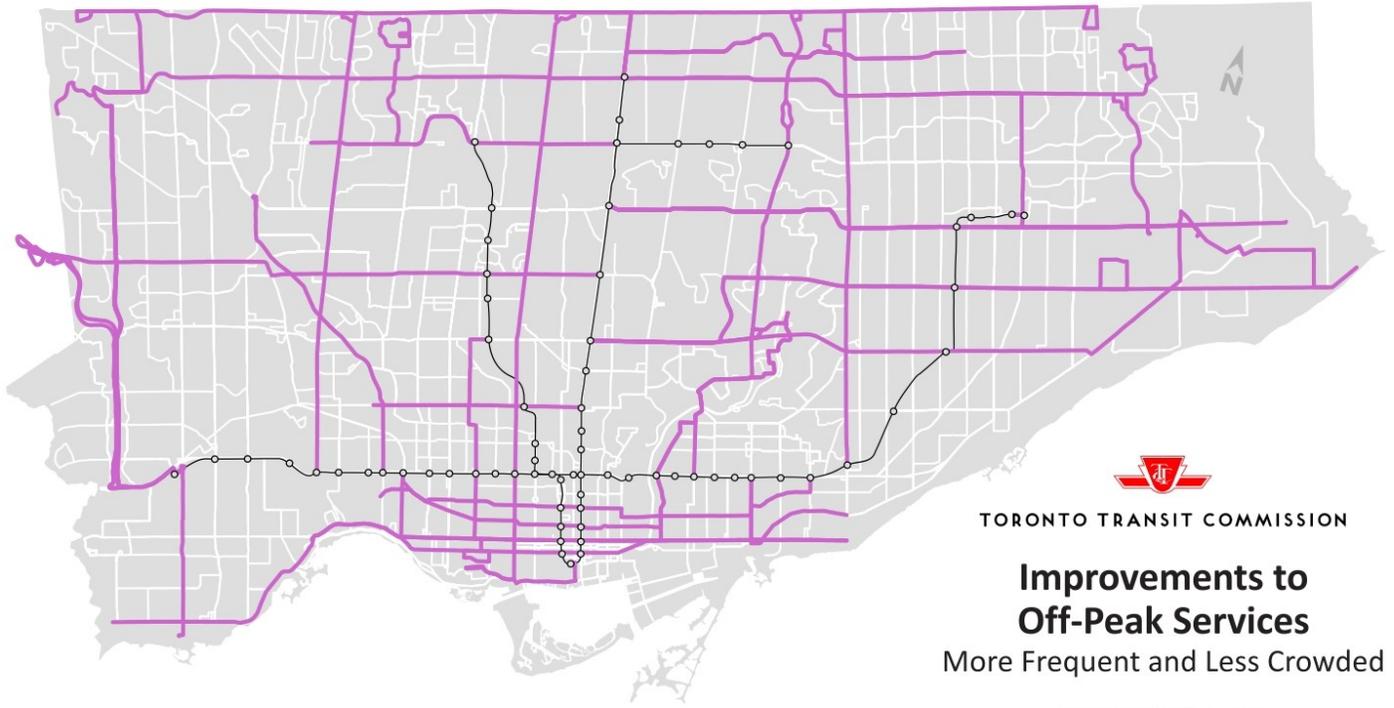
Routes Identified for Off-Peak Service Improvements

The following table lists the routes that will get increased off-peak service in 2015 as a result of City Council’s investment in reduced crowding standards.

Table 1: Routes Which Will Receive Increased Off-Peak Service

7 BATHURST	89 WESTON
22 COXWELL	95 YORK MILLS
24 VICTORIA PARK	100 FLEMINGDON PARK
25 DON MILLS	106 YORK UNIVERSITY
34 EGLINTON EAST	133 NEILSON
35 JANE	191 HIGHWAY 27 ROCKET
36 FINCH WEST	192 AIRPORT ROCKET
38 HIGHLAND CREEK	198 U OF T SCARBOROUGH ROCKET
39 FINCH EAST	199 FINCH ROCKET
42 CUMMER	501 QUEEN
44 KIPLING SOUTH	504 KING
52 LAWRENCE WEST	505 DUNDAS
53 STEELES EAST	506 CARLTON
54 LAWRENCE EAST	509 HARBOURFRONT
60 STEELES WEST	511 BATHURST
63 OSSINGTON	512 ST CLAIR
84 SHEPPARD WEST	

These are illustrated on the map on the following page



TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

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More Frequent and Less Crowded

TTC SP 29-06-2015 DRG. No. 12360

Customer Benefits

This service initiative will benefit approximately 55 million customer-trips each year that are now made on these services, and will attract an estimated 1.8 million new customer-trips each year. This service improvement largely reverses off-peak service cuts that were made in February 2012, when the crowding standard at off-peak times was increased, resulting in off-peak service reductions on 37 routes.

Off-Peak Crowding Standards

Currently, the TTC has two categories of vehicle crowding standards for off-peak service, depending on the frequency of the route:

- routes which operate less than once every ten minutes at off-peak times have a crowding standard that all customers will get a seat.
- routes which operate more frequently than once every ten minutes at off-peak times have a crowding standard that not all customers on board will get a seat.

The new off-peak crowding standards mean that all routes – including ones with frequent service -- will provide a seat for all customers. The change is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: TTC Off-Peak Vehicle Crowding Standards

Vehicle Type	Previous Off-Peak Crowding Standard		New Off-Peak Crowding Standard
	Regular Service (Service less frequent than once every 10 minutes)	Frequent Service (Service once every 10 minutes or more frequent)	All Service
12-metre low-floor bus (36 seats)	36	45	36
18-metre low-floor bus	46	58	46
15-metre high-floor streetcar	42	53	42
23-metre high-floor streetcar	61	76	61
30-metre low-floor streetcar	70	88	70

Reducing the crowding standard at off-peak times, such that, on average, all passengers would get a seat for their trip, results in an improvement in the frequency of service and reduced crowding on 33 bus and streetcar routes at various times and days of the week.

Communications Plan

In order to promote the additional service, the TTC will develop communications initiatives, using various tactics and channels as appropriate.

Other Forthcoming Changes

The *Opportunities to Improve Transit Service in Toronto* report also called for the lowering of crowding standards on bus and streetcar routes during peak periods, to improve service in the same way as at off-peak times. These service increases require additional buses and streetcars, and will be implemented when additional vehicles and garage space are available.

Conclusion

Off-peak service will be improved on frequent routes across the city, providing more-frequent, less-crowded, and more-comfortable service. This further advances the TTC's commitment to provide frequent, reliable service which allows for spontaneous trip-making, and will help change how people make their travel choices.

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