

**MEETING DATE April 14, 2004**

**SUBJECT Staff Response to Commission Inquiry - Later Subway Service**

At its meeting of June 18, 2003, the Commission requested that staff report on the feasibility of extending the operating hours for the subway on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights.

In order to determine if there is enough passenger demand late at night to justify extending the hours of subway service, ridership counts were taken on the last subway trips, at the busiest locations, on both the Bloor-Danforth and Yonge-University-Spadina subway lines. The results, shown in the table below, illustrate that, from a subway capacity perspective, passenger volumes late at night are very low on all days of the week:

Location	Mid-week Weekday	Saturday
	Number of Passengers on Last Trip	Number of Passengers on Last Trip
Bloor-Danforth Subway St George Station		
Westbound	28	46
Eastbound	11	12
Yonge-University-Spadina Subway Wellesley Station		
Northbound	8	29
Southbound	11	38

On mid-week days, the last subway trips carry fewer than half the number of passengers that can be seated on a bus. While ridership on the last subway trips on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights is higher, it still is very low from a subway capacity perspective. On Saturdays, for example, the passenger volumes on the last trains are low enough that they could be carried comfortably on a bus. As ridership at this time of the late evening typically declines with each subsequent trip, any later trips added to the subway would likely not have any more passengers than the current last trips.

There is overnight bus service paralleling the Yonge and Bloor-Danforth subway lines, so passengers can travel at all hours of the night along Yonge Street, Bloor Street, and Danforth Avenue. It is unlikely that many new passengers would be attracted to the system if subway service were extended later than the current hours of operation.

There would be significant costs associated with operating later service on the subway. In addition to the direct costs associated with operating subway trains, all of the stations in the system would need to be kept open to accommodate the later travel. The last trips on the major bus and streetcar routes which connect with the subway, are tied to the last subway trip times. In keeping with this practice, they, too, would need to be adjusted to ensure that people on the later subway trips could continue their journey on connecting bus or streetcar routes. The significant costs involved in extending the hours of subway operation, and the low probability of increased ridership, would result in this service change not meeting the TTC's minimum financial standard.

This assessment of the need for additional late-night subway service is based only on ridership and the cost of service. Transit contributes to economic activity in the city, and operating the subway later would support late-evening entertainment and other activities that are an important part of Toronto life. The present financial constraints on the TTC severely restrict the extent to which the TTC can provide this type of benefit to the city. The TTC would require additional subsidy to provide more hours of subway service.

In conclusion, staff do not recommend additional late-evening service on the subway.

Chief General Manager

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