

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: September 18, 2008

SUBJECT: TTC CORPORATE POLICY - SPECIAL EVENT PASS

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the proposed TTC Corporate Policy for the production of Special Event Passes as attached in Appendix A be approved.

FUNDING

There will be no funding impact on the TTC as the costs of production, distribution and destruction of event specific fare media will be the responsibility of the event organizer.

BACKGROUND

A motion was passed at the June 18, 2008 Commission Meeting directing staff to offer for sale a special two-day pass for Caribana in August 2008. Staff was requested to report back on the results and develop a framework to assess future requests.

DISCUSSION

A significant number of other large transit properties in North America produce specific fare media in support of large festivals and special events in their jurisdiction. The production is justified on the basis of improved customer service and the generation of goodwill for the community. Most organizations have a formal policy to evaluate requests. At the present time the TTC does not have a formal policy for evaluation of requests and inquiries are handled and evaluated on an ad hoc basis taking into account the unique factors associated with each event. The volume of requests has increased recently and will likely continue to increase in the future.

A special event pass was offered for Caribana in August 2008 as a test case. Although sales of this pass were limited, demand may have been affected by this being the first offering of a special pass since 2002, as well as the pass being valid and priced for two days of travel. The pass was promoted by the TTC in a variety of ways including Metro advertisements, PA announcements in the subway system, collector booth cards and placement on the TTC website. An advertisement was also placed in the Caribana issue of Sway magazine. The pass was available at all Collector booths two weeks prior to the event. Passes were also made available to ticket agents along with advertising material. Feedback from the event organizers and their main sponsor was also very positive.

Based on the positive experience from the Caribana test pass, the TTC should support the production of special event passes and implement a corporate policy to ensure the standard evaluation of requests. Lessons learned from the Caribana pass experience are key in developing a corporate policy for the issuance of special event passes. The core elements of the proposed policy which is attached as Appendix A are summarized below.

- Minimum event attendance of 100,000;
- Requests for a special event pass must be received no later than 3 months prior to the event;
- Costs of fare media production, distribution and destruction are the responsibility of the event organizer;
- The pass will be offered as a Group Pass (up to 6 users, maximum 2 adults) valid for travel on a single day. If justified, the pass can also be issued as a Weekly Pass; and,
- The pass will not be priced any higher than the corresponding regular fare media, and can be discounted if an external party provides the required funding.

JUSTIFICATION

There are numerous benefits (at minimal cost) to riders, the TTC and the City of Toronto from the introduction of special event passes for specific large events in Toronto. By adopting this policy, the Commission is in a win-win situation by supporting tourism in the city while also improving the customer's experience on the TTC.

September 2, 2008

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Attachments: Appendix A