

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: January 20, 2010

SUBJECT: SPECIAL TRANSIT PASSES FOR THE SECOND WORLD WAR
AND KOREAN WAR VETERANS

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission approve a program to provide free transportation to Canadian Veterans of the Second World War and Korean War pending adequate funding by an external source to overcome the revenue shortfall that would result.

FUNDING

The estimated impact of this proposal is a \$2 million annual reduction in passenger revenue. This impact has not been factored into the 2010 Operating budget.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on November 17, 2009, the Commission received a public presentation from Bob Kinnear, President/Business Agent Amalgamated Transit Union Local 113, requesting that the TTC consider providing free transportation to Canadian Forces Veterans of the Second World War and Korean War.

DISCUSSION

To quantify the cost of providing free transportation to Second World War and Korean War Veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs was contacted to determine the number of veterans living in Toronto. As of March, 2009, this number was found to be approximately 14,000. From the 2006 Transportation Tomorrow Survey, it was found that the average TTC use per day was 0.29 rides for Toronto residents 75 years of age and over, and for the group 80 years of age and over the figure was 0.25 trips. The foregoing numbers translate into a \$2 million revenue loss.

In considering this request, staff also reviewed the possibility of including all Canadian Forces Veterans, including veterans of Afghanistan and those who served in peacekeeping missions. While the number of local area Veterans that have completed their tour of duty in Afghanistan is low, these numbers may increase substantially in the years coming and the additional financial impact of including these veterans would need to be reviewed at that time.

Canadian Peacekeepers who served during a conflict/mission were also considered for inclusion in the program. It was determined that since 1956, more than 125,000 Canadians have participated in United Nations and NATO peacekeeping duties throughout the world. Staff are working with the Department of Veteran Affairs to determine the number of Peacekeepers currently residing in Toronto and the revenue implications of free transportation for this group.

The administration of such a program would require the assistance of the Department of Veterans Affairs. If this program proceeds, staff would contact the DVA with respect to making arrangements whereby eligible veterans would attend the DVA's district office and/or a Royal Canadian Legion Branch, and present a Certificate of Service and/or Discharge Papers. They would then complete an application form that could be taken to the TTC's Sherbourne Station photo facility where a special Veterans Transit Photo ID Pass would be issued.

JUSTIFICATION

By offering free transportation to Canadian Veterans of the Second World War and Korean War, fully funded by an external source, the TTC furthers its efforts in recognizing the valuable contributions made by this group.

January 12, 2010

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