

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: September 30, 2010

SUBJECT: UITP CHARTER ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Adopt sustainable development as a strategic objective; and
2. Authorize staff to make application to UITP, the International Association of Public Transport, to be a Pledge signatory to its Charter on Sustainable Development.

FUNDING

To be a signatory to the UITP's Charter on Sustainable Development (the Charter), there is an annual administration fee of 300 euros (approximately \$400 Canadian). At least once every two years, attendance at a Sustainable Development event is required.

Funds to cover the cost of these expenses will be included in the Commission's future Operating Budgets as required.

BACKGROUND

Sustainable development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment, so that these needs may be met both now and in the future.

The 1987 UN Report of the World Commission on the Environment and Development: Our Common Future, known as the Brundtland Commission report, defined sustainable development as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The field of sustainable development can be divided into three elements or pillars: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and socio-political sustainability. Similar conclusions and positions were generated at the 1992 Earth Summit with the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, through the work of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, and the UN 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

The UITP Charter, which was launched in 2003, is a voluntary, measureable commitment to monitor and report on an organization's performance in sustainability terms. Full signatories must demonstrate their commitment to sustainable development, have policies and measures in place, and show they are reporting on sustainability. Pledge signatories commit to putting this in place within a reasonable time frame. Presently there are more than 150 signatories to the Charter, including organizations providing public transportation services in all regions of the world. UITP's Sustainable Development Commission is the managing body of the Charter and signatories may request information or give feedback to its members. The annual administration fee includes access to the best practices of the signatories. Both the American Public Transportation Association and the Canadian Urban Transit Associations are Association Signatories to the Charter. As at June 2010, the Société de transport de Montréal (STM), the Agence métropolitaine de transport, Montréal, and Communauto Inc., Montréal were Pledge signatories; and the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority (TransLink) was a Full signatory to the Charter.

DISCUSSION

In order to be a Pledge signatory to the Charter, an organization is required to demonstrate that it has adopted the principle of sustainable development as a strategic objective. To become a Full signatory, an organization is required to also submit reports demonstrating efforts in economic, social and environmental areas of operation.

The TTC is working toward being a sustainable organization and in order to become a Full signatory, it is proposed that the TTC would supply its annual report to fulfill the economic sustainability reporting requirement. To demonstrate its commitment to social sustainability, it is proposed that the TTC would report on its Work Safe - Home Safe Program, Accessibility Plan and Diversity Plan. For environmental reporting, it is proposed that the TTC would submit its Environmental Plan.

Staff participated in a teleconference with the Senior Manager Sustainable Development of UITP and discussed the requirements of organizations that are both Pledge and Full signatories to the Charter. UITP does not prescribe the manner or type of reporting and encourages organizations to leverage the reporting systems that are currently in use. As a Pledge signatory to the Charter, a member organization receives access both to a database of good practices and to other practitioners facing similar issues, which may influence the type of sustainability reporting prepared over the long term. By having access to information on sustainability practices by transportation service providers world-wide, the TTC will learn what has been successful elsewhere. This would permit an exchange of information and lessons learned, possibly including costly problems to be avoided, as an experienced and knowledgeable peer group would be available for consultation.

If approved, the application to become a Pledge signatory to the Charter would be signed by the Chief General Manager and would be submitted this year.

JUSTIFICATION

Adopting sustainable development as a strategic objective and becoming a Pledge signatory to UITP's Charter on Sustainable Development is a voluntary, measurable commitment to monitor and report on the TTC's performance in economic, social and environmental terms.

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