



Open Streets TO Inc.
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Report #2

Presented to the Board
November 23, 2015

November 18, 2015

Toronto Transit Commission
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: 2016 TTC and Wheel-Trans Operating Budget

On behalf of Open Streets Toronto Inc., a non-profit organization committed to fostering a happier, healthier Toronto, we would like to affirm our support for Mayor Tory's and TTC Chair Josh Colle's letter to commence operating subway and connecting streetcar and bus service an hour earlier on Sunday mornings.

Open Streets Toronto Inc. is the organizing body for the Open Streets TO program, our city's largest free recreation program. Based on our core values of connectivity, accessibility, and livability, we open streets to people and close them to cars, encouraging participation in physical activity and healthy recreation. Placing the movement of people, rather than cars, at the centre of our philosophy, we help foster a vision of Toronto where all residents can move about the city in an accessible, cost effective manner.

It is from this context that our support for this initiative stems. Global cities like London, Paris, New York, Tokyo, and Hong Kong all provide early Sunday morning subway service, recognizing the importance of mobility in 21st century cities. Toronto should follow suit. Despite phenomenal growth over the last 25 years, shifts in commercial patterns, the explosion of major international cultural events, street festivals, and marathons that make Toronto one of the most livable cities in the world, Torontonians still struggle to get from point A to point B on Sunday mornings.

Our own experience organizing the Open Streets TO program, which commences prior to 9:00am confirms this. On two Sunday mornings in 2014, and then again in 2015, over five kilometers of Bloor and Yonge Streets were closed to vehicular traffic and opened to all other forms of people-powered transportation. Working with local resident groups, Business Improvement Areas, and community centres, public spaces along the route are activated with free programming, and local businesses are encouraged to engage with program participants. What we've heard from businesses over the last two years is that they would like to open earlier on Sundays to take advantage of the program. In fact they would like to open earlier all year round, but they are unable to do

so as their employees are unable to get to their place of business in time. Similar feedback was also received from program volunteers and participants. As Toronto continues to fortify its position on the global scene, both commercially and culturally, we believe that our infrastructure needs to support this positive momentum.

In closing, we would like to re-iterate our support for extending subway, streetcar and bus operating hours on Sunday mornings. The experience of Open Streets TO and the experience of cities around the world, in our view, clearly illustrate that the demand exists, and that the benefits of providing earlier Sunday morning service are real. We encourage the Commission to adopt this initiative as part of the 2016 TTC and Wheel-Trans Operating budget, and move forward with expanding service that Toronto greatly needs.

Thank you for your consideration,

Open Streets Toronto Inc.