



Improving Transit Service to Major Music Festivals

Date: May 8, 2018
To: TTC Board
From: Chief Operating Officer

Summary

The purpose of this report is to respond to the Board's request to report on how the TTC plans and co-ordinates service to special events, including major music festivals.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Receive the report for information; and
2. Direct staff to forward this report to Councillor Mike Layton, City of Toronto Transportation Services, Toronto Music Advisory Council, Exhibition Place, Ontario Place and Metrolinx for information.

Financial Summary

This report has no financial impact.

The Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

Equity/Accessibility Matters

The TTC has made significant progress in providing barrier-free, accessible transit services for all customers. Presently, all TTC bus services are operated using accessible, low-floor buses. New low-floor streetcars are currently being deployed and all routes will have accessible streetcars by 2019. All subway stations will be accessible by 2025.

By providing public transit services to special events the TTC encourages and supports more spontaneous trip-making, which is an important part of making the conventional system attractive to potential new customers, such as Wheel-Trans registrants who are taking advantage of the TTC's Family of Services, and to all travellers in Toronto. This

supports the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) objectives of more-spontaneous travel options for customers with disabilities, and the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy of making transit more accessible and attractive to everyone.

Decision History

At its meeting on May 27, 2015, the TTC Board considered a communication submitted by Chair Colle on behalf of Councillor Mike Layton, Ward 19 Trinity-Spadina. The Board referred the communication to TTC staff with a request to report back on the item.

[http://www.ttc.ca/About the TTC/Commission reports and information/Commission meetings/2015/May 27/Reports/Improving Transit Service Options to Major Music Festivals.pdf](http://www.ttc.ca/About%20the%20TTC/Commission%20reports%20and%20information/Commission%20meetings/2015/May%2027/Reports/Improving%20Transit%20Service%20Options%20to%20Major%20Music%20Festivals.pdf)

Issue Background

The communication referred by the Board asked staff to work with festival organizers at Ontario Place, Fort York, and other festival venues across the city, to evaluate options for increased transit service or shuttle service on festival days, including evaluating the costs and possibilities for sponsorship.

From 2015-2018 Toronto hosted approximately 225 Music Festivals. Most of these music festivals are held at locations that are already well-served by regular TTC services.

In addition to providing service for special events, the TTC also regularly accommodates community events by temporarily diverting or removing service for parades and street festivals. In these cases, TTC staff work closely with City of Toronto staff, Councillors, event organizers, and the community to ensure that local needs are accommodated while at the same time ensuring inconvenience to transit customers is minimized.

Comments

Overview of Service to Special Events

The TTC operates an extensive, integrated transit system that serves many types of travel throughout Toronto, from day-to-day travel to work and school, to occasional trips to special events, festivals, and the like. The TTC has a long history of providing excellent, cost-effective service to special events. This includes the annual Canadian National Exhibition, the Caribbean Carnival, major concerts and sporting events at several venues, and significant individual events such as the Pan Am/Para Pan Am and Invictus Games.

Because of the extensive coverage provided by the TTC's regular transit network, most special events in Toronto are held at locations that are already well served by the TTC. In most cases, as in the Pan Am Games, special event service was seamlessly

provided by simply adding more service to existing TTC routes that are well known and used by event-goers.

Service to Ontario Place

Ontario Place is the site of two concert venues, Echo Beach and the Budweiser Stage (formerly named Molson Amphitheatre). Ontario Place has been in use for many years, and has been served by TTC buses and streetcars from Dufferin and Exhibition Loops, as well as GO Transit trains from the GO Exhibition Station. The walk from Exhibition Loop to Ontario Place is approximately 1.2 km or 12 minutes.

Prior to 1996, the TTC Exhibition Loop was marginally closer to Ontario Place. It was relocated because of the construction of the trade centre at Exhibition Place. Over the years, a few service adjustments have been implemented to service Ontario Place. Prior to the year 2000, a limited-service bus route operated to Ontario Place. Another attempt included an extension of the 63 Ossington bus route operating to Ontario Place for several summers. At the time, neither of these services carried significant numbers of customers, and the services did not meet minimum financial or ridership standards.

In recent years, however, with new investments to the other attractions at Ontario Place, such as the Cinesphere and Trillium Park and William G. Davis Trail, customer demand has increased and a new seasonal bus service will begin June 24, 2018, and operate until October 6, 2018.

However, apart from the revival of seasonal service to Ontario Place for regular park usage, special bus service to concert events at Ontario Place would be difficult to justify. Ontario Place does not currently have a bus terminal that is suitable for handling high frequency bus services and large crowds arriving at or leaving from special events. Operating special buses between Ontario Place and Exhibition Loop, where customers would connect with streetcars, would require a circuitous routing over a short distance, along roadways that are highly congested after major events.

When there are major events scheduled at Exhibition Place, TTC Wheel-Trans customers get picked-up and dropped-off at the Dufferin Gate Loop and/or the Princes' Gates. For transportation to Ontario Place, TTC Wheel-Trans customers typically get picked-up and dropped-off at 955 Lakeshore Boulevard West, in front of Ontario Place at the taxi roundabout. During some major events at Ontario Place, crowds and traffic may prevent Wheel-Trans from getting in and out of the roundabout.

During major events at Ontario Place, customers may use the frequent service already operated on the 509 Harbourfront and 511 Bathurst streetcar routes from Exhibition. Along with the high capacity GO Train service at Exhibition GO, this would be a better option for moving the high number of people that travel to Ontario Place for special events. It would be ineffective to operate a special bus shuttle for major events to Ontario Place as it would not provide enough capacity and the buses would get mired in the event congestion. For these reasons, TTC staff does not recommend operating a shuttle service to Ontario Place for special events.

Service to Downsview Park

The Veld Music Festival is hosted each year at Downsview Park on the same weekend as the annual Caribbean Carnival. During this event, the TTC's Closures and Diversions section works closely with Downsview Park organizers to ensure service in and out of Downsview Park is sufficient and buses can safely navigate in and out of the park.

With the TYSSE extension now servicing Downsview Park Station, there is a significant increase in service capacity into the park that can be utilized for all future events.

Planning and Managing Special Event Service

The TTC's current process for managing transit service to special events and festivals includes close co-operation with City of Toronto staff. A monthly Event Support Team meeting is held at City Hall and is chaired by the City's Economic Development & Culture Department. The TTC's Manager of Closures and Diversions attends this meeting to evaluate upcoming major city events and determines the impact of the event to TTC's regular service. TTC staff relies on the information exchanged at this meeting to plan the required service and diversions to minimize the impact to customers.

TTC staff also work closely with the City's Economic Development & Culture Department. Special event organizers are also provided with the contact information for the TTC's Closures and Diversions groups so increased collaboration can take place and the TTC can meet customers' transit needs to the event. TTC staff determines if extra service or a diversion is required, and works with TTC transportation departments to ensure that service needs are met.

In addition, a monthly Road Closures Co-ordination Working Group Meeting is held at City Hall which is chaired by the General Manager of Transportation and attended by the Mayor. TTC staff attends and participates in this meeting, and information is exchanged about construction, road closures, transit closures, and co-ordinated projects to avoid conflicts.

To ensure event goes and TTC customers are well informed, Customer Communications works closely with event organizers to promote both the event and transit service to the event. Weekly updates are included on ttc.ca to provide customers with information on how to get to the event using transit. We also promote events on our platform video and station information screens where possible. Large events, i.e. Veld, are also supported with station signage to direct customers to the correct bus or streetcar. Event transit options and disruptions are also promoted on social media.

TTC staff will continue to work closely with City of Toronto staff on special event planning, and we remain committed to working with event organizers to co-ordinate service to their events.

Contact

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Signature

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Attachments

None