

# TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

**MEETING DATE:** May 21, 2008

**SUBJECT:** ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT SERVICES PLAN:  
2007 STATUS REPORT, AND OPTIONS FOR FASTER PROGRESS

**ACTION ITEM: X**

**INFORMATION ITEM:**

---

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Receive this report, noting that:

- the report describes the status of the TTC's current activities to improve the accessibility of its facilities and services. The report fulfils the provincially-legislated requirements for an annual documentation of the TTC's accessibility plans and major initiatives;
- the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) requires that all transit services and facilities be accessible by 2025. The TTC's current plans, as outlined in this report, will meet and exceed this goal;
- all the TTC's accessible transit service plans and updates are available on the TTC's web site, so the public can see the progress being made each year towards the TTC's accessibility goals;
- the TTC's first annual public meeting on accessible transit services was held on May 20, 2008 and, as soon as the input from that meeting has been compiled, it will be presented to the Commission;
- the rate at which the TTC can improve the accessibility of service depends on the funding provided. There are two significant areas of opportunity where the TTC's accessibility plans could be accelerated through increased, or accelerated, funding:
  - i) acceleration of the construction of elevators at subway stations. All stations could be equipped with elevators by end of 2017, subject to the availability of design resources and qualified contractors, by advancing the capital funding for the project by approximately \$76 million between 2009 and 2016, which would result in an average increase in annual cash flow of approximately \$9.5 million over this same time period,

- ii) the percentage of Wheel-Trans registrants who are unable to get transportation when they request it -- known as the "unaccommodated rate" -- could be reduced from the current approximately 2% to about 1% with additional annual operating funding of approximately \$0.5 million -- which will grow over time -- for the additional service required. Increasing operating funding for Wheel-Trans might be more affordable to the City of Toronto if the operating subsidies were shared equally between the City and Metrolinx/Province of Ontario, similar to the funding arrangement which was in effect up to 1997;
  - the existing fleet of CLRV's and ALRV's are not accessible, and these streetcars now constitute the single largest gap in the TTC's overall system accessibility. The cost of replacing these older, non-accessible streetcars with modern, accessible, low-floor light rail vehicles is estimated at \$1.25 billion. The TTC is waiting for approval of funding for this critical purchase and, when that happens, this major accessibility shortfall will be resolved.
2. Forward this report to the Chief Financial Officer of the City of Toronto, the Ontario Ministries of Community and Social Services, Transportation, and Public Infrastructure Renewal, the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and Metrolinx, in order to highlight that the TTC's accessibility objectives could be achieved faster and sooner if Metrolinx and/or the Province of Ontario were to provide additional funding to allow this.

## **FUNDING**

This report has no effect on the TTC's operating or capital budgets. Funding for committed accessibility improvements is already included in the TTC's budgets.

## **BACKGROUND**

The TTC is committed to making its services accessible to all people, including people with disabilities, and has initiated various programs to reach the goal of making all services and facilities accessible. The TTC is proceeding systematically, and as quickly as funding allows, to create an accessible transit system.

The Province of Ontario's *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) requires that transit properties produce annual accessibility plans. In advance of the AODA requirement, the TTC prepared a comprehensive report on accessibility, entitled *Accessible Transit Services Plan – Year-End 2003 Status Report*, which was received by the Commission in February 2004. Updates of this plan have been provided annually since that time. These documents are available on the TTC's web site at:

[www.toronto.ca/ttc/schedules/service\\_reports.htm#accessibletransitservicesplan](http://www.toronto.ca/ttc/schedules/service_reports.htm#accessibletransitservicesplan)

The main elements of the TTC's current accessibility plan are described in more detail in the appendix to this report, entitled, *TTC Accessibility Transit Service Plan – 2007 Status Report*.

The purpose of this current report is to:

- provide a status update on current TTC activities in making its system accessible;
- respond to the legislated requirement for an annual status report; and
- describe some options by which the TTC's accessibility goals could be achieved faster and sooner if more funding support were provided.

## **DISCUSSION**

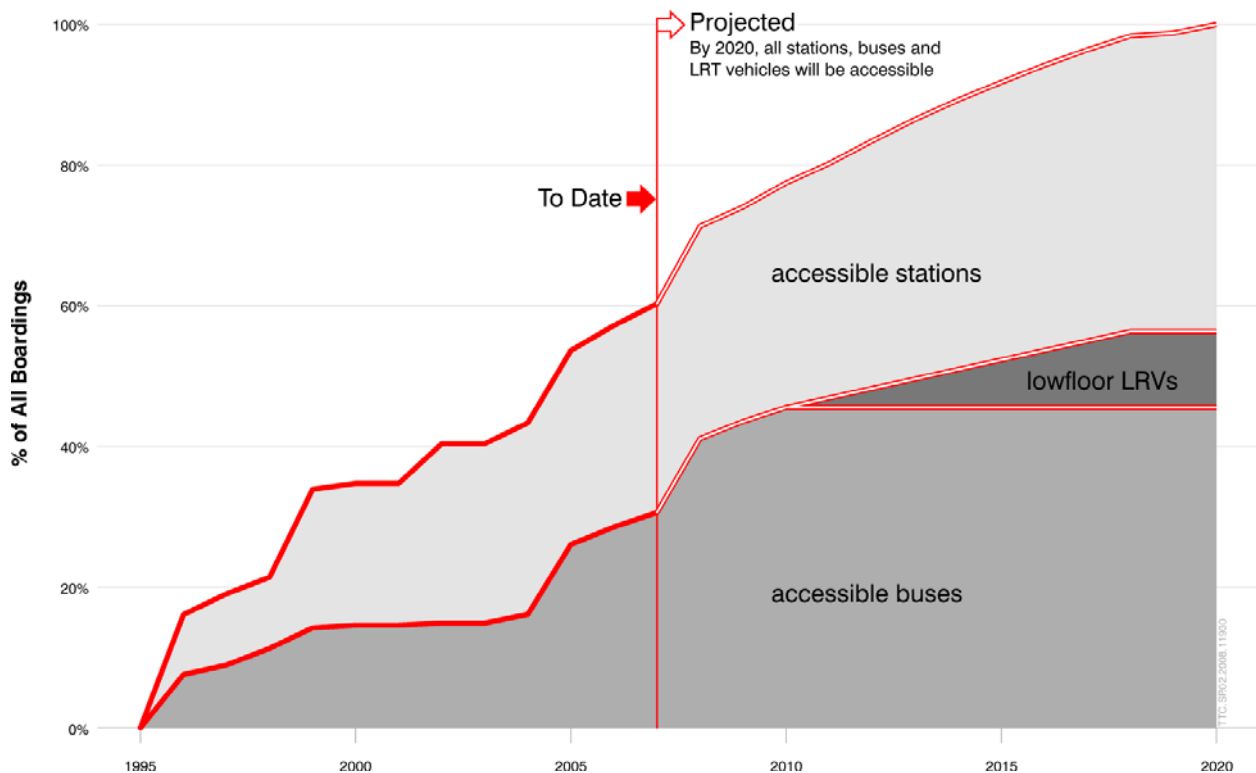
The TTC's operation, services, and facilities are complex, and the task of making the system accessible is a multi-year endeavour. The TTC began making major investments in conventional-services accessibility in the early 1990's. As illustrated in the exhibit "Proportion of TTC Boardings on Accessible Services", significant progress has been made to the point that, currently, sixty percent of all passenger boardings on TTC conventional services now occur on accessible services or facilities. This has been achieved through a combination of installing elevators and other accessibility features at major subway stations, and the acquisition of accessible buses. Current plans call for all passenger boardings to occur on accessible services or facilities by 2020.

At year-end 2007, 28 of the TTC's major subway stations (41% of all stations in the system) had been equipped with elevators and easier access features. Plans call for the remaining rapid transit stations to be made accessible at the rate of approximately four stations per year, with all stations to be accessible by 2020. Seventy percent of the TTC's bus fleet (1,220 out of 1,700) were accessible at year-end 2007, with the remainder of the bus fleet to be accessible by 2010. Accessibility features at the bus-platform level of subway stations are being accelerated at ten stations to allow for accessible bus-to-bus and bus-to-street transfers by 2009. This means that, with all of the bus fleet to be accessible in 2010, transfers between accessible bus routes within subway stations will be facilitated even before all the elevators and other features are installed at all stations.

The current non-accessible streetcar fleet is planned to be replaced by modern, accessible low-floor light rail vehicles (LRV's) between 2012 and 2018, which will provide accessible service on the entire streetcar network as the vehicles are put into service.

In 2007, the TTC's Wheel-Trans operation provided to-the-door service for 49,000 registrants who have restricted physical functional mobility.

### Proportion of TTC Boardings on Accessible Services



The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) provides for the development of accessibility standards that will lead to accessible services and facilities being in place throughout Ontario by 2025. The TTC's accessibility plans meet or exceed this goal on all fronts.

Service improvements are being made to Wheel-Trans services through improved efficiencies, but the cost of Wheel-Trans services, on a per-passenger basis, may limit the extent to which specialized service can be expanded in the longer-term. Improving the accessibility of conventional services will allow a percentage of current and future Wheel-Trans registrants to make more use of the conventional system and to benefit from spontaneous trip-making and more-flexible travel options. While improving the accessibility of conventional services will never eliminate the need for to-the-door services, increased use of accessible conventional services will moderate the increasing demand for to-the-

door service. It also provides the opportunity to improve the efficiency of Wheel-Trans services through better integration with conventional services.

Providing effective accessible service involves more than simply making physical changes to facilities and vehicles. The TTC is also improving the accessibility of its conventional services by training front-line personnel, and developing effective ways of communicating with passengers. For example, in 2008, all TTC vehicles will have automated stop announcements to inform all passengers of the next stop that the vehicle will pass. This benefits all passengers but, in particular, people who are visually impaired.

Virtually all TTC customers benefit from the accessibility features being implemented on conventional services including elevators, escalators, and automatic accessible doors. However, for many seniors and others who have limited agility, strength, and balance, these features are essential. Other people, such as those traveling with baby strollers or carrying heavy packages, find elevators of great assistance. Therefore, while planning for improved accessibility naturally focuses on overcoming impediments to travel by seniors and people with disabilities, all TTC customers will be better off with improved system accessibility.

The rate at which the conventional TTC services can be made accessible is highly dependent on the level of funding provided for accessibility initiatives. The TTC's Capital Program includes numerous projects that will, in aggregate, significantly improve accessibility on the system. The program includes:

- The purchase of 400 low-floor accessible buses between 2008 and 2010, at a cost of \$330 million, to make the bus fleet 100% accessible.
- The replacement of the existing non-accessible streetcar fleet with 204 new accessible low-floor Light Rail Vehicles (LRV's) at a cost of \$1,250 million. The conversion of the streetcar fleet to low-floor vehicles is planned to be complete by 2018. Funding for new LRVs is not yet confirmed, however, and the lack of accessibility on the current streetcar network remains the single largest gap in the TTC's overall plan for system accessibility. This large accessibility gap could be closed if funding for the planned purchase of accessible low-floor light rail vehicles were to be confirmed by Metrolinx and/or the Province of Ontario.
- Constructing elevators and other accessibility features at the 41 subway stations that have not yet been made accessible, at a cost of \$348 million. To date, 28 stations have been made accessible, which is 41% of all stations. This program, as currently planned, could be accelerated to allow completion of all stations by the end of 2017. However, this would require accelerating capital cash flows by approximately \$76 million between 2009 and 2016 or approximately \$9.5 million per year over that time period. Such an aggressive schedule would result in many stations being under construction at any given time. There is also a concern that sufficient design resources

and qualified contractors would not be available to implement an accelerated schedule.

Additional funding for Wheel-Trans would also allow the TTC to improve its delivery of to-the-door service. As demand for specialized service increases, the Wheel-Trans system has been pushed to its limits to accommodate all of the trips being requested. Typically, at present, approximately 2% of all Wheel-Trans trips cannot be accommodated at the time requested. This level of "unaccommodated" trips is a significant issue for Wheel-Trans customers. Additional annual operating subsidies of \$0.5 million -- likely to grow over time -- to operate a combination of additional TTC-operated and contracted services would allow this "unaccommodated" rate to be reduced to approximately 1% on an ongoing basis. Higher operating funding for Wheel-Trans might be more manageable if it were shared equally between the City of Toronto and Metrolinx/Province of Ontario, similar to the operating subsidy agreement which had been in place for many years prior to 1997.

There are many types of mobility difficulties experienced by individual TTC passengers, and it is a complex task to accommodate all these needs on conventional TTC services. The TTC has established an ongoing process for consulting with, and tapping into the expertise of, people with disabilities and to enlist their support in the search for solutions that work for everyone. The time and commitment made by members of the TTC's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) has been, and will continue to be, invaluable in implementing the TTC's accessibility plans. The TTC also uses a number of other methods to provide information and obtain input from members of the public including community meetings, and newsletters. Consultative input and joint problem-solving will remain central to the TTC's ongoing approach to improving the accessibility of TTC services.

Not all of the initiatives being undertaken to improve accessibility require capital funding. The TTC is undertaking a wide range of non-capital initiatives which also will improve accessibility, including:

- implementing standards for design and construction at the TTC which reflect the input received from the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) and the community regarding appropriate design features to improve accessibility;
- taking advantage of private development around subway stations to accelerate the installation of elevators and accessibility features at stations; and
- providing improved information to passengers about accessible services, including a special information line to provide up-to-date information about escalator and elevator availability, the development and distribution of brochures about accessibility features, and information on accessible services on the TTC's web site.

The TTC will focus on maintaining and integrating services for Wheel-Trans registrants,

implementing accessibility improvements to the conventional services, and making the best use of the new accessibility resources as they come on-stream. The opportunities for Wheel-Trans registrants, other people with disabilities, and seniors to use accessible conventional services will grow significantly in the years ahead. Encouraging greater use of accessible conventional services by people with mobility difficulties will be a prime objective of the TTC in the coming years.

The Province of Ontario's *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) established the goal of an accessible Ontario in 2025, and the TTC will exceed the AODA requirements by a considerable margin. However the Province of Ontario is currently developing specific regulations for the implementation of the AODA related to customer service, transportation, and the built environment. These regulations could require the TTC to alter its priorities and schedules, and could increase the TTC's costs, if the regulations identify requirements that are not included in the TTC's current accessibility plans, or require the TTC to alter the priorities set through the TTC's budget and consultation processes. The TTC, along with other transit industry representatives, are participating in a consultation process regarding the proposed regulations. New draft regulations affecting the TTC are expected to be released in 2009, and staff will report on the implications for the TTC of the proposed regulations. The Province has indicated that they will not fund any additional costs to transit operators that result from the requirements of their own AODA legislation.

## **SUMMARY**

The TTC is committed to making its services accessible in order to better meet the needs of seniors and people with disabilities. The TTC has a systematic program in place to ensure that this is accomplished in a cost-effective and timely way. The TTC's accessibility objectives could be met faster and sooner if Metrolinx and/or the Province of Ontario were to provide additional funding to allow this.

-----

April 24, 2007  
11-31-47

Appendix: TTC Accessible Transit Services Plan: 2007 Status Report

## APPENDIX

### **TTC Accessible Transit Services Plan: 2007 Status Report**

#### **1. Background**

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) provides public transit services in the City of Toronto and is committed to design and operate these services to provide travel options for all members of the public, including seniors and people with disabilities. The demand for travel on the TTC's accessible services has been growing rapidly, and will grow at an even faster rate, as a result of the ageing of the population and the higher incidences of disabilities associated with seniors. This report describes how the TTC is taking a systematic approach to making all of the TTC's services accessible as quickly as funding allows. It provides a status report on the TTC's activities and ongoing plans to improve system accessibility for both conventional services and facilities, and specialized transit services.

The plans and programs presented here have been incorporated into the TTC's budgetary and planning processes. The report reflects the 2008 Capital and Operating budgets approved by the Commission on November 14, 2007. All the initiatives outlined here have been addressed in public meetings conducted by the Commission, the City of Toronto, and/or the Commission's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT).

The TTC provides service to people with disabilities both by operating specialized services and by making conventional services and facilities accessible. Making conventional transit services accessible can reduce, but will never eliminate, the need for specialized services, because there are members of the disabled community who require to-the-door assisted services for at least some of their travel needs. However, the availability of accessible conventional services will provide some Wheel-Trans registrants, other residents of Toronto with mobility restrictions, seniors, and disabled visitors to Toronto, with an opportunity to make more trips, to make spontaneous trips, and to travel on transit services available to all members of society. Improvements to the accessibility of the TTC's conventional services will permit people with mobility difficulties unrestricted travel with family and friends, and greater opportunities for social integration and access to services and facilities throughout Toronto.

Both residents and visitors to Toronto benefit from the accessibility improvements. For example, those traveling with baby strollers or carrying heavy packages will find the elevators of great assistance. Similarly, the increase in the number of escalators, the improved directional signage, the additional benches, the courtesy seating in vehicles, the increased and improved communications, and the many other improvements that have or

will be carried out, assist all transit passengers. Therefore, while the TTC's accessibility plans naturally focus first on overcoming impediments to travel by seniors and people with disabilities, all TTC passengers will be better off because of improved system accessibility.

The TTC has undertaken a staged approach to providing accessible services and, since the late 1980's, has moved forward with numerous initiatives that, collectively, have created a program of improved accessibility. The program has been documented in a number reports including:

- *Choices for the Future*, August 1989,
- *Making Public Transit in Metro Toronto More Accessible – Transit Accessibility Implementation Plan*, April 1994,
- *Accessible Transit Services Plan – Year-End 2003 Status Report*

Since 2003, an annual update has been provided outlining the status of the recommendations and projects flowing from the previous studies, ACAT advice, and Commission decisions on accessibility improvements.

The Province of Ontario's *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) established the goal of an accessible Ontario in 2025. The TTC expects to exceed the AODA by a considerable margin, and the project priorities and schedules are developed to compliment each other and, where possible, achieve economies of scale and cost savings. However, the Province of Ontario is currently developing specific regulations for the implementation of the Act that could require the TTC to alter its priorities and schedules and could increase the TTC's costs. New draft regulations affecting the TTC are expected to be released in 2009, and staff will report on the implications for the TTC of the proposed regulations at that time. The Province has indicated they will not fund additional costs to transit as a result of the AODA.

## **2. TTC Delivery of Accessible Service**

The provision of accessible transportation service involves virtually all areas of the TTC from marketing and training, to escalator maintenance and new facility construction, to daily operation of the conventional and specialized transit services.

### **2.1 Wheel-Trans To-the-Door Service**

In 2007, the TTC's Wheel-Trans specialized transit service provided 2.1 million trips for 49,000 registrants, many of whom are unable to use conventional services. The services are provided seven days per week at fares that are the same as for conventional TTC services. Eligibility for Wheel-Trans service is determined through an interview process that

includes an assessment of an applicant's physical functional mobility. As shown in the exhibit "Wheel-Trans Registrants", the registrant base for Wheel-Trans service has grown at a rate of 15% per year over the last 10 years.

Wheel-Trans service uses a fleet of accessible buses that are smaller than conventional transit vehicles and are, therefore, often better able to directly serve hospitals, rehabilitation centres, homes for the aged, and other institutions frequently used by seniors and disabled people. Accessible taxis and sedan taxis, under contract with the TTC, supplement the TTC's fleet of small buses. Wheel-Trans is in the process of attempting to replace and expand its fleet of small bus with the planned purchase of 198 new buses between 2009 and 2014 at a cost of \$76 million.

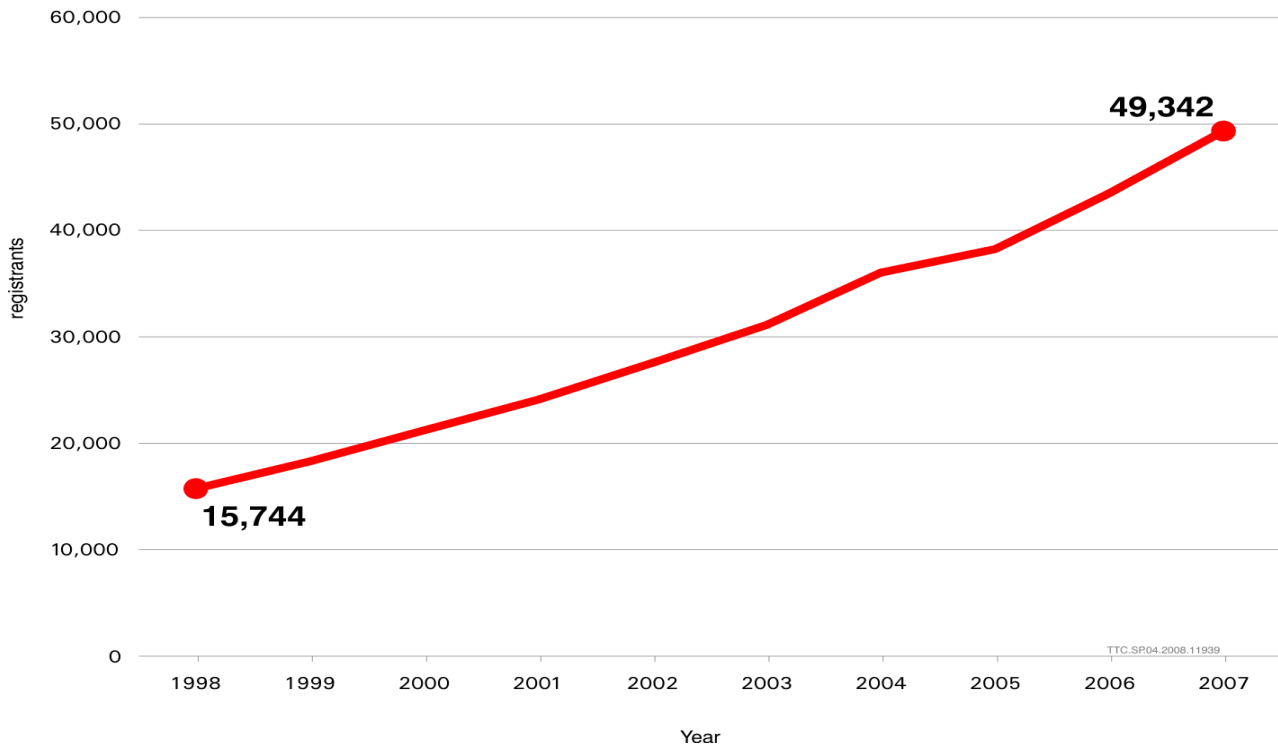
Making conventional transit services accessible will never eliminate the need for specialized service because there are members of the disabled community who require to-the-door services for at least some of their travel needs. However, the availability of accessible conventional transit services will give some Wheel-Trans registrants another travel option, the ability to make spontaneous trips, to travel with groups of family and friends, and to be more fully-integrated into society.

Wheel-Trans also operates five Community Bus routes. These routes are operated on a fixed route and have been designed largely to serve the local needs of seniors and disabled people. They use a smaller Wheel-Trans bus which allows them to enter the driveways of facilities, such as nursing homes and other facilities for seniors and disabled people, where it might not be possible for a full-size bus to operate.

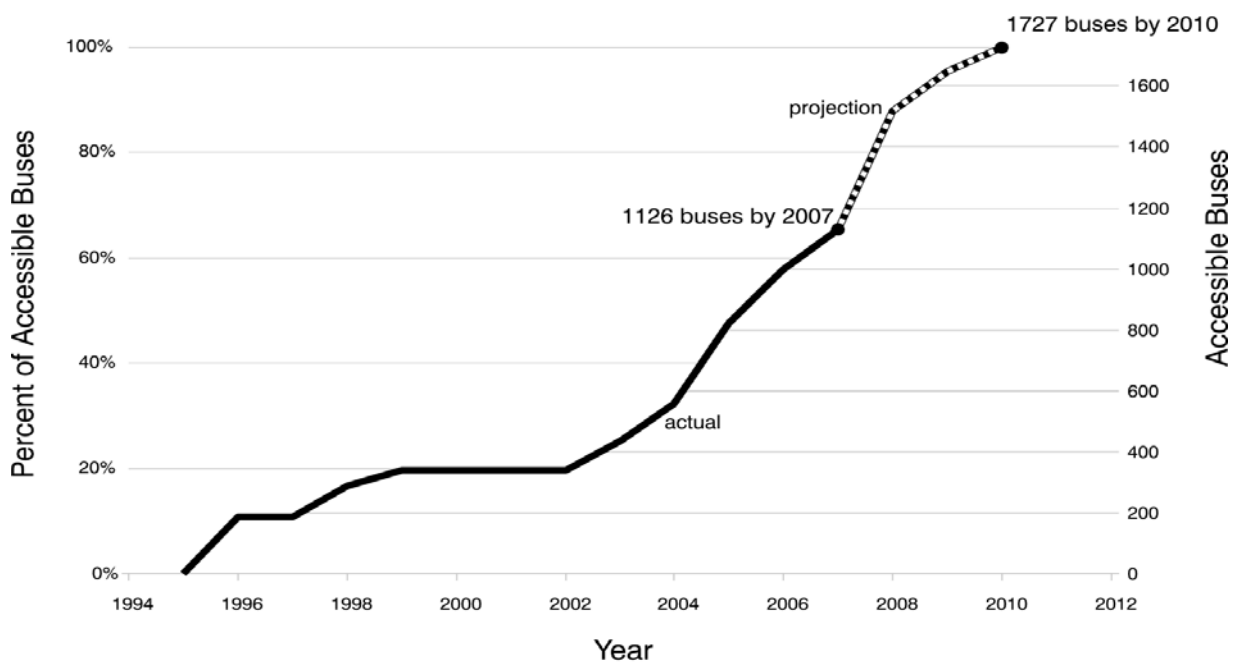
## **2.2 Conventional Bus System**

As of December 2007, the TTC owned 1543 buses for conventional services, of which 1126, or approximately 70%, are accessible. As shown in the exhibit "Accessible Buses", it is planned that all of the buses in the conventional bus fleet will be accessible by 2010.

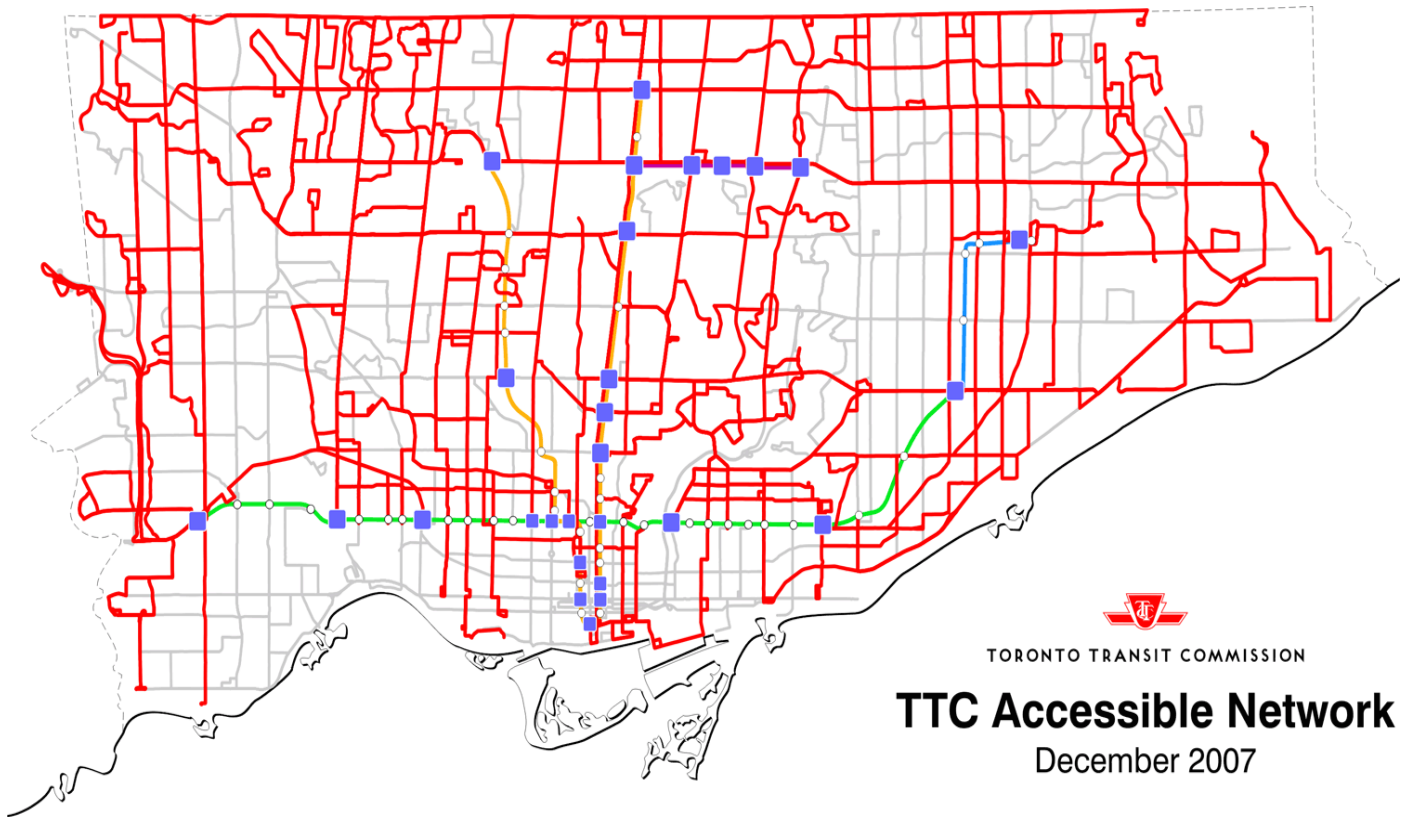
## Wheel-Trans Registrants



## Accessible Buses



The map of the “TTC Accessible Network December 2007” shows the routes that are currently designated accessible in the TTC system. As new accessible buses arrive, new accessible routes will be designated until all the routes are accessible in 2010.



TTC SP 15-02-2008 DRG. No. 11929

### 2.3 Streetcar System

The TTC currently has a fleet of 248 streetcars which are 25-to-30 years old and whose design has step loading to a high floor within the vehicle. People using mobility devices are not able to board the vehicles. The TTC is in the process of replacing these streetcars with modern accessible low-floor Light Rail Vehicles (LRV's) which will significantly improve the accessibility of the streetcar system for people who use mobility devices. Plans call for the entire streetcar fleet to be replaced with low-floor LRV's between 2012 and 2018 at a cost of \$1.25 billion.

The 509 HARBOURFRONT, 510 SPADINA, and 512 ST CLAIR lines have been designed with their own right-of-way and have protected passenger loading platforms in the middle of the street. With the acquisition of new low-floor LRV's, and modest modifications to the passenger platforms, these lines will provide excellent accessible service. However, other parts of the streetcar network will have limited accessibility, even with new accessible LRV's, due to operating constraints. On most of the TTC's current streetcar network, the vehicles operate in the centre of the road in mixed traffic, and usually do not have protected passenger-loading platforms. This type of operation requires that passengers board the vehicles from the road itself. Providing accessible service on these routes will require the deployment of a 1.2-metre-long ramp from the LRV vehicle into a traffic lane which will be less desirable from a customer service and operations perspective.

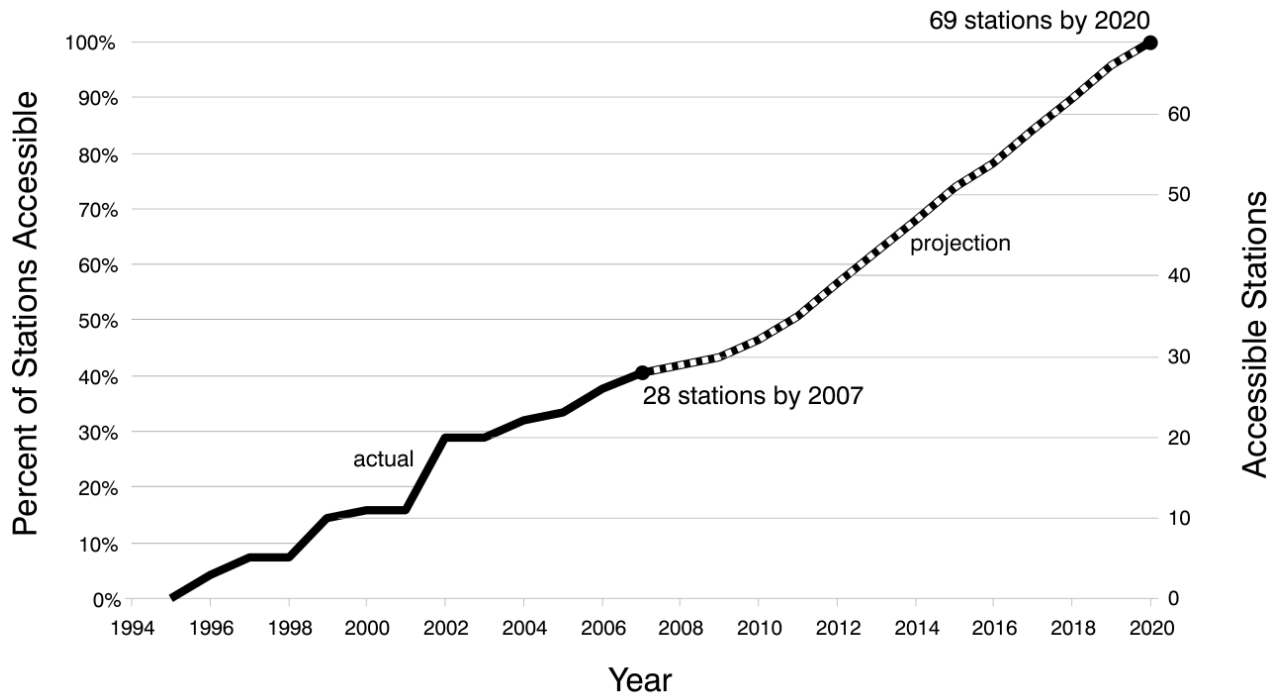
The TTC has committed to ensuring that all future streetcar/LRV lines, including the planned new lines in the waterfront and the extensive Transit City light rail network, are constructed to provide excellent accessibility with platform loading into low-floor LRV vehicles.

## **2.4 Subway/RT System**

### *Accessible Subway and RT Stations*

Sixty-four percent of all TTC passengers use the subway/rapid transit (RT) system, including people with mobility difficulties who use these services on a regular basis. For this reason, accessibility of the subway and Scarborough RT is a prime objective for the TTC. As illustrated in the exhibit "Accessible Subway and RT Stations", at year-end 2007, 28 of the TTC's major subway stations (41% of all of the stations in the system) had been equipped with elevators and easier-access features. The access improvements for North York Centre Station and Lawrence West Station will be completed in 2008 and 2009, respectively. Plans call for the 39 remaining rapid transit stations to have elevators and related accessibility features installed at the rate of approximately four stations per year from 2010 until all stations are accessible in 2020. The cost of this program is budgeted at \$343 million between 2008 and 2020.

## Accessible Subway & RT Stations



TTC SP 22-01-2008 DRG. No. 11923b

Accessibility features at the bus-platform level of subway stations are being accelerated at ten stations to allow for accessible bus-to-bus and bus-to-street transfers by 2009. This means that, with all of the bus fleet to be accessible in 2010, transfers between accessible bus routes within subway stations will be facilitated even before all the elevators and other features are installed at all stations.

TTC standards require the inclusion of elevators and accessibility features as part of any new station, or major expansion of an existing station. In addition to elevators, depending on the station design, there may be requirements for ramps, two or more sets of automatic doors and at least one accessible fare-gate. The standards also include improved signage, more benches, the elimination of pathway obstructions, and the installation of guide tiles. These standards are being used as the basis for planning and budgeting for the subway extension projects currently being proposed for the Spadina Line and Yonge Street lines into York Region. In addition, when a private developer chooses to establish a direct connection with a TTC station, they must contribute to the installation of accessibility features.

*Accessible Subway and RT Vehicles*

TTC subway and RT vehicles are accessible due to the use of level loading platforms throughout the system. However, the design of the vehicles has progressively been improved from an accessibility perspective with input from customers and ACAT. The "T1" cars that first went into service in 1995 incorporated a multitude of accessibility improvements over the earlier "H" car design, including wider doorways, clear obstruction-free centre aisles, side stanchions rather than centre stanchions, and flip-up seating to allow an area specifically for wheelchairs. The T1 car also incorporates the work done by TTC staff, ACAT, and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, to design extended end-gates between subway cars.

The TTC is in the process of acquiring replacement subway cars for the remaining "H" cars in the fleet, and the new "Toronto Rocket" (TR) design incorporates additional accessibility features including new 'flip-down' seating in the wheelchair area, a more-open wheelchair area, redesigned stanchions, tactile flooring, electronic signs and maps, audible and visual announcement systems, removal of impediments to moving between cars, and features to facilitate safe and quick evacuations. Current plans call for all of the remaining "H" cars in the fleet to be replaced by new Toronto Rocket cars by 2013. Similarly, the TTC plans to replace the existing Scarborough RT fleet by 2014, and state-of-the-art accessibility features will be a requirement of the design of the replacement vehicle.

*Automated Subway Station Stop Announcement System*

The TTC is implementing an automated stop announcement system to assist sight-impaired travellers on the subway and Scarborough RT systems by providing audio information regarding the next stop to be made by the train. In 2008, all subway and RT vehicles will be equipped with the automated stop announcement system.

**3. Other Accessibility-related Activities****3.1 Consultation**

The TTC is undertaking its program of improved accessibility with the support of a continuing community consultation process that has been effective in improving the quality and effectiveness of accessibility investments.

The TTC's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT), which was formally established by the Commission in 1993, is continuously involved in the review of the TTC's policies, designs, standards, plans, and implementation activities pertaining to accessible transit at the TTC. ACAT is a fifteen-member volunteer committee, appointed by the Toronto Transit Commission. The committee is made up of disabled persons,

seniors, and those who can speak on the behalf of disabled people in the community. ACAT has established a number of subcommittees and panels that meet to address specific standards or other projects including elevator design standards, improved signage and access guides, design of new accessible fare gates, accessible bus operating procedures (lifts and ramps), and the allocation of accessible buses to routes.

In addition to ACAT, the TTC provides other opportunities for members of the public to provide input to the planning and operation of accessible transit services, including an annual public community meeting to solicit suggestions for improvements to conventional services and identify potential new services.

TTC initiatives that improve the overall quality of service for all passengers, such as more-frequent service and planning for less-crowded vehicles, are of special benefit to seniors and people with disabilities but, generally, are not seen as investments in improved accessibility. The TTC is in the midst of a continuing program for implementing these types of initiatives. The program includes less crowding on vehicles, additional hours of service on minor routes, traffic signal priority, transit rights-of-way, and improving vehicle reliability, all of which will contribute to an improved quality of service for all Toronto transit users.

### **3.2 Legislative and Regulatory Issues**

The Province of Ontario's *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) established the goal of an accessible Ontario in 2025. The TTC expects to exceed the AODA requirements by a considerable margin: to-the-door services are accessible now, the conventional bus fleet will be accessible in 2010, the light rail fleet will be accessible in 2018, and rapid transit stations will be accessible by 2020. However, the Province of Ontario is currently developing specific regulations for the implementation of the Act related to customer service, transportation, and the built environment. These regulations could require the TTC to alter its priorities and schedules and could increase the TTC's costs if the regulations identify requirements that are not included in the TTC's current accessibility plans. The TTC, along with other transit industry representatives, are participating in a consultation process regarding the proposed regulations. New draft regulations affecting the TTC are expected to be released in stages in late 2008 and 2009, and staff will report on the implications for the TTC of the proposed regulations. The Province has indicated that they do not plan to provide additional funding for any additional costs to transit as a result of the AODA.

### **3.3 Integration of TTC Accessible Services**

The TTC is undertaking an initiative to increase the integrated use of the TTC's specialized services and conventional services by Wheel-Trans registrants. This will help to make best use of the limited resources available, as specialized services are costly on a per-passenger basis, and the capacity of the specialized service is constrained by vehicle availability. There are considerable social and community benefits in helping people with mobility difficulties to be more integrated into mainstream activities. Conventional services can be more attractive than Wheel-Trans services for many passengers because of the opportunities for spontaneous and non-time-restricted travel. The intent is to provide integrated trips and to avoid segregation of disabled people from the rest of the community wherever and whenever possible.

### **3.4 Training Staff Who Deliver Accessible Services**

The provision of both technical and sensitivity training is a critical component of the TTC's move towards a high level of accessible transit service. The TTC has a comprehensive, integrated approach to both the certification of new employees and the recertification of existing ones. Accessibility and sensitivity issues are built into the curriculum, and training is systematically delivered and tracked. Approximately 3000 surface operators, 500 subway operators, 350 collectors, and 200 route supervisors receive both vehicle-specific accessibility training and broader sensitivity training as part of the ongoing training programs.

### **3.5 Customer Information and Outreach**

The TTC uses various media for customer information and outreach, including brochures for distribution to customers, seniors groups, and agencies, web-based information, and participation in community group and outreach programs. The "Easier Access" brochure, in particular, provides non-ambulatory customers with information to help them use the TTC's accessible conventional services. A similar brochure designed to assist Wheel-Trans registrants provides information of special interest with respect to Wheel-Trans operation and services. The TTC also participates in the *People in Motion* trade show, which takes place annually in Toronto, and which focuses largely on mobility devices and transportation for mobility-restricted people.

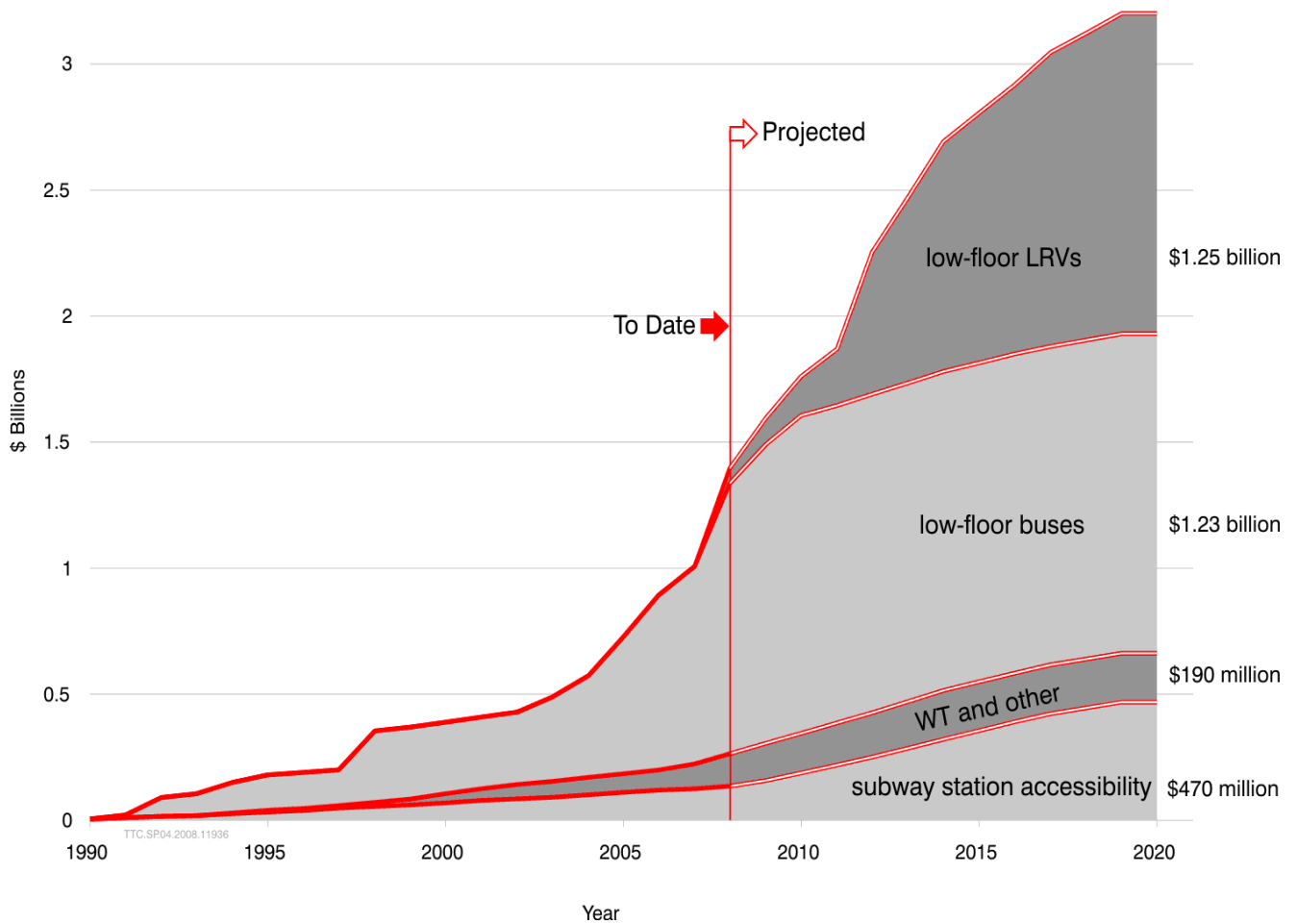
## **4. Funding is the Key**

The TTC is working as hard as possible to make all of the major elements of its system accessible, but the rate of progress towards an accessible system is dependent on the

funding provided. As illustrated in the exhibit “Cumulative Capital Investment in Accessibility”, fleet replacement costs make up the largest proportion of the TTC's ongoing accessibility-related capital needs. In total, the cumulative cost of replacing the bus and streetcar fleets with low-floor accessible vehicles will be approximately \$2.7 billion by 2020. Subway station accessibility, will cost approximately \$470 million to complete.

This program can be significantly accelerated if additional funds were to be provided for the program, although there are logistical and resource challenges in an accelerated process.

### Cumulative Capital Investment in Accessibility



To date, the TTC has spent approximately \$1.4 billion on improving system accessibility, and this amount is expected to grow to approximately \$3.1 billion when the program is complete in 2020, or sooner if possible.

As described in this report, the TTC has already completed, or is in the process of implementing, virtually all the improvements that can be made to system accessibility, given the funding available. The rate at which the TTC can proceed with implementing further accessibility improvements is dependent on the amount of funding received for such improvement initiatives.

## **5. Conclusion**

The TTC is taking a comprehensive, integrated approach to providing effective public transportation for this growing market. The approach incorporates both specialized services provided by Wheel-Trans, and continuing programs to make conventional services accessible.

The rate at which the conventional TTC services can become more accessible is primarily dependent on the level of funding provided for accessibility initiatives. Based on current plans, the bus fleet will be fully accessible by the end of 2010, the streetcar fleet converted to low-floor accessible vehicles by 2018, and elevators will be installed throughout the subway and RT system by 2020.

The TTC will focus on three primary activities in the coming years in providing accessible service. Those activities are: maintaining and integrating services for Wheel-Trans registrants, achieving the current timetable for implementing accessibility improvements to the conventional services, and making the best use of new accessibility resources as they come on-stream. Higher levels of government funding would allow the TTC to make faster progress towards achieving the TTC's goal of comprehensive system accessibility.