

Ref: 2006-11-I(02)

October 6, 2006

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

City Council on September 25, 26 and 27, 2006, referred the following Motion to the Executive Committee:

I(2) Request of the Province of Ontario to Declare Transit Service in Toronto an Essential Service

Moved by Councillor Palacio, seconded by Councillor Lindsay Luby

“**WHEREAS** the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) should seek to have transit service in Toronto declared an essential service; and

WHEREAS as required under the *Act* for the declaration of an essential service, a stoppage in TTC service does create a ‘danger to life, health or safety’ and ‘serious environmental damage’; and

WHEREAS the Toronto Transit Commission carries over 1.3 million passengers daily, including 80 percent of transit trips in the Greater Toronto Area, and is the hub of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) inter-regional transit network; and

WHEREAS one subway line in Toronto takes 53,000 automobiles per hour off the road during rush hour, and the TTC carries the equivalent of 365 million automotive trips annually, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 8 megatonnes per year; and

WHEREAS hundreds of thousands of Torontonians rely on the TTC to get to work, to school and to conduct their lives each day, and the City of Toronto is simply not designed to function without an operating public transit system; and

WHEREAS Wheeltrans is the only means of transportation for many of Toronto’s elderly and physically disadvantaged residents; and

WHEREAS it is estimated that any transit stoppage costs the City of Toronto economy upwards of \$10 million in lost economic activity and excessive inconvenience for hundreds of thousands of Torontonians; and

WHEREAS the reliability of transit service has consistently been cited as the primary factor in a potential rider's decision whether or not to take the TTC, which any type of work stoppage completely undermines; and

WHEREAS there was a crippling two-day TTC strike in 1999, and an eight day strike in 1991, and further labour disruptions have been threatened in 2006; and

WHEREAS other essential services, nonetheless, have a very strong bargaining position and typically secure very favourable agreements through arbitration and mediation; and

WHEREAS Toronto is the only municipality that has a public transit service of such magnitude which entails significant ramifications for the public;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT as an urgent matter of public health and safety, Toronto City Council request that the provincial government introduce legislation deeming public transit service in the City of Toronto an essential service.”

for City Clerk

M. Toft/cd