



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Establishment of One Toronto Marathon

<b>Date:</b>	January 21, 2010
<b>To:</b>	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
<b>From:</b>	General Manager, Transportation Services
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>Reference Number:</b>	Pw10004te.row

#### SUMMARY

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The first organized marathon in the City of Toronto was in 1978 and it was not until 2000 that a request was made for a second marathon, which was given permission by City Council at the time. The marathon referred to in this report is a footrace of 42.2 kilometres in length and requires a full or partial closure of a street.

Organizers for the Goodlife Toronto Marathon and the Scotiabank Waterfront Marathon, with minor changes to routing over the years, have been running their marathons annually. The Goodlife Toronto Marathon course starts in the North York District, runs south along Yonge Street down to the Martin Goodman Trail and finishes back up at Queen's Park Circle. The Scotiabank Waterfront Marathon course starts at Toronto City Hall, proceeds down to Lake Shore Boulevard, runs west to Windermere Avenue, heads back east along Queen Street to Victoria Park and returns to finish at City Hall. The extent of the route of both marathons monopolizes a number of communities in the City and, as such, concerns from residents and businesses about having both marathons approximately 3 weeks apart in the Fall of each year, coupled with lengthy road closures, lack of access and egress to homes and businesses, rerouting of TTC and GO Transit vehicles and the resulting rider delay and traffic congestion have increased dramatically.

This report recommends the adoption of a one marathon per year policy in the City effective 2011 and also recommends the process of selecting one marathon be through a Request for Proposals process.

One marathon for the City of Toronto can enhance a City's athletic running profile on a local, national, and in some cases, international level. It can also increase tourism for the City and have direct and indirect economic impacts for Toronto and the Province of Ontario.

The current race organizers will be given an opportunity to make deputations before Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council adopt a one marathon per year policy in the City of Toronto effective 2011, which would require the full or partial closure of a street;
2. Subject to the adoption of Recommendation 1, City Council direct the General Manager of Economic Development & Culture, in consultation with the General Manager of Transportation Services, to issue a Request for Proposals for the one marathon, the content of which Proposal is more particularly set out in the body of this report;
3. Subject to the adoption of Recommendations 1 and 2, City Council authorize the General Manager of Economic Development & Culture, in consultation with the General Manager of Transportation Services, to negotiate the appropriate terms and conditions of the contract to be entered into with the successful proponent and to report back to seek authority to enter into an agreement;
4. Notwithstanding Recommendation 1, the General Manager of Transportation Services have the authority to permit any marathon that may occur in relation to the Pan Am Games in addition to the one annual marathon permitted by the policy; and
5. Subject to the adoption of Recommendation 1, City Council direct the General Manager of Transportation Services to report back on any required by-law amendments.

## **BACKGROUND**

City Council, at its meeting of October 26 and 27, 2009 (MM41.14), requested the City Manager to undertake a review of the two annual City of Toronto marathon events, in consultation with the representatives' convenors and sponsors, with the view to developing and promoting an international marathon event in the City that will have the potential to rival the signature status of other city marathons.

## **COMMENTS**

City staff have met with the race organizers of both marathons, Goodlife Toronto Marathon and Scotiabank Waterfront Marathon, trying to resolve the issue of the two marathons being held three weeks apart on a number of previous occasions. One of the discussed solutions was to move one of the two marathon events to the Spring season. Neither race organizer was willing to move their race, or to come to another solution.

Both have cited similar factors as to why it is not possible, such as: sponsorship, time of year coinciding with training schedules for runners and availability of venues.

A professional facilitator hired by the City of Toronto has met with City staff and the organizers to assist in alternative resolutions to this matter. What came out of this meeting was a consensus by both race organizers on the fact that there has been an increase in the overall number of events held in the City which has caused public frustration.

There were other areas of mutual understanding, being: how neither marathon can continue to flourish with the other being so close in date, economic benefits to the City, minor route changes and associated costs. However, by the end of the meeting, neither race organizer demonstrated a willingness to change their race date or come up with a reasonable resolution.

Marathons can enhance a City's athletic running profile on a local, national, and in some cases, an international level. They can also increase tourism for the host city, as runners often choose a race and then plan an associated trip to the City around it. The marathon in the City of Chicago, for example, has almost 40,000 participants. The most famous of all marathons, equivalent to the "Super Bowl", located in Boston has 20,000 runners at the start line. Runners can only participate in the Boston Marathon if they run a pre-set time at a Boston qualifier race. Both Toronto marathons are qualifiers for Boston.

Recent studies dealing with marathons have shown that participation rates are up 30 percent since 1995 due in part to the associated trip planning described above. The marathon experience is now all encompassing in that a diversity of runners at various levels can participate. Most marathons offer other smaller road races, which encourage participation from the elite athlete to the athlete with special needs. The host city gains a tourism benefit because of the number of out of town participants and economic impact.

According to the Greater Boston Convention and Visitor Bureau President, the direct and indirect economic impact to the Greater Boston Region is approximately \$71 million dollars annually. Participants come from every state in the United States and 52 countries. Approximately 500,000 spectators line the 26.2 mile course.

The City of Chicago, which hosts the largest marathon in the world, and the City of New York have participation numbers of 37,500 and 30,000 respectively. In the case of Chicago, the race had grown by 17,000 participants in a five-year period. Economic impact estimates are in the hundreds of million of dollars for these events.

An economic impact study was completed for the 1992 Toronto Marathon (there was a different event producer during this time period) by the Metropolitan Toronto Convention and Visitor Association. The event had 5,339 participants, approximately 2,900 participants from beyond the borders of the Toronto area, 295 from the United States and approximately another 100 from other countries. It was estimated that the Toronto Marathon generated \$10 million of economic benefit for Toronto and the Province of Ontario that year.

Other marathon races close to Toronto such as those held in London, Ottawa, Burlington and Niagara Falls draw from 500-2,500 participants. Similar Toronto's experience, these races draw participants from outside their geographic borders and provide a tourism and economic benefit to their respective City. More specifically, the City of Ottawa marathon and other running events in Ottawa, draw 10,000 participants from outside the City limits. The total registration for all running events in Ottawa is approximately 18,000.

Marathon participation numbers for the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon and Goodlife Toronto Marathon have been as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Goodlife Toronto Marathon</b>	<b>Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon</b>
2000	1,677	473
2001	1,826	555
2002	1,805	607
2003	1,927	756
2004	2,014	1,503
2005	1,483	1,773
2006	1,618	1,906
2007	1,773	2,100
2008	1,703	2,532

The concern now is that since both marathons continue to run annually with only three weeks separating them, the adverse impact of these events on affected commercial and residential communities, which is no longer tolerable, will increase in severity.

Since 2000, land use changes and intensive development along the marathon routes have resulted in many more adjacent condominium towers, re-vitalized shopping areas, and recreational routes, all resulting in higher levels of pedestrian and traffic interaction. Complaints from the public concerning lengthy road closures, lack of access and egress to homes and businesses, re-routing of TTC and GO Transit vehicles resulting in rider delay and all day traffic jams are the most common complaints.

As a result of the above, Economic Development & Culture and Transportation Services are proposing the adoption of a one marathon per year policy in the City of Toronto.

There are numerous by-laws and policies of the former municipalities of the amalgamated City of Toronto governing the temporary closing of a road for an event. The General Manager, Transportation Services, currently has the delegated authority to

administer street events within the City's rights-of-way under these by-law parameters. If a one annual marathon policy is adopted, by-law amendments may be required. The General Manager of Transportation Services will report back to Public Works and Infrastructure Committee on any required by-law amendments.

Requests to use City roads to hold an event have grown considerably over the years. Street events in the City of Toronto range from small block parties organized by resident volunteers, where disruption to property access and the transportation system is minimal, to professionally organized events attracting tens of thousands of Torontonians and visitors with extensive impact on the transportation network. The downtown core in particular remains the favourite destination for larger and specialized events to such an extent that for at least one day of every weekend from April to November, a permit is issued for a full and/or partial closure of one or more major roads. In addition to the growing requests for events, the size of these events in terms of attendance has also grown tremendously. Transportation Services through by-laws/policies tries to strike an appropriate balance between those members of the public and organizations eager to apply for/attend a street event and those wanting to carry on with their normal daily business.

The attempt to have the two race organizers agree on a reasonable solution was unsuccessful. Under the circumstances, in an attempt to minimize the impact on the public and to attract greater participation, Transportation Services recommends that the City adopt a one annual marathon in the City of Toronto policy effective 2011, and that this official marathon be selected through a Request for Proposals process where the criteria for selection includes:

1. qualifications, reputation and creativity of the race organization;
2. relative experience and qualifications of the overall team proposed to produce the marathon;
3. financial ability and stability of the race organization team;
4. understanding of and integration of the marathon into the City of Toronto Agenda for Prosperity;
5. respect for and understanding of the marathon route and its impact on the public, transportation routes and the City of Toronto event calendar;
6. value of the financial return, tourism impact, charitable causes to the City of Toronto and to the 2015 Pan Am Games; and
7. such other elements as may be required in the opinion of the General Manager of Economic Development & Culture and the General Manager of Transportation Services.

The General Manager of Economic Development & Culture, in consultation with the General Manager of Transportation Services, recommends that the Request for Proposals be for a term of five years, with the option of the City to renew for an additional five years.

In view of the sponsorship, time of year with training schedules for runners and marketing, it is not feasible to request that one marathon be held in 2010, but rather the 2011 marathon calendar in Toronto be limited to one marathon.

The Request for Proposals will be managed by the General Manager of Economic Development & Culture, in consultation with the General Manager of Transportation Services. The selection panel will consist of City staff and outside advisors from the private and athletic community.

If Council adopts a one marathon a year policy, it is recommended that the General Manager of Transportation Services have the authority to permit any marathon to occur in relation to the Pan Am games.

This report has been prepared in consultation with the General Manager of Economic Development & Culture.

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## **SIGNATURE**

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