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## 2015 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

### Wheel-Trans Users That Could Use TTC Conventional Services If All Stations Were Accessible

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#### Issue/Background:

- At its meeting of January 29, 2015, the City of Toronto Budget Committee requested the Toronto Transit Commission provide a briefing note on:
  - a) Approximate percentage of Wheel-Trans users that could use Toronto Transit Commission services if all stations were made accessible; and
  - b) Future budget pressures on Wheel-Trans as a result of Toronto's aging population over the next ten years.
- The key points below will address Part A of the information requested by the City of Toronto Budget Committee on January 29, 2015.
- Wheel-Trans carried 3,077,181 to the door passengers in 2014.
  - Of those passengers, 23% were in wheelchairs and 77% were ambulatory.
  - These numbers have been trending toward increased ambulatories for more than a decade. In 2014, 34% of Wheel-Trans customers were in wheelchairs while 66% were ambulatory.
- The ability to use TTC Conventional modes is variable for current Wheel-Trans passengers.
  - Customers may have cognitive, frailty, age or anxiety impairments which render the Conventional service a challenge.
  - Not all TTC Conventional modes beyond stations are accessible. While all buses are accessible and many stations are already accessible, the streetcar routes beyond Spadina 510 with the new streetcars are not accessible.
- It is likely that there will be many Wheel-Trans registrants who are capable of using Conventional transit only some of the time, including when i) the distance to the station or stop at the origin/destination is short; ii) the person is having a “good day” medically or disability wise; or iii) there is no snow/ice on the ground, etc. These registrants would still need Wheel-Trans for other trips.

**Key Points:**

- Should all TTC Conventional modes be accessible, about 70% of TTC's customers could use the TTC Conventional modes. However, there are variants beyond mobility, including all Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) requirements that necessitate the use of Wheel-Trans including cognitive, frailty, age or anxiety and other mental health challenges.
- If all stations and all modes were accessible, Wheel-Trans could have the ability to shift up to 40 - 50% of the current trips to Conventional service. Further Wheel-Trans trips can be shifted to Conventional service with the implementation of intermodal trip planning, with this cautionary note:
  - Previous trials to transfer customers to Conventional modes generated significant resistance. Therefore to embark on this exercise would require a change to the eligibility policy (planned for 2016) and a significant amount of travel training for existing and new customers.
  - It is possible to combine Wheel-Trans service with Conventional service to pick up a customer from their home address, take them to the nearest accessible subway station, allow the customer to journey on the subway to the closest accessible station to their destination, use Wheel-Trans to collect the customer at the subway station, and transport the customer to their final destination with a mirrored route on the return journey.

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