

From: [Melissa Wong](#)
To: [councilmeeting](#)
Cc: [Councillor Crisanti](#); [Councillor Holyday](#); [Councillor Morley](#); [Councillor Perks](#); [Councillor Nunziata](#); [Councillor Pasternak](#); [Councillor Colle8](#); [Councillor Bravo](#); [Councillor Perruzza](#); [Councillor Malik](#); [Councillor Saxe](#); [Councillor Matlow](#); [Councillor Moise](#); [Councillor Fletcher](#); [Councillor Jaye Robinson](#); [Councillor Burnside](#); [Councillor Carroll](#); [Councillor Cheng](#); [Councillor Bradford](#); [Councillor Crawford](#); [Councillor Thompson](#); [Councillor Mantas](#); [Councillor Myers](#); [Councillor Ainslie](#); [Councillor McKelvie](#); [Jin Huh](#)
Subject: [External Sender] Please Support MM5.6: Fine Equity: Balancing Toronto Transit Commission Fare Evasion and Parking Fines
Date: March 31, 2023 2:32:58 PM

Sent on behalf of Jin Huh

Dear City Councillors,

Social Planning Toronto is a non-profit, charitable organization that challenges inequity in our city — through knowledge generation, debate, civic engagement, advocacy, and collaboration — to spark social and policy change. I am writing to express our strong support for MM5.6, “Fine Equity: Balancing Toronto Transit Commission Fare Evasion and Parking Fines”.

We are concerned about the impact Fare Evasion Fines will have on equity-seeking communities, namely low-income Black, Indigenous and racialized communities. We support a process that prioritizes equity, a fair process that is based on penalties that match any offence or action committed, and justice meted out in ways that will lead to positive results without causing unintended negative consequences or harm.

There are numerous reasons why an individual may have not been able to pay their TTC fare, including low-income residents struggling to make ends meet as well as a failure of the PRESTO system. Fining those without means will simply exacerbate the conditions that lead to the fare evasion. TTC staff have reported numerous times that there are major gaps in the PRESTO resale network in Scarborough and Northwest Toronto. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) wrote to the TTC and Metrolinx in April 2021 outlining their concerns that the use of the PRESTO electronic fare payment system “may present barriers to accessing Toronto’s public transit for some Human Rights Code-protected groups.”* The OHRC letter explained that the PRESTO resale network at Shoppers Drug Marts does not provide “sufficient access to physical locations for purchasing PRESTO fares, with the most significant gaps occurring in areas where more residents are racialized or experience poverty, such as North-west Toronto and Scarborough. Physical fare sale locations are also particularly important for people who do not have access to credit cards or the internet and need to buy fares with cash. As well, needing to travel further distances to buy fares may present challenges for people with disabilities.”

According to the most recent census**, more than half of public transit users are women, immigrants and people from racialized groups. Reducing TTC fines is long overdue and would reduce the harms of the current fine structure, which are disproportionately felt by low-income and racialized people. Furthermore, the TTC has reported clear evidence that Black and Indigenous people are grossly overrepresented in TTC enforcement activities, especially Black and Indigenous men. This overrepresentation remains strong across TTC locations, benchmarking techniques and enforcement activities.***

This motion is about fairness between transit users and drivers and we hope that City Council will keep this in mind as you debate this item.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jin Huh

Executive Director

Social Planning Toronto

*https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/letter-ttc-and-metrolinx-human-rights-code-barriers-linked-presto

**<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221130/dq221130c-eng.htm>

*** https://ttc-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/Project/TTC/DevProto/Documents/Home/Public-Meetings/Board/2021/April_14/5_External_Presentation_Owusu_Bempah_Wortley_TTC_Racial_Equity_Impact_Assessment_Interim_Report.pdf

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