

May 19, 2025

RE: EX23.5 - 2025 Update on SafeTO Implementation

Dear Mayor Chow, Deputy Mayors and Members of Toronto City Council,

TTCriders, a membership-based transit advocacy organization, has long called for proactive, effective, and care-centered solutions to transit safety. Everyone deserves to feel safe on the TTC.

We're writing today to offer our support of EX23.5 - 2025 Update on SafeTO Implementation, as amended and are urging all members of council to vote in favour of it. We are pleased that Mayor Chow and the Executive Committee have responded to our call for more supportive staff trained in de-escalation and mental health crisis response. This approach is a clear improvement over relying solely on police enforcement, which can increase the risk of harm for Black, Indigenous, unhoused people, and those experiencing mental health challenges.

There are additional evidence-based measures to address safety for all riders, which we wrote about in our 2023 report "Whose Safety?" Investing in a Safer TTC for All informed by expert perspectives and diverse rider experiences. We encourage City Council to consider the report's recommendations, including:

Increasing service, especially at night. Frequent service and more riders will make the transit system safer. Waiting longer on the platform or at a bus stop late at night increases rider isolation. Overly crowded buses, streetcars, and subways make transit trips unsafe for riders using mobility devices as well as people with grocery carts and strollers.

Providing free public Wi-Fi access and reliable cellphone service in subway stations and tunnels

Installing platform edge doors on the subway, which would make riding the TTC safer, more accessible, and more reliable by preventing riders from falling or being pushed onto the tracks.



Hiring more TTC staff to serve as “Transit Ambassadors” focused on guidance and support rather than enforcement. Safety in numbers is a more than a theory, and having staff focused on ensuring people’s safety will make everyone feel more secure.

Protecting door-to-door Wheeltrans service. Riders with disabilities and who use mobility devices have identified numerous access and safety issues in the conventional TTC system, including: Insufficient space to board crowded vehicles with mobility devices, call buttons and emergency alarms on subway and other TTC vehicles not placed in reach of someone using a mobility device, and more.

We also urge City Council to continue advocating for more affordable rent-geared-to-income and reliable housing, including shelters and supportive housing, as an essential part of making our transit system safer and more inclusive for everyone.

We recognize that many of these measures come with a sizable price tag, that’s why we hope that you will continue to advocate both the federal and provincial governments for ongoing and sustainable operational and capital funding for the TTC. We also hope that you continue to look into alternative funding models such as the Commercial Parking Levy

We thank you for your continued commitment to making our transit system safer and more reliable.

Sincerely,

Andrew Pulsifer
Executive Director
TTCriders