

Award of Doc4755698985 to Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. for Operation and Maintenance of a Passenger Transportation Shuttle Service for High Park and other Potential Parks

Date: April 28, 2025

To: General Government Committee

From: General Manager, Parks and Recreation and the Chief Procurement Officer

Wards: 4 - Parkdale

SUMMARY

This report seeks authority for the City to enter into a licence agreement with Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. for operation and maintenance of a passenger transportation shuttle service within High Park, with potential for additional agreements as required and as deemed feasible at other City parks in the future. The initial agreement is for a term of five years, with two options to extend up to five years each, in favour of the City, provided the licensee is not in default of the agreement.

The licensee was selected through a Request for Proposal process issued on November 4, 2024 for April 2026 operation. The Request for Proposal supports the goals of the High Park Movement Strategy and improves accessibility to key destinations within High Park with a consistent and predictable service. The solution is environmentally friendly, will modernize customer service, provides a daily shuttle service from April to October 31 annually, and includes a winter service pilot program to expand service availability to year-round operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Parks and Recreation and the Chief Procurement Officer, recommend that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks and Recreation to sign on behalf of the City of Toronto a licence agreement and any ancillary agreements and documents, and to amend the agreements as required with Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. to operate and maintain a shuttle

- service in High Park for five years starting on approximately December 1, 2025, with two optional renewal terms of up to five years each, exercisable at the General Manager's sole discretion, substantially on the terms and conditions set out in Attachment 1 of this report, and on such other terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager, Parks and Recreation and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, to sign additional licence agreements with Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. to provide a similar shuttle service at any additional parks where the General Manager, Parks and Recreation in consultation with the local City Councillor, determines the service is needed, and the Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. is willing and able to provide the service, on similar terms and conditions as the High Park licence agreement except for service schedule and passenger fare pricing, which must be mutually agreed upon, provided that the High Park licence agreement remains in good standing.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Under the agreement, the Licensee will pay the City 15 per cent of gross revenue (before Harmonized Sales Tax) earned by the Licensee and will operate services at no additional cost to the City. This percentage fee format is used in lieu of the previous flat licence fee of approximately \$10,000 annually to achieve improved deliverables, incentivize performance, and to encourage passenger fares to remain affordable and similar to other people-moving services in City parks, while ensuring that the City shares in the shuttle's success if the program is profitable.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The High Park Movement Strategy was developed to ensure that High Park is an inclusive and inviting space accessible to people of all ages, cultures, genders, and abilities. Procurement of a shuttle service for High Park is aligned with that objective.

The recommended supplier, Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd., is committed to partnering with local organizations, women business enterprises, and advocacy groups to identify and connect with diverse suppliers and subcontractors.

The recommended supplier verifies that the proposed shuttle service will meet the requirements of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and the operating model will support reduced or fare-free service for different passenger communities for equitable access for select days or circumstances.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on May 11, 2023, City Council adopted the High Park Movement Strategy. City Council approved a suite of recommendations to advance the implementation of changes to park roads, including that Parks and Recreation issue a Request for Proposal to procure a shuttle service to support the principles of the strategy.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.IE3.7>

COMMENTS

Background

High Park is one of Toronto's most treasured parks. The park is a unique greenspace that serves local residents and visitors from across the region. The park spans over 160 hectares, much of which is recognized for its environmental significance. It accommodates a wide range of activities, amenities, and ecological, recreational, and cultural functions.

The High Park Movement Strategy (HPMS) was launched in 2021 to rethink the travel network in the context of the city's growing population, changing travel patterns and the impacts of COVID-19. The goal of the study was to improve mobility within the park, while prioritizing safety, accessibility, and the park's environment.

The HPMS focuses on mobility and the travel network within the park including existing roads, driveways, and parking lots. The strategy evaluated the impacts and benefits of road closures as well as other important mobility matters such as reducing conflicts between road users and encouraging active transportation. Council adopted the HPMS in May 2023, and since that time, Parks and Recreation has been implementing the project, beginning with weekend road closures for private vehicles and interim improvements to park roads in support of Council's recommendations.

One of Council's recommendations was for Parks and Recreation to issue a Request for Proposal for a new shuttle service within the park. Implementing a shuttle service is a core component of maintaining accessible access to destinations within the park. Other accessibility measures include maintaining seven-day a week access to the park for Wheel-Trans service, and working with the Toronto Transit Commission to maintain the seasonal 203 High Park bus during weekends and holidays throughout the summer months to provide service in the park until the shuttle is in operation.

The current licence agreement for the Trackless Train amusement service expires in October 2025. The recommended solution will replace an amusement service with an improved and expanded people-moving service, allowing visitors to access key destinations within High Park without the use of personal vehicles. The recommended route will also provide access to locations in the park that are not accessible to vehicles

via the park roads at any time due to the existing road network. The new agreement, which sets out expectations for electrification of the shuttle fleet, aims to align with City strategic initiatives and goals, including more environmentally friendly and sustainable practices. Electric service is expected to phase in starting in 2026, and have a fully electric fleet by 2028.

Overview of the Request for Proposals Process

The City issued a Request for Proposal for the Operation and Maintenance of a Passenger Transportation Shuttle Service for High Park and other Potential Parks (Doc4755698985). The Request for Proposal was conducted by Parks and Recreation in collaboration with Purchasing and Materials Management. The Request for Proposal requirements were structured to allow potential suppliers to demonstrate their qualifications, experience, operational capacity, and technical knowledge through their creative proposal to offer quality shuttle service with modernized service.

The City publicized the RFP through the following channels:

- Social Media
- High Park Movement Strategy website
- PFR RFP eNewsletter for interested suppliers
- BusinessTO eNewsletter
- City's Business Opportunities for Parks and Recreation webpage
- City's Ariba system for online bidders

The Request for Proposal was issued on November 4, 2024. Eight suppliers attended the optional virtual information meeting held on November 12, 2024, and four suppliers attended the optional onsite information tours on November 13 and 20, 2024. The City received one submission when the submission deadline closed on December 5, 2024, from:

Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd.

Details of the Evaluation Process

A formal Evaluation Team consisting of staff from Parks and Recreation worked in collaboration to evaluate the submitted proposal.

The evaluation included the following stages:

- Stage 1: Mandatory Submission Requirements
- Stage 2: Mandatory Qualification Requirements, Technical Requirements and Evaluations of Rated Criteria
- Stage 3: Fare Ticket Pricing
- Stage 4: Financial Proposal and Ranking of Proposals

The process confirmed that the sole supplier met all the mandatory requirements and was able to meet all expected mandatory deliverables and some preferred deliverables and met all the minimum score thresholds. The supplier's fares, ticket pricing, and

financial proposal met the Request for Proposal requirements. In accordance with the criteria set out by the Request for Proposal, this process determined that the supplier, Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd., should be recommended for award of the licence agreement.

Proposal Highlights and Service Improvements

As the current operator of the Trackless Train amusement service in High Park, Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. brings almost 40 years of experience delivering a service in High Park and has the capacity to transition into a shuttle service meeting HPMS goals. They have established resources and infrastructure to seamlessly operationalize a shuttle service in High Park, and have a thorough understanding of the topography, shared park use, and wildlife conservation activities in the park. Their shuttle service proposal includes improvements such as:

- Procurement of an electric shuttle fleet over three years, with at least one electric shuttle by April 2026.
- Daily service, rain or shine, from April to October, inclusive of statutory holidays. Each vehicle can service up to 70 passengers and it is anticipated that it can service around 140 passengers per hour during peak season.
- Winter service (November – March), available for three hours a day on weekends with the ability to expand service as required.
- Website, email, and phone communication.
- Live updates on shuttles' operational status with GPS tracking on the shuttle.
- Compliance with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and shuttle vehicles that are wheelchair accessible.
- Cash and cashless options are available for purchasing tickets.

For full routes and service schedule information is available in Attachment 1 and 2.

For service comparison:

Features	Current Trackless Train Amusement	New Shuttle Service
Term	Concludes fall 2025	Initial term of five years, starting December 2025. Two options to extend, for up to five years each.
Customer Service	No website prior to 2025 No status update of service	Website and phone line for customer service. GPS tracker on vehicles. Live updates of service status.
Payment Method	Cash	Cash and cashless options, including advance ticketing.

Features		
Current Trackless Train Amusement		New Shuttle Service
Fees to the City	Approximately \$10,000 in licence fees per year.	15 per cent of gross revenue earned by the Licensee will be paid to the City.
HPMS Directions		
Universally Accessible Vehicles and Shuttle Stops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited compliance with AODA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with AODA. Can accommodate up to four wheelchairs with wheelchair ramp and stepping stool. Staff training on assisting passengers with mobility devices, visual or hearing impairments.
Daily All-Season Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service from April – October, weather dependent. No winter service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily service from April – October Pilot winter weekend service in 2026
Affordable fare with Discounts or Targeted Free Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable fares in-line with industry benchmarks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable fares in-line with industry benchmarks. Various discounts available for equitable access.
Green Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diesel vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Electric vehicle by 2026 with transition to full electric fleet by 2028. Supplier to supply and install chargers to facilitate electrification of vehicles.

Pricing

The regular fare pricing is less than, or similar to, the rates for other people-moving services in City parks, such as the Toronto Island Tram and Toronto Zoo Mobile. The regular fare pricing for the Shuttle Service starting in April 2026 is:

Age Categories	Proposed Pricing
Adult	\$8.85 + HST
Youth	\$6.19 + HST
Child	\$4.42 + HST
Senior	\$ 6.19 + HST

Tickets allow passengers to reboard the shuttle on the same day within a four-hour window. The pricing is slightly higher than the 2025 Trackless Train, which can be attributed to inflationary increases and additional fees to offset cost of providing consistent services with investment of new fleet.

In addition to the strategies outlined in the Equity Impact Statement section, the proposal also includes other strategies to promote equitable access such as:

- 50 per cent discounts on for seniors every Tuesday
- Family pass

Other Potential Parks

At Council direction, this Request for Proposal also considered the potential need for shuttle service within other City parks. Should the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, in consultation with other local councillors, determine that a similar shuttle service is required and appropriate at another park, the City may, but is not obliged to, offer a licence agreement to Carla construction and Maintenance Ltd.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Through a competitive Request for Proposal process structured to achieve City outcomes, improved service, and goals of the High Park Movement Strategy, Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. was identified as meeting all requirements to deliver the Shuttle Service at High Park, with the potential to offer similar shuttle services at other parks. Parks and Recreation recommends the award of the licence agreement to Carla Construction and Maintenance Ltd. and upon award, Parks and Recreation will work collaboratively with the supplier to prepare for implementation of the service for 2026 operation.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Howie Dayton
General Manager, Parks and Recreation

Geneviève Sharkey,
Chief Procurement Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Major Terms and Conditions of the Agreement

Attachment 2: Routes and Licensed Areas