



Publicly Honouring the Service and Contributions of Veterans

Date: October 6, 2025

To: TTC Board

From: Chief Strategy and Customer Experience Officer

Recommendations

It is recommended that the TTC Board:

1. Approve the development of veteran recognition programming in 2026, including exploring opportunities to honour TTC veterans through station displays, digital storytelling, educational outreach, and public art.
2. Direct staff to explore partnerships with veterans and heritage organizations in 2026.

Summary

At its July 17, 2025 meeting, the Board requested that TTC staff identify opportunities to remember and honour Canada's veterans and highlight TTC staff who are veterans, including in TTC vehicles and stations.

Current veteran recognition initiatives at the TTC include welcoming Royal Canadian Legion members to distribute poppies in TTC stations in advance of Remembrance Day; pausing service for two minutes of silence at 11 a.m. on Remembrance Day; providing free rides for veterans and their companions on Warriors' Day and Remembrance Day; and utilizing the TTC Honour Guard in various civic events throughout the year, including those that recognize veterans.

A new initiative will launch in October 2025 and run through Remembrance Day week that will see digital content recognizing veterans in our system. In 2026, the TTC could pursue the development of veteran recognition programming, explore new partnerships with veterans and heritage organizations, and explore additional opportunities to honour TTC and Toronto veterans and peacekeepers through digital storytelling, educational outreach, and public art.

Background and Analysis

While the TTC currently participates in several initiatives to honour Canada's veterans, there is an opportunity to explore expanded initiatives and partnerships, including those that honour Canadian war veterans and peacekeepers, and particularly those who served as TTC employees.

Current Initiatives

The TTC has a longstanding tradition of recognizing veterans, including:

- A partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion, which includes an annual event to launch the Toronto Royal Canadian Legion's poppy campaign on the TTC.
- Halting all vehicles at 11 a.m. on Remembrance Day for two minutes of silence, prompted by audio and visual messages to customers to honour veterans.
- Offering free rides to veterans, active service members and their companions on Remembrance Day and Warriors' Day.
- The TTC's Honour Guard, who participate in various events throughout the year, including Remembrance Day and Warriors' Day ceremonies.
- Lowering flags to half-mast at TTC properties to mark solemn occasions, as appropriate, including the National Day of Mourning.

These efforts reflect the TTC's commitment to civic remembrance and public service.

Veteran Recognition Programming

The TTC has identified opportunities to expand its veteran recognition initiatives. New digital content recognizing veterans will launch in October 2025 and will run through Remembrance Day week.

In 2026, staff could pursue development of commemorative recognition programming to honour veterans in an ongoing and permanent way. Potential initiatives could include, but are not limited to:

- Tribute walls, such as displays featuring commemorative items, TTC veteran photos, names and service details in select stations, especially in stations near Royal Canadian Legion locations.
- Large-scale poppy murals or sculptures with plaques explaining their symbolism.
- Meet-and-greet booths hosted by local Legion members on Remembrance Day to share stories and distribute poppies.
- Digital content, such as rotating stories of TTC and Toronto veterans, military history, and educational content.

Strategic Partnerships

In addition to the TTC's existing partnership with the Toronto Royal Canadian Legion around Remembrance Day events, the TTC could pursue new and expanded partnerships in 2026. These could be with veteran organizations (such as Veterans Canada, etc.), to collaborate further on storytelling and outreach, and/or art and heritage organizations (such as Parks Canada, Heritage Toronto, StreetARToronto, etc.), to collaborate on education materials, history programming, and funding opportunities.

Timeline

The TTC will launch new digital content for Remembrance Day 2025, in addition to continuing with previously planned initiatives. If approved by the Board, the TTC will pursue expanded veteran recognition programming, new and expanded strategic partnerships, and digital initiatives, in preparation for Remembrance Day 2026.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Matters

Honouring veterans reflects the TTC's deep commitment to inclusion and recognition of diverse lived experiences. Veterans represent a broad cross-section of Canadian society, including individuals of varied cultural backgrounds, genders, and abilities. By publicly acknowledging the service of TTC employees (past and present) who are veterans, and by partnering with veterans and heritage organizations, including Indigenous veteran groups, Black Canadian military history organizations, and LGBTQ2S+ veteran advocacy groups, the TTC can affirm its dedication to equity and inclusion. Highlighting TTC employees who are veterans contributes to workplace inclusion and employee recognition, especially for those who may feel invisible or undervalued. This supports employee well-being, retention, and diversity in leadership, particularly when planning and storytelling includes veterans from marginalized backgrounds.

Future initiatives can support diverse representation in veteran stories and imagery, engage veterans in co-designing initiatives, and use trauma-informed approaches in storytelling and education. The TTC's current and proposed recognition initiatives not only commemorate military service, but also foster a culture of respect and understanding across generations and communities.

Innovation and Sustainability Considerations

The proposed veteran recognition initiatives present opportunities to integrate innovation and sustainability into the TTC's public engagement efforts. TTC staff could explore the feasibility of launching an innovation challenge to crowdsource creative ideas from employees, customers, and community partners on how best to honour veterans on the TTC. This approach would encourage civic participation and tap into diverse perspectives, while fostering a culture of innovation. The ideas generated would then be evaluated through the innovation pipeline process for feasibility, viability, and desirability.

Given the early phase of the initiative, the TTC has not yet integrated environmental sustainability considerations into its scope. Should the TTC Board approve the development of a veteran recognition program, the TTC will evaluate the feasibility of incorporating the following sustainability practices, including but not limited to:

- Procuring biodegradable alternatives to plastic poppies, such as those introduced by the Royal Canadian Legion, which are made from cotton, paper, and bamboo. Seed-paper poppies that can be planted to grow flowers, as demonstrated by the Poppy Project, a collaboration between local schools, Fanshawe College, and the Royal Canadian Legion, could also be explored. These alternatives would replace current plastic and fossil-fuel-based options.
- Providing designated collection points at select stations for the responsible disposal of existing plastic poppies, reducing their environmental impact and landfill waste.

Corporate Plan Alignment

This initiative is an emerging priority of the Board.

Financial Impact

Current efforts to honour veterans, such as free rides on Remembrance Day and Warriors' Day, are included in the TTC's 2025 Operating Budget.

The Interim Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

Contact

Matt Hagg, Manager, Customer Policy and Planning
416-393-3514
matt.hagg@ttc.ca

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Decision History

Attachment 1 – Decision History

TTC7.10 - Publicly Honouring the Service and Contributions of Veterans - by Chair Jamaal Myers, seconded by Commissioner Dianne Saxe

At their July 17, 2025 meeting, the TTC Board requested that TTC staff identify opportunities to remember and honour Canada's veterans and highlight TTC staff who are veterans, including in TTC vehicles and in stations, and report back to the TTC Board no later than October 2025. Report: [Member Motion on Publicly Honouring the Service and Contributions of Veterans](#). Decision: [TTC Board Decision](#).