



2012 City of Toronto Budget: Analysis
Cuts to Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)

Issue:

- The 2012 City of Toronto Budget proposes cuts in the TTC's 2012 Operating budget, including reversal of the Ridership Growth Strategy, reducing the frequency of bus service during peak and off-peak hours by February 2012.¹
- While reducing services, the 2012 TTC operating budget also includes a 10-cent fare hike that was implemented at the beginning of this year, with additional fare hikes over the next three years².

Facts:

- Public transportation is a social determinant of health. It provides access to employment, educational opportunities, healthy food options and health services.³ Functioning and accessible public transit systems can promote active lifestyles, and reduce disease, disability and death associated with obesity and accidental injury.⁴
- TTC customers currently spend, on average, 49 minutes to get to work.⁵ Increasing commute times will make it more stressful to get to jobs and educational programs and decrease the amount of time people can spend on activities that support their mental and physical health, such as social and family activities or exercise.⁶
- As public transit becomes less functional, more people may choose to use cars. Increased car use will worsen environmental problems such as air pollution and worse global warming. One health implication of these environmental conditions is worsening rates of illness from respiratory diseases such as asthma.⁷ In 2007 there were 1700 hospitalizations in Toronto related to air pollution from car traffic, with mortality related costs of \$2.2 billion.⁸

Analysis:

- The proposed service cuts disproportionately target low-income neighbourhoods, which already experience a "transit desert" and health inequities.
- Cuts to the TTC are a glaring example of being "penny wise and pound foolish", as the short term savings will lead to long term costs from high levels of health care system use.
- In order to fully support TTC operations, the City of Toronto must embrace visionary leadership including attention to equity for all people across the GTA. As public transit in Toronto becomes less functional, people with the option of personal care use will stop using the TTC and in turn may be more inclined to oppose funding public transportation. This will further contribute to disparities in access to transportation.
- Rather than eroding TTC services the city must work towards making the TTC better, encouraging even more people to chose public transit. Not only will this have the above noted health promoting effects, it will increase the amount of fares taken in and thus, the overall TTC budget.

HPAP calls on Toronto City Council to make the healthy choice and stop the cuts to vital community programs!

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- ¹ Toronto Transit Commission (2011) Retrieved from http://www3.ttc.ca/News/2011/December/1215_TTC_Budget_Fare_Increase.jsp
- ² Toronto Transit Commission (2011) Retrieved from http://www3.ttc.ca/News/2011/December/1215_TTC_Budget_Fare_Increase.jsp
- ³ Bell, J. And Cohen, L. (2009) *The Transportation Prescription: Bold new ideas for healthy, equitable transportation reform in America*. Retrieved from http://www.policylink.org/atf/cf/%7B97C6D565-BB43-406D-A6D5-ECA3BBF35AF0%7D/transportationRX_final.pdf
- ⁴ Bell, J. And Cohen, L. (2009) *The Transportation Prescription: Bold new ideas for healthy, equitable transportation reform in America*. Retrieved from http://www.policylink.org/atf/cf/%7B97C6D565-BB43-406D-A6D5-ECA3BBF35AF0%7D/transportationRX_final.pdf
- ⁵ Wellesley Institute (2011) *Wellesley Institute Deputation to the Budget Committee on the 2012 Operating Budget*. Retrieved from <http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/blog/wellesley-institutes-deputation-on-the-2012-toronto-budget/>
- ⁶ Bell, J. And Cohen, L. (2009) *The Transportation Prescription: Bold new ideas for healthy, equitable transportation reform in America*. Retrieved from http://www.policylink.org/atf/cf/%7B97C6D565-BB43-406D-A6D5-ECA3BBF35AF0%7D/transportationRX_final.pdf
- ⁷ Toronto Public Health (2007) *Air Pollution Burden of Illness from Traffic in Toronto* http://www.toronto.ca/health/hphe/pdf/air_pollution_burden.pdf
- ⁸ Toronto Public Health (2007) *Air Pollution Burden of Illness from Traffic in Toronto* http://www.toronto.ca/health/hphe/pdf/air_pollution_burden.pdf