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YORK REGION TRANSIT SALE OF MOBILITY PLUS TAXI SCRIP COUPONS

The Transit Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report, May 28, 2008, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report updates Transit Committee and Regional Council on the rationale for the limited sales distribution network for York Region Transit (YRT) Mobility Plus Scrip Ride coupons.

3. BACKGROUND

The Scrip Ride Program provides spontaneous service to Mobility Plus customers who have last minute or unplanned trips

In addition to the regular fare media options, Mobility Plus customers can purchase discount coupons for last minute or unplanned trips through the taxi Scrip Ride program. A book of Scrip Ride coupons has a value of \$60.00 and is sold by Mobility Plus to the customer for \$30.00, representing a 50% discount. Registered Mobility Plus customers can book same day trips with an approved local taxi company and pay for this trip using Scrip Ride coupons. The customer pays for the trip based on the kilometre charge confirmed by YRT Mobility Plus.

Scrip Ride coupons are currently only distributed and available at the YRT offices at 50 High Tech Road and can be purchased either in person, by phone using a credit card, or by mailing in a cheque. With the substantial savings, some customers have tried to purchase additional coupons not intended for their personal use. To ensure this does not occur, the number of books sold to any one client is limited.

A request was made by Regional Councillor Spatafora to consider expanding the distribution of these coupons to other Regional buildings, including police district offices.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Limiting the sale of Scrip Ride coupons to the YRT offices, telephone or via mail, allows YRT to maintain financial control

The YRT Mobility Plus client database changes daily with the addition of new clients or with revisions to a client's eligibility level. Limiting the coupon distribution network, gives Mobility Plus staff the opportunity to verify the client's status. For example, coupons are not sold to a client who is currently suspended or has temporary eligibility that has expired. This information is confidential and cannot be shared with a third party agency.

Reasonable steps are needed to discourage fraud

Also, although the Scrip Ride program is spontaneous and passengers book their trips directly with an approved taxi contractor, the contractor must call Mobility Plus to confirm the ride, the customer, and the approved kilometres. This gives Mobility Plus staff the opportunity to see who is making use of the service, the frequency of travel, and the cost to the Region. For example, if it is observed that a customer has purchased a number of coupon books, but Mobility Plus has no record of trips being taken, staff will suspend the sales of any additional coupons to the customer until further verification. This is to provide reasonable oversight for the prevention of fraud.

Mobility Plus Scrip Ride customers are primarily making use of the mail and phone-in ordering system

Scrip Ride coupon sales data for the month of April 2008 clearly demonstrates that customers prefer and are taking advantage of the mail-in and phone-in ordering system (Table 1). The mail-in and phone-in systems account for 82% of sales, while the walk-in or over-the-counter sales account for only 18%.

Table 1
Scrip Ride Sales Summary – April 2008

Type	# of Books Purchased	# of customers	Percentage	Value
Mail-In	49	24	58%	\$1,470
Phone-In	20	14	24%	\$600
Walk-In	16	10	18%	\$480
Total	85	48	100	\$2,550

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no costs associated with the recommendations of this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There are no local municipal implications associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the sale of Scrip Ride coupons continue to be sold solely from the YRT offices at 50 High Tech Road in Richmond Hill, and via telephone or mail. This will ensure that YRT staff are able to exercise the necessary degree of financial control over the program.

For more information on this report, please contact Sharon Doyle at Ext. 5634.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.