

Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to develop an understanding of the role that fare structures, fare collection systems and incentives play in producing and maintaining high ridership levels and successful public transit systems. More specifically, this report seeks to answer the question: “What can Toronto learn from Zurich’s fare structures practices?” Zurich, Switzerland has been acknowledged around the world as having one of the most successful public transportation systems, with its success reflected in its high per capita ridership levels. It is for this reason that it was chosen to be a “best practice” example.

Literature Review

Public transportation systems play a vital role in encouraging connectivity throughout a region and in supporting more sustainable means of travel. There are a multiplicity of factors that affect the success of a public transit system including fare structure, service, frequency and convenience. The degree to which these are provided can have a significant impact on ridership levels and the success of a system.

Switzerland is a small land-locked country located in the centre of Western Europe. The city of Zurich, one of the country’s economic hubs, is located in the northern part of Switzerland within the canton of Zurich, with a population of less than 500,000. Regardless of its size, the city and greater region have been able to consistently provide residents with one of the best public transit systems in the world. There is consensus among scholars that the success of Zurich’s public transit system is largely due to the fact that frequency, coverage, speed, reliability, safety and quality are all provided within a well-coordinated and integrated network. Figure A presents a map of Switzerland and highlights the city of Zurich within the country.



Figure A: Map of Switzerland

Figure B presents a map of the Province of Ontario and locates the city of Toronto within it. Despite the current problems that exist within its transit system, Toronto was once considered a pioneer for its forward-looking approach to public transit. This success has been overshadowed by suburban sprawl and the dependency on the automobile contributing to today's declining ridership levels.



Figure B: Map of Ontario, Canada

after it implemented a multi-modal fare system that eased transfers and promoted heavily discounted passes.

service, frequency and convenience that a system can provide.

Methodology

A comparative case method was used in this report in order to identify areas of comparability and difference between Zurich and Toronto's transit systems. Since Zurich has long been considered a pioneer in successful public transportation systems it was used as a basis of comparison in order to understand how fare systems can be structured in order to help encourage transit use and increase ridership levels. An extensive literature review helped to establish the evaluative framework used throughout this report. Specifically six criteria, as shown in Table 1, were developed in order to assess the current fare structure and incentives present in the Zurich and Toronto's public transit systems. For each criterion, each city was assessed on an individual basis followed by a comparative section in order to highlight the areas of similarity and difference.

Analysis

Table A presents a summary of these findings from the analysis chapter of the report. Please note that a more detailed analysis can be found in Chapter 4.

Table A: Findings from the Case Study Analysis!

Criteria	Zurich	Toronto
<u>Fare Pricing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Passes available • 	6	5

