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Hell on wheels

The TTC is offering some should be tried again. temporary relief for York's less than 20 minutes is none other than the York University Express

One member of the York community is tired of counting buses destined for "GARAGE" pass through our frozen fields and parking lots.

"I got involved basically as a frustrated commuter," explained environmental studies student Simon Owens who, not surprisingly, is a downtowner. "So many things are wrong with the routing and planning of transportation services at York.'

Owens decided he would try to persuade the York administration that with declining enrolment and higher gas prices, it was in the university's interest to improve bus services. "My argument was that you can't abdicate responsibility for this service," he said.

The office of Vice-President of

University Services W.W. Small was prompted to respond. It now recognized that severe overcrowding takes place on the York 106 service which connects the campus with the Spadina line at Wilson station, notably during the morning and afternoon rush hours. Many of the buses would leave the Wilson station full with the result that those wishing to board at intermediate stops were now unable to do so.

Small's office noticed a reference to the idea of express buses included in The Joint Metro/TTC Transit Policy Committee's report Transitin the 1980's: A New Direction which had been published in September. While express services had been tried before, for instance from the Scarborough Town Centre to downtown, and failed, the committee stated they

"It struck me that York frustrated and weary commuters. represented almost precisely the Whisking passengers non-stop kind of area in which people wish from the Wilson subway station to move from point A to point B to the foot of the Ross Building in with no interest in the area in between," said Peter Wood, of Small's office.

Owens and Wood were now determined to convince the TTC that the 106 York University bus route could provide an ideal case for testing the proposal as, at certain times during the day, full loads were generated at either end of the route, without the possibility of filling the buses along the way.

Owens proceeded to make a submission to the Joint Metro/TTC Transit Policy Committee, where he brought attention to the "inadequacies of the bus service at the university, and its implications for the residents of Downsview as a whole.'

As a result of these efforts, the additional bus service began operating on February 25 and is scheduled to run on a trial basis until April 3.

Owens is disappointed with the lack of support the issue has received from the CYSF. "The student government should be involved," he said. "Perhaps there exists a bias. A lot of people involved in student government are residents of the campus and are not as aware of community problems.'

There are still improvements to be made to the existing services. "The TTC should be looking at improving bus services skirting around the campus to see if they could come in closer to the buildings," Owens suggests. He also notes the frequency of "out of service" buses which end up on campus after 5 p.m. "The administration should be on top of route planning. More attention should be paid to schedules, etc., for the bus service to be effective."



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