

Toronto Transit Consultation Meetings

June 21, 2016

Highlights Report

This concise Highlights Report has been prepared to provide the City of Toronto, TTC, Waterfront Toronto and Metrolinx with a snapshot of the feedback captured at the public meeting held on June 21, 2016. A more detailed report of the feedback captured during this phase of consultations will be prepared in the coming days.

Introduction

On June 21, 2016 the City of Toronto hosted a public meeting on four key transit projects currently being planned. The meeting was held at City Hall – Council Chambers.

The public meeting presented the various transit projects being studied as part of a network approach to transit planning including:

SmartTrack and GO Regional Express Rail (RER): Present the integration of SmartTrack and GO Regional Express Rail to improve rapid transit service on three GO corridors in Toronto.

Relief Line: Present results of the evaluation of alignment options

Waterfront Transit Reset: Present preliminary transit concepts and their associated evaluation framework.

Scarborough Transit Planning: Present the evaluation of options for the Scarborough Subway Extension and LRT connecting Kennedy Station and the University of Toronto.

The meeting featured a series of panels and interactive feedback activities on each project. Participants could freely move between display panels and activities at their own pace, and speak with project staff from the City, Waterfront Toronto, TTC and Metrolinx.

Following an overview presentation on Developing Toronto's Transit Network Plan given by John Livey (Deputy City Manager, City of Toronto) and Jennifer Keesmaat (Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, City of Toronto) at 5:30 PM, participants had the opportunity to ask questions of clarification as well as provide feedback.

Approximately 40 individuals attended the public meeting, including Councillors Gord Perks (Ward 14) and Janet Davis (Ward 31).

Highlights of Participant Feedback

Questions of Clarification

The discussion captured during the question and answer period following the overview presentation is summarized below. Questions are noted with a "Q", comments with "C" and answers with "A".

Q. The premise of social equity was mentioned during the presentation in reference to the Relief Line. The same premise should be applied in Scarborough. The removal of the SRT and station at Lawrence Avenue on the Scarborough Subway Extension will negatively impact local transit service in

Scarborough. I object to the idea of the subway being a driver for economic development in central Scarborough. The City should focus on improvements to the road system as a driver of economic development. An LRT on Eglinton Avenue East will cause congestion and drive away economic development.

A. You are right that higher order transit is not the only critical factor for success regarding economic development in Scarborough Centre. For that reason we initiated a transportation master plan in 2016 which includes a reconfiguration of the road network. The challenge is that the road network in Scarborough needs to be urbanized. There are a whole series of initiatives underway to support the creation of a vibrant urban area.

A station at Lawrence Avenue on the Scarborough Subway Extension was the most problematic in terms of its depth, based on initial investigations completed by the TTC. Normally subway stations are built on average four stories below ground level or less. This particular station would require digging 10 stories below ground level due to the local geography. A station at Lawrence Avenue on SmartTrack would be able to absorb ridership and become an effective part of the network.

C. The headway on the Lawrence Avenue buses is 1 to 8 minutes; the best SmartTrack can do is 8.6 minutes. Mathematically SmartTrack cannot service the Lawrence Station adequately. The problems associated with the depth of Lawrence Station are likely; however there is still a need to ensure transit equity for Scarborough, particularly on Lawrence Avenue and north of the 401.

Q. It is good to see the word “network” being used. The problem with a network approach is that it does not necessarily provide local service in order to provide through service. The three-stop Scarborough Subway Extension provided local service to bus connections at Lawrence Avenue, Ellesmere Road, and Sheppard Avenue. I would be happy to see the one-stop Scarborough Subway Extension built, however the network argument for connections to Lawrence Avenue, Ellesmere Road, and Sheppard Avenue are still valid. Are you planning to ensure that a station can be built at Lawrence Avenue in the future?

A. We recognize that we do have to keep those considerations in mind. The subway will be constructed to not preclude a future station at Lawrence Avenue.

At minimum the tunnel that would be built under Lawrence Avenue would be straight and flat. We are not recommending a rough in for a station at Lawrence; there are other things that can be done to support a station in the future. Keep in mind that it would require temporarily shutting down the subway in the future to build it.

Q. If SmartTrack is going to be useful to riders within the City of Toronto, service within Toronto should be included in the TTC fare. Have you considered the possibility of two different fare schemes for SmartTrack (e.g., co-fare, one fare)?

A. A key component of SmartTrack is fare integration with the TTC. We still need to examine a co-fare structure versus a one fare structure. That is the work that still needs to be undertaken.

C. If a person is traveling within the City of Toronto they should only pay one fare.

Q. Has there been any consideration of continuing the Eglinton LRT east to Malvern Town Centre?

A. At this time the recommendation is to identify a terminus at the University of Toronto Scarborough campus (UTSC), but to do it in a way that does not preclude an extension further north. It was anticipated that the Sheppard LRT and Eglinton LRT would share a terminus station and maintenance yard; the challenge is the uncertainty regarding the completion of the Sheppard LRT.

Q. How will the congestion created by the Eglinton LRT be addressed?

A. Impacts to traffic will be carefully reviewed and analyzed in the next phase of work. Once the analysis has been done, we will be proposing measures to mitigate any traffic impacts as necessary.

Q. I am delighted to see that rapid transit to UTSC is at least on the books. This talk of congestion is confusing, as from my experience, transit replaces congestion. What I see is the opportunity to improve the capacity of residents to access places like UTSC. I am concerned by the balance of projects being planned and the funding available to implement them. Given the limited resources available, how will projects be prioritized?

A. The question of financing and prioritization is being considered by Council. We expect to see provincial and federal contributions on the City's transit priorities; however the City will also need to provide some funding.

Next Steps

A more detailed report of all consultation activities will be made available after this phase of consultation. Comments were to be submitted by June 30, 2016 to ensure inclusion in this report.