

Coordinated Transit Consultation Meetings
SmartTrack, GO RER, Relief Line, Scarborough Subway Extension
June 24, 2015
Highlights Report

This concise Highlights Report has been prepared to provide the City of Toronto, TTC and Metrolinx with a snapshot of the feedback captured at the public meeting held on June 24, 2015. A more detailed report of the feedback captured during this phase of consultations will be prepared in the coming days.

Introduction

On Wednesday, June 24, 2015, the City of Toronto, City Planning Division (Transportation Planning), the TTC and Metrolinx, hosted a public meeting on four key transit projects currently being planned. The meeting was held at the Scarborough Civic Centre, 150 Borough Drive, Toronto.

The purpose of the public meeting varied by project:

SmartTrack: Introduce the SmartTrack concept and study process for the Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Study, and gather feedback on three conceptual alignments being studied in the Feasibility Study

GO Regional Express Rail (RER): Introduce the GO RER program in Toronto

Relief Line: Collect feedback on the results of potential station area evaluation and potential corridors

Scarborough Subway Extension: Collect feedback on preliminary analysis of potential corridors and potential alignments and station concepts

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, TTC and Metrolinx.

At 7:00 pm, an introductory presentation on coordinated network transit planning, with a focus on the Scarborough Subway Extension was given by Tim Laspa, Director of Transportation Planning for the City. After the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions of clarification as well as provide feedback.

Approximately 70 people attended the public meeting, including Deputy Mayor Glenn De Baeremaeker (Ward 38) and Councillor Chin Lee (Ward 41).

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”. Answers were provided by Tim Laspa, Director of Transportation Planning and Gary Carr, TTC Project Manager for the Scarborough Subway Extension.

Q: The SRT is in need of repair. How long can we continue to use it?

A: The SRT is nearing the end of its life, which is part of the reason that it is being replaced with a subway. The budget for the subway construction includes money for refurbishing the SRT vehicles. Assuming that we will not need to shut down the SRT, this money will be used to complete the extensive amount of work required to keep it going until 2023.

Q: When will we know the ridership levels for the different corridors? These will be important when choosing a corridor.

A: The ridership modeling is currently underway for all transit projects including SmartTrack and GO RER. Ridership numbers for the three short listed Scarborough corridors will help us to finalize the corridor evaluation and will be presented in the fall.

Q: Many of the Scarborough residents travel east-west and north, rather than downtown. Will there be any improvements or enhancements to the entire Scarborough transit network, particularly the bus system in addition to the Scarborough Subway Extension?

A: Yes – these are not the only projects. We have been reviewing the Official Plan’s Transportation Policies including a prioritization of 24 recognized rapid transit projects across the city that City – a number of which are found in the Scarborough area (information about these projects can be found at www.feelingcongested.ca).

We will also be working closely with the TTC to consider the surface transit connectivity to stations and how the local transit service (and other transit services along our borders) will connect in to the subway extension.

C: The only time we should be using the term ‘rapid transit’ is to refer to busses. Busses tend to travel faster than any other form of transit. All we simply need is more vehicles.

C: Many of the Scarborough Centre Station Alternatives do not include an exit on the side facing the Scarborough Civic Centre. This seems like an important destination and a station should have an exit facing the Civic Centre.

C: Just because the Sheppard LRT will be built, it should not mean that we will never have a subway running west along Sheppard. The station concept at McCowan and Sheppard should account for a possible future east-west alignment at Sheppard.

Q: Will the TTC and GO fares be integrated with SmartTrack?

A: We will be looking at fare integration as part of the ridership forecast – including the fare structure as it is today, the possibility of TTC fare on Go Transit, and possibly other options such as a co-fare or hybrid.

Q: Do we really need to have all three projects – Scarborough Subway Extension, Relief Line and SmartTrack – when perhaps they can be combined into one? For example, the subway storage yard for the Bloor-Danforth line has a close connection to the existing GO Corridor. Perhaps you could build a track from that storage yard to the GO corridor, which would take care of the

needs of the Relief Line. And in terms of the Scarborough Subway, perhaps you could have a spur line from SmartTrack over to the Scarborough Civic Centre, and use the money saved to extend it to the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus.

A: Our ongoing work will help us to understand how all three of these projects fit together and how the network could operate in the future. The updated transportation model will also help us understand the need for each. The projects are being studied in a coordinated way and will allow us to present aligned recommendations to City Council.

C: **In order to maximize the benefits of the Scarborough Subway Extension, perhaps we should move the GO station that is currently under renovation at Bellamy, over to Brimley, and have the subway line run from Kennedy, through Brimley (with a 4th station here) and over/up McCowan. That way you connect to GO, connect to the hospital and Scarborough Centre, all while reducing the extra costs that would be incurred with the Bellamy corridor.**

Q: **How many kilometres of track have been approved under the current budget for the Scarborough Subway Extension?**

A: The budget that was approved in 2013 was based on an assumption of 7.7 kilometres of track and three stations.

Q: **Is the ridership modelling taking into account ridership from Durham Region as well, or is it just limited to ridership within Toronto?**

A: We are including the entire Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area in the modeling, including York and Durham Regions.

Q: **Where would we find information about the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs)?**

A: A map of the NIAs is available on the website – scarboroughsubwayextension.ca/neighbourhood-improvement-areas.html.

Summary of Comments Provided in Interactive Sessions

Scarborough Subway Extension: Preliminary Corridor Analysis

The public feedback regarding the preliminary corridor analysis was mainly positive and concurred with the evaluation results thus far.

Overall, the majority of the feedback was in agreement that the SRT (Line 3) and Markham corridors should not be carried forward for further study due to capital costs and low development opportunities. No comments were made regarding Midland to Markham/Progress or Hydro and Brimley corridors.

Regarding the three short listed corridors that are proposed to be carried forward for further study (Midland to McCowan, McCowan and Bellamy), McCowan appeared to be the most preferred and Midland to McCowan and Bellamy received mixed reviews. Many disagreed with carrying forward the Bellamy corridor due to the added capital costs and lower population within the area but some liked the connection to the Eglinton GO station and that it would support both the Scarborough Town Centre and

Cedarbrae Mall. There were mixed reviews regarding the Midland to McCowan corridor. Some felt it would be too close to the proposed SmartTrack corridor and would not serve the hospital or local businesses whereas others felt the corridor was a good option as the capital costs would be low in comparison to other options. Most people favoured McCowan corridor because of the additional development potential, the proximity to the hospital and the Scarborough Town Centre and the potential increase in ridership.

Many were concerned about serving the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus and Centennial College and questioned how any of the options would improve access to the schools.

Scarborough Subway Extension: Potential Alignments and Station Concepts

Regarding alternative station concepts, Sheppard East station concept #4 (SE4) and Scarborough Centre Station Concept #7 (SC7) seemed to be the most preferred due to redevelopment opportunities in the nearby parking lot spaces and the distance from residential areas.

Next Steps

One more public meeting is scheduled during this phase of consultations, after which a more detailed report of all consultation activities will be made available. Comments must be submitted by July 3, 2015 to ensure inclusion in this report.

SmartTrack: Feedback received will inform the Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Study. Draft results of the study will be presented and consulted on in September, 2015.

Relief Line: The project team will use the feedback received to inform the evaluation of potential corridors. The preferred corridor, along with potential alignments and station locations, will be presented and consulted on in September, 2015.

Scarborough Subway Extension: The project team will use the feedback received to help finalize the evaluation of the potential corridors and evaluate the potential alignments and station concepts. The preferred corridor, alignment and station concepts will be presented and consulted on in September, 2015.