

Coordinated Transit Consultation Meetings
SmartTrack, GO RER, Relief Line, Scarborough Subway Extension
June 15, 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 15, 2015. A more detailed report of the feedback captured during this phase of consultations will be prepared in the coming days.

Introduction

On Monday, June 15, 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 Estonian House, 958 Broadview Ave., 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.

An introductory presentation on coordinated network transit planning, with a focus on the Relief Line project, was given by Stella Gustavson, Program Manager, Transit Implementation Unit, Transportation Planning, City Planning Division at 7:00 PM. Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions of clarification as well as provide feedback.

Approximately 65 people attended the public meeting, including Councillors Mary Fragedakis (Ward 29), Paula Fletcher (Ward 30) and Janet Davis (Ward 31) and MPP Peter Tabuns (Toronto-Danforth).

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 Stella Gustavson, Paul Millett (Chief Project Engineer, Engineering, Construction and Expansion Section, TTC) as well as Tim Läspä (Director, Transportation Planning, City of Toronto).

- Q. Is the Relief Line going to be built at the same elevation as the existing subways so that the line could be made into a big loop, and there would not be the need for a transfer from the Bloor-Danforth?**
- A.** We looked at the possibility of running every other Bloor-Danforth train straight downtown via the Relief Line. This idea was abandoned because this approach cuts the capacity of the Bloor-Danforth line by half to the west of the diversion, and at half the capacity, it will not support the demand.
- Q. With any of the four potential corridors, particularly "A" and "C," what assumptions are you making about the continuation of service on the Dundas and King streetcar routes?**
- A:** The assumption is that the streetcar service will remain and subway service will complement the streetcar network. We have no intent of cancelling existing streetcar routes.
- Q. Does Corridor "A" or "C" go through Riverdale Park with a train? Does it run under Broadview, does it come out into the park at some point?**
- A:** We don't have an alignment yet, we only have corridors. But we are not planning an at-grade or elevated service, so trains would not be going through Riverdale Park.
- Q. Why was Union Station dismissed by the community as a connection point? Clearly it is congested, but why are we not building relief there?**
- A:** It was not just from community input that Union Station was dismissed, but also the technical analysis. Two things tell us that the main destination downtown is in fact blocks north of Union Station. First, employment statistics show that the highest concentrations of jobs are in the Bay and King area. Second, data on where people get on and off of the Yonge-University line shows us that most people are getting off before getting to Union Station and very few people stay on past King. This means that for relieving congestion, Union isn't a "bad" option, but it's not as strong as King or Queen.
- Q. In 2011, Metrolinx commissioned a study that looked at alleviating congestion at Union Station capacity by 2031, and one method they looked at was a secondary station around Bathurst and Front. If they were to proceed with this secondary station option, wouldn't the Relief Line need to get to Bathurst and Front. Would any of these potential corridors meet this need?**
- A.** We are working closely with Metrolinx on this question. Metrolinx has advised that they have the capacity issue resolved and have another solution for a satellite station.
- Q. As for the streetcar service along King and Queen, you might want to look into mining those stations so as to minimize the open-cut and this way reserve the Queen and King alignment and Streetcar service during construction.**
- A.** Once the preferred corridor is selected, the alignment and station options will be studied further to decide upon a preferred alignment. Construction method, which could include mining, will be determined after a preferred alignment has been identified.
- Q. There are serious, well-known geo-technical problems downtown, including the crossing of the Don River around King and Queen. Has there been enough time given for the proper evaluation of these problems?**

- A. There has been considerable work done recently with the West Donlands that adds to the amount of historical geotechnical information. We are planning on drilling bore-holes to fill in some information gaps. We are well-aware of the geo-technical issues.
- C. **We would like access to that geo-technical information so we can provide better comments.**
- C. **While there has already been a strong preference for a Unilever site station shown, and the Unilever lands are always mentioned, it is never mentioned how important the Portlands development is for the future. We should not focus only on the Unilever lands when we talk about that station, but it is really the station for east Portlands. There are 50 years of development down there.**
- Q. **Given that the Scarborough subway and SmartTrack are going north of Danforth with a lot of capacity for years to come, would it make more sense, rather than extend the Relief Line north of the Danforth, to provide better transfer points to SmartTrack and the Scarborough Subway from the Bloor Danforth Subway?**
- A. We are protecting for a northern extension of the Relief Line, but this phase of planning is focused on relieving existing crowding on the Yonge Subway and at Bloor-Yonge Station.
- Q. **Other cities use express subways. If we are going to tunnel-bore the Relief Line, can we bore for four tracks (an express and the station stop service)? A majority of people will be going straight from the Danforth to the downtown core, additionally, any time there is a delay in one direction, you could also move the trains over onto another track to get around.**
- A. That work is a little further on in our study when we will be looking at tunnel-boring technologies in more detail and deciding specific alignment and station stops.

Summary of Comments Provided in Interactive Sessions

SmartTrack: Conceptual Alignments

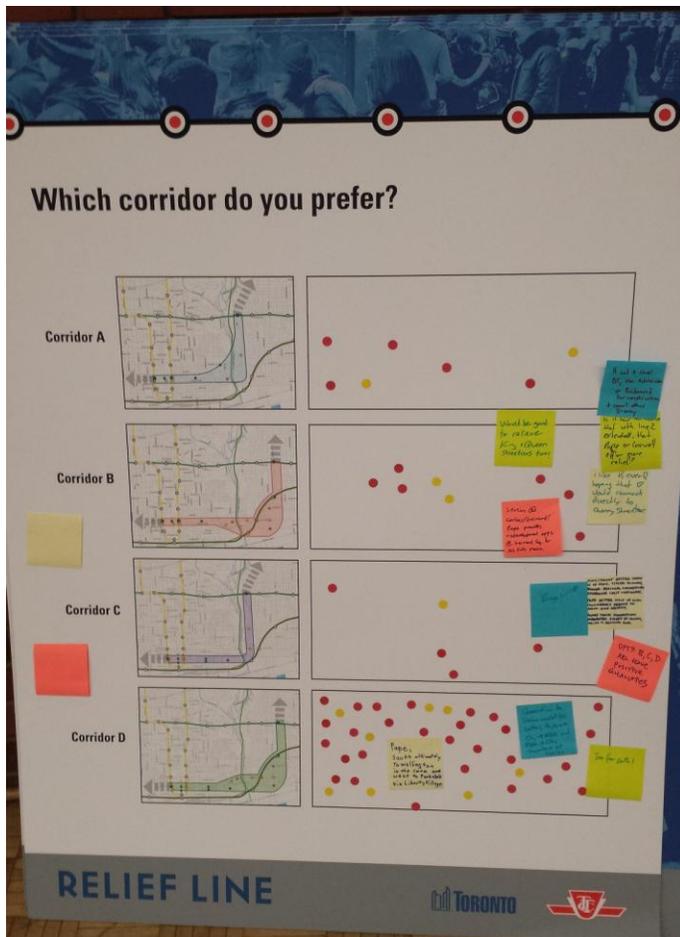
Meeting participants generally expressed support for Eglinton Crosstown LRT Phase 2 to the Mississauga Airport Corporate Centre (MACC) and Pearson Airport for its lower cost and better local service and network connectivity. Some participants expressed a desire for modifications to the ECLRT Phase 2 design to be considered, such as removing stations or putting portions of the line underground in order to shorten the duration of the trip to MACC and Pearson.

In addition, some participants indicated a desire for a lower cost rapid transit access to Pearson than the Union Pearson Express.

Relief Line

Through a dotmocracy exercise at the meeting, most of the meeting participants generally agreed with the results of the evaluation of potential station locations.

A majority of the meeting participants indicated a preference for Corridor D, as depicted on the meeting dotmocracy exercise in the photo below.



Scarborough Subway Extension

Participants were interested in gaining further information on the project, and requested staff to go over the merits of each of the short listed corridors. When informed about SmartTrack, some questioned the *need* for two planned transit lines to be within such close proximity to one another. One participant was curious about the evaluation criteria used to shortlist corridors and whether there was any consideration given to natural features and how the subway could traverse watercourses within the study area. Overall, many people preferred the McCowan corridor due to its centrality, straight-line path, and its connection to the Scarborough Hospital, however, many of those same people were concerned about the budgeted cost of constructing a subway.

Next Steps

Six more public meetings are 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.