



# Toronto Transit Commission Transit City Open Houses

## Etobicoke-Finch West LRT July-August Summary Results Report

Prepared by Lura Consulting  
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This summary report was prepared by LURA Consulting. LURA is providing third-party open house hosting services as part of the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and the City of Toronto Transit City projects. This summary captures the key comments submitted during the noted open houses. It is not intended as a verbatim transcript. If you have any questions or comments regarding the summary, please contact:

**Rick Holli**

Etobicoke-Finch West LRT Project Manager

TTC

Phone: 416-393-7847

[rick.holli@ttc.ca](mailto:rick.holli@ttc.ca)

**Jean-Louis Gaudet**

Consultant

Lura Consulting

Phone: 416-410-3888 x 5

[jgaudet@lura.ca](mailto:jgaudet@lura.ca)





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## Introduction

As part of the Transit City process, the City of Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) are proposing ways to significantly improve transit service by building a Light Rapid Transit (LRT) line on Finch Avenue West between Yonge Street and the Highway 27 area.

Three public open houses were held in July and August 2008 as part of the first series of City LRT open houses. The purpose of the open house was to share information about the Etobicoke-Finch West Transit project with the community and to gather feedback on preliminary project plans. The details and participation in the open houses are provided in the table below.

Etobicoke-Finch West LRT Open Houses Summary			
Date	Tuesday, July 29, 2008	Wednesday, August 6, 2008	Thursday, August 7, 2008
Location	6:30pm - 9:00pm North York Memorial Community Hall 5110 Yonge Street	6:30pm to 9:00pm Jane-Finch Mall 1911 Finch Avenue West	6:30pm to 9:00pm Elmbank Community Centre 10 Rampart Rd
# of participants (signed-in)	92	98	56
# of comment forms received	14	21	13

Each open house included 39 detailed display boards, a Frequently Asked Questions handout (both available for download on the project web page at [www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/etobicoke\\_finch\\_w\\_lrt](http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/etobicoke_finch_w_lrt)), a continuous-loop slide show with voice over, and an open invitation to ask questions and discuss the plan with the many project team members present.

Participants were invited to write down their ideas and opinions on comment forms and submit them at the registration table. In addition to the comment forms, project team members and Lura staff also recorded participant comments on clip boards.

The public is also able to provide comments online or via telephone. Up to August 20th the TTC also received 76 comments via email and telephone, many of which were questions and/or requests to be added to the mailing list.

This report summarizes all comments received through the open houses and other communication channels.

## Comment Summary

A summary of the key issues and comments raised are presented below, with detailed comments provided in the Appendix.

- Overwhelmingly general support for the new LRT on Finch.
- Considerable amount of concern over the large distances between stops, especially for elderly, handicapped and women at night.
- Concerns over the raised curb, which restricts left turns and forces U-turns.
- Concern about congestion caused by the project construction or on-going.

- Interest in the use of hydro-corridors as an alternative to on street transit and/or bike paths.
- Support for safe bike lanes and storage.
- Preference for underground connections to subway because it reduces the need for stairs and provides shelter from winter weather conditions.
- Questions concerning the timing and phasing of construction, and funding of the project.
- Assorted questions and comments relating to other transit issues.

## Appendix – Aggregated Comments

A summary of all aggregated comments are presented below. They are grouped by topic and type of comment. A number in brackets is used to count duplicate comments received.

### Suggestions

#### *Stop Placement*

- Put a stop between Westmore & Martin Grove, because many residents live there.
- Consider additional stop between Albion and Kipling, because there is a large senior population on Silverstone using the existing bus stop.
- Need more stops west of Kipling for residents.
- The wide stop spacing is appropriate.
- There seems to be a stop missing at Bathurst & Finch.
- A Senlac stop should serve the Willowdale Middle Schol
- There should be a stop between Finchurst Drive and Edithvale Drive for elderly people transferring to the bus going north at Senlac Rd /Grantbrook St.

#### *Alignment / Routing / Design*

- Underground connections to subway are preferred because it reduces the need for stairs and protect people from winter weather conditions. (4)
- Use the hydro corridors rather than Finch Ave. (4)
- Suggest routing south onto the hydro-corridor at Tamarisk Park to Humber College Blvd. and go along Humber College Blvd. to serve the hospital and the college.
- Consider a connection to Pearson Airport. (3)
- Good idea to connect with Woodbine Live. Suggestion that the developer help pay for a terminal/connection.
- Extend to Humber College Blvd. (3)
- Suggested option: turn west on Albion Rd. from Finch, and continue to Hwy 27 and Albion then turn south onto Hwy 27 to Humber College.
- Passing under the Hwy 400 and railway tracks is preferred.
- Consider an elevated LRT system, similar to new systems in India.
- Extend the LRT to where Finch and Steeles meet.
- Connect to GO transit from Brampton. (2)
- Consider a connection to the Sheppard Line.
- Reconfigure median islands at Dufferin on north side of Finch
- Continue the LRT east of Yonge St.
- Signalized intermediate intersections should cross the streetcar tracks to minimize inconvenience.
- Use support for CPR bridge when building tracks underneath railway and temporarily close off the 400 bridge because no connection underground would be made in order to build a tunnel underneath the road to by-pass either bridge.
- Bathurst & Finch: 400 exit bring cars traveling east, turning left (north) on Bathurst – expand & provide a double north turning lane (boulevard is there).

### *Finch Station Design*

- Continue the LRT service into Finch Station.
- Support for options 2, 3 & 4.
- Option 1A at Finch West station at Keele St is preferred.
- Reduce walking time to Yonge subway. (2)
- Disqualify options that require transfers through street entrances because they are not conducive to increasing ridership.
- Go underground or use bus bay. If bus bay is used, bus-LRT relationship will need to be carefully managed. If underground, timing of first/last LRT vs subway could be complicated.

### *Bicycles*

- Bike lanes are imperative. (4)
- Put the bike lanes on the sidewalk side of the curb. Put trees between the road and the bike path, for increased safety.
- Put cycle lane outside of vehicle lanes.
- Provide safe cut-throughs at side streets.(2)
- Provide bike storage/locking stations, preferably sheltered and with surveillance. Intermodal connections are key. (2)
- Bicyclist safety should be a high priority.
- Put a curb between bike lane and cars.
- Put removable bollards between bike car lanes like in Montreal.
- Consider a bike lane between Dufferin & York University.
- The bike route in the Hydro-corridor is best with access down to Wilmington.
- Consider a route along West Don St. Bernard's Convalescent Home.
- Raised platforms are a barrier for bicycles.
- Concerned the new right of way might interfere with existing popular North -South bike routes. In particular the Senlac-Grantbrook route.

### *Open House / Communications Approach*

- Messages need to be provided in the popular languages.
- Food should be provided.
- Provide reusable cups for water.
- Make the project information specifics more accessible.

### *Other*

- There should be parking lots for commuters, specifically close to Hwy 400, with the LRT connection to Keele and on the west end too. (3)
- Suggest an independent power supply for this LRT (e.g. wind power, solar panels).
- Keep a bus going along with LRT in between but not as frequent as LRT to make all of the usual local stops that the LRT will be cutting out.
- Design streetscape enhancements all along the route, especially in the Jane & Finch area.
- Provide "next train" timing indicators.
- Provide train tracking via the Internet.
- Plant trees along the road.
- Provide washrooms at major stops.
- Ensure clear signage, especially at LRT intersections with stations.

- Consider more frequent single trains rather than less frequent double trains.
- This project should be run by a new smaller company other than the TTC in order to provide better service.
- Let residents know about the construction phasing.
- The section between Yonge St. and Keele St. should be built first to support this heavily populated corridor.

## Concerns

### *Stop Placement*

- Stops are too far apart causing long walks. This is especially a problem for elderly, handicapped, women at night, and parents with young children. (15)
  - Especially between Yonge and Edithville.
- The larger distances will cause more people to use Wheel-Trans. (2)

### *Traffic Issues*

- Concerns over the raised curb which restricts left turns and forces U-turns. (10)
  - Lost business because of inconvenience.
  - Frequent inconvenience to residents.(2)
  - Will cause more traffic line-ups.
  - Cause more use of side streets.
  - Hamper emergency vehicles.
  - Specifically Glenborough Park Cres.
- Drivers are likely to make increase use of side streets to avoid U-turns. This could be a safety concern on streets with schools.
- Concern about congestion: (6)
  - Specifically between HWY 400 and Islington Rd.
  - During construction (2)
- Potential increase in accidents caused by U-turns at intersections. (2)

### *Other*

- Concern about tax increase. (4)
- Cost is too high.(3)
- Dedicated bus lanes would be preferred (3).
- Trains are prone to back-ups along the line from just one break-down. (3)
- Worried about any possible expropriations.
- Aesthetic of wires would be ugly. (2)
- Concern about safety for accessing the center platform.
- Concerns about increasing cost of TTC fares.
- General disapproval of LRT on Finch. (2)
- Finch collapsed in the past. Don't want it to happen again.
- Protect conservation areas.
- Concerned about the safety of J-walkers.
- Don't want to see bus drivers laid-off.
- Worried about snow removal.
- Concerned about LRT noise and ground rumble.
- Concerned about the elimination of buses.

## General Support

- General approval of the plan and a desire to see it happen. (20)
- Appreciate stops reaching Humber College.
- Look forward to future communication and project additions.
- Encourage the TTC and City to push through with current plans and not give in to auto-lobbies.
- Volunteer offers to help project team.
- Like the low entrance height from platform.

## Other Comments

- Seems roadways are narrower on Finch than Sheppard LRT.
- Don't replicate Calgary's mistakes.
- This should have been done 20 years ago.
- Electric power is good for the environment. (2)
- There is traffic and Keele and Finch at 12pm.
- I love the idea of connection the different lines.
- This line will improve Dufferin and Finch intersection.

## Questions

- What is the construction schedule? When will the first LRT line be open? (10)
- Do you have the money to implement?
- How much will this cost? (4)
- Not clear why LRT is better than buses on a dedicated lane? (3)
- Why is it called "Etobicoke-Finch West" i.e. why include "Etobicoke" compared to the names of other lines? (2)
- What will be the hours of operation? (2)
- How will the system deal with snow? (2)
- How will the system deal with the slope on Bathurst? (2)
- Will the platforms have shelters?
- Will a noise barrier fence be erected for properties that back onto the road?
- Is there a minimum standard dimension for street widths etc?
- Will there be an added ride cost when travelling over the city border?
- Will this include new sewers for the likely increased development?
- How will bike racks work on LRT?
- Are there studies showing the economic impact on businesses?
- Is there space for the additional lanes? (4)
- Are LRT's safe?
- Will they have a driver?
- Can greenspace be maintained above the LRT power lines in some way?
- At MacTier: If sidewalks are rerouted (aerially?) at the underpass, would enough space in street width be available?
- What provisions are being left open for an eastward extension from Finch Station in the future
- How and when will snow be removed from the bike lanes?
- What will happen to other bus lines that bring people to Finch station?

- How will service differ from Spadina?
- Could you give a comparison of sound and vibrations compared to existing street cars?
- Will there be an interim service during construction?
- Where will the trains be stored?
- Do you do traffic studies?
- Will lanes be lost on Finch?
- What is “SRT”?
- If boarding at all doors, how is the fair paid?
- How fast will it go? What are the travel times?
- What other cities use the same LRT design?
- What is an LRT?

### Other Transit Issues

- Subways are better. (6)
- Change existing service on Albion Rd to run from Wilson and/or York Mills.
- Bus #108 is very busy. 7100 count seems very low - it serves a very dense low-income area.
- Signage at Yonge-Bloor is confusing.
- Why is Sheppard West not proceeding with higher-order transit?
- Opposed to bike lanes on hydro-field because it will provide a get-away route for thieves who break in to adjacent homes.
- There is a public amenity opportunity at Wilmington Ave. and G. Ross Lord Dam.
- Would like connection of Sheppard line to Downsview Station. (2)
- Link to other BRT from the west.
- Aim to create youth jobs in the construction process.
- Food kiosks in the subway should reflect the diversity of the community, i.e. a place to buy roti, samosas, patties, jerk chicken, etc.

Note: some street and location references may be misspelt because of unclear handwriting.