



## **Waterfront West Streetcars Environmental Assessment**

Public Information Centre #3

January 24, 2008

Queen Elizabeth Building  
Fountain Room, Exhibition Place  
200 Princes' Boulevard  
6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

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### **SUMMARY NOTES**

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#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The following persons attended:

#### **ATTENDANCE:**

41 individuals signed-in and 45 attended.

#### **City of Toronto/TTC Project Team**

- Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone
- Councillor Gord Perks
- Chris Bishop, TTC
- Richard Nusink, TTC
- Mary-Ann George, TTC
- Jim Sinikas, TTC
- Nigel Tahair, Transportation Planning, City of Toronto
- David Nagler- Public Consultation Unit, City of Toronto
- John Kelly – Transportation Services, City of Toronto
- Karl van Kessel, Gartner Lee Ltd.
- Terry Wallace, LEA
- Vivian Leung, LEA
- Adrienne Long, Earth Tech

## 1.1 Notification

On December 20, 2007, notices were mailed and/or e-mailed to the project mailing list (312 total) On January 7, 2008, 24,989 notices were distributed via Canada Post to all properties in the study areas for the Waterfront West Streetcars and Union Station to Exhibition Place EAs. Public notification was also placed in NOW magazine on January 10 and January 17, 2008.

## 2.0 Handout Package

The handout package consisted of colour maps of the proposed routes between Dufferin and Roncesvalles, a list of Frequently Asked Questions, a description of the route options and a comment sheet.

## 3.0 Welcoming Remarks and Overview

**David Nagler** opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. He introduced City Councillor **Gord Perks** and Deputy Mayor **Joe Pantalone** and the project team.

**David Nagler** explained that his role is to facilitate communication between the project staff and the public. The meeting handouts will be posted on the City's website along with the presentation from the meetings. He asked those in attendance to share the information with their neighbours and/or group members. It is important that community members fill out the comment sheet and submit it by February 22, 2008. He said community members were welcome to contact him by email or phone if they had questions.

## 4.0 Presentation

The following is a summary of the presentation given by **Chris Bishop, Karl van Kessel** and **Terry Wallace**.

**Chris Bishop** said since the last PIC, the project team responded to comments from the public, had discussions with City councillors and received input from other stakeholders. The project team developed new potential routes from Dufferin to Roncesvalles based on feedback from the Parkdale community. He noted that the meeting presentation includes an overview of three related studies, including the Union Station to Exhibition Place Class EA.

The three projects discussed were:

- EA Modification Project (Exhibition Place to Dufferin Street)
- Municipal Class EA Project (Dufferin Street to Roncesvalles Avenue).
- Municipal Class EA (Union Station to Exhibition Place)

For the EA modification (Exhibition to Dufferin) and the Dufferin to Roncesvalles EA, the presentation covered the purpose, objectives, schedule, evaluation methodology, process, evaluation of alternative routes, next steps and participation options. It included colour maps and forecasts of ridership.

For the Union Station to Exhibition Place Class EA, the presentation covered purpose, objectives, schedule, evaluation approach including the recommended solution (streetcar in a dedicated right-of way along Bremner Blvd and Fort York Blvd) next steps and participation options.

The slides of the presentation are posted on the project website – [www.toronto.ca/involved](http://www.toronto.ca/involved)

## 5.0 Questions and Discussion

The following summarizes questions, comments, and answers from the meeting.

Q1: **Community member** asked why road widening is being considered in evaluations when the city is aiming to reduce carbon emissions by 80%. Other transit projects are getting rid of roads as transit should be able to carry more people than roads do.

A1: **Karl van Kessel** said that the EA process is entrenched with choice. We want to ensure transit is the right choice and that is why other alternatives such as HOV lanes and road widening were included for review, though not selected.

Q2: **Community member** said they feared that the EA processes are not working. It is a very complex area and the EA is trying to do too much. According to the Western Waterfront LRT EA from the early 1990's, it would not save travel time to extend the existing Harbourfront LRT to South Etobicoke and a second transit line will be required. It suggested a third EA, which was not done. By trying to serve the Harbourfront/waterfront area and trying to create a direct line from South Etobicoke to downtown you are mixing goals. A proper corridor study is needed of everything south of Queen.

A: Comment noted.

A2: **David Nagler** asked Chris Bishop to explain what the travel time savings could be for a Waterfront West route from Roncesvalles to Union Station compared to the existing King Street service.

**Chris Bishop** said the former 1992-1993 EA did not deal with the Dufferin to Roncesvalles section. Since the WWLRT 1992-93 EA, there have been significant changes to streetcar route and the end of the line is now located behind the National Trade Centre in the Exhibition Grounds.

At one time, travel time might have been comparable between King St/Queen St. streetcar and a Waterfront West line in a reserved Right of Way. However, the travel time through the area on King and Queen has increased since 1993. The travel time savings will be up to twelve minutes with a new Waterfront West route from Roncesvalles to Union Station and the service reliability will be much higher. The Bremner/Fort York Blvd corridor for the Union Station to Exhibition line is intended to address the section of the 1993 EA that indicates another line would be required.

C3: **Community member** said they were unsure if the focus for Union Station to Exhibition was on serving the existing customer base or to helping people in new developments. I fear it is the latter. I think it will be compounded when you get higher capacity new streetcars.

A3: Comment noted.

Q4: **Community member** asked about the Union to Exhibition Place EA corridor selection and why Front Street, Bremner/Fort York are included, but there was no examination of a direct route through the rail corridor at the rail level.

A3 and A4: **Jim Sinikas** said the primary purpose of the Union Station to Exhibition Place EA is to serve the developments within the Fort York/Railway Land neighbourhoods. We want to make the new route as convenient as possible by placing it in the centre of these developments. A transit facility in the Bremner/Fort York Blvd corridor would be in the middle of these

neighbourhoods . The recommended corridor (Bremner/Fort York) would provide transit users to and from the Railway Lands and Fort York Neighbourhoods the most convenient access and shortest walking distance to transit.

Q5: **Community member** said in the preference for the Bremner corridor, you said it had better connectivity with the existing Union loop. They asked if that included the work that would have to be done to expand the Union loop.

A5: **Jim Sinikas** said the Union loop has to be expanded. It is a very small loop and has capacity problems. It has to be expanded to provide additional capacity for proposed new transit services to serve the East Bayfront and the Portlands to the east and new service to the west, including the Railway Lands and fort York neighbourhoods.

Q6: **Community member** said, regarding the CNE to Dufferin project, I want confirmation that route one does not absolutely require the replacement of the Dufferin Street bridge and that it could be rehabilitated and have tracks put on it.

A6: **Chris Bishop** replied that it would be possible to rehab the bridge.

Q7: **Community member** said the Official Plan states that the road system south of Parkdale will be reconfigured to free up more land for park purposes and to provide better connections between south Parkdale and the waterfront. I understand routes three and four to connect Dufferin to Roncesvalles would both include additions to the parkland, but they do not provide better connections. We need to look at the ramp system comprehensively. The transportation people need to engage in a public process with residents, and the Consultants undertaking the Western Waterfront Master Plan study. This would be the best approach. A7: **Chris Bishop** said what we have put forward is just one alternative to the reconfiguration of the roads. Other design options will be developed once the recommended option has been chosen. How that process happens and consultation with the public has to be decided in the future.

Q8: **Community member** asked why no cost information or ridership comparison information for the different options was provided.

A8: **Chris Bishop** said the transportation model cannot define small differences in ridership in a corridor that is this close together. It is only an estimate.

Q9: **Community member** asked if there were going to be any public meetings in the area about the Bremner Boulevard route.

A9: **Jim Sinikas** said tonight's meeting is the first public meeting for the Union Station to Exhibition Place study. We have conducted analysis to determine which corridor would better serve the Railway Lands and Fort York neighbourhoods. We are presenting it now for community review. We will take your comments into consideration in the next steps of the study.

C10: **Community member** said there has been no analysis for the Fort York extension. We need to look at the Spadina and Bathurst right of way that is already done. This is a broken EA and broken TTC. We do not have a proper Waterfront transit system; there are too many weak links. According to an earlier EA report, the 507 will be operate by Queen, Dufferin, the CNE and Union, the 513 will operate by Bathurst and Fort York, so the 511 coming down to the CNE will be cut in half. We are diluting our system. We want effective waterfront transit and this is not it. The Front Street option needs to be re-evaluated, including the section in the CNE. We need to look to transit, not cars.

A10: Comment noted.

Q11: **Community member** asked why, in option 3, there was no examination of continuing the Dufferin to Roncesvalles route along Lake Shore Blvd. to the foot of the Dufferin extension.

A11: **Chris Bishop** said that the question of going down to Ontario Place along Lake Shore Blvd. compared to using the existing Exhibition Place loop is what we are looking at in the EA amendment for connecting service to Dufferin St from the east.

The original approval in 1993 was the route you described along the Lake Shore Blvd. to Dufferin St through the north side of Ontario Place. However, the previous EA rejected going all the way along the Lake Shore to Roncesvalles. Since the original approval for a line to Dufferin St. there have been three major changes such that service ended up behind the National Trade Centre. We have selected the shorter option to connect to Dufferin Street using the existing Exhibition Place loop which did not exist in 1993 during that study.

Q12: **Community member** asked if there was any reasonable possibility of building an express streetcar line railway from Dufferin to Union Station.

A12: **Chris Bishop** said this would only be possible if the railway gave up their tracks and property. From discussions with CN and GO, this will not happen as there is no space available for us to do anything within that corridor from Dufferin to Union.

C13: **Community member** said they wished for the service from above the Ex to be on the north side of the track to serve Liberty Village, new condominiums, and the business district. A lot of environmental assessment has been done for the Front Street extension so there may be cost savings on the EA studies.

A13: Comment noted.

C14: **Community member** said a loop should be considered through the Ex, which would go through the grounds to the north side and returning by Ontario Place.

A14: Comment noted.

Q15: **Community member** said that specific information has been requested on noise from vibrations and expropriated properties, but this has not been provided and will only be provided late in the process. More input is needed from the community. I suggest that if you do not have 75% of input from people who live in the area you should declare this project a failure. The EA is too philosophical. I wonder who will pay for the restoration of the Dufferin Street bridge.

A15: **Chris Bishop** responded that the focus is on alignment and the ability to go across the bridge. The decision has to be made about whether to rehabilitate it or widen it and the processes behind those options. At this point we are not looking at going across one side or another, we are looking at going straight across the bridge.

Q16: **Community member** asked if temporary right of way, that only becomes effective at certain times, has been looked at versus a permanent right of way.

A16: **Chris Bishop** said no, we have not looked at temporary right of way. There is a requirement to have the reserved right of way at all times as it improves reliability and service.

C17: **Community member** asked that the service have the capacity to provide both express and local service. For example, in New York City, they have a third line.

A17: Comment noted.

Q18: **Community member** asked if the Lake Shore has been looked at under the Gardiner Expressway as if you go back and look at the Gardiner dismantling, the proposal is to have a ten lane highway on the Lake Shore that could be made to include a high speed rapid transit.

A18: **Jim Sinikas** said no, we have not looked at the Lake Shore under the Gardiner. There are no immediate plans to take down Gardiner so we cannot wait for that. We have to make plans to service today's demand.

C19: **Community member** said according to my conversations with the developer for City Place, they have never foreseen a rapid transit line down Fort York and Bremner because they felt there was sufficient service on the current routes. At the same time, if we put that service onto Fort York, it is going to loop services on the 509. I wonder how the TTC say this is the way to do it. They say there is not enough ridership on the waterfront, but people living there feel there is not enough service.

A19: Comments noted.

Q20: **Community member** asked if there was any way to estimate the financial costs of the different options for Dufferin to Roncesvalles.

A20: **Chris Bishop** said cost estimates of whether it is of high, medium or low cost have been included. The cost differences are not that far apart.

Q21: **Community member** asked if this was the only meeting to decide on the transit option for Union Station to Exhibition Place.

A21: **Karl van Kessel** said that the Municipal Class EA process involves four phases. We are in the second phase, the alternative solutions phase, which involves looking and focusing on different solutions to the problem. The next phase is comparing design concepts within a corridor for Union Station to Exhibition Place. We will review feedback from this meeting and at the next meeting we will evaluate routes within a recommended corridor. We will be seeking further public input along the way.

### **5.0 Closing Remarks**

**David Nagler** thanked everyone for attending. He advised residents to submit written comments by February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The meeting ended at 9:30 p.m.