

December 19, 2006

Ms. Ulli Watkiss
City Clerk
City of Toronto
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Dear Ms. Watkiss:

At its meeting on Wednesday, December 13, 2006, the Commission considered the attached report entitled, "Victoria Park Bus Terminal Replacement – Approval of Conceptual Design."

The Commission approved Recommendation Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 6, as listed below:

- "1. Approve the recommended design, a perimeter bus terminal concept (with bus entrance from Denton Avenue and bus exit onto Victoria Park Avenue) as the basis for the detailed design of the bus terminal replacement at Victoria Park Station at an estimated project cost of \$26 million for the base project;
2. Approve an increase in project funding from \$20 million to \$26 million as part of the 2007-2011 budget submission;
3. Authorize staff to undertake the design of the replacement bus terminal and related station changes at Victoria Park Station in accordance with the approved concept;
6. Forward this report to the Budget Advisory Committee for consideration in concert with the TTC proposed 2007-2011 Capital Program."

The Commission referred Recommendation No. 4 to the TTC Budget Committee and City Budget Advisory Committee for more work on a cost/benefit analysis; and further that staff be requested to prepare a briefing note on possible funding strategies including contributions from abutting and benefiting property owners.

The Commission struck out Recommendation No. 5 and replaced in lieu thereof the following:

- "5. That TTC and City staff be requested to coordinate the design and construction of connecting right-of-way, streetscape and security improvements, including the walkway to Crescent Town, consistent with the approved concept design and within the approved project funding."

The Commission also approved adding a Recommendation No. 7 to the report to read, as follows:

“7. That this report be forwarded to the General Manager – Transportation Services, City of Toronto for consideration in the development of their 2007-2010 Workplan.”

The foregoing is forwarded to the City Budget Advisory Committee for consideration in concert with the TTC proposed 2007-2011 Capital Program.

Sincerely,

Vincent Rodo
Secretary

Form Revised: February 2005
1-10

**TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION
REPORT NO.**

MEETING DATE: December 13, 2006

SUBJECT: VICTORIA PARK BUS TERMINAL REPLACEMENT –
APPROVAL OF CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Approve the recommended design, a perimeter bus terminal concept (with bus entrance from Denton Avenue and bus exit onto Victoria Park Avenue) as the basis for the detailed design of the bus terminal replacement at Victoria Park Station at an estimated project cost of \$ 26 million for the base project;
2. Approve an increase in project funding from \$20 million to \$26 million as part of the 2007 – 2011 budget submission;
3. Authorize staff to undertake the design of the replacement bus terminal and related station changes at Victoria Park Station in accordance with the approved concept;
4. Provide direction to staff on \$2.4 million in possible enhancements to the station beyond the \$26 million base budget as outlined in this report;
5. Request TTC and City staff to continue to co-ordinate the structural rehabilitation and architectural upgrades of the Bridge over Victoria Park Avenue with the approved concept design for the reconfiguration of Victoria Park Station provided that any upgrades to the bridge are at no cost to the TTC; and.
6. Forward this report to the Budget Advisory Committee for consideration in concert with the TTC proposed 2007-2011 Capital Program.

FUNDING

Funding in the amount of \$20 million for the design and reconstruction of the Victoria Park station bus terminal and commuter parking lot was included in the TTC's 2006-2010 Capital Program under Program 3.9 Building and Structures – Victoria Park Bus Terminal Replacement project as outlined on pages 899-901 (Category State of Good Repair/Safety) as approved by City Council on December 12, 2005.

Funds in the amount of \$21 million were included for this expenditure in the TTC proposed base 2007-2011 Capital Program, however this is insufficient to cover the \$26 million now required by this project and will require a funding increase of \$5.0 million to the base capital program.

It should be noted that the work to reconfigure Victoria Park Station is being undertaken through two projects: the base project as described above; and the Easier Access project which contributes an additional \$12 million in elevators and other components to make this station fully accessible. The funding for elevators and other components to make the station accessible is provided for through the Easier Access Phase 3 Project. The current estimate of \$12 million will be available through the funds designated for elevator installations at Victoria Park and anticipated savings from elevator installations in other stations. No funding adjustments to the Easier Access Phase 3 Project is required at this time.

An additional project identified as Victoria Park Bus Terminal Replacement – Additional is included below-the-line in the proposed 2007-2011 Capital Program with a cost of \$10 million; however these additional requirements will now require only \$2.4 million more for a total project requirement of \$28.4 million to do all the work at Victoria Park station.

BACKGROUND

Victoria Park Station sits partially within a hydro corridor, immediately south of the Dentonia Golf Course and parking lot. A group of apartment buildings lies to the north and east, adjacent to the east end of the station. A group of condominium towers sits on the south side of Denton Avenue. The station is connected to Crescent Town and the parkland on the west side of Victoria Park Avenue by a City of Toronto (“City”) pedestrian bridge (the “Bridge”). (See Appendix 1)

The station consists of a commuter parking lot, a side-platform station and a slotted six bay bus terminal constructed over top of portions of the station concourse and commuter parking lot. Bus access to the terminal is provided by a ramped driveway with its entrance and exit located off Denton Avenue, south of the station. Neither the subway platforms nor the bus terminal are currently accessible.

The 270 space Metropass commuter parking lot at Victoria Park Station is fully utilized. Demand for commuter parking at the station is such that commuters are parking on nearby residential streets and in retail parking lots surrounding the station. Therefore, maintaining parking spaces during project construction is a concern.

Victoria Park is an in-line station and, as such, in accordance with TTC standards, was not provided with an off-street PPUDO at the time it was built. As a result, passenger pick up and drop offs in the north and south bound lanes of Victoria Park Avenue and from within the adjacent golf course parking lot are creating problems. Waiting cars and taxis block the golf course parking lot entrance, screening oncoming traffic from view. This has led to a number of accidents. In an attempt to address safety concerns, the City has passed a bylaw that prohibits stopping along Victoria Park Avenue in front of the station and immediately south of the golf course entrance.

Five paths link the surrounding community to two station entrances. The Bridge across Victoria

Park leads to a set of stairs which in turn leads down to station concourse and then street level. A second path from Victoria Park Avenue follows the north perimeter of the commuter parking lot to an enclosed walkway at the south end of the station and the Albion entrance while a third path from Denton leads to the same walkway and entrance. A fourth path from Albion Road leads to the Albion Road entrance. The fifth pedestrian path, from Teesdale Avenue and the apartment buildings to the north east of the station, follows an elevated pedestrian walkway along the south edge of the Dentonia golf course parking lot to the main station entrance.

Staff recently carried out various structural inspections on the bus terminal deck structure which show that it is in poor structural condition and must be replaced.

The demolition of the existing bus terminal and the construction of a new fully accessible bus terminal are critical to making the station accessible and redeveloping the property to its highest and best use. City and TTC staff have worked over the past three years on the planning studies and the conceptual design of a bus terminal (and related station facility) that would result in a fully accessible station and a parcel of land suitable in size and configuration for future development. Preliminary traffic surveys and analysis were undertaken as part of the process. Community concerns were identified and resolved through public meetings held as part of the planning study and conceptual design processes. The City expects to complete a new secondary plan and related zoning by-laws for the terminal lands in early 2007.

On May 12, 2005 the Commission endorsed investigation of functional design concepts, construction staging options and the preparation of preliminary cost estimates for the reconstruction of the bus terminal in response to the structural condition of the existing facility and to maximize land development potential. The Commission approved a preliminary budget (\$20 million) for a replacement facility (excluding the cost to make the subway platforms and concourse fully accessible) as part of the 2006 capital budget and made provision for detailed design and construction in future years in the 2007 - 2011 budget cycle based on confirmation of project scope and cost estimates derived through the conceptual design process.

A consultant was retained to prepare a functional design for a fully accessible bus terminal and station and a replacement commuter parking lot at Victoria Park Station. The terms of reference emphasized urban design excellence and improvement of the pedestrian realm in the immediate vicinity of the station. A steering committee comprised of City and TTC staff (the "Steering Committee") was established to review and comment on proposed concepts from urban and transit planning perspectives. The conceptual design work is now complete: public input has been obtained, the Steering Committee has finished its work, the preferred design concept has been identified and the capital cost of the project has been confirmed. The base project (without enhancements and easier access elements) is estimated to cost \$26 million. Costs for accessibility related elements such as ramps and elevators are in addition to the \$26 million base project costs and are estimated at \$12 million. TTC and City staff support the recommended base concept for the station improvements. The recommended concept is in keeping with the current planning study for the station area and public response to the recommended approach has been favourable. The project is ready to proceed to detailed design. Approval of the station concept and an increase in the project budget of \$6 million to implement the base project scope is now required in order to proceed with demolition of the existing bus terminal and detailed design of the replacement facilities.

DISCUSSION

Existing Facilities

Victoria Park Bus Terminal is in need of structural rehabilitation. During the public consultation process the community expressed concerns about the existing station environment, accessibility and lack of urban design features, the location of the collector's booth with respect to the street and bus platforms, lighting and pedestrian safety. Therefore a major objective in redesigning the station has been to address these concerns and improve the pedestrian environment of the station.

The Teesdale Walkway delivers customers directly to the east end of the station. However, because there is no automatic entrance, passengers must walk the length of the station along an elevated walkway (fenced with chain link to protect them from errant golf balls) to the main station entrance on Victoria Park Avenue in order to enter the station.

The Victoria Park Avenue station entrance is not visible from the street. Curbs are missing and the sidewalk paving blends into the road paving encouraging cars and taxis to mount the sidewalk to pick up or drop off passengers. The existing station environment is not adequate from a pedestrian perspective. There is no sidewalk on the west side of Victoria Park and no at grade crossing for pedestrians in proximity to the station entrance. Consequently, TTC customers frequently cross the street at the entrance as the closest intersections to the north and south are remote from the station.

The urban spaces surrounding the station are more than 30 years old and generally in need of modernization to current TTC and City standards. Reaching the station and accessing the bus bays is very difficult for customers with mobility challenges due to the elevated nature of the station and the inaccessible entrances, pedestrian bridges and walkways. The placement of the bus terminal on an elevated deck at the approximate level of the subway platforms forces all riders transferring from bus to subway to go down to concourse level, across the concourse and then back up to platform level. The bus terminal would be more appropriately located were it to be approximately at grade, at the same elevation as the concourse, to avoid these down, across and up again pedestrian movements.

The commuter parking lot at Victoria Park serves the immediate community and is fully utilized. Based on origin/destination studies, commuters are unlikely to transfer to Warden or other commuter parking lots because most are destined downtown and will not drive east if their destination is west of Victoria Park. Maintaining parking spaces during construction and replacing parking spaces displaced by development is an important objective.

Recent passenger pick-up and drop-off surveys indicate that overall, there is the same level of activity and therefore the same need and demand for off-street PPUDO facilities at Victoria Park as at Warden Station (Warden, as a terminal station, was provided with a PPUDO and taxi stand at its inception). Victoria Park Avenue, particularly the northbound lanes, and the adjacent Dentonia Golf Course parking lot have been serving as informal PPUDO's and taxi stands.

Approximately 90-95% of pick-up and drop-off activity occurs on the Dentonia Golf Course parking lot or in the north bound lane of Victoria Park Avenue. This has led the City to put in place stopping/standing restrictions to respond to safety concerns and address the high incidence of accidents in front of the station.

Redevelopment Strategy

Emphasis has been placed on reconfiguring the station facilities to create a parcel of land for future high-density transit-oriented development. Following completion of the planning study currently underway and reconfiguration of the station facilities, staff intend to market the resultant commuter parking lands for redevelopment with the developer of the lands being responsible for replacing the commuter parking spaces within the development and/or the hydro corridor east of the station. The high utilization of the existing 270 space lot and the extent of parking on local streets when the lot is full requires the replacement of the existing spaces on a 1 for 1 basis as per Commission policy.

Design Concepts

The consultant developed two approaches to the redevelopment of Victoria Park into an accessible terminal and station (See Appendix 2):

- Option 1: On-grade perimeter bus terminal with bus entrance from Denton Avenue and bus exit to Victoria Park Avenue at a new signalized intersection and
- Option 2: On-grade island bus terminal with bus entrance and exit to and from Denton Avenue.

The options were assessed against the following criteria:

- Efficiency of bus operations and the bus-subway passenger transfer;
- Quality of the pedestrian connections between the bus terminal, subway platform and station entrances;
- Amount of land made available for commuter parking and future development;
- Resulting quality of the urban environment;
- Traffic impacts;
- Station legibility/accessibility; and
- Overall cost effectiveness.

Denton Avenue currently carries a relatively large amount of traffic including all bus movements to and from Victoria Park Avenue. Queues at Victoria Park are extensive at rush hour leading to delays to TTC buses. Improved bus operations in combination with the impact of future

development on bus access to and from the terminal were therefore important considerations in evaluating the two options.

Option 1 is preferred for the following reasons:

- Results in a larger parcel for development;
- Allows for a larger commuter parking lot in the interim, pending redevelopment;
- Results in more efficient bus operations;
- Alleviates existing congestion on Denton Avenue;
- Provides a more suitably shaped property for redevelopment; and
- Allows for a new pedestrian crossing on Victoria Park Avenue to correspond with the new main station entrance on the east side of Victoria Park Avenue.

Description of Recommended Station Concept

A recommended concept design (the base project) was developed by TTC Engineering Department based on Option 1. (See Appendices 2 & 3), the base project includes the following elements:

- Demolition of the existing bus terminal deck;
- Construction of a accessible 6 bus bay bus terminal at grade, on level with the station concourse;
- Making the station accessible, including the Bridge across Victoria Park;
- Improving the station pedestrian environment;
- Providing an at grade pedestrian crossing for Victoria Park Avenue at a signalized intersection;
- Widening of the Teesdale Walkway on the north side of the station leading to the Teesdale community;
- The addition of windows on the westbound subway platform overlooking the walkway/golf course;
- Providing a new, highly visible, accessible station entrance fronting on Victoria Park Avenue;
- Improving streetscape on both sides of Victoria Park Avenue in the vicinity of the station;

- Providing approximately 70 commuter parking spaces during construction and 200 commuter parking spaces upon project completion; and
- Providing an off street PPUDO on the east side of Victoria Park Avenue in addition to taxi facilities.

The above base station elements are considered to be the minimum improvements to the station necessary to replace the existing bus terminal with an accessible terminal; and to address community concerns. The base station concept can be implemented at a capital cost of \$26 million (excluding the cost to make the subway platforms and concourse accessible). This represents an increase in the proposed capital budget for this project of \$5 million.

In addition to the base project budget, enhancements to the station could be implemented at the same time as the recommended base station concept is constructed. These consist of the following components which are included as a recommended below-the-line project in the 2007 – 2011 capital budget:

- Additional streetscaping (\$0.6 million) consisting of additional trees, lighting and/or street furnishings;
- A new Teesdale automatic entrance located adjacent to the north subway platform at the east side of the station and opening directly onto the platform, to serve pedestrians north and east of the station (\$1.8 million).

The above enhancements total \$2.4 million and can be included in the base project budget at the direction of the Commission but are currently “below the line”. The proposed TTC 2007-2011 Capital Program identified these costs as being worth \$10 million, however based on more current information they have now been reassessed at a cost of \$2.4 million.

In consultation with the City and as part of the planning exercise for the station area, three categories of improvements to the station’s urban environment were identified as desirable to connect the station to the surrounding community and create a more inviting urban atmosphere around the station:

1. Improvements to be included in the capital cost of the TTC project and generally limited to the immediate station area on the east and west sides of Victoria Park Avenue (TTC base project);
2. Improvements to the pedestrian environment leading to the station, including the Bridge over Victoria Park Avenue and improved pedestrian connections to the Crescent Town and Teesdale communities (City responsibility); and
3. Improvements to Victoria Park Avenue south of the proposed TTC bus driveway to be funded by the future developer of the commuter parking lot lands, following construction of the new bus terminal (developer responsibility).

The improvements noted under Item 3 above can only be achieved if and when the commuter

parking lands are developed and consequently such improvements are not included in the Victoria Park Station base budget or in the list of possible enhancements.

The base station budget addresses only improvements made in the immediate vicinity of the TTC station (Item 1 above). It includes lay-bys to accommodate taxis, an off-street passenger pick-up and drop off facility, landscaping and a portion of sidewalk along the west side of Victoria Park Avenue. A pedestrian crosswalk will be provided at the station entrance in conjunction with a new signalized bus exit. Possible enhancements to the base budget include \$0.6 million in additional streetscaping that would further improve lighting, landscaping and hard surface treatments along the front of the station.

The general street improvements that are necessary to enhance pedestrian connections to the station (Item 2 above) should be funded by the City of Toronto and not the TTC. As an example, as part of the conceptual design process, the community and the Local Councillors sought improvements to the Bridge and associated stairs over Victoria Park Avenue to the Crescent Town development. It should be emphasized that the Bridge is not owned or maintained by the TTC. This rests with the City of Toronto. As a result, any capital improvements or upgrades to the Bridge should be undertaken by the City and not the TTC.

TTC staff, in consultation with the Local Councillor and the Chair, agreed to the following with respect to the proposed rehabilitation and upgrades to the Bridge planned by the City:

- City staff will proceed with cosmetic Bridge repairs in 2006 at an estimated cost of \$20,000 from existing City budgets.
- City staff will consider Bridge lighting upgrades in the short to medium term however lighting is maintained by Toronto Hydro and any upgrades are a Toronto Hydro responsibility.
- The City planned a \$1 million major rehabilitation of the Bridge for 2012 – 2016. City staff agreed to move this forward to tie-in with the TTC project.
- As part of the Bridge structural rehabilitation, the City will consider flooring improvements to upgrade the Bridge's aesthetics. It was made clear in the above noted discussions that this improvement is NOT a TTC budget issue and funding for the upgrade must be found within the City's Transportation Department's budget.
- The Bridge rehabilitation and the station reconfiguration will need to be co-ordinated between City and TTC staff due to the extensive interface between the two projects and the impact of Bridge rehabilitation on TTC passengers going to and from Victoria Park Station.
- The Bridge will have to be closed to the public for 2 – 3 months during rehabilitation. This means the Bridge rehabilitation project will have to provide for an interim pedestrian crossing at Victoria Park Avenue during the closure. The Bridge closure could result in the City project contributing to a number of cost elements currently included in the TTC base station project budget if it occurs in the same time frame as the TTC project.

- If Bridge flooring and/or lighting upgrades are required by the City and funds are available from non-TTC budget sources, the design of the upgrades will be incorporated into the bus terminal replacement project;
- Although this is a City bridge and this is not a standard TTC requirement, the scope of TTC's station project and related contract(s) will include a Passenger Assistance Alarm, intercom and CCTV in the Bridge (monitored by the station collector) owing to the fact that at least 95% of Bridge users are TTC passengers. As the Bridge is owned and maintained by the City, and despite the presence of DWA type facilities monitored by the TTC station collector, the responsibility for the Bridge (structure maintenance, cleaning snow clearing, insurance, liability, pedestrian safety, etc.) will remain with the City.

TTC staff will continue to work with the Local Councillor and City staff on the co-ordination of the Bridge and station projects.

Summary

After consultation with City staff, TTC staff and the Local Councillors and taking into consideration the concerns and wishes of the surrounding community expressed in various public meetings, Option 1 (the base project) is the preferred direction for replacement of the existing bus terminal and associated modifications to Victoria Park Station and is recommended for acceptance.

While the recommended concept represents a significant improvement to the quality of the TTC station environment, the TTC capital project only begins to address the needs of the station area. Various station enhancements could be implemented if funding over and above the base station budget is made available and/or if the City proceeds with certain improvements to the station area.

The improvements in the area surrounding the station (Item 2 above), while desirable, are not part of the TTC capital project and should be funded through the City budget process under the leadership of the Local Councillor while other improvements (Item 3 above) will be the responsibility of the developer of the commuter parking lands in the future.

JUSTIFICATION

The recommended concept provides the greatest benefit to both TTC and the surrounding community at the least cost. It will make the station fully accessible and it has the potential to increase ridership in the future through development of the commuter parking lot. The improvements to the station outlined in this report are required regardless of whether development of the land is successful in future.

December 13, 2006
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Attachments: Appendices 1 – 3

P:\ICR – Victoria Park Bus Terminal – December 13, 2006

Attachment