

# TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

**MEETING DATE:** October 23, 2008

**SUBJECT:** YONGE SUBWAY NORTHERLY EXTENSION –  
PROJECT STATUS AND FUTURE TTC INVOLVEMENT IN  
TRANSIT PROJECT ASSESSMENT/FUNCTIONAL PLANNING

## **ACTION ITEM**

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Authorize the Chief General Manager (or delegate) to publish a Notice of Study Commencement for the Yonge Subway Project under the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP), on behalf of the TTC and City, following Commission and City Council consideration of staff reports on this issue;
2. Confirm the TTC being a co-proponent of the Yonge Subway northerly extension project along with the City of Toronto and York Region;
3. Recommend that City Council confirm the City of Toronto as a co-proponent of the Yonge Subway northerly extension project and forward this recommendation directly to the October 29, 30, 2008 City Council meeting for consideration;
4. Confirm TTC staff, along with City of Toronto staff, participating in the necessary public consultation process for the project and that staff report back on public concerns about the project as required;
5. Approve sufficient funds in the amount of \$0.3 Million to allow the related work to proceed without interruption through April 2009, at which time it is expected that Provincial funding will be made available, subject to receiving budget and project commitment approval from City of Toronto Council through the 2009-2013 Capital Program budget process in December 2008;
6. Request staff to report back, following finalization of the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), on a comprehensive study on capacity improvements that are necessary to Yonge-Bloor Station (and other stations on the Yonge line south of Bloor) to respond to the passenger volumes projected in the RTP;

7. Confirm TTC staff proceeding with a Subway Rail Yard Needs Study (\$165,000) to identify the preferred options for the storage and maintenance of the future subway car fleet that will be necessary to support the Yonge Subway extension, ATO/ATC, and other possible initiatives that would impact the subway car fleet to 2030 noting that York Region is front ending the cost of this study;
8. Forward this report to the City of Toronto Council for funding approval in the amount of \$0.3 Million through the City's 2009 Capital budget process; and
9. Forward this report to Metrolinx and the Province for information and consideration in the Provincial 2009 budget preparation.

### **FUNDING**

The Yonge Subway North Subway project was included in the TTC's 2009-2013 Capital Program budget as outlined on pages 1559-1561; however, this project is presented below the line and can proceed only upon the confirmation of funding approval.

The cost of the functional planning and TPAP work carried out by York Region to date has been front ended by York Region at no cost to the TTC/City of Toronto. TTC staff costs to date to participate in the ongoing studies have been authorized as an unbudgeted expenditure and are expected to be recovered (in whole or in part) from Metrolinx. A total staff cost of \$0.3 Million is expected until April 2009 and approval of this expenditure is required pending the anticipated government funding for the project through the Spring 2009 Provincial budget process.

The cost of the Subway Rail Yard Needs Study (SRYNS) is estimated to be \$165,000 excluding TTC staff costs. Again, the cost of the SRYNS is being front ended by York Region.

### **BACKGROUND**

York Region is leading, at their expense, a functional planning study and a Transit Project Assessment Process (under the new Environmental Assessment Act Regulations for Transit Projects) for the extension of the Yonge Subway from Finch Avenue to Highway 7 (Richmond Hill Centre). The functional planning work to select the preferred alignment, station location and layout of surface station elements (entrances, bus terminals, commuter parking, passenger pick-up and drop-off, sub-stations, emergency exit buildings) has been ongoing for the past 12 months with input from City and TTC staff. Exhibits 1 and 2 outline the recommended concept and functional requirements for the Yonge Subway northerly extension based on the public input received to date at public consultation sessions led by York Region and located outside the City of Toronto.

York Region has taken the lead to initiate these studies as the extension of the Yonge Subway to Richmond Hill Centre/Highway 7 is an important component of York's long term rapid transit network including VIVA connections to the terminal station for their Highway 7 and Yonge Street VIVA services. As well, the Yonge Subway extension impacts York Region plans (now on hold) for bus rapid transit service in the Yonge Street corridor between Steeles Avenue and Highway 7.

TTC and City of Toronto staff have participated in the Yonge Subway functional planning and TPAP work to date as required but at the time this report was prepared, no formal public meetings had been held in the City of Toronto as the Yonge Subway project is not an official TTC/City expansion project and has not been identified as a TTC/City priority.

To date, the TTC/City has not identified the Yonge Subway northerly extension as a high priority in comparison to the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension (TYSSE) project or Transit City initiative for the following reasons:

- The Yonge Subway is approaching practical capacity south of Bloor Street. Without improvements to the capacity of the Yonge Subway, a further extension of the Yonge line was not recommended.
- Funding of the TYSSE and Transit City initiative was a higher priority from a TTC/City perspective especially given the limited resources for rapid transit investment.
- Completion of the Spadina Subway extension to the Vaughan Corporate Centre prior to completion of the extension of the Yonge Subway is important to divert Yonge riders to the Spadina Subway line in order to alleviate congestion on the Yonge line and maximize utilization of the Spadina line.
- The Yonge Subway northerly extension requires additional trains to be added to the subway car fleet for the YUS line. Existing yard facilities at Wilson Yard, which could be expanded to store the new subway car fleet, are not ideally situated with respect to a Yonge Subway northerly extension from a deadhead mileage and operational/maintenance perspective.
- It should also be recognized that one of the remaining constraints to increasing the capacity of the existing Yonge line is the passenger congestion at Yonge-Bloor Station. Due to the number of passengers boarding/alighting trains at the Bloor Station on the Yonge line, trains dwell as long as 60 seconds in the station and this constrains the ability to move additional trains through the station in peak periods. As well, there are constraints on the circulation and movement of passengers between the Yonge and Bloor levels of the station. The constraints on passenger movements between the two levels of the station do not directly affect the ability to add more trains to the YUS line but they do affect the length of time it takes for passengers to transfer at Yonge-Bloor Station and the quality of the transfer environment.

The above issues have now been resolved to the satisfaction of City/TTC staff and as a result, staff are now prepared to formally support the implementation of the Yonge Subway northerly extension project. The above issues have been addressed as follows:

- With the release of the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) on September 26, 2008, and the emergence of the Yonge Subway northerly extension as a priority Metrolinx project, it is expected that the Yonge Subway extension will be implemented at no capital cost to the City of Toronto. Given the above, and the commitment to the Transit City initiative in the RTP and the full funding of the TYSSE project, proceeding with the Yonge Subway project can proceed without impacting City/TTC investment priorities.
- The commitment of Metrolinx to funding of the re-signalling of the YUS line clears the way for significant capacity improvements to the YUS line. With the full implementation of ATO/ATC (currently planned for completion in 2015), the capacity of the YUS line is no longer considered a constraint to the extension of the Yonge Subway to the north.
- The full funding of the TYSSE project will result in completion of the project by third quarter 2015, prior to the earliest date for opening of the Yonge Subway extension to Richmond Hill Centre/Highway 7 (2016/2017).
- As outlined later in this report, staff are initiating a Subway Rail Yard Needs Study (SRYNS) to address yard/network requirements to accommodate an expanded subway car fleet to 2030.
- Various studies have been undertaken to address the capacity of Yonge-Bloor Station. Past studies have confirmed that the preferred solution to the subway train dwell time constraint is the separation of boarding and alighting passengers on to separate platforms. This would require the construction of a centre platform at the Yonge Subway level (Bloor Station) and the creation of two new side platforms at the Bloor-Danforth level (Yonge Station). Staff intend to analyze the timing/trigger for the construction of these platforms (and any other related improvements at Yonge Subway Station) given the implementation of ATO/ATC, the implementation of Transit City (i.e. additional rapid transit connections to the Yonge line), the growth in Sheppard Subway ridership, the ridership diversion impact of the extended Spadina line and the proposed extension of the Yonge line to Richmond Hill Centre. This analysis can only be undertaken when the Metrolinx RTP has been finalized and the projected passenger volumes on the Yonge line south of Bloor are known.

As well, a study of improved circulation between the Yonge and Bloor subway lines to reduce transfer times between the two levels of Bloor-Yonge Station is also necessary. Staff intend to report back to the Commission following the finalization of the RTP on a comprehensive study to address the capacity issues at Yonge-Bloor Station (and the Yonge Subway south of Bloor) and to respond to the ridership implications outlined in the plan.

As a result, TTC/City staff involvement and public consultation in the Yonge Subway northerly extension project is now appropriate from a policy and operational perspective.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Yonge Subway northerly extension has a number of implications for the TTC as follows:

- The extension requires changes to the existing Finch Station tailtrack;
- A major project decision relates to the inclusion of a Cummer/Drewry Station and the resulting construction methods (cut and cover or tunnelling) for the section of the line from Finch to Steeles;
- The Steeles Station will relocate TTC services which currently serve Finch Station to a large bus terminal at Steeles Avenue. The location, configuration and transit operating environment for the new bus terminal at Steeles West Station is important in terms of the quality of the bus to subway transfer, protection for development around the station and integration with VIVA/York/GO bus services;
- With the resulting transfer of Finch Station bus services to Steeles Station, the redevelopment of the Finch Station bus terminal may be possible in some fashion;
- The storage and maintenance of an expanded subway car fleet will have implications for City residents depending on the location/configuration of such facilities;
- The extension has implications as to the service levels that will be operated to Steeles and Highway 7 (i.e. whether a short turn will be implemented at Finch Station for an interim period of time prior to full service to Highway 7); and
- The planning and redevelopment of Cummer/Drewry and Steeles Station will require the necessary planning studies to be initiated in conjunction with the completion of the TPAP study and the conceptual design of the project.

York Region held public consultations over the past several months with the latest being held on September 25, 2008 and published a Notice of Study Commencement for the TPAP (under the new Transit Project Regulations) on October 3, 2008. Given the above, and the 6-month time limitation on completion of the TPAP (including 2 months for public and MOE review), it is important that public consultations take place in the City of Toronto concerning the project implications as soon as possible and that the TTC/City participate in the study process as co-proponents along with York Region.

Due to the fact that the Yonge Subway is TTC's most important asset and vital to the City of Toronto, TTC/City participation, as co-proponents of the undertaking, is necessary to protect TTC/City interests. This requires the publication of a Notice of Study commencement by the TTC/City (in addition to the Notice published by York Region). At the conclusion of the study, the proponents must also submit a Statement of Completion of the Environmental Project Report prior to submission to the Ministry of the Environment for consideration.

It is anticipated that the Notice of Study of Commencement will be made immediately following the October 29, 2008 City Council meeting and consideration of this report. The Notice of Completion of the Environmental Project Report would be considered by the Commission on December 17, 2008 and by City Council in January 27/28, 2009.

The above dates are important given York Region Council's position that the Yonge Subway TPAP be approved by the Ministry of the Environment by March 2009 following the period for public review and Ministerial approval outlined in the TPAP regulations.

With confirmation by the Commission, TTC staff will participate fully and engage the public within the City of Toronto concerning the project implications. To date, the public consultations held on the project have been located in York Region and the involvement of local City Councillors has been minimal.

As a result, staff propose to proceed as follows with respect to the completion of the project:

- A first public meeting in the City of Toronto (and involving the local Councillors, Councillors Fillion and Shiner) has been organized for October 16, 2008 in the North York City Hall Council Chambers. Staff will provide an update on the results of the public meeting at the October 23, 2008 Commission meeting;
- Publication of a TTC/City Transit Project Assessment Process Notice of Study Commencement will be initiated following the October staff report to City Council. The notice would indicate the City/TTC as co-proponents along with York Region;
- Separate from the Yonge Subway TPAP Process, the TTC will be initiating a SRYNS to identify the storage and maintenance facility requirements for the Yonge Subway car fleet including the need for new and/or expanded subway yards; and
- As outlined previously, a comprehensive study for the necessary improvements for Yonge-Bloor Station (and the Yonge Subway, south of Bloor) will be the subject of a future Commission report.

City staff have been consulted on the preparation of this report and the recommendations.

**JUSTIFICATION**

With the release of the Metrolinx RTP and the identification of the Yonge Subway northerly extension project as a short term priority, it is now appropriate for the TTC/City to fully participate in the ongoing functional planning/EA work. The policy and operational issues related to the implementation of the Yonge Subway northerly extension project have now been satisfied and the full engagement of City residents with respect to the implications of the project should now proceed. Further study of the implications of the Metrolinx RTP on the capacity of Yonge Subway stations is required and will be initiated when the RTP has been finalized.

September 29, 2008

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Attachments

## EXHIBIT 1

### Where We Are Today

- Six stations
- Two bus terminals
  - Steeles Terminal
  - RHC Terminal
- Bridge over East Don River
- Alternative alignments into RHC

6	Richmond Hill Centre	Key intermodal passenger terminus of subway
5	Longbridge / Langstaff	High potential for intensification Key location for park-and-ride that works in tandem with Richmond Hill Centre
4	Royal Orchard	Good opportunity for intensification of existing medium density development
3	Clark	Good transit connections to local routes Opportunity for intensification along with existing medium and high density development
2	Steeles	Numerous connections between bus and subway
1	Cummer / Drewry	Good transit connections to local routes Good opportunity for future live/work development
	Finch	Part of existing transit system



EXHIBIT 2

## What Comes With a Subway?

Station	Pedestrian Entrances	PPUDO	Bus Terminal	Park'n Ride	Substation	Summary
Cummer / Drewry	●		Bus turn-around loop			Line station with minimal surface requirements
Steeles	●	●	●		●	Transit hub
Clark	●					Line station with minimal surface requirements
Royal Orchard	●				●	Line station with minimal surface requirements
Bunker / Longbridge	●	●		●		Commuter hub
Richmond Hill Centre	●	●	●		●	Transit hub