

June 19, 2008

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, June 18, 2008, the Commission considered the attached report entitled, "Waterfront West LRT Connection to Union Station: Fort York-Bremner Boulevard."

The Commission approved the Recommendation contained in the report, as listed below:

"It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Approve the concept of constructing a light rail transit right-of-way alignment in the Bremner Boulevard-Fort York corridor, between Union Station and Exhibition Place, as described in this report, to serve both as the necessary connection for the future construction of the Waterfront West Light Rail Line, and as an important service to meet the needs of the rapidly- and densely-developing Railway Lands and Fort York Neighbourhood, noting that:
 - the Waterfront West Light Rail Line will introduce a new, dedicated transit right-of-way linking the developing areas of Mississauga, southern Etobicoke, The Queensway, Parkdale, and Exhibition Place with Toronto's central business district and, in so doing, will remove 3 million car trips and 10 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year;
 - the Railway Lands and Fort York Neighbourhood, located between the Waterfront West LRT and Union Station, are being developed extremely quickly, so the need for high-capacity transit in this area has become more urgent;
 - the number of riders who will travel via the Waterfront West LRT in the Railway Lands-Fort York Neighbourhood area is approximately 44,800 per day, or about 13.7 million per year, which is roughly equal to the ridership on the 501 QUEEN streetcar route;
 - analytical and modelling work which has been done as part of the environmental assessment (EA) for the Bremner-Fort York Light Rail Line has concluded that the existing Fleet Street-Bathurst Street-Queens Quay right-of-way will not be able to accommodate the total volume of light rail vehicles which will be travelling between Union Station, and Exhibition Place and points west;

- another east-west connecting link between Union Station and Exhibition Place will be essential if the Waterfront West LRT is to provide attractive, reliable, and fast service;
 - the most logical and feasible alternate link would be the Bremner-Fort York LRT Corridor which is already under study;
 - for this corridor, west of Bathurst Street, operational analyses and modelling have demonstrated that the “under the Gardiner Expressway” alignment, as described in this report, would be best for both transit and traffic operations;
 - there is opposition to this alignment because, although it is literally underneath the Gardiner expressway amid concrete support columns, the land is part of the Fort York National Historic site;
 - all of these findings will be formalized in the Environmental Assessment Study Report for the Bremner-Fort York Light Rail Line which is currently in preparation;
 - for the reasons described in this report, there is a need to expedite the approvals, funding, and construction of the Bremner-Fort York LRT line;
2. Request City of Toronto Council to endorse this report; and
 3. Request Metrolinx to provide funding for this vital component of the Transit City Light Rail network, because it will provide a sustainable-transportation alternative for residents and workers in what will soon be one of the most densely-developed areas in the entire GTHA, and will lay the foundation for the Waterfront West Light Rail Line.”

The foregoing is forwarded to City of Toronto Council through the City Planning and Growth Management Committee for consideration of the Commission’s request embodied in Recommendation No. 2 of the report.

Sincerely,

Vincent Rodo
General Secretary
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Attachment