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June 4, 2010

Mayor David Miller
and Toronto City Councillors
City of Toronto
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Miller and Councillors:

Attached is a report referring to Item PW33.9 on the City Council agenda for June 8, 2010.

At its meeting on June 2, 2010, the Commission approved the recommendations of the Ashbridges Bay Maintenance and Storage Facility Transit Project Assessment Report and requested that the TTC report to Council on the Knox/Eastern/Russell connection route.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G Webster".

Gary Webster
Chief General Manager

55-4-3
1158920

Attachment

**Ashbridges Bay Maintenance and Storage Facility Transit Project Assessment Study
Response to TTC Commission Request
Knox/Eastern/Russell Access Routing Option
TTC Service Planning – June 7, 2010**

At its meeting of June 2, 2010, the Toronto Transit Commission, in conjunction with approving the Ashbridges Bay Maintenance and Storage Facility Transit Project Assessment Study, requested that TTC staff:

“Consider the addition of a second access route as part of the Transit Project Assessment Plan and report to City Council on the Knox/Eastern/Russell route.”

This report responds to that request.

Background

The TTC, during the course of the Transit Project Assessment for the Ashbridges Bay Maintenance and Storage Facility, considered a wide range of possible routing options to provide access between the site and the existing TTC streetcar network. These include a number of options which were suggested by the public during the consultation process or through correspondence. A total of eleven options were assessed based on a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria including access, parking and property issues, noise impacts, transit and traffic operations, and costs. As a result of this process, as illustrated in Exhibit 1, Leslie Street was identified as the preferred routing option for the access connection between the yard site and Queen Street.

One of the options brought forward by a member of the public, which is also shown on Exhibit 1, is an access route utilising Knox Avenue, Eastern Avenue, and the existing Russell Streetcar Yard.

Assessment of the Knox/Eastern/Russell Access Route

The Knox\Eastern\Russell option was suggested because it would have TTC Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) operating past fewer residential properties, thereby minimising community impacts related to noise and vibration. However, there are a number of factors which make this option unacceptable from a TTC perspective.

Loss of LRV Storage Space

As shown in Exhibit 2, the creation of operating tracks through the existing Russell Yard would eliminate storage space for 14 LRV vehicles at the yard. The TTC’s Master Plan for LRV maintenance and storage facilities has been optimised such that there is no excess space available elsewhere to store these vehicles. There is a planned expansion of the carhouse building at Russell Yard to accommodate prototype testing of the new LRVs. Following completion of prototype testing, this facility will be converted for use for major collision repair. There is no additional space available to store the displaced vehicles at



Russell Yard. Similarly, the TTC has optimised space at its other LRV storage facilities including the proposed Ashbridges Bay site and Roncesvalles Yard. The Knox\Eastern\Russell is not feasible because it eliminates LRV storage capacity that is required to accommodate the 204 LRVs.

Property Required on Queen Street

The proposed operating tracks through Russell Yard must be implemented at the west end of the site because the complex "ladder" track work at the south end of the site cannot be arranged to accommodate crossing tracks from the west. As shown on Exhibit 2, the location of the proposed track at the west end of the site results in a requirement to acquire a property on Queen Street to provide the turning radius required for LRVs turning westbound on to Queen Street. The acquisition of this property would be a lengthy process that would delay the project beyond the delivery date of the new LRV vehicles and would add to the project costs.

Inefficient TTC Operation

The Knox\Eastern\Russell option requires that the TTC operate through two additional ninety-degree traffic signals to travel between the site and Queen Street which will result in slower operation compared to the Leslie Street routing. In addition, access from the east end of the yard facility would result in LRVs having to travel completely around the site both on leaving the facility and on entering the facility where the preferred access at Leslie and Commissioners results in half as much circulation around the site.

Implications for Canada Post

The creation of a streetcar access route on Knox Avenue and Eastern Avenue would affect Canada Post's South Central Lettermail Processing Plant on the south-east corner of Knox Avenue and Eastern Avenue. This facility is a major industrial operation which depends on the efficient movement of a large number of trucks to and from the site. While no detailed traffic analysis has been undertaken of the interaction, Canada Post has indicated that they "will strongly oppose any proposal that involves new connecting streetcar lines on Knox Avenue or Eastern Avenue".

Implications for the Martin Goodman Trail

The creation of an access to the Ashbridges Bay site on Lakeshore Boulevard at Knox Avenue would require the construction of curved streetcar tracks into and out of the first track in the yard along the north edge of the site. These curved tracks can only be located in space currently planned for the Martin Goodman Trail and landscaping. They would significantly affect the Martin Goodman Trail as cyclists would be required to negotiate multiple curved streetcar tracks crossing the trail. This would be highly undesirable and, from a safety perspective, may require the installation of gates to require cyclists to dismount at this location.



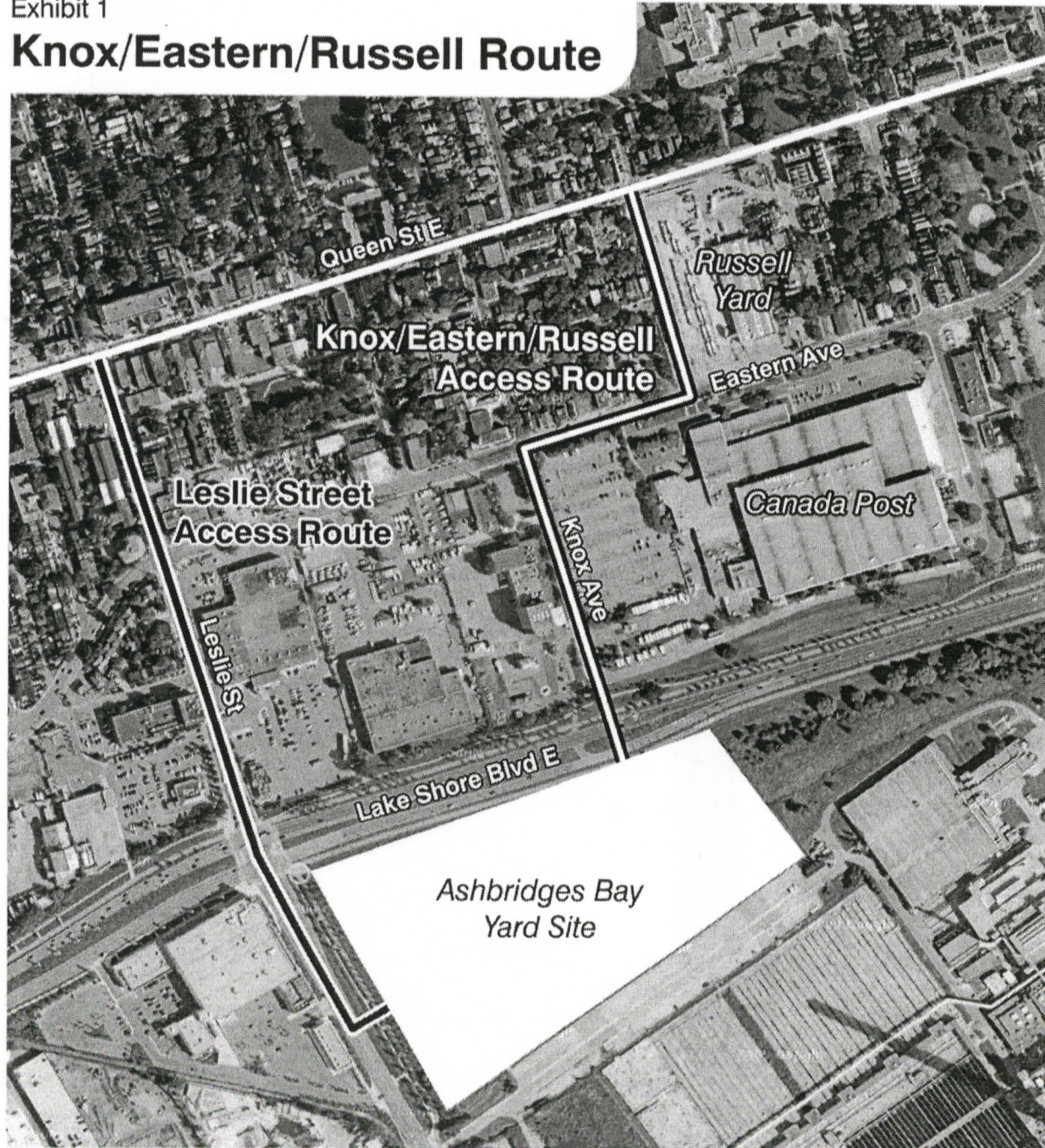
Summary

For the reasons listed above, the Knox\Eastern\Russell access routing option is not recommended. The comprehensive assessment of the connecting track alternatives is included in the Ashbridges Bay Maintenance and Storage Facility Transit Project Assessment Study report which is before Council at its meeting on June 9, 2010. The TTC understands and appreciates the concerns of the community regarding noise and vibration impacts of the operation, in particular, but the Knox\Eastern\Russell routing is not a reasonable alternative to the recommended option on Leslie Street. The TTC has identified a range of possible measures to minimise noise and vibration impact and is committed to implementing these through a community consultation process during the design phase of the project.



Exhibit 1

Knox/Eastern/Russell Route



Access Tracks Through Russell Yard

