

APPENDIX 5

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The City of Toronto, in partnership with Metrolinx and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), is carrying out a coordinated public consultation plan on SmartTrack and Regional Express Rail (RER), alongside related projects - the Scarborough Subway Extension (SSE) and the Relief Line.

The objective of the coordinated approach to consultation is to engage and seek input from the public while providing more opportunities for engagement beyond each project's study area. The joint approach also demonstrates the interconnected nature of these initiatives as it relates to the overall transit network. The coordinated consultation approach included Public Information Centres (PICs) which the public was notified through a dedicated transit webpage (toronto.ca/TransitTO), and newspaper advertisements. There is a strong online presence for each project that contains all materials presented at PICs. The public provided feedback through comment cards and notes that were filled out online, in person, e-mailed or mailed to the project team. City staff issued media releases on June 10 and 22, 2015 as part of the launch of public consultation; media were also present at a number of public meetings.

The first round of public consultation took place from June 13 to June 25, 2015, and included eight public meetings across the City. All four transit initiatives were addressed. Two of these eight meetings were held in the SmartTrack Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Review study area to allow for convenient locations and times to better engage local residents who may have a direct interest in the review. The information provided at the meetings included an overview of the SmartTrack proposal and Metrolinx's Regional Express Rail plan, in addition to information on the project timing, process and next steps. The same material on all projects was presented at all eight meetings.

The format for each public meeting began with an open house where members of the public could have one-on-one conversations with members of the project team. The open house consisted of presentation boards with information on each transit initiative. This was followed by a formal presentation and a group question and answer period. Another open house session followed the question and answer period where the public continued discussions with members of the project team, and were provided the opportunity to ask additional questions, and provide comments on all materials presented.

This summary provides a synopsis of all public comments received on the SmartTrack Plan and SmartTrack Eglinton West Feasibility Review during this first round of public consultation meetings.

For the purpose of analysing comments, the consultation objectives for the overall SmartTrack Plan and the SmartTrack Eglinton West Feasibility Review are identified below:

- To inform and seek input on the SmartTrack plan overall

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- To inform and seek input on the feasibility of the seven options considered under the SmartTrack Eglinton West Feasibility Review (corridors 1A-C, 2A-C, and 3A, and the Base Reference Case LRT).

1. FEEDBACK ON SMARTTRACK

The City presented introductory information about SmartTrack and the work underway to review the concept. During the presentation and informal one-on-one discussions at public meetings:

- Some residents asked questions on the distinctions and similarities between RER and SmartTrack.
- There was positive feedback for SmartTrack related to TTC fare integration, additional stations, electrification and greater frequency of service.
- Other comments were concerned that SmartTrack was redundant with RER, and that it would add further pressure to existing crowding at Union Station.
- A few comments were concerned with the potential impacts of SmartTrack stations on local communities and surrounding land uses.
- There were also concerns related to the coordination and prioritization of Toronto's transit projects. There was concern expressed by some that SmartTrack has priority status over the other projects concurrently under way (including Scarborough Subway Extension and Relief Line project assessments).

Feedback on SmartTrack Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Review

The consultation materials outlined the scope of work and approach being used to assess each alignment option in terms of technical, service concept, regulatory, land-use and financial feasibility.

The public was asked for their views on both the approach to the study and the seven corridor options:

- Some comments indicated that land-use compatibility was a concern, particularly for communities and areas that would be impacted.
- Some comments related to the service concept, looking to gain a better understanding of how SmartTrack would impact other transportation services.
- Other comments related to technical analysis and asked if building heavy rail along the Eglinton corridor is feasible from engineering and operational standpoints.
- A majority of people preferred the Base Reference Case LRT, indicating support for the proposed LRT station stops and LRT technology as most appropriate for the Eglinton corridor.
- Other comments on the Base Reference Case LRT proposed improvements to the LRT including grade separations and removing some station stops to increase speed and travel times.

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Eglinton Avenue West alignment

Corridors 1A, 1B, and 1C received mixed to neutral feedback which noted that through service (without a transfer) from Union Station along this part of Eglinton Avenue West was good, but people were unsure if heavy rail was the best technology. A few participants thought that more station stops than the three proposed would be needed to serve the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Northern route alignment via Airport

Corridors 2A, 2B, and 2C received mixed feedback from participants. A few people stated that they liked the idea of continuing the service along the existing GO Kitchener corridor and that it reaches neighbourhoods further north of Eglinton Avenue West. A few felt that the corridors were circuitous and travel times would be long, so commuters would not be attracted to choose transit over a private vehicle.

Stand-alone heavy rail on Eglinton

Comments for Corridor 3A were negative stating that the Base Reference Case LRT would better serve this area, since 3A would not offer continuous service from the Kitchener corridor.

Residents from across the City wanted a better understanding how the SmartTrack plan would benefit the City. Overall, there was a general concern for local residents directly impacted by the SmartTrack Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Review with the proposal to run heavy rail technology on a local arterial road.

2. ALL FEEDBACK

The following table summarises the major communication inputs and results related to SmartTrack engagement efforts to date.

Table 1. Summary of Results

Communication	Counts
www.toronto.ca/TransitTO	2,390 visits (2,947 views) – as of July 10, 2015
www.toronto.ca/SmartTrack	994 visits (1,262 views) – as of July 10, 2015
Online Survey (SmartTrack Eglinton West Feasibility Review)	13 submissions
Emails received	16
Mailed- and Handed-in Comment Sheets	
GO RER/SmartTrack	5
SmartTrack Eglinton Avenue West Feasibility Review	8
Comment notes at Public Meetings (SmartTrack Eglinton Feasibility Review maps only)	98
Number of residents who signed in at two public meetings, located in Etobicoke	
June 13 (Burnhamthorpe Collegiate Institute)	Approximately 20 people
June 18 (Archbishop Romero Catholic Secondary School)	Approximately 30 people
Number of residents who signed in from all eight public meetings	Approximately 336 people

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Complete comments received for the June 2015 SmartTrack consultation are captured in the full consultation report, available for download at www.toronto.ca/smarttrack.

Further consultation on the results of the SmartTrack Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Review will continue through 2015 and 2016 as appropriate. The next series of public meetings are expected to take place in late Q4 2015.

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH NEIGHBOURING MUNICIPALITIES

The SmartTrack plan proposes some stations outside the City of Toronto, in Mississauga and Markham. The City's consultations to date have not included discussions with residents of Mississauga or Markham.

City Planning has had discussions with officials from both Mississauga and Markham on how to approach consultations with their residents. Further work and coordination is required to develop a more formalized consultation plan to support the next phases of work for SmartTrack. A formalized consultation plan would be part of a broader approach for engaging with neighbouring municipalities in the planning of SmartTrack. It is anticipated that any consultation events outside of Toronto would be led and coordinated by the respective municipalities with support and cooperation from the City of Toronto staff.