

January 23rd 2018

# EX30.1.5

**Waterfront Transit Network Plan (EX 30.1)**

**City of Toronto Executive Committee Meeting: January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**Deputation: Stasia Bogdan**

**Director, Planning and Redevelopment, St. Joseph's Health Centre**

To the City of Toronto Executive Committee,

This deputation is prepared in support of St. Joseph's Health Centre, located at 30 The Queensway – approximately 250 metres west of the King Street / Queen Street / The Queensway / Roncesvalles Avenue intersection. The health centre asks that future planning of the Waterfront Transit Network Plan consider the needs and efforts of this important community institution.

The Waterfront Transit Network Plan outlines the preferred transit alignment for a portion of the study area identified as "Section 2, Humber River to Strachan Avenue", which includes the area in proximity to St. Joseph's Health Centre. The preferred alignment, as identified by the project team, illustrates streetcar service in its own right-of-way along Lake Shore Boulevard between the Exhibition lands in the east and Colborne Lodge Drive in the west.

St. Joseph's Health Centre is concerned about the preferred alignment chosen, given that it would be located in the order of 150 metres south of the hospital, and would be physically separated from the hospital by Lake Shore Boulevard (westbound travel lanes), the Gardiner Expressway, the Lake Shore West GO Transit Rail Line, and The Queensway.

Consideration should be given to providing direct and convenient connections between planned new transit infrastructure along the Toronto waterfront and St. Joseph's Health Centre, understanding the importance of services this institution provides to people living in various neighbourhoods along the western Toronto waterfront, and the level of employment and educational programming the hospital provides. St. Joseph's Health Centre has the busiest emergency department in the city, providing 24-hour-a-day emergency services that accommodated more than 100,000 visits last year. Additionally, the hospital is a major employment destination providing approximately 3,000 jobs, as well as educational programming for prospective health care professionals. The hospital has engaged its community, staff, clinical leaders and consultants in planning for the renewal and expansion of its services. The ability to rely on convenient transit access for patients, staff, students and visitors is fundamental to the hospital's operations.

Given the above, it would be sensible for new transit services to provide convenient connections to the health centre. These connections can include:

1. A new or upgraded Sunnyside Pedestrian Bridge which meets AODA accessibility requirements;
2. Additional pedestrian bridges;
3. New tunnel or underpass connections;
4. Improvements of existing sidewalks and public realm; and / or
5. Improved pedestrian connections between Parkside Drive and The Queensway.

Notably, Figure 5 within Attachment 1 of the “Waterfront Transit Network Plan Planning and Technical Background” report indicates a “new pedestrian bridge” at the location of the existing Sunnyside Bridge. A new pedestrian bridge represents an opportunity to connect a future transit stop with St. Joseph’s Health Centre. Accessible vertical connections at either end of a new weather protected pedestrian bridge, potentially integrated seamlessly into a new transit stop, would better facilitate pedestrian connectivity to the health centre than the existing Sunnyside Pedestrian Bridge.

Further consideration should be made to providing transit stop locations, additional services and / or transfer opportunities that are appropriate for hospital staff, students, and clients. In this regard, additional measures and considerations should be made to accommodate hospital clients with mobility challenges, which may require providing new or modified transit connections to the hospital itself or transfer opportunities to existing services that route adjacent to the hospital (i.e. the #501 streetcar). The existing #501 Queen Streetcar is an important service in connecting to the “front door” of the health centre, and should continue to operate frequently along its existing route in vicinity of St. Joseph’s.

Given the items discussed, St Joseph’s requests the following:

- Future background studies prepared in support of a Transit Project Assessment Process Environmental Assessment for the preferred route between Colborne Lodge Drive and Dufferin Gate include accessible options (AODA compliant) for connecting identified transit stop locations at the Sunnyside Pedestrian Bridge and Parkside Drive to St. Joseph’s Health Centre. As noted, these options should include, but are not limited to, new or upgraded bridge structures, new underpasses, enhanced public realm and pedestrian sidewalks.
- The Deputy City Manager recommends that associated financial implications of the exclusive TTC transit right-of-way extension between the Exhibition Loop and the Dufferin Gate Loop in the second quarter of 2019 or earlier. St. Joseph’s Health Centre requests that associated financial implications include consideration of improved pedestrian connections between planned transit stops south of the Gardiner Expressway and the vicinity of St. Joseph’s Health Centre.

- The existing #501 Queen Streetcar be maintained as a frequent service within its existing route to provide adequate transit accessibility to the “front door” of St. Joseph’s.

St. Joseph’s Health Centre appreciates your time and consideration on this matter. We embrace the introduction of high-quality transit service along the Toronto waterfront and welcome open discussion to enable the planning of viable and supportive transit infrastructure for the diverse groups of people we serve daily.

Sincerely,



Stasia Bogdan, OAA MRAIC

Director, Planning and Redevelopment, St. Joseph’s Health Centre