Re: MM7.4 - Improving Public Transit and Traffic Flow on Finch Avenue West

Dear Mayor Ford and Members of Council,

I am writing regarding Member Motion 7.4 – Improving Public Transit and Traffic Flow on Finch Avenue West. I agree wholeheartedly that travel times for motorists and public transport users on Finch Avenue West must be reduced.

For this reason, on March 1, 2011, I wrote to TTC Chair Stintz:

Reliable and efficient public transportation is a hallmark of great cities around the world. Residents in Toronto's north-west corner are presently served by transportation that is neither reliable nor efficient. The system serving Wards 1, 7 and 8 produces commute times that are unacceptably long and fall below our city’s standard of excellence. …

My vision for North Etobicoke extends far beyond my term of office. It is a vision that leverages North Etobicoke’s strategic assets – its proximity to major arteries and an international airport, its strong industrial base and its vibrant culture – to lay the long-term foundations for a growing and thriving community.

In subsequent weeks I engaged TTC Staff and Mayor Ford’s office in a constructive dialogue on how best to achieve this vision. I cordially remind my colleagues on Council that the recommendations contained in MM7.4 relating to public transit have already been considered and are being acted upon by the TTC.

Yours truly,

Vincent Crisanti
Councillor, Ward 1 – Etobicoke North

Encl: 1
Dear Chair Stintz,

Reliable and efficient public transportation is a hallmark of great cities around the world. Residents in Toronto's north-west corner are presently served by transportation that is neither reliable nor efficient. The system serving Wards 1, 7 and 8 produces commute times that are unacceptably long and fall below our city's standard of excellence.

The result is that workers, students and families spend more time on the bus and less time at their jobs, in school or at home. The acute limitations facing our public transportation model do little to encourage residential and economic development in Toronto's outer suburbs. This is unfortunate.

The previous mayor and council approved a light rail-based public transportation plan that would have increased capacity and reduced travel times along the Winch West corridor, but at a cost unacceptable relative to its long-term benefits.

I was heartened when Torontonians last October overwhelmingly agreed with a vision for public transportation brought forth by Rob Ford. Mayor Ford recognized the need for underground public transit and the opportunities it creates, both in terms of generating revenues through development charged but also in long-term, multi-generation city building.

My vision for North Etobicoke extends far beyond my term of office. It is a vision that leverages North Etobicoke’s strategic assets – its proximity to major arteries and an international airport, its strong industrial base and its vibrant culture – to lay the long-term foundations for a growing and thriving community. My vision is to connect North Etobicoke to the rest of the City of Toronto through efficient, reliable and world-class public transportation in the form of a subway.

I trust this vision will be formalized by the TTC when it releases its new transportation plan consistent with Mayor Ford’s platform in the coming weeks.

In the interim, the development and implementation of a rapid bus transit service is essential in meeting the needs of commuters along the Finch West corridor. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the TTC Board and with TTC Staff to set this plan in motion.

Respectfully yours,

Vincent Crisanti
Councillor, Ward 1 – Etobicoke North