



METROLINX

An agency of the Government of Ontario
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PW12.5.77

Vice President, Policy, Planning and Innovation
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February 29, 2012

City Clerk
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CITY OF TORONTO
CITY CLERK

His Worship Mayor Ford and Members of Toronto City Council:

Re: PW12.5 "Front Street West Reconfiguration Environmental Assessment Study"

We have reviewed the **Front Street West Reconfiguration Environmental Assessment Study (EA)** Public Infrastructure and Works Committee report and the online Public Information Centre materials, and have the following comments.

Metrolinx's vision for an integrated regional transportation system is set out in *The Big Move*. *The Big Move* provides 15 and 25-year plans for the regional rapid transit network, and identifies 51 mobility hubs, and over 90 priority actions and supporting policies to transform the transportation system in the GTHA.

As the busiest transportation hub in Canada, Union Station plays a critical role in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area rapid transit network, serving more than 200,000 passengers daily. Planning for the station and surrounding area should reflect this importance, and emphasize seamless integration of all modes of transportation.

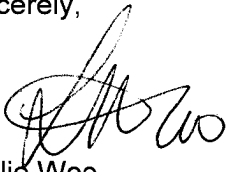
In 2011, Metrolinx released *Mobility Hub Guidelines* to clearly communicate the mobility hub concept and provide guidance on developing mobility hub plans and incorporating mobility hub objectives into other planning activities, including environmental assessments. A key objective of the *Mobility Hub Guidelines* is to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle access to stations, including the provision of a range of bicycle parking options and bicycle sharing in proximity to station entrances.

It is encouraging to see an emphasis in the EA on pedestrian priority and safety; however, I would encourage the City to consider this opportunity to concurrently improve access to Union Station for cyclists. In particular, the preferred concept identified through the EA provides minimal dedicated on-road space for cyclists. With the introduction of a greater number of taxi and loading zones, there may be a greater number of points of conflict between cyclists, pedestrians, and motorized vehicles. On Front Street, the consideration of on-street bike lanes or dedicated cycling facilities may help to reduce conflicts, especially in high activity areas, such as adjacent to taxi stands and loading zones.

I understand that BIXI station locations are currently planned for the north-east corner of Front and Bay Streets and the north-west corner of Front and York Streets. These stations are relatively far from station entrances, and do not provide clear and short connections for Union Station customers using BIXI. Providing additional BIXI bicycles in the plaza directly in front of Union Station would provide better access and visibility, creating a seamless connection between transit and bicycle sharing. In addition, the City should consider providing more bike parking directly adjacent to the station building itself and its entrances. Locating additional post-and-ring facilities on the north side of Front Street does not provide bicycle parking close to station entrances, and reduces convenience to station users arriving by bicycle.

I would like to commend the City for their work through this environmental assessment to improve pedestrian access to Union Station. The suggestions offered here provide greater consideration for cyclists using the station, and to provide more balanced access to the station by a wider variety of modes. Thank you for your consideration of these suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Woo', written in a cursive style.

Leslie Woo
Vice President
Policy, Planning and Innovation

c: Gary Wright, Chief Planner