
McNicoll Bus Garage

Frequently Asked Questions

August 6 , 2014

Construction

Q. Why is the facility required?

A. Transit ridership has reached record levels with a projected 540 million riders in 2014. Buses are an integral component in helping meet ridership growth. TTC is currently operating near or over capacity at its existing seven bus garages. It is forecasting a growth in ridership and this facility will be required to meet the demand. Currently buses servicing parts of Scarborough are being maintained in west end garages resulting in operational inefficiencies and increased costs.

Q. Is funding secured for this project?

A. The 2014 – 2023 Capital Budget includes \$181M for the project, however, only \$80M in funding is available at this time. TTC plans on requesting the balance of funds in the 2015-2024 capital budget submission.

Q. What will a delay of the project mean to the construction schedule?

A. The impact of finding an alternate site would delay the project by up to three years.

Q. What are the cost implications of a delay?

A. Cost would increase substantially, particularly if staff were directed to find an alternate site. In addition to the cost of purchasing a new site, the budget would have to include expropriation costs. Any delay would also be subject to escalation costs, which would amount to approximately \$7 million/year (4% of project cost).

Q. What other locations were considered?

A. This was the only suitable, available site at the time of purchase. Considering a site further from the routes that are being serviced would increase dead head time (the amount of time vehicles spend out of service driving to maintenance facilities) and operating costs. There was no direction from the TTC Board at its meeting on July 23, 2014 to seek out alternate sites.

Q. When will construction begin?

A. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2016 and be completed by the end of 2019

Q. Can any of the existing bus garages be expanded to accommodate growth?

A. TTC has reviewed this and determined that the existing facilities could not be expanded to service the additional vehicles.

Community

Q. Has TTC consulted with the community?

A. The TTC hosted two public meetings on November 27, 2013 and May 14, 2014 to share details about this project. Interpreters were provided at each event for anyone requiring them.

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TTC also hosted separate meetings for residents at the Bamburgh Condo and Mon Sheong Foundation. Some suggestions from these meetings were incorporated into the revised design. For example, the diesel tanks were relocated in the design to address concerns from the community about potential noise during refuelling operations.

Meetings were also held with adjacent property owners to share details about the project.

Q. What concerns were raised and how are they being addressed?

A. Traffic, emissions and noise were raised as key concerns. The TTC will address each of these in the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP). TTC will help ensure all emissions and noise levels are within Ontario Ministry of the Environment thresholds.

Some residents were concerned about how the TTC refuels its buses. TTC operates eight other bus garages and has a wealth of experience and excellent safety record on managing fuelling operations at these facilities.

Comments and concerns raised by the community will be addressed by the TTC and included in the draft Environment Project Report (EPR) presented to the Board on July 23, 2014. A copy is available on the project website at projects.ttc.ca.

Q. What else is TTC doing to address community issues?

A. TTC has agreed to postpone issuing the Notice of Commencement by two months (from September to November 2014). This will allow further consultation with the adjacent property owners and their consultants to complete a peer review of the technical reports associated with this project.

Q. How has the TTC engaged the community for the TTC and City meeting?

A. TTC sent emails to all those on the project mailing list with information about the TTC Board meeting as well as the Planning and Growth Management Committee meeting. The link included details on how to register as a speaker at both meetings.

Traffic

Q. How will the new facility impact traffic at Kennedy and McNicoll?

A. A Traffic Impact Study was completed which showed the facility will have minimal impact on this intersection. The majority of buses will access the facility during off-peak periods resulting in very little added congestion in the area. A copy of the Traffic Impact Study is included in the EPR.

Q. How will the construction of the new Redlea Ave extension impact this project?

A. The extension of Redlea Avenue will help relieve heavy traffic on Kennedy Rd. Construction of this extension is scheduled to start this year and be completed by the end of 2015.

Q. Will local service be improved?

A. Reducing the time it takes for a bus to get to its route and return to the garage (dead heading) means more resources will be available to improve service on all local routes, including the 43 KENNEDY and 42 CUMMER.

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Zoning

Q. Will the TTC site require re-zoning?

A. No. The site of the new garage is zoned "Employment Heavy Industrial" which is appropriate for the operation of a transit facility.

Q. Is there a zoning conflict, building a bus garage next to a Long Term Care Facility?

A. No. City Planning approved a by-law amendment in August 2004 for the adjacent Long Term Care Facility and Condominium Complex. The developers were advised that they would be constructing next to an industrial-zoned property. The City required that the following wording clause for offers of purchase and sale to be included as a condition of site plan approval.

"Future residents are advised that this development is in proximity to existing industrial facilities and industrially zoned lands whose activities may at times be audible and emit exhaust. These industries may legally expand their operations and/or hours of operations, including operations on a 24-hour basis and such operations at times may be audible which may affect the living environment of the residents, notwithstanding the inclusion of noise, vibration attenuation measures in the design of the development and individual units"

Design

Q. Do the above-ground diesel reservoir tanks pose a safety risk to the community?

A. Above ground tanks allow for the early detection of fuel leaks and thus pose a low environmental risk. Slow leaks of petroleum products can lead to major soil contamination, leading to catastrophic environmental damage, and costly clean up and remediation.

The tanks used by TTC have double steel walls (sealed tank within another sealed tank) and are fire rated. If the primary tank was to develop a leak, it would be safely contained within the secondary tank. The space between the tanks contains a vacuum and is equipped with a fuel leak detection system, so any perforation of the primary tank is quickly detected.

Tanks have a two-hour fire rating. This rating protects the tank contents from fire for a minimum of two hours, which will provide time for emergency services to respond in the event of a fire. Tanks have also passed impact-testing will be protected with a combination of jersey barriers and bollards. All tanks are ULC- approved fire rated. (ULC Standards develops and publishes standards and specifications for products having a bearing on fire. It is accredited by the Standards Council of Canada.)

Of the eight bus garages, including Wheel-Trans, operated by TTC, six have above grade tanks and plans are in place to upgrade the remaining two by replacing them with above-grade units.

Q. Is there a danger to having the diesel tanks by the GO Rail line?

A. Although the facility is adjacent to the GO Rail corridor, the track alignment is straight with no cross-overs, switches or other special track work typically associated with train derailments. As well, the Milliken GO station is less than 1 km of the garage site; northbound trains will be decreasing their speed

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as they approach the station and southbound trains will be very early into acceleration. In short, trains are not expected to travel past the bus garage at a significant speed. GO Transit has provided TTC with guidelines for minimum setbacks from the tracks; the TTC will be complying with these recommendations and not constructing the building or tanks within this minimum setback zone.

Q. How many vehicles will be maintained at the facility? Will there be outdoor storage?

A. The facility has the capacity to maintain and store 250 standard (40'). If articulated buses are maintained at the facility the number will be reduced. All storage and servicing will be done indoors.

Q. Will the facility maintain articulated buses?

A. The facility will be equipped to maintain both 40 ft. buses as well as the newly-acquired 60-ft. articulated buses.

Q. How many people will be employed at the facility?

A. Approximately 100 will work at the facility. An additional 400 operators will report there for their routes (over a 24 hr. cycle).

Q. How will air quality be impacted by the new facility?

A. All new TTC buses use clean diesel fuel, meeting the highest emission standards in North America for diesel engines. The project will be subject to the Transit Project Assessment Process that includes studying air quality, traffic impacts and noise. The TTC will be required to mitigate to keep levels within Ministry of the Environment thresholds. Preliminary findings suggest that the majority of the background emissions originate from sources other than the TTC facility. The additional emissions from the garage are very small in comparison to the existing background levels.

A draft environmental project report with additional information was released on July 18, 2014 in advance of the July 23, 2014 TTC Board meeting. The document is also available for viewing on the McNicoll Project Page at projects.ttc.ca.

Q. Who should people contact for further information?

A. TTC has assigned a Senior Community Liaison Officer to this project. Lito Romano can be reached at 416-397-8699 or lito.romano@ttc.ca.

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