

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM8.40	ACTION			Ward:18
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Metrolinx Davenport Community Rail Overpass - by Councillor Ana Bailão, seconded by Councillor Cesar Palacio

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Ana Bailão, seconded by Councillor Cesar Palacio, recommends that:

1. City Council endorse the list of issues regarding the proposed Metrolinx Davenport Community Overpass identified in the letter (June 16, 2015) from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to Metrolinx.
2. City Council request Metrolinx to extend its project schedule by two to three months to provide more time to address City staff and community comments on the proposed Metrolinx Davenport Community Overpass prior to the Notice of Commencement for the Transit Project Assessment Process.

Summary

The Metrolinx Davenport Community Rail Overpass is a proposed 1.5 kilometre rail bridge to provide grade separation for Barrie GO trains over CP Rail's main line. The new rail bridge would extend from Bloor Street to Davenport Road, just west of Lansdowne Avenue.

At its meeting on March 31, April 1 and 2, 2015, City Council adopted a Motion directing the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to ensure that land use planning (including grade separation underground or above ground) and urban design considerations are part of the EA process being carried out by Metrolinx for the project (MM5.33).

The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, sent a letter dated June 16, 2015 (attached) to Metrolinx raising several concerns related to the project. The prior decision of Metrolinx to move forward with an Overpass (versus a trench) was identified as the most critical issue needing further understanding. Another priority is to establish a new GO Rail Station on the Barrie line at the Bloor Subway as shown in the City's Official Plan (Map 4). The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning also identified opportunities for local improvements such as restoring the road grade at Dupont Street, and possibly Bloor Street; creating new road, park, pedestrian and cycling connections; and, the need to assess impacts on

existing and new development.

Another issue raised by the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning is the tight timeline for the City's review of this major project, with the Notice of Commencement for the Transit Project Assessment Process (final project review) to be filed in September, 2015. The complexity of the proposal, and limited time provided to undertake detailed review and assessment of the emerging design and supporting studies for the environmental assessment, do not allow for appropriate input by City staff.

A Resident's Reference Panel created by Metrolinx calls the proposed Overpass the "single greatest local infrastructure project in a generation". The Panel was clear that its participation does not condone an Overpass, but seeks to make the best of this option. It recommends numerous improvements to local public spaces and connections, and supports a timeline for electrification of the Barrie line as a condition of community support.

This Motion is urgent as Metrolinx is planning on filing a Notice of Commencement for the Transit Project Assessment Process in early September. Once that process commences, it follows a formal six month schedule. The next City Council meeting is scheduled to take place on September 30, 2015, therefore, it would be too late to consider this Motion in September.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM8.40

(June 16, 2015) Communication from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning addressed the Executive Vice President, Regional Express Rail, Metrolinx (<http://www.toronto.ca/leqdocs/mmis/2015/mm/bqrd/backgroundfile-82098.pdf>)