



方卓怡 市議員 **Paula Fletcher**

City Councillor | Ward 14 Toronto-Danforth

July 17th, 2020

Deputy Mayor Michael Thompson
Chair, Economic and Community Development Committee
100 Queen St. W

Save Jimmie Simpson Recreation Centre

Dear Chair and Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

In April 2019, the Government of Ontario announced plans to build the Ontario Line and in August enacted Regulation 248/19. This resulted in the Relief Line South as well as all other TTC transit expansion projects being taken over by the Ontario government and Metrolinx. The Initial Business Case for the Ontario Line proposes the line to run aboveground in the current heavy rail GO corridor from the Don River to Gerrard Street – approximately a 2 km stretch – which includes parks, green space and the Jimmie Simpson Community Centre.

On October 29, 2019, Toronto City Council passed motions directed to Metrolinx regarding safety concerns and community impacts of the Ontario Line, including the protection of parks, local services and community centres.

And on January 29, 2020 City Council called for the Province and Metrolinx to undertake a full, formal Transit Project Assessment Process that would consider alternative technology, station locations and alignment, including putting the Gerrard to Don River section underground.

Sadly at their Community Advisory Committee meeting of May 13, 2020, Metrolinx said they are not considering burying the section of the Ontario Line from East Harbour to Gerrard as requested by the community and the City of Toronto, but are only looking at an above ground line in the current heavy rail railway corridor. That railway corridor directly abuts Jimmie Simpson Community Centre and 7 parks.

An above ground line will run perilously close to the Jimmie Simpson Community Centre which serves as a community hub for recreation programming with a variety of programs for everyone from preschool to older adults. The back wall of the recreation centre is right on the edge of the rail corridor. Residents in Riverside and Leslieville are deeply concerned.

While the City and the neighbourhood will continue to press Metrolinx to bury this 2 KM section of the Ontario Line the City has to also start contingency planning to protect/ move/ rebuild the Community Centre in the event that Metrolinx forges ahead.

I would appreciate support from Economic and Community Development Committee for the following recommendation:

Recommendations:

1) City Council request the City Manager to evaluate construction, maintenance and operational impact of the proposed above ground Ontario Line on Jimmie Simpson Recreation Community Centre and Artificial Ice Rink and develop a strategic plan to determine how best to mitigate the impact on these facilities and on the level and quality of City services currently delivered by the City to residents using these facilities

Sincerely,

Paula Fletcher
City Councillor
Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth