

From: [Chris Williams](#)
To: [Infrastructure and Environment](#)
Cc: [Daryl Finlayson](#)
Subject: My comments for 2022.IE29.14 on April 26, 2022 Infrastructure and Environment Committee
Date: April 25, 2022 10:45:05 AM
Attachments: [Wonscotonach deputation.pdf](#)

To the City Clerk:

Please add my letter attached in PDF format

to the agenda for the April 26, 2022 Infrastructure and Environment Committee meeting on item 2022.IE29.14, Metrolinx's Proposed Don Valley Layover Facility and the Wonscotonach Parklands

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.



We recommend the Infrastructure and Environment Committee evaluate the report from General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and the Executive Director, Transit Expansion Office with respect to the following:

Metrolinx provided incomplete plans.

Metrolinx has not included the lower rail bridge over the Don River in their plans however the bridge is essential to the project. How can City of Toronto staff prepare a report on plans that are incomplete? By excluding the lower rail bridge from the plans, Metrolinx has avoided the required environmental or historical assessments of the site. This site has been the main crossing of the Don River for the last 11,000 years – the Davenport route that links Teiaiagon village to Withrow Site. In early Colonial times, the City of York was connected to settlements on the east side of the river by the Winchester - Royal Drive route that featured the ford at the very site of this un-examined rail bridge.

Metrolinx's Don Valley plan runs counter to its stated objectives.

“Metrolinx has noted it requires a new Facility at this particular location (Don Valley) to reduce the congestion currently experienced at Union Station” however The Toronto Board of Trade in their 2021 Report on Regional Rail recommends “corridor twinning” to solve this very issue.

The TBOT states, “the Trillium Network would relieve the possibility of overcrowding at Union Station: most trains would travel through that station but wouldn't start or end their trips there.”

Rather than park trains in the Don Valley, they could keep moving up the Richmond Hill line which would help provide the “two way all day” service which is the objective of the whole project.

Metrolinx incorrectly claims Greenhouse Gas Emission reductions.

The expansion of diesel-based transit service, which the Metrolinx's Don Valley Layover is central to, runs counter to all level of Governments' objectives in Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Metrolinx makes great claims about the benefits of electrification of the network however a significant portion of Metrolinx's GO plans are dedicated to the expansion of diesel service. In fact, according to Metrolinx's own statistics the GO Expansion plan will actually increase the amount of GHG emissions created by the service over the life of the project.

Additionally, concurrent Government's policy is to transition private vehicles from gas to electric. Metrolinx states one of the benefits of GO Expansion is induce people to use transit instead. Replacing electric car trips with diesel-based transit does not reduce GHG emissions.

It's a flood plain.

Metrolinx trains have been submerged by flooding in the Don Valley on multiple occasions, the most recent in 2013. Currently only the Richmond Hill line is at risk however if Metrolinx's plan goes ahead the Milton line was also be at risk due to flooding. Metrolinx claims the facility is above the 100-year flood line however all the rails from Corktown Common north the Layover, the emergency access road and the employee parking lot are certainly in the floodplain including the aforementioned lower rail bridge over the Don Valley. Metrolinx responds that their plan will not be affected by flooding.

Metrolinx has to yet explain details about DVP that may affect Protected View.

The DVP generates salt spray that extends about 10 metres to either side of the highway. The area where Metrolinx plans to park their trains is not only within 10 metres but also lower in elevation than the DVP. Without a barrier, trains will be subject to hours of salt spray each day which will degrade the equipment. If a tall barrier is to be erected along the west side of the DVP from Helliwell Hill south to the Adult Learning Centre that will affect one of the designated skylines of the Prince Edward Viaduct and the skyline of Toronto.

No benefit to Toronto.

The Don Valley Layover and facility exists only to benefit peak service commuters from Milton. For the residents of Toronto there is no additional train service nor additional transit line, this is highly subsidized parking lot for commuters on one underused line. According to Metrolinx their latest published ridership numbers for this line is 423 average daily riders (apr-sep 2020).

Metrolinx planning wrong type of infrastructure

As above, since Metrolinx's Don Valley proposal has no benefit for the citizens of Toronto, the Infrastructure and Environment Committee should be considering what other potential developments could realize higher value for more people. As the largest greenspace within walking distance of the urban core, the Don Valley is a perfect location for an urban park. Vancouver has Stanley Park and Montreal has Mont Royal, both large parks within walking distance of the core that generate millions of dollars in tourism value but also reap huge quantifiable health benefits for the citizens of the city. Re-industrializing the Don River Valley runs against 60 years of conservation efforts, the Federal Ravine Strategy and the billions of dollars invested downstream at naturalizing the mouth of the Don River.

CHCTRA - About us.

We are a residents association tucked in between Broadview Ave and The Don Valley; north of the Danforth. Among many things, Don Valley oriented, we protect one of the gems of Toronto; the Chesterhill Lookout and its iconic view of the Prince Edward Viaduct and the Toronto's skyline.