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March 14, 2024

Mr. John Elvidge, City Clerk
City Clerk's Office
100 Queen Street West
12th Floor, West Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mr. Elvidge,

RE: ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY ON THE PROGRESS OF FEASIBILITY WORK ON ADAPTING THE SCARBOROUGH RT TO A LINEAR PARK

On February 12, 2024, Councillor Paul Ainslie submitted an Administrative Inquiry to seek information regarding the request for staff to report back to Council on the feasibility of a new linear park in Scarborough. This letter provides a response to this request. It has been developed in collaboration with CreateTO, TTC, Parks Forestry and Recreation, and City Planning.

Introduction

On February 2, 2022, City Council adopted [MM39.24](#), Potential Adaptive Reuse - Scarborough Rapid Transit Elevated Track. Council requested staff to explore the feasibility of transforming the Scarborough RT into a linear park and/or active transportation corridor, as well as pedestrian accessibility to the Scarborough RT busway.

The TTC officially decommissioned the Scarborough RT in August 2023. In 2018, the TTC estimated the order of magnitude cost to decommission and demolish the remaining Scarborough RT infrastructure at an estimated \$150 million to \$175 million (as referenced at a [January 2024 TTC Board meeting](#)).

Since 2021, TTC public consultations have engaged customers and the public on this topic, along with other elements of the Line 3 Bus Replacement and Busway, and there has been general support for the exploration of alternative uses, such as active transportation and/or the development of a linear park space. At the same time, development interest surrounding Scarborough Town Centre and parcels adjacent to the Scarborough RT structure is anticipated to increase with a desire to demolish the existing structure for other mixed uses.

Staff across multiple groups at the City have begun initial assessments of the opportunities and constraints posed by this adaptive re-use concept. Preliminary analysis has concluded this is a highly complex and resource intensive undertaking with challenging components that need to be reviewed in detail to fully understand the magnitude of the project, delivery feasibility, budget requirements, and the city building outcomes. Some of the complex and technical components include: understanding complete ownership / title of the rights-of-way; technical review of structural integrity and state of good repair of the current infrastructure; future TTC service or operational requirements; interim responsibility for the structure's maintenance and security during and after the feasibility study process; park needs and opportunities; mobility needs and opportunities; development potential of stratified easements and adjacent properties; opportunities for economic development, arts, and cultural activations; and estimated project timing and costs.

Response

Please find below responses to each of the questions submitted:

1. What work has been completed to date regarding the feasibility study and funding options for the pedestrian accessibility transformation into a linear park?

Staff across key City divisions and agencies (i.e., CreateTO, Toronto Transit Commission, City Planning, and Parks, Forestry and Recreation) have undertaken reviews to understand the potential for adaptive re-use of the Scarborough RT and to inform the scope and resourcing requirements for a feasibility study. The TTC has provided relevant drawings, reports, and documentation pertaining to the structure. Very early in the process it was clear that understanding complex components such as property ownership and determining adaptable sections of the existing transit infrastructure will require detailed technical analysis and is critical to understanding project feasibility. For instance, there are several stratified easements where property owners may now have their own redevelopment interests. Overall, it is anticipated a project of this size and complexity will require both significant staff resources and funding to move forward with an adaptive re-use.

Based on the initial assessment, a detailed feasibility study is required, along with commensurate City funding, and capacity/resources to coordinate various consulting services and streams of work. Currently, work is at initial feasibility assessment stage, and there is no approved budget for City divisions and agencies for the staff resources and costs associated with detailed feasibility work. The following are critical parts of the scope that would need to be examined to determine full project magnitude, feasibility, and city-building opportunities:

- Ownership / title of rights-of-way (i.e., acquisitions / renegotiation with private property owners)
- Structural integrity and state of good repair of the current infrastructure (i.e., structural analysis)
- Environmental assessments
- Parks requirements and opportunities
- TTC/Transportation requirements and new opportunities

- Development potential of adjacent properties
- Municipal service opportunities
- Opportunities for economic development, arts, and cultural activations
- Market and public consultations on innovation and design excellence
- Project cost analysis

To assist in this work, City Planning has identified six segments along the Scarborough RT alignment and has undertaken a pre-liminary assessment, as each has unique characteristics. These are:

- i. **Kennedy Station to Ellesmere Road** – an at-grade rail corridor proposed to be converted to a busway.
- ii. **Ellesmere City Works Yard** – north of Ellesmere Road and including the below grade tunnel portion of the corridor to where it arrives at-grade west of Midland Avenue, and includes portions operating on third-party owned property.
- iii. **West of Midland Avenue to Borough Drive** – beginning where the guideway transitions from the tunnel portal to an elevated guideway west of Midland Avenue to the east side of Borough Drive.
- iv. **Borough Drive to McCowan Road** – a segment of the elevated corridor, which begins at the easterly edge of the Borough Drive right-of-way and ends at the westerly edge of the McCowan Road right-of-way, and includes portions of decommissioned guideway located on third-party-owned property as permitted under legacy agreements.
- v. **McCowan Road to Grangeway Avenue** – the SRT corridor crosses through two parcels of land that are City-owned and three public rights-of-way: McCowan Road, Bushby Drive and Grangeway Avenue.
- vi. **East of Grangeway Avenue** – the elevated section of the SRT returns to grade via an embankment on the east side of Grangeway Avenue and proceeds to McCowan Yard, the SRT storage and maintenance facility, which will remain under TTC operational management for future TTC use.

2. Which division or department is leading the feasibility study and project?

To date, CreateTO, the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), Parks, Forestry, and Recreation (PFR), and City Planning, in consultation with appropriate City divisions and agencies, continue to assess the scope and resourcing requirements for commencing an adaptive reuse feasibility study for the Line 3 infrastructure.

The assessment has determined that this is a complex undertaking with several challenging components that will need to be analysed in detail, including developing multiple costed, adaptive reuse scenarios. Eventually, if Council provides direction and funding to undertake additional analysis and options on adaptive re-use of the Scarborough RT, a formal project team would be required with centralized coordination and multi-disciplinary teams from multiple divisions and

agencies. For next steps, it is recommended that the working group come together, led by the City Manager's Office and supported by CreateTO, to summarize the initial assessment and considerations and finalize the scope for a technically detailed feasibility study, program governance, study cost estimates, and associated funding sources for the study for Council consideration in Q4 2024.

3. When can we expect a detailed report back to the Council with the feasibility and funding options to transform the supported busway for pedestrian accessibility?

As a next step, the City Manager's Office supported by CreateTO, will continue to work with TTC, City Planning, PFR, and other City partners as appropriate, to clearly summarize findings to date and determine all key considerations, and scope the detailed feasibility study, program management design and requirements, estimated cost for all elements of the feasibility study, and potential funding sources for the study. Any future budget requirements beyond this foundational due diligence and enabling work to explore the project concept will be identified and included in the report back to Council targeted for Q4 2024.

Sincerely,



Paul Johnson
City Manager

cc:

Vic Gupta, CEO, CreateTO

Rick Leary, CEO, TTC

David Jollimore, Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services

Jag Sharma, Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth Services

Paul Raftis, Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services

Stephen Conforti, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer

Kerri Voumvakis, Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Howie Dayton, Interim General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation