

## **Ensuring Safety for Ontario Line Haul Routes**

**Date:** March 19, 2025

**To:** City Council

**From:** City Manager and Executive Director, Transit Expansion Division

**Wards:** 10, 13, 14

### **SUMMARY**

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On February 20, 2025, Toronto and East York Community Council (TEYCC) directed City staff to report to the next meeting of City Council on a safety incident that occurred between a dump truck and a pedestrian near Metrolinx's Ontario Line (OL) Pape and Sammon Avenue construction site. The subcontractor's driver that was hauling materials for the OL did not follow the prescribed haul route for the construction site resulting in a pedestrian being struck and critically injured on a public road. This report responds to TEYCC's direction by providing:

1. Information on current haul routes being used by Metrolinx's contractors for the construction of the OL.
2. An update on the collision near the OL Pape-Sammon construction site, and police investigation, including charges laid.
3. An overview of Metrolinx's policies and measures being taken with their contractors to prevent future incidents and ensure public safety.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial impacts associated with this report. The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## DECISION HISTORY

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A full decision history is provided in Attachment 1.

## COMMENTS

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The Province of Ontario is delivering the Ontario Line (OL) through its agency, Metrolinx. The OL will be a 15.6-kilometre subway with 15 stops running from Exhibition Place to the Ontario Science Centre. Construction of the OL began in December 2021, and the project is expected to be completed by 2031. The OL will operate on a mix of tunnelled, above-ground and elevated track segments, with substantial excavation required to construct the underground segments in the Downtown-OL South Segment and Pape Avenue portions of the OL (See Figure 1 in Attachment 2 for the alignment and grading of the OL).

### 1. Ontario Line Haul Routes

Construction of the OL is advancing with enabling work phases that support the excavation for the future underground portions of the stations and tunnels. This phase requires a significant number of construction vehicles to transport material to and haul away spoils from construction sites. The Pape-Danforth area is experiencing significant construction as Pape Station will be a key interchange station between the OL and Line 2 – Bloor-Danforth. This work requires expanding the existing station to accommodate a new concourse and platform. Additionally, on the southeast corner of Sammon Avenue and Pape Avenue, crews are constructing an emergency exit building, a mechanical building, and a crossover, which allows trains to change from one track to the other<sup>1</sup>. Metrolinx estimates approximately 30 trucks a day are required to support bulk excavation at Sammon Avenue, which is anticipated to last until Summer 2025<sup>2</sup>.

As part of this work, the City and Metrolinx have been reviewing and implementing best practices for traffic management and safety around all OL construction sites. City staff are guided in their discussions with Metrolinx by City Council's direction, including through TM2.1 - City of Toronto Recommendations for Metrolinx's Ontario Line Construction within the Toronto and East York District, which noted the importance of traffic management plans that, amongst other matters, focused on safety, which included requesting Metrolinx to:

- Install appropriate signage for all road users and safe accommodation for pedestrians, and road users with accessibility needs and mobility challenges;
- Ensure safe passage throughout the traffic management area to protect cyclists; and

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<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.metrolinx.com/image/upload/v1734123236/Images/Metrolinx/20241002\\_PapeDanforth\\_CLC\\_PresentationDeck\\_V3.pdf](https://assets.metrolinx.com/image/upload/v1734123236/Images/Metrolinx/20241002_PapeDanforth_CLC_PresentationDeck_V3.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.metrolinx.com/image/upload/v1734123649/Images/Metrolinx/20241106\\_PapeDanforth\\_CLC\\_PresentationDeck\\_V3.pdf](https://assets.metrolinx.com/image/upload/v1734123649/Images/Metrolinx/20241106_PapeDanforth_CLC_PresentationDeck_V3.pdf)

- Maintain pedestrian access to transit service and businesses and include truck haul route plans and traffic impact analysis, including any modifications to traffic signal timing plans and turning restrictions.

One of the results of discussions between the City and Metrolinx is the development of haul routes, which are used to reduce congestion and improve safety for all road users. Haul routes are designated routes for construction vehicles entering and exiting work sites. Haul routes are developed between Metrolinx and their contractor, in consultation with the City's Transit Expansion and Transportation Services Divisions, who review Metrolinx's haul route proposals and provide their recommendations.

Haul routes have been developed so that vehicles and equipment can be delivered to and from work zones as safely and efficiently as possible. Strategic traffic management principles are used to minimize disruptions to the community and safeguard all road users. Principles include using expressways and arterial and collector roads to access construction sites, avoiding residential and heavy vehicle restricted streets, and ceasing hauling during school hours if the route passes through a school zone. As such, the City has emphasized that Metrolinx should avoid using residential areas whenever possible and reduce congestion due to construction vehicles in neighbourhoods.

In response, Metrolinx stated their routes are designed with the goal of keeping heavy trucks off residential streets, avoiding school zones before and after school hours, and prioritizing main roads and highways. The haul routes also apply to all heavy construction vehicles for the worksite, not just dump trucks hauling excavated material. Other considerations include coordination by Metrolinx with concurrent construction projects occurring in the area, and augmenting haul routes with other safety measures such as signage and traffic control persons.

Recognizing the potential risks of increased truck traffic on haul routes to pedestrians and cyclists, City staff have worked with Metrolinx and their contractor to implement strategies that prioritize safety for all road users in accordance with Vision Zero principles. Relevant strategies and approaches include reducing vehicle speeds, improving visibility at intersections, enhanced signage, pavement markings, forward-in and forward-out truck movements and implementing traffic calming measures. For example, at the Pape-Sammon site, there is signage and safety barriers around the work zone, and traffic control personnel are on site to safely direct vehicles and pedestrians when trucks are entering and exiting the work site.

In addition to reviewing Metrolinx's haul routes, City staff, led by Transit Expansion, review Metrolinx's OL design and construction submittals, and provide comments regarding safety concerns the City may have observed during their reviews.

#### *Active Ontario Line Haul Routes*

Haul routes have been established for the following worksites (see Attachment 2 Figures 2-19 for maps of all haul routes that have been established for the OL):

- Pape Station/Pape-Sammon
- Minton Place
- Don Yards
- Corktown

- Moss Park
- Queen Station
- Osgoode Station
- Queen-Spadina Station
- Exhibition Station/Ordnance

### *Ontario Line Haul Routes Under Development*

The King-Bathurst haul route is currently being re-evaluated based on community feedback. The haul route is anticipated to be finalized in Q2 2025, and likely will utilize Bathurst Avenue or Spadina Avenue and King Street West for inbound travel, and Adelaide Street West, King Street West or Front Street West via Portland Street, and Spadina Avenue for outbound travel.

Metrolinx has begun to work with Transit Expansion and Transportation Services on outstanding haul routes to determine the most appropriate and safe haul routes and expect to finalize these routes by Summer 2025. This includes haul routes for the spoils from the forthcoming 3.4-kilometre subway tunnel excavation from Gerrard and Carlaw to Minton Place. Metrolinx will share proposed haul routes with the community and provide further details once available. Haul routes that are currently under development include:

- Pape-Cosburn, which will likely follow the Pape-Danforth and Pape-Sammon haul routes closely (see Figures 2-3 in Attachment 2).
- Gerrard-Carlaw, which will likely utilize Carlaw Avenue and Lakeshore Boulevard to access the Gardiner Expressway or Don Valley Parkway.
- East Harbour, which will likely utilize Eastern Avenue and Lakeshore Boulevard to access the Gardiner Expressway or Don Valley Parkway.

### *Public Engagement*

Metrolinx has twelve active Construction Liaison Committees (CLC) for the OL, including 3 new CLCs that were established in the Fall of 2024 for Pape-Danforth & Sammon, Pape-Cosburn & Minton Place, and Thorncliffe Park. CLCs are led by Metrolinx and their contractor, and members include local residents, businesses, elected official's staff, City staff and other stakeholders. The CLC discusses project updates, information on the upcoming project activities, including construction impacts, and identifies stakeholder concerns. Metrolinx shares haul routes with CLCs as they are developed, and considers the feedback provided by CLC members.

Before starting work, Metrolinx and its contractor provide advance notification to local businesses, community, Ward Councillor and other impacted stakeholders. Construction notifications are issued in advance of the work, both on the OL project website and delivered door-to-door (standard practice for notice delivery is a 500-metre radius of the impacted site), where information like haul routes and safety measures are detailed. Major impactful changes such as road closures and restrictions are also reported through social and traditional media.

Metrolinx confirmed they are in the process of opening a new community office at 810 Danforth Avenue. Details on the opening date will be communicated to the public once

available. In the meantime, residents can continue to call, email, or visit the other OL community offices at 770 Queen Street East or at East York Town Centre to provide feedback or share concerns with Metrolinx staff directly<sup>3</sup>.

## **2. Safety Concerns at Ontario Line Worksites**

### *Pedestrian Injury*

On February 6, 2025, a pedestrian was struck and critically injured while they were crossing at Mortimer Avenue, by a dump truck from the OL Pape-Sammon construction site that was making a right turn from Pape Avenue. The dump truck belonged to a subcontractor of Green Infrastructure Partners (Metrolinx's contractor, GIP). The dump truck was hauling spoils away from the Pape-Sammon OL site. The truck driver was not following the designated haul route, where construction trucks are to exit the site using Danforth Avenue and travel north on Pape Avenue and east on O'Connor Drive to connect to the Don Valley Parkway (see Figure 4 in Attachment 2 for map). In addition, as per Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 950-1329, heavy trucks are prohibited from Mortimer Avenue at all times<sup>4</sup>.

Upon learning of this incident, City staff immediately contacted Metrolinx staff to express their significant concern over operations at the OL Pape-Sammon site and emphasized the need for prompt action from Metrolinx and GIP to ensure compliance with designated haul routes. City staff also requested clarification on what enforcement and oversight mechanisms Metrolinx is using to ensure contractors are abiding by safety codes and regulations, as well as what accountability measures are being taken against both the subcontractor and the individual operating the vehicle.

City staff also visited the site with local residents and the Councillor to identify and address issues like snow removal, sightlines and signage. In response, Metrolinx indicated they were working with their contractor to investigate the incident and would conduct safety assessments of OL work sites and associated haul routes and share their findings with the City. The findings would assist in the ongoing adjustments and reviews that the City and Metrolinx conduct of the haul routes.

On March 10, 2025, Metrolinx stated via letter (see Attachment 3) that in response to the February 6, 2025, incident, they worked with GIP to suspend the subcontractor involved from any further work on the project, pending the outcome of the Toronto Police Services (TPS) investigation. Subsequently, Metrolinx confirmed to the City that the subcontractor involved in the incident has been permanently removed from the project.

### *Toronto Police Services Investigation*

TEYCC also directed City staff to confirm if charges were laid by TPS against the driver and the trucking company involved in this incident. The TPS confirmed to City staff that upon investigation, the driver of the dump truck from the February 6, 2025, incident was

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.metrolinx.com/en/projects-and-programs/ontario-line/ontario-line-contact-us>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/toronto-code-950-30.pdf>

charged on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025, with careless driving causing bodily harm, under the *Highway Traffic Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s 130(3)<sup>5</sup>. If convicted, the penalties include fines ranging from \$2,000 to \$50,000, or imprisonment up to a two-year term, or both. In addition, it can also carry a driver's licence or permit suspension for up to five years.

### *Metrolinx's Response to Continued Haul Route Non-Compliance*

On February 28, 2025, City staff were made aware of another incident on February 27, 2025, involving a different subcontractor of GIP making the same right turn from Pape Avenue onto Mortimer Avenue, and immediately pressed Metrolinx for information on how the hauling of material away from the site was being managed safely. Over the following week, Metrolinx's actions included:

- Metrolinx's safety team conducted an on-site assessment over the March 1, 2025, weekend and initiated corrective measures.
- In consultation with the City staff, Metrolinx installed advanced advisory signage on Pape Avenue, south of Mortimer Avenue and Torrens Avenue, warning truck operators of the No Heavy Truck restriction on these roads.
- TPS was requested to provide enhanced enforcement to ensure compliance with truck prohibitions.
- GIP implemented enhanced education for their truck operators, requiring them to sign an acknowledgement of haul routes prior to leaving the construction site.

Metrolinx confirmed on March 10, 2025 (see Attachment 3), that the subcontractor involved in the February 27, 2025, incident was prevented from accessing the OL Pape work sites until a safety briefing was conducted with both GIP and the subcontractor's management. Metrolinx have confirmed that the driver involved in this incident is no longer able to work on the project, and the subcontractor resumed work after the safety briefing occurred.

As a further safety measure following the safety assessment, Metrolinx deployed its own traffic control persons at the Pape Avenue and Mortimer Avenue intersection during hours when OL truck traffic will be occurring to ensure no right turns are made by trucks onto Mortimer Avenue from the Pape Avenue construction sites. City staff verified this action by Metrolinx was implemented immediately after the City contacted Metrolinx on February 28, 2025. In addition to the Metrolinx traffic control persons, the City also deployed a temporary traffic agent for March 5-7, 2025, to the intersection of Pape Avenue and Mortimer Avenue. Following March Break, on March 17, 2025, the traffic agent will be replaced by a crossing guard, who will be deployed to the intersection alongside the Metrolinx traffic control person during the morning and afternoon school hours to enhance pedestrian safety.

Metrolinx attended a community meeting on March 6, 2025, hosted by the local Councillor regarding OL construction safety. At the meeting, City staff requested Metrolinx use GPS tracking on heavy trucks to ensure they are not deviating from haul routes. Metrolinx confirmed that while some larger subcontractors use GPS tracking for their own operations, it is not mandated for OL subcontractors. Metrolinx confirmed they

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h08#BK236>

do not currently have the technology to immediately implement GPS tracking but are closely assessing options to do so and determining the feasibility.

The City will continue to work with Metrolinx and their contractors to enforce designated haul routes, implement corrective measures, and prevent further incidents. Ongoing reviews and additional safety measures will continue to be monitored and adjusted as necessary.

### *Metrolinx Safety Measures and Policies*

Metrolinx confirmed on March 10, 2025, that all personnel working in the area, including subcontractors, were issued a directive to comply with the haul routes, with zero tolerance for any deviations. GIP also instituted a new zero-tolerance policy for their subcontractors, where any driver found contravening the haul route will be banned from the construction site.

In addition to the haul routes, Metrolinx has safety protocols in effect for construction sites, which include<sup>6</sup>:

- Truck routes designed so that trucks make left turns through signalized intersections.
- Traffic control flag persons are present (yielding stop / slow signs) at construction vehicle entry and exit points (gates) to give verbal and hand signals to the approaching truck drivers.
- Safety gates are installed, to ensure safe movement of vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and transit, when construction vehicles need to access the sites.
- Constant communication with other transit control persons using radio, coordinating vehicle movements.
- Signs indicating speed limits for construction sites (10km/hr) that are posted and displayed at gates.
- Regular briefings with truck companies that have been contracted by Metrolinx or their subcontractors to follow safety requirements when entering and exiting sites.
- Signs posted regarding speed limits and construction hazards for public awareness.
- Providing materials indicating haul routes and verbal instructions to truck drivers before they exit work sites.
- Securing barriers and fencing to make sure work sites are separated from public spaces.
- Adding signage, wayfinding, construction hoarding, temporary traffic signals, pedestrian crossings, and detours to help the public navigate around safely around closures.
- Regular safety audits of construction sites to review safety issues and any potential community impacts.

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<sup>6</sup> [https://assets.metrolinx.com/image/upload/Images/Metrolinx/updated\\_October\\_24\\_2024\\_CT\\_DY\\_CLC.pdf](https://assets.metrolinx.com/image/upload/Images/Metrolinx/updated_October_24_2024_CT_DY_CLC.pdf)

### **3. Next Steps**

Staff from Transit Expansion and Transportation Services are working with Metrolinx to review the OL haul routes to ensure that contractors and operators make any necessary adjustments so that the safest and most appropriate routes are used. Staff will continue to work closely with Metrolinx and its contractors on a regular basis to emphasize adherence to haul routes and construction site interface best practices and ensure that safety remains a top priority.

City staff will report back to Toronto-East York Community Council on the progress of the OL in Q2 2025, including any updates provided by Metrolinx on their safety assessments and measures being implemented to increase public safety and safeguard against future incidents.

### **CONTACT**

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### **SIGNATURE**

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Derrick Toigo  
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Paul Johnson  
City Manager

### **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Decision History  
Attachment 2: Maps of Metrolinx's Haul Routes for Ontario Line Construction  
Attachment 3: March 10, 2025, Letter from Metrolinx re: Community Safety During Ontario Line Construction