

Coordinated Transit Consultation Meetings
SmartTrack, GO RER, Relief Line, Scarborough Subway Extension
June 13, 2015
Highlights Report

This concise Highlights Report has been prepared to provide the City of Toronto, TTC and Metrolinx with a snapshot of the feedback captured at the public meeting held on June 13, 2015. A more detailed report of the feedback captured during this phase of consultations will be prepared in the coming days.

Introduction

On Saturday, June 13, 2015, the City of Toronto, City Planning Division (Transportation Planning), the TTC and Metrolinx, hosted a public meeting on four key transit projects currently being planned. The meeting was held at Burnhamthorpe Collegiate, 500 The East Mall, Toronto.

The purpose of the public meeting varied by project:

SmartTrack: Introduce the SmartTrack concept and study process for the Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Study, and gather feedback on three conceptual alignments being studied in the Feasibility Study

GO Regional Express Rail (RER): Introduce the GO RER program in Toronto

Relief Line: Collect feedback on the results of potential station area evaluation and potential corridors

Scarborough Subway Extension: Collect feedback on preliminary analysis of potential corridors and potential alignments and station concepts

The meeting featured a series of panels and interactive feedback activities on each project. Participants could freely move between display panels and activities at their own pace, and speak with project staff from the City, TTC and Metrolinx.

At 10:20 a.m, an introductory presentation on coordinated network transit planning, with a focus on SmartTrack – Eglinton West Corridor, was given by Tim Läspä, Director, Transportation Planning, City Planning Division. After the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions of clarification as well as provide feedback.

Approximately 20 people attended the public meeting, including Councillor Stephen Holyday (Ward 3), and MPPs Peter Milczyn (Etobicoke-Lakeshore) and Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre).

Highlights of Participant Feedback

Questions of Clarification

The discussion captured during the question and answer period following the overview presentation is summarized below. Questions are noted with a “Q”, comments with “C” and answers with “A”. Answers were provided by Tim Läspä, Director, Transportation Planning, City Planning Division.

- Q. If SmartTrack is built along Eglinton, what would happen to the future Phase 2 Eglinton Crosstown LRT? Would it be a companion or replacement? There are so few stations on Smart Track it doesn't change the need for LRT on Eglinton.**
- A.** If heavy rail is built along Eglinton there would likely be only 3 stations; this is what was including in the concept that Council asked staff to study. Phase 2 of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT has a total of 16 stations in the same corridor and extending into the airport. You would not be able to build both. If heavy rail is built, it would need to be supplemented with local bus service.
- Q. Why was a station chosen for Kipling Ave. instead of Islington Ave.? Why those 3 stations? Or is that just part of the political beginnings of this proposal?**
- A.** The SmartTrack concept that Council has asked us to study included those station locations. Those particular station locations still need to be studied. While we are focusing on the feasibility of some corridor options today, you are very welcome to submit comments about station locations as well.
- Q. Is it correct that if the LRT is extended along Eglinton to the airport instead of SmartTrack, there would still be RER service on the Kitchener Line beyond the airport?**
- A.** No matter what is built along Eglinton to reach the Mississauga Airport Corporate Centre, there would still be RER service on the Kitchener Line. There is a need to determine how to ensure SmartTrack and Kitchener RER services fit together when they merge around Mt. Dennis Station.
- Q. How does central Etobicoke get local transit service if SmartTrack is built along Eglinton?**
- A.** If Council asks us to proceed with one of the SmartTrack options on Eglinton West, there is a need to knit TTC service into that plan. We would need to determine how to provide local transit on Eglinton and in Etobicoke more broadly.
- Q. The LRT on Eglinton West already has an approved EA. Is there currently funding for it?**
- A.** No, the LRT on Eglinton West is not funded.
- Q. In terms of the Eglinton West LRT, would that also need to be knitted with TTC service?**
- A.** Certainly. The LRT itself would be part of the transit network, and how it would interface with other elements of the network was considered during the Environmental Assessment (EA) study. More work would still be necessary through the design phases of the project to determine the details.
- Q. Would it be more difficult to knit in TTC to 16 stops for LRT, than knit it into the 3 for Smart Track?**
- A.** It's actually easier to knit more stations in with the existing system with 16 stops on the LRT. If there are only 3 stations, we may need additional services, consider bus terminals at those fewer stations, etc.

- Q. Executive Committee was recently discussing the proposed Woodbine Station. They said something about knocking a wall in a tunnel for access to a possible casino at Woodbine. Do you have any information about that?**
- A.** *[Richard Beck, Manager, Transportation Planning, Etobicoke-York]* We are protecting for a future GO Station on the Kitchener Line at 427 for access to casino lands. They are in conversation for a stop on the UP Express.
- Q. Is there technology that can put a light rail wheel onto a heavy rail track?**
- A.** *[Sheldon Frankel, HDR Inc.]* No, we do not mix light and heavy rail vehicles on the same track.
- C. We should consider mixing them, thinking outside the box, and mixing types of vehicles.**
- C. With respect to the map with Eglinton and RER line and airport centre connection, you should consider connecting them so if there is a service disruption you can have more options than if waiting outside in the cold.**
- Q. If you are considering SmartTrack on Eglinton as a separate service, what is the point of having SmartTrack on Eglinton at all? Compared to the LRT, it would cut the number of stations from 16 to 3, you would still need to transfer at Mt. Dennis, it would mean heavy rail crossings for cross streets and might cost \$1.5B. Why is this something that you are seriously studying?**
- A.** Yes, there are a lot of challenges. What is the benefit of that option? We may find that it is feasible but we would then need to look carefully at its value and benefit. Also, we have no detail at this point how the LRT will extend further west on Eglinton to the Airport Corporate Centre.
- Q. We know you are not prepared to make recommendations now, but if value is not there, will you be reporting back that it's not a good idea?**
- A.** We are reporting on feasibility, yes or no. But we will also be providing facts beyond yes or no; things like high-level costs, ridership and land use impacts. Council will decide if we should move forward with any of the options.
- Q. Are there any cost estimates?**
- A.** Not yet. As part of the feasibility study we will consider costs. This won't be a detailed study, but results will allow Council to compare the options to each other.
- Q. Is it known whether Metrolinx intends to run the Etobicoke portion of the LRT as a request stop, or if every train will stop at all destinations all the time? This will impact speed of service and may influence the comparison of the LRT and SmartTrack options.**
- A.** *[Gary Carr, TTC – answer provided after the meeting]* The Crosstown will stop at every station in the buried section. Operations in the at-grade sections are still to be finalized.
- Q. I assume the length of time to cross Etobicoke by LRT will be part of what we use to evaluate the SmartTrack options?**
- A.** Yes, the benefits and costs of the SmartTrack options will be compared to the LRT as the 'base-case.'

- C. **Right now we have Eglinton Crosstown and Finch West on the go. The difference is size. This is a smaller Finch west size. We should split all transit up into chunks because we can get more done on smaller chunks.**

Summary of Comments Provided in Interactive Sessions

SmartTrack: Conceptual Alignments

Several people indicated a preference for the Eglinton Crosstown LRT extension to the ACC and Pearson for its better local service. Some concern was expressed about those impacted most during construction not necessarily being the people who stand to benefit the most from the line. Other comments suggested alterations to the SmartTrack concept such as changing or adding station locations or extending the line either to Pearson or further west into Mississauga.

Relief Line

A few people asked questions of clarification on the Relief Line Project Assessment regarding the future extensions to the north and west and technology selection. Participants found it important to make connections to communities like Flemingdon Park and Thorncliffe Park with future extensions to the north. Participants discussed the potential to utilize the Bay Street corridor as a rerouting option for commuters. Some people commented that Broadview Station is less than ideal as a connection to the Danforth subway line compared to Pape Station, due to the ability to connect north, development potential, redundancy to the streetcar service from Broadview Station and impacts to the Don Valley. In general, participants were supportive of the results of the station evaluation and the corridor options presented.

Scarborough Subway

Most participants asked questions about the project to better understand it and how it relates to the rest of the transit network, rather than providing specific feedback. Participants asked questions about the corridor evaluation, ridership and how SmartTrack would impact the need to construct the extension. One participant asked about details regarding the closure of the SRT and how various corridors would impact the SRT's operation. Finally, one participant asked about the "SmartTrack spur" idea and if a spur from SmartTrack to Scarborough Centre is being considered and evaluated.

Next Steps

Seven more public meetings are scheduled during this phase of consultations, after which a more detailed report of all consultation activities will be made available. Comments must be submitted by July 3, 2015 to ensure inclusion in this report.

SmartTrack: Feedback received will inform the Eglinton West Corridor Feasibility Study. Draft results of the study will be presented and consulted on in September, 2015.

Relief Line: The project team will use the feedback received to inform the evaluation of potential corridors. The preferred corridor, along with potential alignments and station locations, will be presented and consulted on in September, 2015.

Scarborough Subway Extension: The project team will use the feedback received to help finalize the evaluation of the potential corridors and evaluate the potential alignments and station concepts. The preferred corridor, alignment and station concepts will be presented and consulted on in September, 2015.