

**Coordinated Transit Consultation Meetings**  
**SmartTrack, GO RER, Relief Line, Scarborough Subway Extension**  
**June 20, 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 20, 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 20, 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 the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 370 King Street West, 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.

An introductory presentation on Coordinated Network Transit Planning with a focus on the Relief Line was given by Tim Läspä (Director, Transportation Planning, City of Toronto) and Stella Gustavson (Program Manager, Transportation Planning, City of Toronto) at 10:00 AM. Following the presentation, participants had the opportunity to ask questions of clarification as well as provide feedback.

Approximately 31 people attended the public meeting.

## **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, Stella Gustavson and Paul Millett (Chief Project Engineer, Engineering, Construction and Expansion Section, TTC).

- Q. The trains on the Yonge-University-Spadina line are crowded before they reach Eglinton Station because of the number of people that get on at Finch Station. The proposed Relief Line corridors will help alleviate crowding at the Yonge and Bloor interchange, but not at stations further north such as Eglinton or Lawrence. Shouldn't this phase of Relief Line planning address crowding on the Yonge line before trains get to the Yonge and Bloor interchange?**
- A.** The feasibility study for the Relief Line (the Downtown Rapid Transit Expansion Study) found that the most critical section is from downtown to the Danforth east of the Don River. That is why we are planning this phase first. We need direction from City Council to study the northern extension. The first phase of the Relief Line would offer some relief to crowding north of Bloor-Yonge station by reducing the time it takes to load passengers at Bloor-Yonge, therefore speeding up trains travelling along Yonge.
- Q. Since SmartTrack was introduced by the Mayor in Fall 2014, there has been a lot of confusion about the concept and how it relates to Metrolinx's Regional Express Rail (RER) project. What does SmartTrack offer that RER does not? Is it possible to make a recommendation to let RER do the work?**
- A.** It was emphasized earlier that SmartTrack and RER are the same type of trains and tracks. The SmartTrack concept proposes 14 more stations on the RER corridors within the City of Toronto which would provide better connections to the TTC network. The work on SmartTrack is also exploring a TTC fare structure at stops within the City. We will also be reporting on the ridership implications of the SmartTrack proposal and its benefits compared to RER.
- Q. During the presentation, you mentioned that the King and Queen streetcar routes would not be impacted by construction activities, but the diagrams depicted potential station areas on both streets. Is it possible to construct a subway under King or Queen Streets without impacting either streetcar route? Can you provide a clear statement that these routes will not be affected?**
- A.** We heard the same comment many times during the consultations we hosted in March. To clarify, the King and Queen streetcar routes will remain operational during construction and there is no intention to remove or cancel service even after the Relief Line is operational. If our technical evaluation determines that it is the right decision to tunnel below either of those streets, there may need to be diversions or short-term impacts but we will identify ways to minimize disruption to streetcar service and coordinate construction activities. We understand the issue and importance of maintaining existing service levels during construction.
- Q. There is approved development in the areas south of the proposed Relief Line corridors and it would be prudent to build the Relief Line to serve those developments.**
- A.** We do have projections about population and employment growth, which I invite you to take a look at. It's also important to remember that there has been so little investment in public transit over the past decades that we need to invest in more transit to improve current service levels, not just for future demands.
- Q. What is the reporting timeline for SmartTrack, as it would affect preferred options for the Relief Line?**
- A.** We will be seeking feedback from the public about various aspects of the SmartTrack concept including fare integration, Eglinton West feasibility and number of stations, in the fall, prior to reporting to Council. The intent is to present the study results at the October meeting of the Executive Committee, followed by the Council meeting scheduled for November 3 and 4, 2015.

We will also be reporting on how SmartTrack functions in a network with the Relief Line, Scarborough Subway Extension and RER.

**Q. The SmartTrack and RER projects hinge on the electrification of the rail corridors. What kind of commitment to electrification has been made by our elected representatives? Also, when does Metrolinx plan to purchase the next set of locomotive equipment?**

**A.** There was a commitment in this year's provincial budget to electrify the Stouffville, Lakeshore East and Kitchener GO corridors, which are in fact the SmartTrack corridors. The transition from diesel to electric locomotives will need to happen in step with electrification. Since electrification will need to be phased in across the network, some corridors will continue to use diesel powered locomotives, as others run electric powered trains. I encourage you to follow-up with representatives from Metrolinx here this morning for more details.

**Q. I am involved with the Relief Line Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG). In your presentation you did not mention the feedback provided by SAG members. From my recollection, the preference was for a corridor further south than on King or Queen Streets.**

**A.** You're right, I did not mention the SAG in particular. The information presented this morning is the exact same information discussed at the last SAG meeting. The input we have received from SAG members has been tremendously helpful and it will be carefully considered in the analysis of the corridors.

**Q. Is it correct that among the projects that are being studied, the Scarborough Subway Extension is the only one that Council has committed to?**

**A.** Council has committed to each of these projects in different ways. For SmartTrack, Council has asked us to study the feasibility of the concept, which is really the first stage in the process. Further studies would be needed before the City and Metrolinx would be able to construct it. For the Relief Line, Council first directed staff to undertake an Environmental Assessment (EA) to determine the best alignment in 2010. There is no funding committed to the Relief Line beyond the EA. For the Scarborough Subway Extension, Council directed staff to undertake the EA in 2013 and it has funding commitments from all three levels of government.

**Q. I have heard that the Scarborough Subway Extension and SmartTrack are in conflict with each other. Is there still time to truncate the line and make adjustments to the Scarborough Subway Extension?**

**A.** We will be presenting the emerging directions for the Scarborough Subway Extension at the November Council meeting along with the recommendations from the SmartTrack study and the emerging directions on the Relief Line. We will be able to demonstrate how SmartTrack and the Scarborough Subway Extension relate to each other and Council will provide direction on how we will proceed. City Council has a great deal of control on the outcome of these projects.

**Q. Does the SmartTrack proposal require additional track capacity beyond what RER has identified?**

**A.** As more stations are added to a corridor, service and scheduling are affected. Requirements for additional track and other infrastructure will become clearer as the various studies proceed.

**C. Union Station is at capacity no matter how many plans we have.**

**A.** Capacity at Union Station will be a challenge, but there is commitment from the City and Metrolinx to look at possible solutions in that area.

**Q. Could you recommend extending the Eglinton Crosstown westward to overcome technical and financial constraints of the SmartTrack Eglinton Corridor Feasibility Study?**

**A.** It is important to understand that we are currently reviewing the feasibility of the Eglinton West Corridor, not developing the design. The result will include a "yes" or "no" for the feasibility of each option, as well as a high level summary of some of the constraints. Council will need to direct staff to pursue any of the heavy rail options.

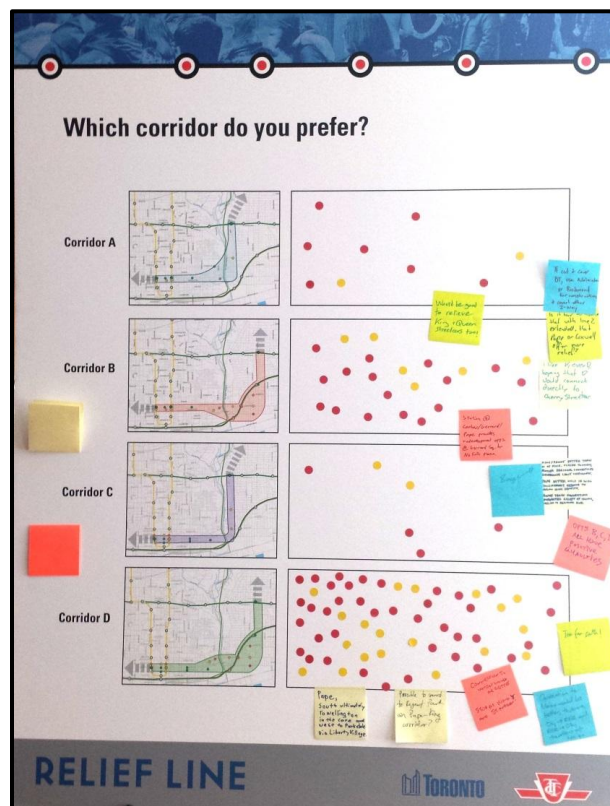
## Summary of Comments Provided in Interactive Sessions

### Relief Line: Results of Potential Station Area Evaluation

Through a dotmocracy exercise at the meeting, the majority of the meeting participants generally agreed with the results of the evaluation for the Connections to the Danforth Subway, the results of the evaluation for Key Activity Areas West and East of the Don River and the evaluation of the Downtown connections.

### Relief Line: Potential Corridors

Through a cumulative dotmocracy exercise at the public meetings a majority of the meeting participants indicated a general preference for Corridor D.



### **Scarborough Subway Extension: Preliminary Corridor Analysis**

Participants who attended this event were keen to share some of their proposed hybrid corridors and potential bus routes that could benefit all transit riders in Scarborough. Many of the same topics from previous meetings were discussed, namely, how the subway and the proposed SmartTrack would interact with one another. Some questioned the development potential around each proposed station, and whether the ridership generated from future development would adequately support the levels needed for a subway.

### **Next Steps**

3 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 and station locations. The preferred corridor with station locations along with potential alignments and station concepts 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.