

City of Toronto/TTC Expert Advisory Panel on Ontario-Toronto Realignment of Transit Responsibilities Review

Integration and Mobility

Meeting Three – Minutes

July 9, 2019 – 4:30PM to 6:30PM
Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy
1 Devonshire Place, Room 208N, Toronto

Attendees

Chris Murray
Rick Leary
Enid Slack
Pedro Barata
Drew Fagan
Steven Farber
Shirley Hoy
Andy Manahan
Bill Robson
Matti Siemiatycki
Patricia Wood

Absent

Joe Berridge
Debbie Gillespie
Joe Pennachetti
Shoshanna Saxe
Hana Syed

Presentations

The Expert Advisory Panel heard a presentation from City and TTC staff on regional integration and mobility in Toronto. The presentation touched on several key points, including the regional nature of travel patterns in the City and Region, the core objectives of the City and TTC's mobility strategy, examples of TTC's work to support initiatives to improve service and network integration, and the possibility of moving toward an approach that treats "Mobility as a Service." The presentation also highlighted fare integration as a major challenge for integration of mobility in the region.

Panel Discussion – Key Points

The Expert Advisory Panel discussed how different aspects of transit integration (fare, system, service, and integration of different modes of travel) can be improved in Toronto and the region. The following are the main themes, ideas, and comments from the panel's discussion. They do not necessarily reflect a consensus position from the panel.

Integrated Mobility at a Regional Level

- Several panel members agreed that it was important to take a principles-based approach to regional integration: Start with the principles you want to achieve and build

an integrated system from it. Principles might include being equity focused, data driven, evidence supported, user focused, and fiscally and environmentally sustainable.

- It was suggested that tackling equity makes most sense at a regional level, where one can more broadly tackle social redistribution. From a socioeconomic perspective, there is not much difference between some regions outside Toronto and neighbourhoods in Toronto.
- The issue of zone-based fares was raised. It was pointed out that implementing them in just Toronto could produce negative consequences in terms of equity (lower income neighbourhoods within Toronto's boundaries are further from economic/downtown core), but at a regional level, zone-based fares could be more successful (a zone could encompass all of Toronto).
- A concern was raised that fare integration with the region could involve the TTC subsidizing GO riders, and that such a subsidy may not be the best use of TTC funds, given that TTC rides are already subsidized.
- It was pointed out that integration with GO can take pressure off the TTC system by distributing riders across GO and TTC systems.
- Outside Toronto, the percentage of people who travel by transit is significantly lower, meaning Toronto and rest of GTA are tackling different problems: In Toronto, it's about meeting current demand. Outside, it's about setting up for a transit-oriented future.

Working with other municipalities

- Several panel members agreed that Toronto should be working proactively with neighbouring municipalities on these issues.
- The City should be working with neighbouring regions to develop pilot projects that build the business case for integration (e.g. how integration helps businesses, improves neighbourhoods, etc).
- The three core principles behind the City and TTC's mobility strategy – moving people and goods, supporting prosperity, improving places – could guide these pilot projects.
- Pilot projects would also help determine what the costs of integration might be and how to operationalize it.
- It was pointed out that, because transit systems outside Toronto have excess capacity while the TTC is facing excess demand, there could be benefits of integrating assets across the region.
- It was argued that municipalities should have conversations about what their needs are from an equity perspective so they can tackle them collectively.
- Edmonton was highlighted as an example where municipalities came together on their own to develop a regional transit agency – a “bottom up” approach.
- Hamburg was highlighted as an example where a city is bringing all operators and modes of transit together and taking a data driven approach to determine where people live, where they move, and how you can nudge them toward transit-oriented behaviour.

Mobility as a Service

- A concern was raised with Mobility as a Service products (i.e. apps that coordinate service across public transit, bike share, ride hailing, etc), in particular, incorporating ride sharing and other services run by the private sector into a government approach to mobility. It was pointed out that, without strong regulation, Mobility as a Service can strengthen private sector transit and take riders away from public transit.

- Successful U.S. pilots of partnerships between municipalities and ride-hailing companies were mentioned as a potential way to address low service levels in the GTHA. Increasing service levels with equity in mind is expensive and partnering with ride-hailing companies could be a solution.
- The example of Innisfil in Ontario was raised, where criticisms of its partnership with Uber is increasing because it is expensive. It was pointed out that these partnerships don't scale well, but that at a lower level of service they can be cheaper than a transit network.

Risks to service integration from an upload of Toronto's transit system

- Several panel members pointed out that the upload of the subway did not necessarily need to affect service integration. It really depends on the details behind Provincial ownership of the subway (e.g. roles, responsibilities, and decision-making on setting service levels, fare, who controls the bus docks and platform spaces, who owns the stations, and who has control over terminals, etc).
- Fare-splitting could also be a concern unless fares are apportioned fairly between subway and bus rides.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, July 23 – 4:30pm to 6:30pm
Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy
1 Devonshire Place, Room 208N, Toronto
Topic: Governance