

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

### Transit and City Building

### Meeting Two – Minutes

June 17, 2019 – 4:30PM to 6:30PM  
Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy  
1 Devonshire Place, Room 208N, Toronto

#### Attendees

Derrick Toigo (for Chris Murray)  
Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas (for Rick Leary)  
Enid Slack  
Pedro Barata  
Joe Berridge  
Drew Fagan  
Steven Farber  
Andy Manahan  
Joe Pennachetti  
Shoshanna Saxe  
Matti Siemiatycki  
Hana Syed  
Patricia Wood

#### Absent

Chris Murray  
Rick Leary  
Shirley Hoy  
Bill Robson

#### Presentations

The Expert Advisory Panel heard a presentation on the relationship between transit and city-building, with a focus on geographical trends in the City's growth and development (e.g. proposed residential and non-residential development), the growing income disparity, the need to balance investments to support growth and City building with ongoing operational challenges (e.g. Line 1 capacity), an overview of transit-oriented development, and how changes introduced by the Province through Bill 107 and 108 might affect City planning.

#### Panel Discussion – Key Points

The Expert Advisory Panel discussed how transit can be used to achieve broader policy objectives, including social equity and economic development, and what obstacles exist to achieving the right alignment between transit and land-use planning. 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.

### Building Transit is Building Neighbourhoods

- Transit has the ability to reset neighbourhoods and so it is important to plan constructively for the kind of change one wants to see around new transit lines and stations.
- Several panel members indicated that it is important to prioritize social equity in transit planning, including prioritizing construction of affordable housing around transit stations.
- It was noted that, if left purely to market forces, development around transit can contribute to greater inequality between neighbourhoods. But with clear policy goals, partnerships and relationships with the private sector can be used to accomplish equity objectives as well.
- It is also important to connect transit to existing neighbourhoods, and in particular ones with lower-income and marginalized populations, in order to increase opportunity.
- It was suggested that one way to ensure alignment between transit development and planning goals is to set explicit criteria for transit projects. Transport for London was highlighted as an example. They have three criteria for projects: fare box revenue, the possibility of private sector investment, and what reduction could be expected in welfare and unemployment costs.

### Encouraging Development

- Several panel members emphasized the need to encourage density around transit stations.
- Some emphasized the importance of working with the province on intensification around transit stations and even suggested that the City seek to exceed density targets laid out in provincial plans.
- Intensification around transit would help spread development around Toronto and the City could aid in this goal by working with communities where development would potentially take place.
- Midtown Toronto west of Yonge was suggested as an area where intensification could be encouraged through transit improvements. It was pointed out that some neighbourhoods in the area already have towers, and that improvements in transit can be achieved through modes other than subways.
- There was a suggestion that the city promote “gentle intensification” in residential neighbourhoods by allowing three- or four-storey buildings to be built where currently only single-family homes are permitted.
- It was pointed out that Toronto should learn from its past and provide anchor tenants near stations. Many stations built in the past were anchored by government services.

### Setting the Right Targets and Using the Right Approach

- Several panel members agreed that it was important to set clear and more ambitious targets for mode share.
- More generally, clear policy and performance objectives are important to lay out in advance of transit planning, to ensure decisions are made with reference to those objectives.
- It was also suggested that relationships between the major players in transit in the region needed to be strengthened.

- Accessibility has to be part of the transit process. Every entrance that touches transit needs to be built with an accessibility lens, an important point to consider when partnering with the private sector.
- The City was encouraged to look at examples of holistic approaches to mobility, transit, and land-use taken by other cities, including Portland, Nashville, Seattle, Montreal, and Vancouver. It was noted that many of these are cities with younger transit systems, which can make it easier to implement new approaches.
- Los Angeles was also singled out for how it implemented specific planning districts that allowed for better integration between land use and transit.

#### The Need for a Regional Approach

- Several panel members suggested that the right alignment between transit and land-use planning could only take place at the regional level.
- It was suggested that some of the City's past successes in this area occurred because of its two-tier metropolitan government at the time.
- Lateral partnerships between municipalities is one way to create a more regional approach. Informal or formal meetings could be organized between representatives at different municipalities.
- It was noted that most movement within transit system continues to be local, and that has to be taken into account when planning regionally.

#### Taking Immediate Action

- Many panel members commented that, in order to meet transit needs, it was important to rethink how roads are designed and to build more space for rapid bus, bike lanes, and other modes.
- The City was encouraged not to lose sight of the success of the Bloor and King St. pilots, as well as the St. Clair streetcar right of way. Many panel members suggested that these approaches be expanded to other streets, including Dufferin.
- The City was encouraged to adopt a pilot-based approach to policy – to test in deliberate ways rather than try to design the ideal policy from the start.
- It was pointed out that better and more frequent service is essential to improving transit and needs to occur alongside expansion.

#### Next Meeting

Tuesday, July 9 – 4:30pm to 6:30pm  
 Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy  
 1 Devonshire Place, Room 208N, Toronto  
 Topic: Integration and Mobility