
TRANSIT REVIEW

Transit Review Public Information Centre – June 13, 2019 Highlights Report

This Report has been prepared by AECOM to provide the City of Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) with a snapshot of the feedback captured at the Public Information Centre (PIC) held on Thursday, June 13, 2019 in Etobicoke. The meeting was the first of a series of four meetings that were held across the City of Toronto in June 2019.

Overview

On Thursday, June 13, 2019, the City of Toronto and TTC hosted a PIC to inform the public about the Transit Responsibilities Review being undertaken by the City and the Province. The meeting was held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Father Serra Separate School, located at 111 Sun Row Drive in Etobicoke.

At the sign-in table, attendees were invited to sign up for the project mailing list and were notified of opportunities to provide their feedback via a comment form and through the online survey which would be open until August 31, 2019. The open house component of the meeting featured a series of 15 informational display boards and several handouts for attendees to view and take home. Attendees could move freely between display boards and speak with Project Team members from the City and TTC.

At 7:00 p.m., Alicia Evans (AECOM) welcomed attendees to the meeting and provided an introduction to the Transit Responsibilities Review. Scott Haskill (Manager of Project Development and Coordination, TTC) and James Perttula (Director of Transit and Transportation Planning, City of Toronto) provided a 30-minute informational presentation about Toronto's multi-billion dollar transit needs, including maintenance, operations, and transit expansion needs. The presentation also provided an overview of the current governance and funding model for transit in the City, the Province's proposed transit expansion proposal and the Province's two-part plan to upload the TTC subway system as described in the 2019 provincial budget. The presentation concluded with next steps and information on how to get involved and provide feedback.

Immediately following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and provide input related to the presentation topics in a 30-minute facilitated Question and Answer session (see **Appendix A** for the questions and responses).

The facilitated Question and Answer period was adjourned by Alicia Evans (AECOM) at 8:00 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m., after attendees had additional time to speak with the Project Team.

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Twenty-six individuals signed into the PIC, including Toronto Mayor John Tory and Kinga Surma, MPP Etobicoke Centre.

Highlights of Participant Feedback

Several key themes emerged during the PIC, including:

- Concerns regarding how the Capital Investment Plan would be funded;
- Concerns regarding the current funding gap related to the City's Transit Plan;
- Concerns regarding the lack of the Province's presence at the PIC;
- Concerns regarding a potential increase/ modification to transit fares if the TTC is uploaded to the Province;
- Concerns regarding TTC workers' contracts;
- Concerns regarding accessibility standards of transit in Toronto if the TTC is uploaded to the Province;
- Discussions regarding who would be responsible for transit expansion and maintenance costs (e.g., Province, City, taxpayers, transit riders);
- Discussions regarding the differences between the City's Transit Plan and the Province's Transit Expansion Proposal and what that means for currently planned projects;
- Discussions regarding the various ways to get involved in the Transit Review (e.g., PICs, pop-ups, comment form, online survey);
- The need for City priority projects to be carried forward as planned; and
- The need for the Province and the City to work closely to address Toronto's transit needs.

Next Steps

A summary report on the Phase 1 Consultation will be reported out in Fall 2019.

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Appendix A – Question and Answer

Details of the Question and Answer session that followed the presentation are provided below. To provide transparency for those not present at the meeting, the questions and answers received have been transcribed as much as possible.

During the Question and Answer session, Alicia Evans (AECOM) took four questions at a time, before turning it over to City and TTC staff to respond. Questions are noted with a “Q”, comments with a “C” and answers with an “A”. Answers were provided by James Perttula (City of Toronto) and Scott Haskill (TTC) unless noted otherwise.

Funding the System and Transit Fares

Q1: Are Metrolinx and Provincial government staff present to answer questions? It seems like capital funding is \$1.5 billion short per year for the next 15 years, with two thirds unfunded. Does this mean there will be a 15% property tax increase or doubling of transit fares? Has the Province indicated it would assume this funding responsibility? What about TTC jobs? How will TTC employees be impacted by the upload?

A1: The City does not have specific answers about how costs will be allocated or how TTC jobs will be impacted. The TTC has expressed concern regarding funding and the City of Toronto is currently discussing costs, what it means, how it happens, and who is responsible for payment. The Province has stated that the TTC will continue to operate the system. Issues regarding labour and jobs are key parts of the conversation with the Province and Rick Leary, TTC CEO, strongly committed to keeping staff informed discussions progress.

Q2: Social equity was mentioned in the presentation. How does a system that relies on 70% of funding from the fare box serve any notion of equity? Also, slide 25 of the presentation displayed funding sources but did not include fare box funding.

A2: The City is trying to determine how best to ensure good access to transit for people in underserved areas. We are considering fare levels for different groups of people including seniors, children, students and more.

Q3: Will the City be funding the extension of Line 1 that travels to Richmond Hill?

A3: The City is not covering any of the planning costs for this project and no commitment for future contributions has been made at this time. The Province would be interested in the City joining on this project, but the City is currently reviewing other lines.

C1: The presentation outlined funding pressures but did not cover the fact that the Province has cut \$1.1 billion over the next 10 years. We also have not discussed why the Eglinton East LRT has been left off the map. The City may not be able to move forward with some very important transit projects and the Province is not present at this meeting to explain why.

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Q5: The TTC is a well-regarded system as it is integrated and does not require passengers to pay to transfer. Metrolinx has been trying to separate fares by distance for quite some time. Do we have any assurance from the Province that if the subway is uploaded to them the fares will not be separated by distance?

A5: Metrolinx has been discussing fare integration for many years but no changes have been formally proposed. Recently, the Province announced a reduction in GO fares to \$3.70 for the first 10 km or less and has arranged for discounted double fares that make your trip cheaper if you transfer between GO Transit and TTC.

Transit Expansion Needs

Q1: There is a subway stop near Yonge and Bloor that is always empty. Are there any plans or ideas for how this could be used as a boost to the system?

A1: The stop you are referring to, at the lower level of Bay Station, is one that the TTC is not able to make good use of. It was confirmed that expanding the existing Bloor-Yonge line by building a new platform is the best option for increased safety and improved mobility.

Q2: Has the City considered putting the Harbourfront line underground?

A2: The City/TTC has a good plan in place for improving the streetcar connection on Harbourfront. Unfortunately, this project is not on the Province's funded list.

C1: Congratulations on the success of the King Street West pilot study.

The Review Process, Bill 107 and the Provincial Transit Proposal

Q1: If the subway is uploaded to the Province, do TTC workers fall under the jurisdiction of the Province? If so, do the contracts transfer with the workers?

A1: The City and the TTC do not know what will happen to contracts at this time.

Q2: I use WheelTrans to go to work, to study and to the hospital. Why has accessible transit not been mentioned in this discussion? What will happen to accessible transit if the subway is uploaded to the Province?

A2: The City and the TTC are fully committed to accessibility. The TTC has a major accessibility forum every year and our TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) provides ongoing suggestions for more accessible transit. The Capital Investment Plan includes funding for the renewal of the WheelTrans fleet and we are on track to deliver full accessibility by 2025. We expect the Province would follow these plans as they are enshrined in the legislation. As part of the Relief Line project, the City is considering the development of additional elevators but cannot comment on whether the Province would follow through on this.

Q3: Does the Province agree with the proposed SmartTrack stations?

A3: The Province is focusing on a market-driven approach on new GO stations to find third parties that are interested in undertaking transit-oriented developments. This is not a step back on commitment as the Province recently supported the City's application for Federal funding of

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SmartTrack stations. The City is working with the Province to determine and assess whether there may be funding opportunities within the private sector.

Q4: There was a plan in place to implement a certain number of accessible stations and streetcars, but this plan continues to get delayed. Will the plan be respected by the Province if the subway is uploaded?

A4: All plans for accessibility are being continued.

Q5: I have concerns about the Light Rail Transit (LRT) plans and Bill 107. The City's map shows the Waterfront LRT and Eglinton East LRT, which are both important projects. Bill 107 can allow the Province to designate a project and take complete control. We have a Premier with a phobia of public transit and a Provincial plan that leaves gaps in transit for underserved areas. What guarantees the Province will not impact the LRT projects?

A5: City Council provided a firm commitment on how to move forward with the LRT projects. A report from fall 2018 identified the next stage of the Waterfront LRT to Bayfront and an Exhibition-Dufferin connection. City Council has also asked for a plan on how to move forward with the Eglinton East LRT. Currently, the City has no indication as to how or whether the Province will use various authorities outlined in Bill 107.

Q6: Is this public consultation? Why do I recognize most of the faces in the room as TTC Riders? We need the province present to answer our questions.

A6: This PIC is not the only forum where people can learn about and provide comments on the Transit Responsibilities Review. City staff have been and will continue to host pop-ups over the next few weeks in subway stations and at Nathan Phillips Square to hand out postcards, answer any questions and direct people to our website to learn more and take part in the online survey. We appreciate TTC Riders attending this first PIC as it is important to spread the word and engage as many people as possible. Three more PICs will be held this month.

C1: We should not be having this consultation forum without the Province's involvement. We are not used to involving the Province in Toronto transit discussions. Their feedback is required on this Review, that's why we are here.

C2: It sounds like the Premier of Ontario would like to be the Premier of Toronto. We need someone from the Province at these meetings to answer our questions.

C3: We need more consultation. Consultation typically involves asking questions and receiving answers but without the Province here, we aren't receiving answers. My opinion is that the Province has no business taking over Toronto's transit system in any shape or form. The TTC was built by the people of Toronto and is one of the best systems in North America because it is an integrated system.

Q7: Why is Bill 107 being mentioned during the consultation process?

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A7: The City will be sharing the results of this consultation process, with the public and with the Province. We want to share your thoughts on Bill 107 with the Province. We will summarize what we heard at PICs and pop-ups and have also developed an online survey to ensure public input is integrated into the City's decision-making process.

Q8: Regarding Bill 107, subsection 1, related to provisions, once the system is uploaded to the Province, could the Province overrule existing plans for projects? Has the Province stated to City staff what provisions they intend to overrule, if anything?

A8: The City is unable to address this question. We do not know what is meant by the provisions or how they may be used. The City Manager has noted the importance of keeping all City plans on the table and negotiating what will work and what will not. If the system is uploaded to the Province, the City will reiterate the importance of integration and help the Province to better understand the City's and the riders' point of view.

C4: The Province needs to get involved in the consultation process.

Q9: With this Q&A format of taking multiple questions before responding, the questions get lost in the responses. Are there other opportunities to talk about the Review?

A9 (Alicia Evans, AECOM): Thank you for your feedback about the Q&A format. We will consider this for the remaining PICs. Regarding other opportunities, there is another PIC next Thursday, June 20. This meeting does not end the conversation on the Transit Review. Everyone has the opportunity to fill out a comment form, review the handouts and take part in the online survey. Staff present this evening can help with the online survey if you do not have internet access. Please sign up for the Project distribution list to receive updates. The PIC is scheduled to 8:30 p.m. this evening to give everyone the opportunity to speak one-on-one with staff or elected officials.