



RAIL EXPANSION PLANS WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU?

Increased transit and rail connectivity are sorely needed in the province. As we work to move more people, we need to ensure new rail infrastructure and service increases take public safety and environmental issues like noise and air pollution, and the overall 'livability' of our neighbourhood into account.

OUR MAIN AREAS OF CONCERN:

THE ONTARIO LINE AND THE REGIONAL EXPRESS RAIL PROJECTS.

The impact of two major rail construction projects combined; in the same decade; on the same rail corridor through Riverside/Leslieville, beginning as early as 2021.

Currently our 3 heavy-diesel tracks carrying Go/Via/Freight trains will be under construction to add a 4th 'electrified' track inside the existing corridor; with the addition of 2 more standard gauge tracks running 'at-grade' along each side, as planned for the Ontario Line.

That means our 3 tracks will be widened to become 6 tracks; doubling the size of our current rail corridor. With the overlap in timing of the 2 construction projects our neighbourhood could be under construction for a decade or more, beginning as early as 2021.

- ❖ **RAIL BRIDGE EXPANSION:** Construction implications for the widening of our rail bridges alone would cause major road closures; streetcar/bus and traffic detours for long periods of time, years or more. Our rail bridges are on Gerrard @ Logan, Dundas @ Wardell, Queen @ Degrossi, Eastern Avenue, and Lakeshore @ The Don River. All of our rail bridges would need to be expanded to near double in width to accommodate the Ontario Line tracks.
- ❖ **OVERNIGHT TRACK WORK:** For both RER and OL projects, the majority of track building will happen over-night when trains are not running (midnight to 5:30am). Overnight track work is expected to run 7 days a week, and will have an enormous impact on our surrounding residential areas. This work includes noise from heavy machinery, which will first bulldoze the trees and vegetation along the tracks, and then shore up the track bed to be ready for Phase 2, which is laying down and construction of the new track. It will also include the construction of an overhead catenary wire system along the corridor. Air quality concerns include: construction dust, the running engines of machinery along the tracks which spew construction pollutants and exhaust fumes into the air. All this work on an entire



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bare track corridor with no sound walls planned to buffer the surrounding homes. We expect the construction of the Leslieville station at Queen/Degrassi may happen during business hours, but we don't know yet.

- ❖ **EXPROPRIATION OF LAND:** There is not enough room on our rail corridor for the addition of 2 Ontario Line tracks beside the corridor. We can expect much expropriation of streets and homes, such as Tiverton Ave., Wardell, Degrassi, Strange, Saulter, McGee Streets, and the potential bulldozing of our Jimmie Simpson Community Centre and surrounding park and sporting facilities - which all lie in the path of the Ontario Line.
- ❖ Though studies are being done on the impact of each project separately, there are currently no studies that will tell us what the impact will be on our neighbourhood of **both projects being constructed at the same time.**

*"This section of the proposed Ontario Line, from west of the Don River to the area near Carlaw Avenue/Pape Avenue and Gerrard Street East/Riverdale Avenue has the potential for significant impacts on the existing community **and will require great care** during the design process and during construction. The proposal to construct a significant portion of the central section above grade along the Lakeshore East GO rail **corridor will have temporary construction impacts that are anticipated to be shorter in duration (but potentially greater in intensity)** than the complex construction associated with building underground tunnels and stations. **If widening of the Lakeshore East GO rail corridor is required to accommodate the project, property acquisition of homes, businesses and community facilities may be required.... The operation of trains along GO rail line embankment may generate additional noise and vibration that could impact sensitive receptors like residential homes, schools, and parks...** Further design work is required to fully understand the permanent and temporary impacts to residents and businesses." The City Manager's Assessment Report, Attachment 4 - Assessment of Ontario Line, Oct. 23, 2019.*

NOISE, VIBRATION & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR COMMUNITIES:

The RER project brings train electrification to a new 4th track, and with it the potential construction of an over-head catenary wire system to power it. This means the clearing of trees and vegetation along the corridor, which currently provides some air quality and noise mitigation, and which also provides habitats for various species of birds, small animals and bats. Within Phase 3 of the RER Project, Metrolinx has included noise barriers for **some** areas of the tracks, specifically where their Noise Study levels have shown an increase of 5 decibels



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of sound; note these barriers are in proximity to residential areas only (not parks or open land). However, there are many kilometers of track with homes adjacent which are not currently budgeted for **any noise mitigation**. Metrolinx has explained that these areas were not budgeted for in their track expansion planning. With the coming Ontario Line, these noise barriers are thrown into question entirely, as the addition of 2 tracks running beside the corridor will make the construction of noise barriers left to availability of space, land and budgets. Any kind of noise mitigation for the community will be built at the very end of the construction of both projects – leaving the rail corridor bare for a decade or more. This alone will have an enormous impact the ‘livability’ of our community; and on our homes, our families, our businesses and our health.

- ❖ **POST- CONSTRUCTION.** Our neighbourhood will be living with the on-going impact of 6 lanes of rail traffic (3 diesel, 1 electric, 2 standard gauge tracks) and the noise of constant 24/7 train traffic – **a train passing every 45 seconds. Our current number of trains will increase from 50 to 900!**
- ❖ In 2011, the World Health Organization called noise pollution a threat to public health, linking it to many health issues, including: stress, anxiety, cognitive impairment, tinnitus and cardiovascular disease.
- ❖ Large unanswered questions remain about our air quality, and any air quality monitoring during years of construction, along with current increases in diesel GO train schedules. Metrolinx has not answered our questions about it to date citing electrification air quality studies and ignoring current diesel train frequency or construction air quality mitigation.

INCREASING DIESEL TRAIN OPERATION & PUBLIC SAFETY GAP:

GO Train service levels continue to increase, in the fall of 2018 we had the largest GO service increase in 5 years, and they will continue to increase diesel train service. No mitigation is currently planned for safety, noise, or vibration until the RER project begins its final Phase 3, which could be 8 to 10 years in the future. We call this the **“Public Safety Gap;”** the gap between GO service increases and any kind of safety, and noise mitigation for the community.

- ❖ Metrolinx knows that traffic increases require mitigation in the form of noise walls, vibration mats, electric locomotives and computer-based train control (CBTC). It has committed to these forms of mitigation for RER by the end of the project (2030?) but there are no plans for mitigation through service expansions **right now.**
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PROJECT SPECIFICS:

REGION EXPRESS RAIL EXPANSION PROJECT (RER)

Metrolinx and the Ontario Provincial government have committed to an expansion of GO Transit service for the Stouffville and the Lakeshore East lines from Oshawa GO in Durham Region to Union Station.

Through the Regional Express Rail project (RER), Metrolinx is planning two-way all day service along the Lakeshore East Corridor. They've promised new electric trains and 15 minute service which equates to a train every 3 ½ minutes built on a newly constructed electric track.

The RER expansion along Lakeshore East is planning to make the following changes:

- Adding a fourth track between the Don River Bridge and the Scarborough GO Station (new track will be on the south side of the existing rail tracks between the Don River Bridge and Gerrard Street East, shifting to the north side of the existing tracks between Pape Avenue and Scarborough GO Station);
- Widening of three bridges at Woodbine Avenue, Warden Avenue and Danforth Avenue;
- Modifying the structure underneath the Birchmount Road Bridge;
- Modifications at Danforth GO Station;
- Addition of retaining walls;
- Three culvert modifications: east of Coxwell Avenue at Small's Creek (Mi. 329.50), east of Kennedy Road (Mi. 325.74), and Scarborough Junction (Mi. 325.55).

More detailed information is available on Metrolinx site:

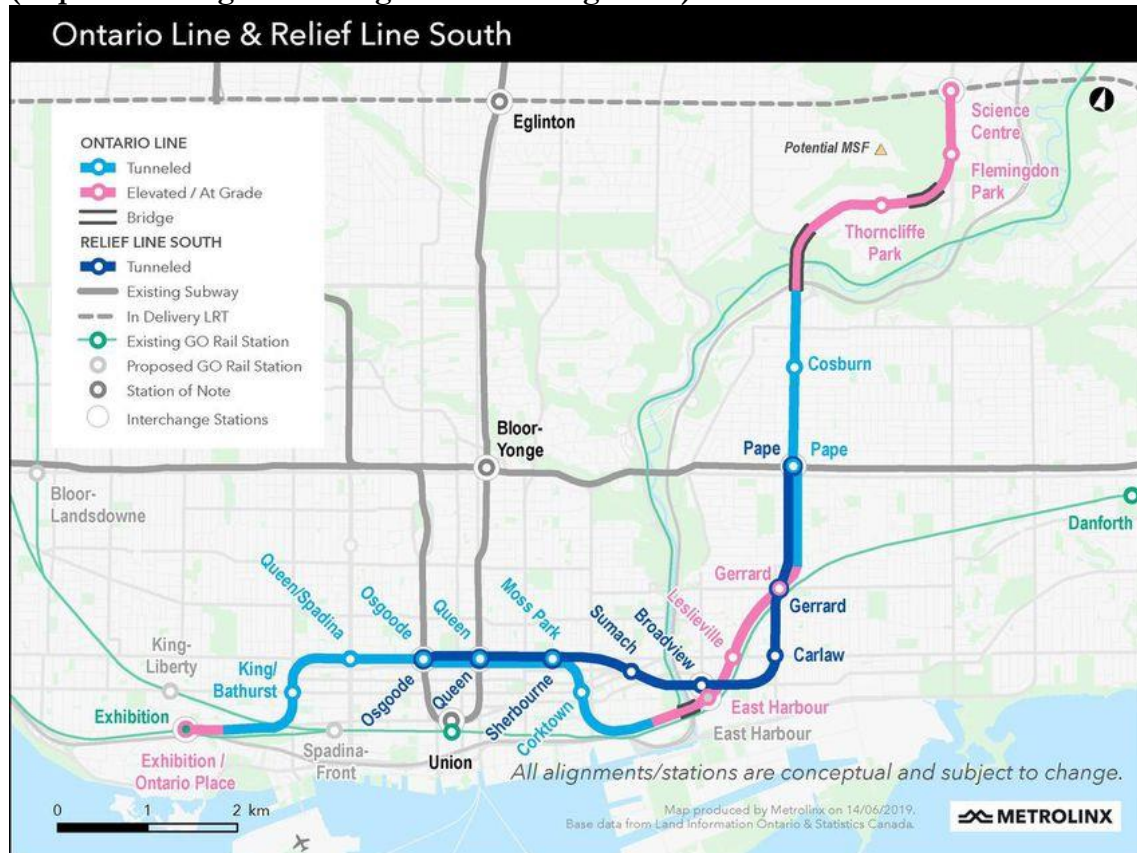
<http://www.metrolinx.com/en/electrification/electric.aspx>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GO_Transit_Regional_Express_Rail and our CAC website:

www.LakeShoreEastTrains.com

THE ONTARIO LINE

(In pink above-ground & light blue below ground)



After leaks to both “The Star,” and “The Globe,” in mid-July, 2019, the Ford government had to announce it had cancelled plans for the City’s subway extension, the Downtown Relief Line (DRL), (shown in dark blue above) and replaced it with the Ontario Line. (Shown in pink for above-ground sections & light blue for below-ground.) Notably the section that runs through Riverside/Leslieville is now an ‘above-ground’ LRT type of train, **not a subway**. This poses a great deal of concern for our neighbourhood as there is currently no room on our corridor to put 2 more tracks.

THE OL ISSUES FOR RIVERSIDE/LESLIEVILLE:

At this time, we have no technical specifics from Metrolinx about the Ontario Line, it is currently only about 10% designed, but we have gathered the following information from its own Business Case, and from the City’s own *Ontario Line Assessment Report* released on Oct. 23, 2019.

- ❖ **2 NEW TRACKS ABOVE GRADE ON A RAIL CORRIDOR THAT HAS NO MORE ROOM TO EXPAND:** Unlike the City’s Downtown Relief Line,

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which was entirely underground, the Ontario Line will cross over the Don River and travel above-ground beside the GO rail corridor on a widened at-grade embankment or an elevated structure. That means two above-ground tracks from East Harbour to Gerrard where it will go underground again. As there is no more room on the existing corridor to expand for these 2 new tracks, expect much expropriation of streets and homes, and bulldozing of our Jimmie Simpson Community Centre - surrounding park and sporting facilities - which all lie in the path of the Ontario Line.

- ❖ **THE POTENTIAL LOSS OF OUR REMAINING GREEN SPACES & OUR JIMMIE SIMPSON PARK AND COMMUNITY CENTRE.** “If the Lakeshore East GO rail corridor requires widening to accommodate the project, there may be impacts on adjacent parks and recreation centres. Leslieville station is proposed to be located adjacent to the Jimmie Simpson Recreation Centre, McCleary Playground, and Bruce Mackey Park (on Degrassi Street). Gerrard station will be adjacent to the Gerrard-Carlaw Parkette, an important neighbourhood amenity. Further design and analysis is required to understand the degree of impact to these facilities, which will be determined by the exact location of station platforms, vertical circulation, entrance buildings, and other infrastructure. Consultation with the Parks Forestry & Recreation division will be essential to ensure the functionality of these parks and recreation centres is maintained to the extent possible.” *City Manager’s Assessment Report: Healthy Neighbourhoods.*

- ❖ **MANY UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT HOW TO BUILD AND MITIGATE A 6-LANE RAILWAY CORRIDOR THROUGH LESLIEVILLE.** “Between Cherry Street and Gerrard Street East the project will be above-grade within the Lakeshore East GO rail corridor, rather than in a tunnel, in order to reduce costs. These cost savings will be partially offset by the portals that will be needed to transition between an underground and above-grade alignment and additional property costs if widening of the rail corridor is required. Maintenance and operating costs may be higher for above-grade sections, as the infrastructure will have greater exposure to the elements. Project risks that may result in increased costs in this section include uncertainties about the technical design required to achieve an elevated crossing of the Don River, coordination with multiple other construction projects occurring during the same timeframe in the Lower Don area, **and uncertainties about the mitigation measures required in the above-ground corridor running through Leslieville.**” *City Manager’s Assessment Report: Section 2.3 Rapid Transit Evaluation framework. – Principle #3 – Supporting Prosperity.*



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- ❖ **INCREASED NOISE AND VIBRATIONS:** The Ontario Line Business Case states "elevated guideways expose the trains to the open air, increasing potential for additional noise and vibration impacts for residents... due to frequent train passage." Trains running every 45 seconds – 24 hours beside homes, parks and businesses.
- ❖ **PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES & TRACK SAFETY:** The Ontario Line will use driverless train technology. No other public safety mitigation has been outlined in the Business Case. Can you imagine a derailment on even 1 of the 6 tracks in the middle of our densely populated, residential neighbourhood?
- ❖ **THE LESLIEVILLE STATION:** Queen/Degrassi has been chosen as the new "Leslieville" station (it's Riverside actually), in the past it was widely rejected by planners and residents alike as a location for a station, as there is no room to put a station. The City's Assessment Report says, "There are better city-building opportunities with the location of the Sumach, Carlaw and Gerrard stations, as proposed for the Relief Line South, in comparison to the Corktown, Leslieville and Gerrard stations as proposed for the Ontario Line." *City Manager's Assessment Report*
- ❖ **Look Up, WAAAAAYYYY UP!** If the Ontario Line does become an elevated structure, it will need to be constructed some 30+ feet in the sky to allow space for the elevated embankment, overhead catenary system required to electrify the GO trains, and clearance of double-decker GO trains. Businesses and residents will be living under the equivalent of the Gardiner Express highway.
- ❖ **BANG FOR OUR BUCK:** Even with the addition of the Ontario Line, the City and TCC will be, "at or near capacity by 2041." That means that the shelf life for the Ontario Line **is 14 years**, at around a billion dollars a year of tax payers' money. We don't even know the real cost yet of this line. Is this a good investment for the City's transit infrastructure?

More information on the Province's Ontario Line can be found here:

<https://metrolinx.files.wordpress.com/2019/07/click-here-to-view-the-ontario-line-initial-business-case.pdf>; **City Manager's Assessment Report:**

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-138946.pdf>



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PROVINCIAL BILL 107 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LESLIEVILLE:

Bill 107 “Getting Ontario Moving Act,” was unilaterally passed by the Ontario Provincial Government in August of 2019.

The Lakeshore East Rail Corridor is impacted by Schedule 3 of Bill 107 which amends the Metrolinx Act of 2006 and gives Metrolinx sole responsibility for Rapid Transit Projects with no accountability to the public.

Bill 107 provides the authority for the Province to designate rapid transit projects as “Sole Responsibility Projects” which would:

- ❖ identify Metrolinx as the only body authorized to work on a rapid transit project;
- ❖ require the Minister to approve that the City of Toronto or TTC work on projects, or any projects that are “in close proximity...or substantially similar”. Criteria by which projects would be determined to meet these tests is not clear.

The Bill provides authority for Province to identify other rapid transit projects as subject to Ministerial authority. For these projects, the Minister of Transportation may issue directives in writing to the City of Toronto. Furthermore, the City of Toronto and its agencies may not make decisions related to such projects or take any action that would arise from making such a decision unless approved by the Minister.

- ❖ **WHAT THIS MEANS TO US:** In its assessment of Bill 107, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) said, ““No oversight or compensation. The legislation contains what is known as a “Henry VIII clause,” (Section 47 (9) (b) of Bill 107) which will allow Cabinet to pass regulations behind closed doors that exempt uploaded rapid transit from any existing statutes. This could mean that the Planning Act, the Environmental Protection Act, and the Labour Relations Act won’t apply to new lines. Making these changes by regulation means there will be less public scrutiny when changes occur. And putting Metrolinx in charge means less transparency and accountability. Unlike the TTC Board, where democratically-elected City Councillors make decisions and members of the public can make deputations and have a say, Metrolinx does not have any elected officials who are accountable to Toronto residents and does not allow the public to make deputations at meetings...Bill 107 would also let province take over TTC and City of Toronto assets without compensation. This could include anything from public lands to intellectual property. TTC assets have been paid for by Toronto residents through our property taxes and the fare box, and are a public good.” <https://www.amo.on.ca/AMO-Content/Policy-Updates/2019/AMOInitialReviewofBill107andBill108>



Lakeshore East Community Advisory Committee

WHO WE ARE?

We are your Lakeshore East Community Advisory Committee (LSE CAC) founded to work cooperatively with Metrolinx to minimize the impact of the Regional Express Rail Project (RER) and other Metrolinx projects like the Ontario Line, for the quality of life for our surrounding communities.

OUR AIM:

- ❖ Make recommendations in relation to sound and vibration mitigation and other issues related to the health and quality of life of the communities represented by the CAC.
 - ❖ Make recommendations in relation to local design and landscaping where possible in an attempt to restore any tree canopy that may be lost.
 - ❖ Present the views and recommendations of the CAC to Metrolinx's Project Team.
 - ❖ Given reasonable scheduling allowances, the broader public will be able to comment back to the CAC so that the CAC can reframe affected recommendations back to Metrolinx in the form of a revised recommendation. The CAC will present these recommendations to Metrolinx, and CAC will make efforts to ensure that all communication with the Metrolinx Project Team for the areas represented by CAC will be done through the CAC as a result of this process and not directly from the impacted property owner.
 - ❖ Develop a sustainable stewardship model to support existing and potential new public spaces in the sections of the Lakeshore East Corridor that are represented by members of the CAC, created as a result of the railway expansion program.
 - ❖ Advise on rail safety
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OUR POSITION:

The CAC is not against building transit, we are all transit riders; nor is it advocating to stop the Ontario Line or the RER Projects. We are simply asking on behalf of our neighbourhood, for the Province to put our section of the **Ontario Line underground**. We feel this is best way to mitigate the devastating impacts of building the 2 projects together on the same rail corridor, in the same decade. We are not NIMBYs. We live with the rail corridor running either through our front or backyards, and streetcars running constantly either south or north of us. We ARE a transit neighbourhood. However, we believe having read all the assessments, that an above-ground Ontario Line will cost the City one of its most uniquely urbanized family neighbourhoods; losing much of what makes Leslieville thriving and "livable." We believe an underground subway is the better option for the longevity of a transit relief line, a better investment of our tax dollars, and the preservation of our wonderful neighbourhood.

SIGN UP:

Sign up for communications on our website, www.LakeShoreEastTrains.com or email at:

Riverdalesouthcac@gmail.com