

August 03, 2020

Nigel Tahair, City of Toronto

Waterfront Toronto,

Members of the Queens Quay E LRT extension EA team

Re: Queens Quay E LRT Extension EA

My sincere apologies for the technical issues beyond my control at the July 23rd meeting which prevented me from expressing my thoughts on these important discussions. I would like my comments passed onto everyone as the information presented below would have been my concerns and comments expressed on that day.

I have been involved with Waterfront Toronto Transit Planning as well urban design since 2004 under the leadership of Waterfront Toronto. The goal for Toronto Waterfront has been from day one to have higher order transit in place so future residents and employees will not need a vehicle to live or work in the redevelopment of Toronto Waterfront other than transit. Sadly, it has taken the back seat to the car as well lack of funding it to do so.

To be clarified:

During the original EA for this extension that started around 2008 and approved in 2010, the Freeland portal was the recommended location as not to disturb the Trunk Line at Yonge St and the cost of moving it by tunneling under it. Various options were looked at, but the Freeland Portal was the preferred option.

I and a few others have recommended that a Bay St Tunnel, loop, and connections to Queens Quay should be on the surface as it would be the cheapest option as well faster than the current plan. It was also stated that it would require dual end cars in place of the current cars as well closing Bay St to traffic from Queen St to Queens Quay. The idea for surface transit and closing Bay St died as there was too much opposition to closing Bay St to traffic and the TTC having 2 types of fleets.

TTC has stated since 2004 during the Master Transit Planning for the Waterfront as well the various EA's since then including this EA, that they saw transit not only servicing Union Station Loop from both directions, but as well from other parts of the system including an East-West bypassing of Union Station as limited service and for special events. This included service from the east from Broadview Station, Neville Park Loop and Commissioner St. Cherry St would see service from Broadview Station to the Portlands as well. Not much was talked about service coming from the West, since the extension west of Exhibition had not surfaced at this time and outside the scope of the study.

Development for the Waterfront:

What was the vision for development from Bathurst St to Leslie including the Portlands area between 2004-2010 is no way near that vision today pertaining to height, density, and ridership. I would say density is close to 7 times higher than plan and ridership has doubled, if not more.

Until the City of Toronto removes the eastbound on-ramp for Bay St to the Gardiner Expressway, the Jarvis St off ramp cannot be removed until the new off-ramp is built at Yonge St, like the new Simcoe off-ramp. At the same, Harbour St cannot be extended to Jarvis St until Sugar Wharf developments are completed and Pinnacle One Yonge St project first phase is done. Both projects will be building the new Harbour St extension only up to the Loblaw's property. The current space between the new Pinnacle Tower being built and existing Toronto Star building will be the New Harbour St E.

The new Lakeshore eastbound lanes cannot be built at Yonge St until the new eastbound off-ramp is built at Yonge St. This will require the removal of the current Harbour St alignment to allow Pinnacle to build their other towers. At some future date, Harbour St will become a 2-way street.

Current Phasing of LRT:

Early this year during the Waterfront Transit Reset Study, the moving of the Freeland Portal to the westside of Yonge St surface. From my point of view it is a good option to look at to consider, depending on the cost of filling in part of the Yonge Slip to create a layover place for buses, taxis, delivery to the hotel and docks as well a new entrance compared to the plan tunnel. This would remove the current mess in this block for everyone. Until a full cost comparison between the original plan vs the new plan is done, I move for a formal recommendation that this should proceed at that time.

Some people will be upset with the filling of the Yonge Slip while others see no problem doing so. Most people do not realize they are standing on landfill in the lake that started back in 1850 and completed about 1920. The shoreline being about 1,500 feet where the shoreline used to be when Toronto was first founded and up to about 1850. Many wharfs and remains of sunk ships have been found during the excavation of various building so far. Harbour and Bay Street was the water edge when the Toronto Harbour Commission building was built.

I have some issues with the current phasing as who is doing what and how it will be built. I do like the idea of doing both phases for 2 at the same time, but we need to revisit the Cherry St underpass since there is no formal option for what the preferred one is to be. Since Metrolinx is rebuilding the corridor and expanding it, we need to be looking at it now. We have looked at a new wider underpass to punching holes in the embankment to mix use of the current one but was not part of the mandate for Cherry St Line.

Funding for this project is now in the City 10-year capital plan to be done by 2030/31 for phase 1 and 2, but we have no idea on phase 2A that may become part of this project now. We need to think what the best way is to move forward so the public is not going to see a long impact on their current service.

As a note, during the EA stage, there were various meetings with Redpath as how trucks would have access to the plant and an agreement was reached that was approved by Redpath. As for filling in part of

the Jarvis Slip that is under Waterfront Toronto control, it will have little impact on the ships that dock at Redpath today, but Redpath needs to sign off for the final plan.

Recommendations:

I have opposed TTC plan for Union Station since I first saw it as it will meet only today needs, but not for the full build out of the Waterfront down the road. It is also the costly part of building this extension, as well having a long impact on current service. The funding for Union Station needs to be spread out more than the surface line.

It should be noted that 11 Bay St part of the Westin Hotel is to see construction of a 54-story tower at the corner of Bay and Queens Quay W starting around 2022. One hopes provision has been made for an accessibility entrance to the Bay Station from this tower that will be included in the design of it and be approve by TTC. There need to be 2 elevators for that entrance since one is unacceptable come 2026.

Therefore, I make the following recommendation based on the current phasing to Parliament St and the more up to date information on taking the line straight to Cherry St Loop for any recommendations, but these needs to move forth now.

1: Waterfront Toronto to proceed with the 3 years construction work for the surface area from the New Portal location to Parliament St as Phase 1. This will include the filling in the Yonge Slip area. This is the first phase of funding from the City 10 Capital budget. This could be completed by 2025/26 based on 100% construction drawings done in late 2021 or early 2022 with tender in 2022 and construction started in late 2022 or early 2023.

2: If the extension to Cherry St Loop can be done in this 3-year window, it would be best to do so depending what impact it will have on the capital budget since it not in the current one that I know of.

3: TTC needs to start work on building the new portal up to Bay St only with current service still in place once TTC can start work on it. This will require the closure of a lane of traffic for shoring that will force traffic to be on detour. Construction could start around 2025, depending when the new entrance to the hotel is ready from the Yonge Slip.

4: Once Waterfront Toronto work is near completion to the portal including tracks and overhead system, TTC will suspend service for 509 and 510 streetcar and be replaced with buses. At this point, TTC will rebuild the current portal so it becomes part of the new portal. During the rebuilding of the existing portal as well the new one, a T connection for tracks to allow service from both directions to use the Bay Tunnels and an east-west connection. This will allow TTC to offer east-west service while the Bay tunnels and loop are being rebuilt. Looking at about 6 months of bus service until the east-west line service comes into service.

5: TTC will proceed with the rebuilding of the Bay Tunnels, loop and four platforms where two will be for off loading and two for loading after that section is close off once east-west service starts. The rebuilt tunnels, loop and platforms will reopen once all the work is 100% completed.

6: TTC removes the Bremmer line from their master plan since it has never been carried forward during the Transit Reset Study nor is there a need for it. I am sure TTC will still push for it, but the plan portal will now be on the west side of York St if it every built compared to the plan east side.

7: TTC needs to review how various type of service for limit and special service that will bypassing Union Station fitted into all the new service been plan on the Waterfront as far west as Parklawn Dr.

8: Time to revisit the original plan of having grass in TTC ROW to stop the illegal drivers using the ROW since both the Fire Department, EMS and police have never used the ROW since it opened from all my time down there as well photos shot of them. You will find the fire department using the westbound lanes more than the eastbound lanes to go east. It will help with water run off and having a less impact of the storm water system.

9: Failing grass, artificial turf be use.

10: Failing 8 and 9, red or yellow paint be used at all intersection and to be extend 100 feet on either side of the intersection on the ROW with Transit Only painted on it in large lettering. A section of mid block or a few areas could be also paint with transit only on it as well.

11: Better markings and provision at crosswalks for TTC track area be looked at since pedestrians fail to observe TTC streetcars clearance while waiting to the light to change to cross the street. This is one of several issues causing TTC to operate service below the speed limit for safety issues. Same applies for the MGT.

12: More mature trees are needed since a fair number have died over the years as they were too young, poorly planted or for lack of watering. One must look at the trees along the water edge to see the different between the 2 areas and they are better-looking trees. Other type of trees should be look at.

13: Stonework and pavers need to be reviewed as some are failing way too soon, causing issues for various people and to show where driveways are.

14: Because of illegal drivers using TTC ROW, its time to have signage posted advising drivers not to use the ROW, arrows on the road when turning off major streets and areas south of the ROW to other options.

15: Not sure if having the MGT 5 cm being lower is a good idea.

16: Far too many illegal delivery trucks parking in the westbound lane blocking the flow of westbound traffic to the point there have been far too many near miss head on collisions when westbound drivers try driving around these trucks. Car drivers are also causing the same issue when someone goes in to buy something or if they are waiting for someone.

17: With a full 35-metre ROW for this expansion, some of the extra space can be used to deal with several issues as note above as well more sidewalk space. Increasing the width of the MGT will have some improvement those who use it.

18: Based on the COVID 19 Virus, extra space is needed for any patio plan along the street edge.

19: Plants and flowers that need little maintenance could be placed between MGT and TTC ROW to cut down on the number of pedestrians walking out in front of TTC Streetcars while not paying attention crossing the tracks in mid block.

20: We need to start landscaping various north-south streets as part of this expansion.

Traffic Construction and Detours

Those who have been around when the rebuilding of Queens Quay W first took place years ago know full well there was traffic congestion and detours. What we will see with the construction of this expansion is less traffic on Queens Quay since the bulk of the traffic has been more through traffic than local.

Based on checking licence plates during the QQW EA, it was found there was more than enough lane space for one lane of traffic in place of two lanes in each direction to service the local community and visitors. Most traffic was using QQ as a bypass to get around traffic on the Gardiner and the Lakeshore.

At times there was a lane in each direction, but in the end, it was a single lane going in one direction that changed direction from time to time until the north traffic lanes were in place.

For the next 10-20 years, there will be construction for new development along the existing and new Queens Quay E as well the new extension for the West Don Lands and Portlands that will have an impact on traffic.

A new 71 story tower is plan for the parking garage at Simcoe St and Harbour St.

Then you got the Hybrid Gardiner that has yet to get underway. I would rather see the grand Boulevard that Waterfront Toronto would prefer to see. This will save 100's of millions in taxpayer money. We have only had to look at the change to Harbour St with the existing off-ramps gone to see it was the right thing to do.

Queens Quay W Rebuilt and Bathurst St.

The next few years will require TTC to replace track west of Dan Lecki Way that will require the conversion of Queens Quay to be rebuilt to match the existing since TTC was not willing to pay \$15 million to replace the tracks ahead of schedule during the rebuilding of Queens Quay W.

During the Transit Reset Study, it was recommended that Bathurst St streetcar tracks be move to the west side in its own ROW from Fort York Blvd to Queens Quay as well rebuilding Fleet intersection for Transit only to allow full width accessibility platforms and bike lane. An EA will be required to do this change.