

MEETING DATE December 17, 2003

SUBJECT Staff Response to Commission Inquiry – Easier Access Program

Status Report

At its meeting of November 19, 2003, the Commission requested that staff report back to the December Commission meeting on station prioritization for the Easier Access Program, including the feasibility of expanding the program to include stations that are the least expensive to retrofit.

The Easier Access program has been ongoing for several years. Under the Easier Access Phase II project, twenty-two (22) key Subway/RT stations will be accessible including Osgoode Station which was added in the 2004 – 2008 Budget. To date, thirteen (13) stations have been made accessible, four (4) are currently under construction and five (5) others are scheduled to be completed by 2007. Two (2) other stations have been made accessible under other projects and all five (5) stations of the Sheppard Subway have been also made accessible. This is summarized in Appendix A.

The remaining forty-one (41) Subway/RT non-accessible stations are included in the Easier Access Phase III project. While this continues to be a below the line project in the 2004 -2008 Budget, the Easier Access Phase III Study is included above the line. The intent of this study is to establish the priority of construction for the remaining Subway/RT stations. Conceptual layouts and order of magnitude estimates will be developed to facilitate prioritization of the stations.

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) was established in 1992 to provide a mechanism for ongoing public participation on accessible conventional transportation and specialized transportation issues. The Committee provides advice to the Commission and represents the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities and seniors who use Commission services. Over the last few years, staff have been working with ACAT towards the establishment of the priorities for the Easier Access Phase III stations using available information such as:

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- the geographical distribution of accessible stations,
- daily passenger use,
- connections to bus routes that are, or will be, accessible,
- access to private buildings and strategic facilities, and
- proximity to senior citizens' homes and hospitals.

However, other criteria such as cost, feasibility of implementation and constructibility were not available for consideration. The Easier Access Phase III Study will provide these criteria to facilitate prioritization of the stations.

Staff have reviewed the Commission’s inquiry with ACAT and have agreed that station prioritization for the Easier Access Program should only be determined after the completion of the Easier Access Phase III Study.

While the cost of making a station accessible is one of the criteria that will be considered in the study, those stations least expensive to retrofit may not necessarily be the most beneficial to persons with disabilities and the elderly.

The Easier Access Phase III study is expected to be completed in the summer/fall of 2004, at which time staff will present the results to the Commission and recommend proceeding with the design of the higher priority stations if funding is available.

Chief General Manager

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Attachment – Appendix A

Appendix A

Subway/RT Station Accessibility

Easier Access Phase II			Other Projects			Sheppard Subway			Easier Access Phase III	
1	Finch	C	1	Downsview	C	1	Sheppard	C	1	North York
2	York Mills		2	Spadina B-D	C	2	Bayview	C	2	Lawrence
3	Eglinton	UC				3	Bessarion	C	3	Summerhill

									27	Bay
									28	Sherbourne
									29	Castle Frank
									30	Chester
									31	Pape
									32	Donlands
									33	Greenwood
									34	Coxwell
									35	Woodbine
									36	Victoria Park
									37	Warden
									38	Lawrence East
	Legend								39	Ellesmere
C	Completed								40	Midland
UC	Under Construction								41	McCowan
Total Number of Stations = 70 (considering Spadina B-D and Spadina Y-U-S as two separate stations)										