

**MEETING DATE:**April 6, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Spadina Subway Extension Environmental Assessment Study Phase One – Public Consultation Results

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Forward this report to the City of Toronto Planning and Transportation Committee, the Regional Municipality of York, the City of Vaughan and GO Transit for information.

### **FUNDING**

While there is no funding implication associated with this report, sufficient funds have been included for work related to the Environmental Assessment in Project 3.9, under Environmental Assessment for Spadina Subway Extension to Steeles, as set out on pages 871 to 874 - Category Expansion, in the TTC 2005-2009 Capital Program as approved by City Council on February 23, 2005. The Environmental Assessment is jointly funded by the Province of Ontario, the City of Toronto and the Regional Municipality of York.

### **BACKGROUND**

URS Canada Inc. was retained at the October 20, 2004 Commission Meeting to conduct the Environmental Assessment Study. The Study, which involves the development and evaluation of alternative alignments and station locations, is now underway. The Environmental Assessment Study is being conducted in three phases, as follows:

1. **Phase One** – Development of alternative subway routes and evaluation criteria.
2. **Phase Two** – Analysis/evaluation and selection of the preferred subway route and development of alternative subway alignments.
3. **Phase Three** – Selection and detailed Environmental Assessment of preferred alignment and study recommendations and conclusions.

Public Information Centres (PIC's) are held during each phase of the Study to seek public input in advance of key decision points. The PIC's consist of an open house, a staff presentation and a facilitated workshop.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### Overview

The Phase One PIC's were held at York University on February 10, 2005 and at CW Jefferys Collegiate Institute on February 13, 2005. Approximately 1,000 people attended the open house and 50 people attended the workshop at York University and 100 people attended the open house

and 40 people attended the workshop at CW Jefferys. The open house and workshop presentations and interactive commenting forms were also available on-line at [www.ttc.ca](http://www.ttc.ca). The following were presented for public review and comment:

1. Results of previous studies, including the 1994-approved Environmental Assessment and the 2001 Rapid Transit Expansion Study;
2. An inventory of existing and future conditions in the Study Area;
3. Eight routes recommended for further analysis and evaluation; and
4. Evaluation criteria and indicators to be used to select the preferred route.

#### Alternative Subway Routes

Eight routes (see attached drawings) have been developed to satisfy the following project objectives:

1. Provide subway service to the Keele/Finch area, York University and a new inter-regional transit terminal at Steeles Avenue;
2. Provide connections between the TTC subway and GO Transit (rail and bus), York Region Transit/VIVA and TTC buses;
3. Support local population and employment growth;
4. Minimize adverse environmental effects; and
5. Achieve reasonable capital and operating costs.

All routes would terminate at the Station at Steeles Avenue in the vicinity of lands acquired by York Region for a future inter-regional transit terminal. The key differences between the eight routes are summarized in Table One (attached).

## Public Comments and Study Team Response

Open house attendees were requested to provide their remarks using general comment forms. Workshop and on-line participants provided more detailed comments by answering questions provided in a 30-page work book. The main comments received and the follow-up actions by the Study Team are summarized below and are detailed in Table Two (attached):

1. **Review of Previous Studies** – Most respondents endorsed the 2001 Rapid Transit Expansion Study recommendations related to the Spadina Subway Extension (i.e. extend the Spadina Subway from Downsview Station via York University to Steeles Avenue, and, ultimately, to the future Vaughan Corporate Centre and conduct further study into the best route from Downsview Station to Steeles Avenue). These recommendations are the basis for the Environmental Assessment Study.
2. **Study Area Boundaries** – Participants reviewed the Study Area boundaries, which were selected to encompass the potential environmental impacts of the Spadina Subway Extension. The vast majority supported the proposed Study Area bounded by Sheppard Avenue West (south), Black Creek (west), Highway 7 (north) and Wilmington Avenue (east). Accordingly, this Study Area will be adopted for the Environmental Assessment.
3. **Inventory of Existing and Future Conditions** – Respondents were asked to identify any missing features that would be important in selecting the preferred route. Additional details of the York University buildings and green spaces were requested and the Finch Hydro Corridor allotment gardens were also identified. These will be added to the inventory and will be documented in the final Environmental Assessment Report.
4. **Route Evaluation Criteria and Indicators** – In response to the request for comments on the proposed evaluation criteria and indicators to be used to select the preferred route, members of the public emphasized the importance of safety, convenient access to subway stations for a wide range of transportation modes, minimizing noise and vibration impacts, minimizing construction and operating costs, and maximizing revenue. Several route evaluation criteria and indicators have been modified based on public input, as shown in Table Three (attached). These will be used to select the preferred route during Phase Two of the Environmental Assessment Study. Other proposed additional indicators will be used during the detailed evaluation of alternative alignments during Phase Three.
5. **Alternative Subway Routes** – Respondents were requested to review and comment on the eight alternative routes developed by the Study Team and recommend any additional routes to be analysed. The majority agreed that the Study Team had identified a reasonable range of alternatives routes. Respondents indicated a high level of support for Routes 1 and 2. Based on these comments, the Study Team will proceed with the analysis of the eight alternative routes. The results of the analysis and the recommended preferred route will be presented at PIC #2.

## Next Steps

During Phase Two, the Study Team will:

1. Evaluate and recommend the preferred route;
2. Develop alternative alignments and station locations within the preferred route; and
3. Prepare evaluation criteria and indicators to be used to analyse the alternative alignments.

The results of Phase Two of the Study will be presented to the public for review and comment during PIC #2, which is currently scheduled for May 2005.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

A comprehensive public consultation program is required during the Environmental Assessment Study in order to satisfy the requirements of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act.

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Attachments



















**Table One**  
**Summary of Differences between Proposed Spadina Subway Extension Routes**

<b>Route</b>	<b>GO Bradford Rail Interchange Station Located At:</b>	<b>Keele/Finch Area Station Located At:</b>	<b>York University Station Located At:</b>
1	Sheppard Avenue West	Keele/Finch intersection	Commons
2	Sheppard Avenue West	Keele/ Murray Ross intersection	Commons
3	Sheppard Avenue West	Keele/ Murray Ross intersection	Sentinel
4	Sheppard Avenue West	Keele/Finch intersection	Sentinel
5	Finch Avenue West	Keele/ Murray Ross intersection	Commons
6	Finch Avenue West	Keele/ Murray Ross intersection	Sentinel
7	Chesswood Drive	Keele/ Murray Ross intersection	Commons
8	Chesswood Drive	Keele/ Murray Ross intersection	Sentinel

**Table Two**  
**Key Comments and Study Team Response**

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comment/Issue</b>	<b>Project Team Action/ Response</b>
1) Review of Previous Studies	a) Support Rapid Transit Expansion Study recommendation to extend Subway to Steeles Avenue and ultimately to Vaughan Corporate Centre. Steeles Station identified as potential transit gateway for York Region services.	No further action required.
	b) Continue to monitor need for Yonge-Spadina Subway Loop (i.e. connection between the terminal station of the Spadina Subway Extension and Finch Station).	TTC/City staff to continue to monitor need for Yonge-Spadina Subway Loop.
2) Study Area Boundaries	a) Support proposed Study Area boundaries.	No action required.
	b) Extend north boundary to Rutherford Road (limited number of respondents).	Current northern Study Area boundary at Highway 7 is 6 kilometres north of proposed terminal station at Steeles. All anticipated environmental impacts of the Spadina Subway Extension to Steeles would occur south of Highway 7 (2 kilometres north of Steeles Avenue). Therefore, a northern extension of the Study Area is not recommended.
3) Inventory of Existing and Future Conditions	a) Provide more detailed exhibits showing academic buildings and green spaces on York University Campus.	More detailed information to be presented during Phase Two consultation and documented in final Environmental Assessment Report.
	b) Add allotment gardens in Finch Hydro corridor to presentation materials.	Information to be added to existing conditions inventory and documented in final Environmental Assessment Report.
4) Route Evaluation Criteria and Indicators	a) Add “pedestrians and commuter parking” to indicators measuring ease of accessibility for other travel modes. (B1.2)	Indicator revised according to comment.
	b) Add indicator which measures “passenger comfort and operating speed”. (New)	To be used as indicator for evaluation of alignments in Phase Three of Environmental Assessment Study.
	c) Remove indicator about conformity with development objectives of Downsview lands and York University. (Note: Some respondents were concerned that development plans should be revised to be compatible with proposed subway. However, more respondents ranked this indicator as one of the most important considerations for	Indicator to be retained. More respondents felt this was an important indicator compared to those who requested removal.

Topics	Comment/Issue	Project Team Action/ Response
	the evaluation of routes). (C2.1)	
	d) Add “high density, mixed use” to indicator about stimulating redevelopment at stations. (C2.3)	Indicator revised according to comment.
	e) Emphasize consideration of safety for subway and bus passengers and cyclists (in addition to pedestrians). (C3.2)	Indicator revised according to comment.
	f) Add evaluation criteria to “minimize noise and vibration impacts of subway, buses, and traffic”. (New)	To be used as indicator for evaluation of alignments in Phase Three of Environmental Assessment Study.
	g) Add indicator to measure cost savings of open cut or at-grade routes. (New)	To be used as indicator for evaluation of alignments in Phase Three of Environmental Assessment Study.
5) Alternative Subway Routes	a) Reasonable range of routes identified for further analysis (majority of respondents).	No further action required.
	b) Locate GO-interface station in Finch hydro corridor to connect to “future LRT” or in centre of Keele Industrial area (roughly the same location) (2 respondents).	This location would result in elimination of the station at Keele/Finch, which is one of the key project objectives. A study is underway to identify potential use of hydro corridors. However, a future LRT is not planned for the Finch Hydro corridor at this time. Therefore, no further action is required for Environmental Assessment Study.
	c) Strongly prefer either Routes 1 or 2.	Analysis of routes to be conducted and preferred route to be identified during Phase Two of Environmental Assessment Study.
6) Other Comments	a) Strongly support implementation of Spadina Subway Extension.	Environmental Assessment study is the first step towards implementation. Design and construction are subject to funding availability.
	b) Support alternative subway projects (limited number of respondents).	No further action. Subway expansion priorities identified in 2001 Rapid Transit Expansion Study and 2003 Ridership Growth Strategy.
	c) Plan Spadina Subway Extension to minimize costs and maximize revenues.	This is one of the key project objectives.
	d) Suggest refinements to general station locations.	Detailed station layouts to be developed and evaluated during Phases Two and Three of the Environmental Assessment Study.
	e) Improve east-west bus services.	Ridership on all TTC routes are carefully monitored including major east-west routes, such as 39 – Finch West and 53 – Steeles West. TTC’s

Topics	Comment/Issue	Project Team Action/ Response
		Ridership Growth Strategy calls for increased service levels on major bus routes at peak and off-peak times. Implementation is subject to funding availability.

Table Three

**Final Route Evaluation Criteria and Indicators**

Project Objectives	Evaluation Criteria	Indicators
A) Provide subway service to the Keele/Finch area, York University and a new inter-regional transit terminal at Steeles Avenue.	A1) Convenience for riders to walk to local stations.	A1.1) Existing population and employment within 500 m walking distance of stations.  A1.2) Future population and employment within 500 m walking distance of stations.  A1.3) Students, faculty and staff within 500 m walking distance of the York University station.
B) Provide improved connections between the TTC subway and GO Transit, York Region Transit and TTC buses.	B1) Convenience for other modes of travel.	B1.1) Connection to Finch West Bus (Route 36) and Keele Bus (Route 41) in the Keele/Finch area.  B1.2) Ease of accessibility for other travel modes (taxi, bicycle, pedestrians, WheelTrans, passenger pick-up and drop-off, commuter parking, ambulatory/non-ambulatory disabled persons).
C) Support local population and employment growth.	C1) Conform with current approved planning documents.	C1.1) Conformity with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Toronto planning documents.  C1.2) Conformity with the goals, objectives and policies of the Region of York and the City of Vaughan planning documents.
	C2) Maximize redevelopment potential in support of the subway extension.	C2.1) Conformity with the objectives of the new City of Toronto Official Plan.  C2.2) Conformity with the development objectives of Downsview lands and York University.  C2.3) Potential to stimulate appropriate, intensified redevelopment in proximity to station locations.
	C3) Maximize the potential to create a high quality urban/ pedestrian	C3.1) Ability to integrate stations with the existing and future built form.



<b>Project Objectives</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
	environment.	C3.2) Potential to enhance the existing and future built form and create a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and passengers.

<b>Project Objectives</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
D) Minimize adverse environmental effects.	D1) Protect existing stable land uses.	D1.1) Length of subway route adjacent to residential neighbourhoods.  D1.2) Length of route within Keele Industrial area.  D1.3) Number of sensitive operations at York University within the zone of influence of the subway extension.
	D2) Minimize the potential effects on important natural and cultural heritage features.	D2.1) Number of important natural heritage features within the zone of influence of the subway extension.  D2.2) Area of groundwater discharge within the zone of influence of the subway extension.  D2.3) Number of important cultural heritage features within the zone of influence of the subway extension.
E) Achieve reasonable capital and operating costs.	E1) Minimize the capital and operating costs of the subway extension.	E1.1) Length of subway route.
	E2) Maximize the revenue generated from the subway extension.	E2.1) Total number of a.m. peak passengers on the subway extension.
	E3) Maximize the subway extension in lands with no property costs to the project.	E3.1) Length of subway route within existing road rights-of-way.