

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: November 26, 2008

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT BUSES ON ST. ALBANS ROAD

INFORMATION ITEM: X

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Commission receive this report for information, noting that:

- residents of the new condominiums adjacent to Kipling Station have asked that TTC buses cease laying over on St. Albans Road in front of their buildings;
- Kipling Station has long been deficient in both bus bay capacity and layover capacity, resulting in the need to accommodate bus layovers on the north side of St. Albans Road in order to keep the Kipling bus terminal operating efficiently;
- the need for buses to layover on St. Albans Road will disappear once the planned permanent improvements to Kipling Station are completed in 2009-2010, including a new pedestrian entrance at the station's east end, an additional bus bay, and expanded in-station layover space;
- in the interim, in response to residents' concerns, TTC staff have taken several actions, outlined in this report, to minimise the environmental and traffic impacts from buses stopped on St. Albans Road; and
- further action is being taken to restrict bus layovers on St. Albans Road, as much as possible, to peak periods only, when the station is busiest, and to enhance monitoring of bus operations at this station.

FUNDING

This report has no effect on the TTC's Capital or Operating Budgets.

BACKGROUND

St. Albans Road is located adjacent to Kipling Station and is used by buses for access to and from the Kipling Station bus terminal (see Exhibit 1). For many years, the Kipling bus terminal has been operating at its practical capacity, with some routes doubled up in single bus bays, and layover space inside the station being limited to only two buses. In order to ensure uninterrupted, efficient operation within the terminal, layovers are often taken outside of the

station, on the north side of St. Albans Road. This practice, which has been ongoing for many years, had virtually no impact on surrounding areas because there was little traffic on St. Albans Road and, for a long time, the property on the north side of St. Albans Road was largely vacant.

Over the last few years, redevelopment has occurred on the north side of St. Albans Road, directly across from Kipling Station, with the construction and occupation of four new condominium towers, and a fifth just beginning construction. The four occupied towers are *Essex 1* and *Essex 2*, which are located on the north side of the property, closer to Dundas Street West, and *Nuvo 1* and *Nuvo 2*, which are located on the south side of the property, closest to St. Albans Road (see Exhibit 1). The fifth building, *Parc Nuvo*, will be located on the south-east portion of the property. Two new garage access driveways to these condominiums are located on St. Albans Road which, together with a new commuter parking lot on the Westwood Theatre lands to the east, has resulted in increased local traffic on this street.

The residents of the four existing condominium buildings have expressed concerns to TTC staff and their local Councillor about the impacts of buses parking on St. Albans Road, and have asked that this practice be stopped. Over the past year, TTC staff have met with representatives of both the property management team and the Board of Directors for the Condominium Corporation, and have also responded to concerns in writing. A petition, dated August 1, 2008, signed by 138 residents of the building at 35 Viking Lane (*Nuvo 1 at Essex*), was brought by Commissioner Milczyn to the Commission meeting on September 18, 2008, at which time the Commission requested that staff report back on this issue. This report responds to that request.

DISCUSSION

Kipling Station is one of the busiest stations in the system, being used by 10 different bus routes, with a total of 14 peak period branches and 88 bus-trips per peak hour. Approximately 40,000 customers per day use the buses at this station, representing 70-80% of the total station usage. The bus terminal is operating over its practical capacity because there are only nine bus bays available in the station, and the minimal layover space that is provided is poorly-located and is often taken up by maintenance, delivery and retail service vehicles. Current TTC engineering design standards require that a dedicated layover space for several buses be included in any new station design, as well as a sufficient number of bus bays to accommodate expected bus traffic well into the future. When Kipling Station was designed and built, the standards of the day did not allow for layover space within the station (the existing two spaces were added later), and plans did not envision the volume of bus traffic that currently uses the terminal. According to current design standards, Kipling Station is deficient by up to 6 bus bays and several layover spaces.

This over-capacity situation has been an ongoing problem, and often results in buses using the same bus bay being in the station at the same time. With no spare bays and limited layover space, buses either have to block the station driveway, or layover on the street.

These deficiencies will be addressed permanently as part of the TTC's planned capital improvements to Kipling Station, which will add a new pedestrian entrance to the east end of the station, one additional bus bay, and layover space for several buses at the same time. Construction will be starting in the next few months on these improvements, with completion expected in 2009-2010. Once complete, buses will no longer have to park on-street, and the new pedestrian entrance to the station will provide added transit accessibility to the residents of *Essex* and *Nuvo* condominiums.

In the meantime, TTC staff have recognized that the long-standing practice of buses laying over on St. Albans Road has impacts on the new residents of the adjacent condominiums, and that these impacts should be addressed to the greatest extent possible. The concerns, as expressed by residents, are twofold:

1. environmental impacts due to buses idling directly below the condominium windows (i.e. noise and exhaust fumes); and
2. traffic safety impacts of parked buses (i.e. blocking of the condominium driveway accesses, impaired sightlines for private vehicles exiting the condo driveways, and inadequate passing space on the road).

TTC staff have, to date, taken the following actions to address these concerns:

- minimised scheduled layovers at Kipling Station wherever possible, although it is not possible to eliminate these altogether;
- adjusted schedules, wherever possible, to minimise the instances where buses sharing a single bay in the station are scheduled to be in the station at the same time, although, again, it is not possible to eliminate these altogether;
- designated locations on St. Albans Road for up to three buses to park, when necessary, such that condominium access is not impeded and safe sightlines are maintained;
- arranged for City Transportation to relocate the yellow centre line of St. Albans Road to provide adequate space in the westbound lane for other vehicles to pass stopped buses safely without encroaching into the oncoming lane; and
- instructed bus Operators to observe the 3-minute idling limit whenever possible.

In addition, Surface Operations staff are arranging for enhanced monitoring of this location, as existing supervisory resources allow, and bus Operators will be instructed to restrict layovers on St. Albans Road to peak periods only, and to keep their buses in the station during off-peak periods when the station is not as busy.

These measures, while not eliminating entirely the impacts of bus operations on residents,

should reduce such impacts, recognizing that this is a temporary condition until the permanent improvements to Kipling Station are completed over the next two years.

October 1, 2008
11-31-53

Attachment: Exhibit 1 – Kipling Station and Environs

P:\SharedWorkArea\Commission\Commission - Reports\2008\2008-10 - October\DRAFT\St. Albans Road\Community Concerns About Buses on St. Albans Road - CR #11829.doc



Exhibit 1
**Kipling Station
and Environs**

TTC.SP.11.2008.11973