

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: February 18, 2009

SUBJECT: 39 FINCH EAST – POST-IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW OF
EXPRESS BUS CHANGES

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission forward this report to Councillors Carroll, Cho, Del Grande, Filion, Lee, Kelly, and Shiner, noting that:

1. The February, 2008, change to the stopping pattern of the 39 FINCH EAST express bus services has improved service overall for TTC customers; and
2. Express bus service will be restored to the bus stops at Wayside Avenue/Adirondack Gate, effective March 30, 2009, because a review of recent ridership shows that this will improve service overall for TTC customers.

FUNDING

This report has no effect on the TTC's operating or capital budgets.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on November 26, 2008, the Commission, in the context of considering a staff report on express bus services, passed a motion that directed staff to "report back on the feasibility of reinstating the express service on Finch Avenue that was in place prior to February 2008."

This report responds to that direction.

DISCUSSION

Post-Implementation Reviews

The TTC uses a formal process for planning and evaluating service changes based on a set of Commission-approved service standards. Every new service that the TTC introduces is initially operated on a trial basis. After a minimum six-month trial period, when ridership on the service has approached a mature state, passenger counts are taken, the performance of the route is reviewed, and a recommendation is made regarding its future. All service changes are reviewed to ensure that the original objective of better service for customers has

been met. New routes and extensions, which have been introduced at an additional cost, undergo a ridership and financial review to check that the service has met established standards of acceptable ridership and financial performance. The overall review also considers comments that have been received from customers and the community, and the experience that has been gained in operating the service.

A service change, which has met its performance objectives, will be continued in operation. If a service change has been unsuccessful in some way, further changes will be made for another trial period, or the service will be removed.

39 FINCH EAST Bus Route – Revised Stopping Pattern of the Express Branches

The stopping pattern of the 39C, E, F, G FINCH EAST express bus service was changed, beginning on February 19, 2008. Express bus service was removed from fourteen low-usage stops between Brimley Road and Warden Avenue (seven stops in each direction), and new express bus service was introduced at 11 busy stops between Warden Avenue and Bayview Avenue (five eastbound and six westbound stops). The changes to the stops are shown on the attached Exhibit 1.

This change was implemented as part of the TTC's ongoing Ridership Monitoring and Service Adjustment process. The express bus stop changes were made without adding any buses to the route. There was no change in operating costs as a result of this express bus change.

Ridership counts on the new service were taken in the fall of 2008. Based on these counts, the express stop changes improved service for up to 7,700 customer-trips each weekday. These trips are now made with a shorter wait for a bus and a faster trip. The number of customer-trips made at the stops with new express bus service increased by approximately 2,000 each day, or 35 per cent.

The express stop changes made service worse for approximately 2,000 customer-trips that were being made at the stops that had express bus service removed. These customers now have a longer wait for the bus, and a slower trip. Approximately 1,500 fewer customer-trips each day are made at the stops where express bus service was removed. Of this total, approximately 600 customer-trips each day are now being made by walking to neighbouring stops which have express bus service. The remaining 900 customers-trips have either changed their travel patterns or stopped taking transit as a result of these changes.

Overall, the change in weighted travel time indicates that the benefits to customers of the service change are greater than the inconveniences. The change has made service better for customers and, therefore, the express bus changes will be continued.

A detailed analysis was carried out of ridership changes at all the bus stops that had express service changes, in order to determine if any further changes should be made at those specific stops. Table 1, below, shows the change in boardings and alightings at the

stops that gained and lost express service.

Table 1: Change in Stop Usage, Before and After Express Bus Changes			
Stops with Express Bus Service Removed (Boardings and Alightings, Both Directions, Each Day)			
	Daily stop usage, before express change, 2007	Daily stop usage, after express change, 2008	Change, 2007 to 2008
Alexmuir Boulevard/Chartland Boulevard	430	240	-190
Baylawn Drive	400	210	-190
CNR (west of Baylawn)	100	70	-30
Milliken	660	460	-200
Wayside Avenue/Adirondack Gate	960	550	-410
Walkway East of Birchmount Road	630	340	-290
3501 Finch Avenue (St. Aidan Church)	340	100	-240
TOTAL	3520	1970	-1550
Stops with Express Bus Service Added (Boardings and Alightings, Both Directions, Each Day)			
	Daily stop usage, before express change, 2007	Daily stop usage, after express change, 2008	Change, 2007 to 2008
Bridletowne West	830	1170	340
Pharmacy Avenue	1240	1580	340
Cherokee Boulevard	1220	1560	340
Leslie Street	1230	1850	620
Bayview Avenue	1150	1520	370
TOTAL	5670	7680	2010

Consultation with Local Councillor

At the suggestion of Commissioner Saundercook, TTC staff met with Councillor Del Grande and his staff, and Commissioner Saundercook, to discuss the changes which had been made to the express bus stops on the 39 FINCH EAST route, and to identify the issues of greatest concern and what actions might be available to address those concerns.

The discussion covered a wide range of issues pertaining to transit in Ward 39, and was very informative, open, and productive. With respect to the changes which had been made to the express bus stops on the 39 FINCH EAST route in particular, Councillor Del Grande noted the development and access patterns adjacent to the stops at

Wayside Avenue and Adirondack Gate, and that the majority of complaints that he had received had come from people who had been users of the express service at those stops. Councillor Del Grande stated that restoration of the express service at those stops would be extremely beneficial to the large number of residents in that area.

Follow-Up Action

Based on the feedback received from Councillor Del Grande, and on the observed change in ridership at the affected stops after express service was removed, the restoration of express bus service to the stops in both directions at Wayside Avenue/Adirondack Gate is warranted and recommended. Express service will be restored to this stop, starting on March 30, 2009.

JUSTIFICATION

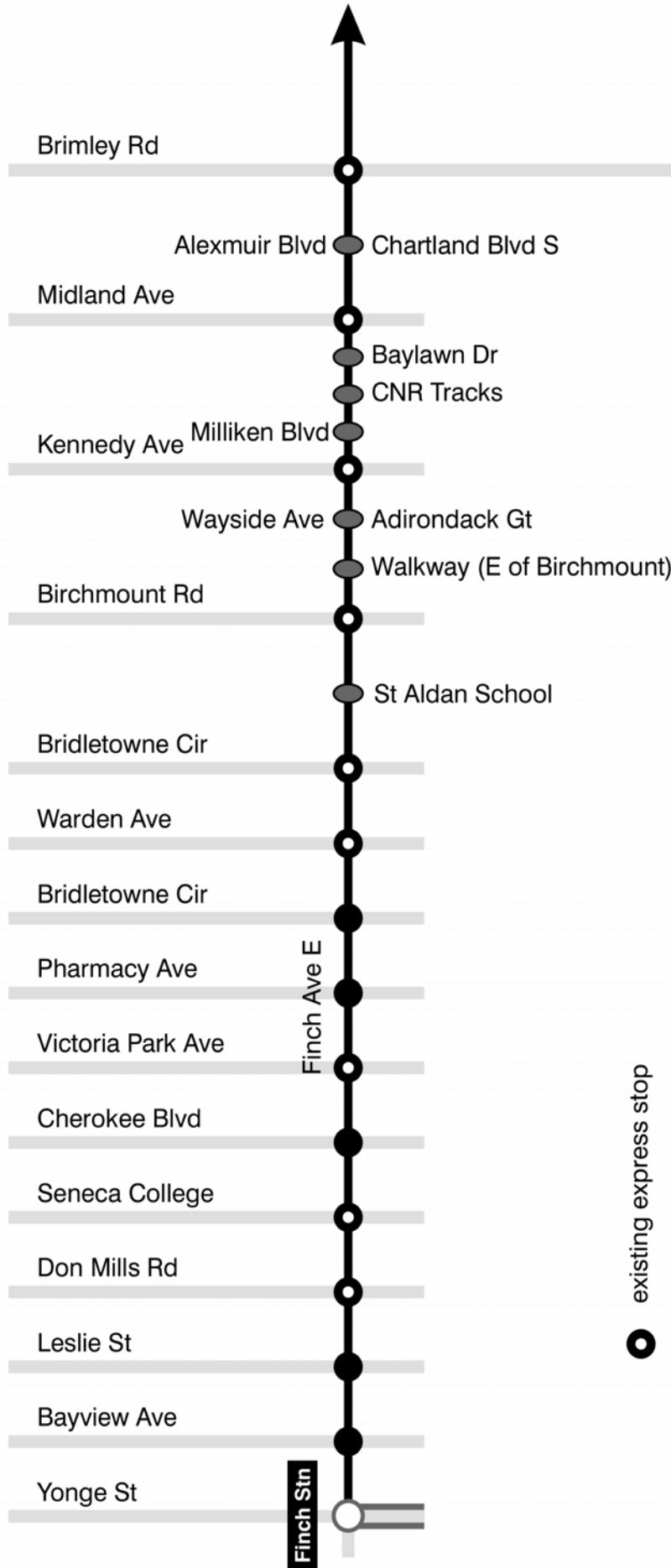
The post-implementation review of service changes is an important part of the TTC's service standards. The change to the stopping pattern of the 39 FINCH EAST express bus branches has, overall, made service better for customers. Therefore, it will be continued as a regular part of the TTC network, but with express service restored to one pair of well-patronized stops.

January 22, 2009

11-31-51

Attachments: Exhibit 1: 39 Finch East Express Stops

Exhibit 1 39 Finch East Express Stops



All stops east of Brimley Rd are served by local and express branches.

- existing express stop
- new express stop
- express stop removed