

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: September 30, 2010

SUBJECT: 53 STEELES EAST BUS ROUTE - EXTENSION TO
MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Commission:

- 1) Approve an extension of the 53 STEELES EAST bus route from Steeles Avenue/Staines Road to the Morningside Heights community, as described in this report, effective January 2, 2010; and
- 2) Forward this report to Councillors Cho, Del Grande, Filion, Lee, and Shiner, City of Toronto Transportation Services, and the Regional Municipality of York.

FUNDING

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

BACKGROUND

On a number of occasions, Councillor Cho and local residents have requested that new transit service be operated on Staines Road, between Quietbrook Crescent and Seasons Drive, to provide improved transit access to the Morningside Heights community.

This report responds to that request.

DISCUSSION

The Morningside Heights community, in north-east Toronto, is served directly by three TTC bus routes. In the southern part of the neighbourhood, the 133 NEILSON route provides service to Scarborough Centre Station, and the 116 MORNINGSIDE route provides service to Kennedy Station. At the north end of the community, the 53 STEELES EAST route provides service to Finch Station. The attached map shows the present and proposed services in the area.

The 53 STEELES EAST route was first extended to the Morningside Heights community on a trial basis in June 2007. Service was provided during the peak periods from Monday to Friday. Full off-peak service was added in November 2008, as part of the TTC's *Ridership Growth Strategy*. The 53 STEELES EAST route currently terminates on a temporary on-street looping via Staines Road and Quietbrook Crescent. A new off-street bus loop is planned for the north side of Steeles Avenue, opposite Staines Road. The construction of this loop has been delayed, but is now expected to be built in 2011. When completed, the loop will be used by the 53 STEELES EAST bus route, and one or more TTC bus routes that would be extended to Steeles Avenue from the south. Space will also be available in the loop for use by York Region Transit, and Durham Region Transit.

Given the delays to building the bus loop, which prevent extending TTC service from the south to Steeles Avenue, TTC staff have evaluated an interim routing change that would extend service on the 53 STEELES EAST route south from Steeles Avenue to the southern part of the Morningside Heights community, at all times of the week. Buses would operate from Finch Station, north on Yonge Street, east on Steeles Avenue, south on Staines Road, north on Morningside Avenue, north on Oasis Boulevard, east on Seasons Drive, north on Staines Drive, returning to its regular routing on Steeles Avenue. Service would be removed from Quietbrook Crescent. New service would be provided on Staines Drive, between Quietbrook Crescent and Seasons Drive. All other parts of the proposed routing are already used by TTC buses.

The change would be made with no additional operating costs. The new service would operate at all times of the week, every 20-to-30 minutes. The resulting service on the short section of the 53 STEELES EAST route between Markham Road and Staines Road would be less frequent than the 9-to-18 minute service operated at present. There would be no change to service levels on the 53 STEELES EAST route west of Markham Road during the busy times of the week.

It is projected that approximately 250 customer-trips each day would be made on the route extension, of which approximately 30 would be new to the TTC. These customers would have a shorter walk to the nearest TTC bus stop, or at least one fewer transfer, because of the new east-west service to the Yonge Subway that would be provided by the 53 STEELES EAST route. Approximately 320 customer-trips are made each day at the stops on the 53 STEELES EAST route east of Markham Road. These customers would have a longer wait for a bus.

The change in weighted travel time shows that the benefit of a shorter walk is more important than the inconvenience of a longer wait. Overall, the change would make service better for customers. Because this route extension would improve service for customers, it is recommended for implementation, starting January 2, 2011.

This change would be made on an interim basis. The final route network for the neighbourhood will be re-examined in advance of the opening of the new loop at Steeles Avenue and Staines Avenue. The possible replacement of the interim 53 STEELES EAST extension with an extension of the 133 NEILSON, 116 MORNINGSIDE, 39 FINCH EAST,

and/or 42 CUMMER routes will be evaluated, in consultation with the local community. Any recommended changes will be reported to the Commission.

JUSTIFICATION

The extension of the 53 STEELES EAST route south from Steeles Avenue to the Morningside Heights community would be better, overall, for customers, and should be implemented on January 2, 2011.

September 3, 2010
11-31-57

Attachment: Map

53 Steeles East

recommended extension south of Steeles Ave

