

Item 15



Notice of Motion

DVN Connects: Recommended Interim Transit Solutions (2020-2041)

Moved by: Commissioner Shelley Carroll

Seconded by: Commissioner Brad Bradford

Summary

In the Ontario Line Initial Business Case, which was unveiled to the public by Metrolinx in July 2019, it became apparent that the originally-planned Sheppard East LRT has now become a six-stop subway extension of Line 4 Sheppard, as part of the provincial government's sweeping changes to transit plans in Toronto.

As the Province and the City are now prioritizing the delivery of the Ontario Line, Line 2 East Extension and the Yonge North Subway Extension, it is unlikely that Sheppard East will see completion of any higher-order transit, LRT or subway, in at least the next two decades. The community is left to grapple with the negative effects of accelerated development growth, including Consumers Road Business Park, which was planned on the premise of a future LRT line, without any significant transit investments or expansion in place.

Since January 2019, a community initiative with the local Councillor, DVN Connects, consisting of drivers, transit riders, pedestrians and cyclists of all ages in Don Valley North, have convened to discuss the impact of congestion and possible interim cost-effective solutions.

The group has requested the local councillor to direct staff to report back with quantitative data, such as projected changes in ridership and transit and vehicular travel times, taking into account development intensification and the lack of higher-order transit on Sheppard Avenue east of Don Mills. The group has also prepared a list of suggestions for the Board and staff to consider in order to address the growing needs for mobility in Don Valley North and beyond.

Recommendation

1. That the Board direct staff to confirm with Metrolinx and study the impact of the lack of higher-order transit on Sheppard Avenue East in the medium term and report back by the end of Q4 2020.
2. That the Board direct staff to study and report back in the same report on suggested interim solutions including those provided by DVN Connects in Attachment 1.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – DVN Connects: Recommended Interim Transit Solutions (2020-2041)
for Don Valley North

Date: February 12, 2020



DVN Connects: Recommended Interim Transit Solutions (2020-2041) for Don Valley North

Background

DVN Connects was a year-long transit roundtable and community initiative, where we brought residents together to identify transportation challenges and build a community vision for the future of the Sheppard East corridor and the new ward of Don Valley North.

Throughout 2019 and early 2020, we convened four roundtable meetings, where the discussion progressed from visioning to evaluating future transit options, from brainstorming recommendations to sharing community outreach strategies. Guest speakers from Transportation Planning and advocacy group TTC Riders have helped to build a stronger understanding of transit planning in the city.

Participants were selected through a name-blind process to form a group representative of the diversity of our community, varying in age, gender, socioeconomic background, frequency of ridership and physical ability.

In June and July 2019, we hosted a Transit Town Hall and community pop-ups where we spoke with TTC riders, car drivers, renters, home owners and people of all ages. Their feedback and suggestions were brought back to the roundtable group to inform their discussions.

The following recommendations are the result of eight months of discussion and consideration by the roundtable group. They reflect the urgent need to address congestion in the area through interim cost-effective solutions before the completion of any higher-order transit on Sheppard East in at least the next two decades.

Recommendations

1. Build new bus infrastructure and bus routes

1a. Dedicated bus lane along Sheppard Avenue East between Leslie TTC Station/future Oriole GO and Agincourt GO

A dedicated bus and high occupancy lane similar to the existing configuration on Don Mills Road would improve the efficiency of bus services along Sheppard Avenue and help address the issue of congestion.

1b. Community bus routes to connect transit desert neighbourhoods to transit stations

Neighbourhoods between Bayview Avenue and Don Mills Road, between Finch Avenue East and Sheppard Avenue East currently have no bus routes running through local collector roads. Community bus routes can help residents in these neighbourhoods gain easier access to subway stations on the Sheppard line.

1c. Express bus route between Don Mills Station and Seneca College

Many students commute to Seneca College (Newnham Campus) from Don Mills Station and would overcrowd buses at peak hours. An express bus route that runs between the TTC station and the campus would help alleviate the pressure on the current Don Mills local and express routes.

2. Review existing bus routes and bus stop locations

2a. Increase service on 51 Leslie

Residents would like to see increased service frequency on the Leslie bus route to access important destinations such as North York General Hospital, Cummer Park Community Centre, and several community housing neighbourhoods. Future additions include a GO terminus at Leslie Station and several new approved development applications in the area.

2b. Review express bus stop locations

Express bus stops should better align with neighbourhood destinations such as grocery stores.

2c. Increase evening and weekend service frequency

Residents would like to see increased service frequency on evenings and weekends that will better accommodate their schedules during non-peak hours.

2d. Specific concerns or changes related to bus routes:

- **10 Van Horne:** Explore the potential of having one route that goes along the entire length of Brian Drive from Sheppard to Van Horne, rather than turning right at Pleasant View, so residents can reach the Pleasant View Community Centre, Library, and Middle School
- **42 Cummer:** Study the bus ridership figures and analyze whether there is a need to shorten headways