



## TTC 5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook City-wide Stakeholder Workshop Summary

Tuesday, June 18, 2019

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Agricola Lutheran Church, 25 Old York Mills Road



### Overview

On Tuesday, June 18, 2019, the TTC hosted the first of two planned city-wide stakeholder workshops for the TTC's 5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook. Approximately 25 people attended, in addition to staff from the TTC, City of Toronto, and the project consultant team.

The purpose of the workshop was to share and seek feedback on ideas being explored for the TTC's 5-Year Service Plan, including observations to date on challenges faced and options being considered to address those challenges, to help the TTC develop a shortlist of opportunities to recommend for immediate and longer-term service improvements on surface transit (i.e. bus and streetcar).

The workshop included an overview presentation, full-room question and answer period, breakout discussions, and plenary discussion. This workshop is part of a broader consultation program for the development of the 5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook which aims to provide a transparent blueprint for continuous service improvements on TTC's surface transit by the end of 2019.

*Attachments included: Attachment A. Agenda, Attachment B. Participant List, Attachment C. Post-Meeting Feedback.*

This workshop summary was prepared by Swerhun Inc., the third-party facilitation and engagement team retained by the TTC to support the consultation process. The intent of this summary is to capture the range of feedback shared at the workshop. It is not intended to serve as verbatim transcript. This workshop summary was subject to participant review before being finalized.

## Themes in the Feedback Shared at the Meeting

The following themes reflect a summary of the feedback received from participants during the workshop. The remainder of this summary provides additional details regarding these points, as well as many others, shared by participants.

**Significantly improve overall transit rider experience.** Overall, participants want to have frequent, fast, and reliable transit service. The TTC should think about a comprehensive way to provide system-wide improvements to the service so it is equitable across the city. Identifying the list of improvements should not just be about fixing the “pain points”.

**Maximize the potential of the surface transit network as an important backbone of transit in the city.** Improving transit in Toronto should not only be focused on subways as subways do not serve the entire city. A huge part of the city relies on buses and streetcars and the TTC should build a network of priority surface transit (i.e. exclusive transit lanes) to better serve Torontonians.

**In addition to priority surface transit, it's important for the TTC to work with local communities to identify local improvements.** Each community has different concerns and priorities. The TTC needs to work with local communities to ensure that improvements will serve the needs of the community.

**Improve integration of TTC network with other modes of transportation and transit agencies.** Many participants supported creating a seamless connection between all modes of transportation (i.e. transit, cycling, walking and cars), which is important to support the different ways people get around in the city. Improved fare and schedule integration of the TTC service with other transit agencies (e.g. GO Transit, YRT, etc.) is also needed as people live and work beyond the city. Some participants also said that creating cycling infrastructure parallel to the subway lines and using existing GO transit lines in the city could supplement and/or help alleviate crowding in the subway system.

**Implement a harmonized wayfinding system among the TTC and other transit agencies.** Participants would like to see a consistent wayfinding system in the GTA's transit system to help improve the transit experience for customers, particularly for people with disabilities.

## Questions of clarification

Following the presentation, participants asked questions of clarification. The questions are included below in **bold**, followed by responses from the project team in *italics*.

- **Has a budget been set aside for transit priority improvements?** *First, we want to identify which corridors, streets, segments, etc. we need to prioritize for potential treatments, and where does it make sense to do it. We're looking for input on where it makes sense. Once that list is created then we can identify the costs, the business case, and what will attract more ridership. If we can provide more service and priority without spending more money, then that's a plus.*

- **Is integration with GO going to be part of this project? One of our concerns is the lack of capacity in North Toronto, particularly along Line 1, to support the increased developments in the area. For example, are you looking at the ways the Richmond Hill and Barrie GO lines could be used to potentially relieve pressure off the TTC, and serve as an alternative to building a Relief Line?** *There is an ongoing service and fare integration committee discussing opportunities to incentivize the use of GO, but using the Barrie and Richmond Hill GO line as an alternative to Line 1 is not the specific focus of the 5-Year Plan.*
- **Are there any plans in the future for rapid transit in east Scarborough? There's a lot of work being done in the west of the city, but not in east Scarborough. Are you looking at providing more Express buses for Scarborough to make up for the lack of rapid transit infrastructure?** *Rapid transit (i.e. subway and Light Rail Transit) is not part of this study. The purpose of this workshop is to discuss what and where the biggest pain points are on surface transit so we can create a list of improvements we need to make and understand the business case for each, so we can identify where we can focus investments in the next five years. For transit issues in Scarborough, we are looking at identifying areas for improvement.*
- **How does this plan interact with other transit plans that haven't moved forward or haven't been completed yet (e.g. Ridership Growth Strategy (2018-2022))?** *Several improvements that are identified in the Ridership Growth Strategy are included as opportunities in the 5-Year Plan. This Plan will also support and achieve the vision and strategies in various City and Provincial policy documents, including the Official Plan.*
- **Are we supposed to consider interventions that rest wholly on the TTC? Or is it TTC and the City? Will it require the Province to agree to the plans?** *The 5-Year Service Plan will be implemented by the TTC and the City.*
- **This study does a comparative analysis with other North American cities – what about cities outside of these countries?** *When we do peer reviews, we look at US and Canadian cities because the urban structure (e.g. roads, planning, etc.) is very similar to Toronto. However, please let us know if there are specific locations that you think make sense and that we should include.*
- **The Line 1 Capacity Requirements – Status Update and Preliminary Implementation Strategy report outlined 19 specific actions for Line 1 – is that a separate study and is there an overlap?** *There is an overlap between the Line 1 Capacity Requirements report and the emerging opportunities that will be explored in this Plan, which will look at improvements for the 2024-2025 horizon.*
- **We need additional surface routes to handle the large volume of subway ridership. Even with signal improvements and the Eglinton Crosstown, there is still a capacity problem. If you look at the surface-level transit map, there are a bunch of red lines that go into Line 1.** *Part of this study is to look at the service requests regarding express services to relieve Line 1.*

- **Are we able to discuss projects that are being completed later (e.g. SmartTrack)?**  
*SmartTrack is just outside of the 5-Year Plan's horizon which is 2020-2024, but we are open to hearing your suggestions.*

## Detailed Feedback

Participants had the opportunity to participate in at least two of the six concurrent small table discussions, each focused on one of the emerging opportunities. Feedback shared at the breakout discussion as well as the plenary are organized into appropriate topic areas below. Note that the numbering of points does not intend to imply any type of priority.

### Reliable transit schedules

1. **Significantly improve service reliability.** The unreliability of service is a huge concern for transit riders. With increasing passenger volume, it is important for the TTC to improve service reliability to enhance the transit experience.
2. **Ensure there is frequent service to justify the implementation of transit priority.** It is important for the TTC to ensure there is frequent service to support transit priority solutions (e.g. exclusive transit lanes) on busy corridors. Implementation of exclusive transit lanes could face push back, particularly in the suburbs where private vehicle use is more prevalent, if there is no appropriate service capacity to support the allocation of a designated transit space.
3. **Ensure there is proper spacing between vehicle arrivals.** It is important to have adequate intervals between buses and streetcars arriving at stops and implement solutions to address bunching. They suggested tracking vehicle arrival at all stops along their route, not just when vehicles leave and arrive at the station.
4. **Review layout of certain transit hubs to improve flow of buses.** For example, the bus loop at UofT Scarborough services numerous transit routes within a limited space, which could sometimes slow down loading and unloading of passengers. Participants would like to see an improved bus bay layout to create a more effective flow for buses coming and going and ensure that buses stay on schedule.
5. **Ensure drivers who do not follow the schedule receive appropriate disciplinary action.** Participants said that bus drivers who are late due to personal reasons (e.g. taking long breaks) should be held responsible. A participant said that suspension with pay is not enough for disciplinary action. *The TTC has a system to discipline drivers who do not follow the schedule, and it is important to report these incidents so the TTC can take appropriate action.*

#### Location-specific suggestions

- Provide more frequent service on Finch Ave.
- Improve reliability of streetcar service in the Parkdale area.
- Improve reliability of bus service in Midland Ave and Sheppard Ave East, as well as the 17 Birchmount bus from Eglinton Ave to St. Clair Ave.
- Implement transit priority solutions for Express buses heading to UofT Scarborough.

## Prioritize transit on busiest corridors

1. **Build a high-performance surface transportation network.** Transit should not only be prioritized on isolated route segments, instead there should be an entire network of prioritized services. A participant suggested setting more ambitious plans and major changes to the surface transit network as it is the major backbone of transit in the city. Another suggested creating a “circle route” of priority buses.
2. **Bus prioritization should be developed with a full Complete Streets plan.** Implementing solutions to make buses flow faster and more reliably should not result in elimination of cars. Pedestrians, bikes, buses and private vehicles should be able to appropriately and safely share the road.
3. **Implement bus priority solutions quickly.** Participants would like to see bus priority solutions to be implemented quickly to improve the quality of service provided to customers. The TTC needs to build the support required to ensure these solutions will be implemented.
4. **Consider the social inclusion component when developing plans to improve transit corridors.** Providing high-quality bus service is critical for the social inclusion of newcomers and disadvantaged groups.
5. **Implement more aggressive transit actions in the suburbs.** The transit conversation in the city should not only focus on subways as there are areas outside the core (e.g. Scarborough and Etobicoke) that are underserved by transit. Getting support from local councillors are needed to push forward plans to amplify the bus service in the suburbs.
6. **Create more north-south surface level solutions.** A high-quality north-south service is necessary to supplement and relieve the heavy ridership on Line 1. Explore servicing express buses on Yonge or nearby parallel roadways entering the core. Look into Avenue Rd, Bay St and Don Mills Rd.
7. **Minimize transfers by making major east-west bus routes to continue service beyond Yonge.** Some bus routes coming from either east or west end their routes on Yonge St and require riders who need to travel beyond Yonge St to get off and change buses at crowded stations.
8. **Refer to the Transit City report** to see different networks and priorities envisioned for the city.
9. **Replicate the King Street Pilot in other busy corridors.**

### *Location-specific suggestions*

- Create queue jump lanes on Finch Ave and near subway stations.
- Create a Bus Rapid Transit on Kingston Ave, as well as between subway stations in north Toronto.
- Implement transit priority solutions on Sheppard Ave.
- Improve bus service at Seneca College to safely move students and staff by transit and accommodate the College’s growth.

## Enhance customer experience at busiest stops

- 1. Improvements to stop areas should not only focus on the busiest stop areas.** Solutions should be implemented across the system. There are many stop areas that are less busy but could still use improvements. For example, smaller shelters on less busy corridors are often not well lit, resulting in drivers occasionally driving past waiting customers. Participants suggested implementing basic improvements at all stops and providing more amenities at busiest stops.
- 2. Ensure new features added to stop areas are properly advertised.** The TTC provides a lot of interesting, new features (e.g. bike lockers, USB ports on new buses, bike repair stations, etc.) but not a lot of people know about them or know how to use them. Effective advertisement will help improve people's awareness and/or utilization of these services.
- 3. Implement consistent wayfinding strategy.** Inconsistent wayfinding could create challenges for people with disabilities. For example, people with vision impairment may be unsure if they are waiting at the correct stop, particularly at major transfer locations where more than one transit route share the same stop. Participants suggested installing consistent signage, tactile marking, and clearer, audible onboard announcements across the system. Others would like to see consistent wayfinding implemented in all transit agencies to create a seamless customer experience.

### *Comfort and convenience feedback*

- 4. Improve accuracy of real-time information** posted on digital boards at stops and stations.
- 5. Ensure consistent loading and unloading spots.** Make it easier to find drop off points for passengers, and ensure drivers stop at the same spot.
- 6. Consider allowing food trucks at key stop areas to improve place-making.** Food trucks would provide a good amenity to riders and turn key stop areas into a destination and not just a place to wait for transit.

### *Safety feedback*

- 7. Create larger shelters at busy stop areas.** Stop areas with 4,500 daily on-boardings should have bigger shelters to align with the volume of people using the stop.
- 8. Improve customer safety when crossing at midblock streetcar stops.** Provide midblock streetcar stops with adequate signs to inform people where they can cross safely.
- 9. Implement solutions to improve security at stop areas** such as installing security cameras pointed toward bike racks and bike bins and ensuring stops are well lit.
- 10. Provide safe pedestrian crossings at all TTC surface transit stops.**

### *Location-specific suggestions*

- Improve the Yonge-Sheppard intersection and turn it into a full transit hub to serve the numerous TTC routes and GO buses that load and unload people at this stop. Suggested improvements include: creating a more substantial shelter, providing more bicycle parking,

installing better signage and information to direct people to GO buses, and creating bus bay. Recognition on the TTC's system maps that connections to GO Transit can be made at Sheppard-Yonge would also be helpful for customers.

- Identify ways to improve pedestrian safety at crosswalks on Steeles Ave.
- Consider integrating the station area with the new public plaza at Weston Rd & Lawrence Ave W.
- Provide better street furniture at Finch Station.

### Connections to new higher-order transit services

1. **Improve walking and cycling connections to stops/stations** so more people would be able to walk to and bike to TTC stops and stations, particularly the future LRT.
2. **Ensure safe pedestrian and cycling crossings when accessing Line 5 and Line 6.** Surface LRT stops should have safe crossings, so riders could easily and safely get to the LRT.
3. **Ensure the cycling infrastructure is well integrated into future Line 5 and Line 6.** Participants would like to see adequate space for bike parking at stops, bike lanes along the LRT routes, and riders are able to easily bring their bikes onto the LRT vehicles.
4. **Consider extending Line 6 east to Yonge Street.** *TTC staff explained that this was included in the previous version of the plan but not in the current plan. However, current plans do not preclude the extension of Line 6 from happening in the future.*

### Integration with other agencies and other modes

1. **Create seamless connections to different transportation modes.** Participants acknowledged that having a complete street (streets designed to accommodate all modes of transportation) would be ideal but may not be possible for all streets. However, it is important to connect transit, cycling, and walking to support the different modes of travel people use.
2. **Address the first and last mile gaps.** The first and last mile gaps are a particular concern in disadvantaged communities where transit deserts are impacting people's mobility and quality of life. Participants suggested providing on-demand service to support the lack of transit service in these neighbourhoods.

#### *Cycling feedback*

3. **Improve cycling infrastructure connections to transit.** Participants shared a number of suggestions to improve cycling infrastructure, including: creating bike lanes along the subway line to supplement transit and help shorten travel time; extending the coverage of Bike Share stations in the city to help address the first and last mile gaps; providing bike repair stations at all transit stations; and improving winter maintenance on bike lanes. Participants suggested looking into the bike patterns and the number of people riding their bikes to a station to understand where there are gaps and support cyclists' use of the TTC.

4. **Explore ways to integrate the costs of transit and Bike Share use.** Participants suggested developing a partnership between the TTC and Bike Share to implement discounts on either the TTC Metropass or BikeShare membership or fees to make travel more affordable for those who use both transportation modes.
5. **Allow multiple bikes on bike racks on the bus to improve cycling and transit integration.** Current policy only allows for one bike instead of two bikes on bus bike racks.

#### *Pedestrian infrastructure feedback*

6. **Improve the design of pedestrian paths.** Formalize walking routes to bus stops by providing adequate lighting and pavement, especially in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs), to improve pedestrian comfort and safety. Consider looking into the LRT report done by Urban Strategies for the Malvern neighbourhood to identify recommended locations to formalize walking routes. Participants also suggested moving some transit stops to where more people would stop or transfer to improve travel patterns. Others would like to see pedestrian paths connected to cycling routes.

#### *Integration with other agencies and other modes feedback*

7. **Improve fare integration with other municipal transit agencies.** Explore ways to integrate fare payment so riders won't have to pay a double fare when crossing municipal boundaries. Participants said that some people walk long distances to avoid paying a double fare which presents a safety concern.
8. **Create seamless transfers with other transit agencies.** Some participants suggested that transit integration between the TTC and other transit agencies, particularly the York Region Transit, is very desirable for riders. Others would like to see improved fare and service schedule integration between the TTC and GO Transit. They also suggested allowing TTC buses to stop at GO stations to provide easier transfers for riders and integrating the GO service map onto the TTC service map.
9. **Consider using the GO trains to relieve pressure off the subway.** Look into how the Richmond Hill GO line could help alleviate crowding and serve as an alternative when there is temporary shut down on the TTC subway line.
10. **Integrate TTC service with vehicles for hire** (i.e. taxi, Uber, or Lyft) to take into consideration the emerging mobility technologies and to create a comprehensive transportation system.

#### *Location-specific suggestions*

- Create a safe cycling corridor along the Yonge subway line.
- Create a connection from the GO Oriole station to the TTC Sheppard station to address the lack of interchange.
- Formalize pedestrian paths to bus stops in the Malvern neighbourhood.
- Install Bike Shares in Midtown subway stations and Malvern neighbourhood.



## Other service improvements

1. **Create bus routes that connect local neighbourhood destinations and places where communities gather** (e.g. local libraries, community centres, grocery stores, Boys & Girls Club, etc.). Communities, especially NIAs, are heavily dependent on buses, so expanding bus routes and/or community buses could help support communities.
2. **Expand coverage of Blue Night bus service.** Understand travel patterns to provide better Blue Night service, particularly in routes that run in the Malvern factory areas.
3. **Improve transfer between Wheel-Trans and the rest of the transit system** to address safety concerns.

### *Wayfinding feedback*

- Display travel time information on signage at stops/stations/transit hubs to inform riders how long it will take to get to major/local destinations.
- Create destination signs displaying routes by nearest bus rather than by branch.
- Improve communication for delays and seasonal constraints.
- Install more interactive wayfinding displays.

### *Location-specific suggestions*

- Implement HOT (High-Occupancy Transit) lanes on Bloor, Danforth and Yonge at rush hour to supplement the subway.
- Improve capacity at subway stations, particularly at Yonge and Bloor, St. George, and Eglinton.
- Change the route of the 63 Ossington bus so it would not end on King Street and help ease traffic on King Street.

## Other advice

1. **Work with local communities on how to improve place-making at stops.** Each community has different needs and the TTC should work with local communities to tailor improvements to the needs of the community. For example, Mornelle Court has a high proportion of people with disability needs and would need to have an accessible stop. Some suggested creating a customer liaison panel to help the TTC identify local needs. Others suggested looking into how the local community could help or lead minor improvements at local stops (e.g. local bike shops to provide bike repair stations).
2. **Consider the “people” aspect when developing service improvements.** It is important to identify the social goals that this plan is trying to solve to improve social inclusion in the city. The TTC should consider the economics, income polarization, and dispersion of poverty in the suburbs. NIAs are particularly difficult to access by transit and yet they are the most reliant on transit.
3. **Expand the capability of Presto cards.** Presto should consider copying transit card payments in other countries, like the Octopus Card from Hong Kong’s MTR system. The Octopus Card can be used on every transit option as well as to purchase food and items from select stores.

4. **Create a “sexier” marketing of TTC services** to compete with other transportation modes (e.g. Uber and Lyft).
5. **Implement a policy to not allow ride-sharing vehicles to pick up/drop-off at stops** because it compromises more transit riders who are waiting for their bus to get to the stop.

### **Next Steps**

Mark Mis, TTC Manager – Service Planning, thanked participants for attending and sharing their feedback. He explained that the TTC and consultants will compile a long list of improvements to identify what are the short-term improvements the TTC could make in the next five years. There will be another round of consultation in the fall where the TTC will share with the stakeholders and the general public the shortlist of improvements.

# Attachment 1. Agenda

## TTC 5-Year Service Plan and 10-Year Outlook City-wide Stakeholder Workshop

Tuesday, June 18, 2019

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Agricola Lutheran Church, 25 Old York Mills Road



**Meeting Purpose:** To share and seek feedback on ideas being explored for the TTC's 5-Year Service Plan, including observations to date on challenges faced, and options being considered to address those challenges

## AGENDA

**4:00 pm**      **Welcome, Introductions & Agenda Review**  
*Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, Chief Customer Officer, TTC*  
*Nicole Swerhun, Facilitator, Swerhun Inc.*

### **4:10**      **PART 1: Overview Briefing: 5-Yr Service Plan & 10-Yr Outlook**

- Why this work is being done, overview of the timeline and process (including connections to the TTC Board, the City, and the public), and how the results of this work will be used
- Summary of early findings, highlights of online survey, and emerging vision & opportunities
  - 1) Reliable transit schedules
  - 2) Prioritize transit on busiest corridors
  - 3) Enhance customer experience at busiest stops
  - 4) Connections to new higher-order transit services
  - 5) Integration with other agencies and other modes
  - 6) Other service improvements

**4:30**      **Questions & Answers**

### **4:45**      **PART 2: Breakout Discussions**

- Intro to breakout discussion
  - Visit 2 tables of the potentially 6 tables.
  - At each table we'll discuss one of the opportunities.
- Questions to discuss at each table:
  - What do you think of the work completed to date?
  - *Let's discuss the emerging opportunity in more detail: What types of solutions do you want to see considered? Where do you want to see the solutions happen?*

**5:30**      **Full-Room Report Back and Wrap-Up**

**6:00 pm**      **Adjourn**

## Attachment 2. Participant List

Listed below are stakeholder groups the TTC invited to participate in the City-wide Stakeholder Workshop. Organizations listed in **bold** attended the workshop. Note that some stakeholder groups had more than one representative in attendance.

1LoveMalvern Transportation Working Group  
8-80 Cities  
Access Alliance  
Access Point on Danforth  
Advocacy Centre for Tenants  
Albion Neighbourhood Services  
All IN  
Alliance for Equality for Blind Canadians  
Alliance of Seniors-Older Canadians Network  
Anishnawbe Health Toronto  
AODA Alliance  
Bread & Bricks Social Justice Group  
Canadian Centre for the Responsibility to Protect  
Canadian Council of the Blind, Toronto Chapter  
Canadian Hearing Society  
Canadian Pensioners Concerned  
**Canadian Urban Transit Association**  
Centennial College Student Association Inc.  
Centre for Independent Living in Toronto  
CivicAction  
**CNIB Foundation**  
**CodeRedTO**  
Community Associations of Northern Scarborough  
**Community Head Injury Resource Services**  
Community Living Toronto  
Confederation of Resident and Ratepayer Associations  
Connect Sheppard East  
Cross-Cultural Community Services Association  
**CycleTO**  
Deep Quong Non-Profit Homes  
**East Scarborough Storefront**  
Eglinton 2020  
Eva's Initiatives  
Fair Fare Coalition  
Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations

**Federation of North Toronto Residents' Association**  
Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods  
Fred Victor  
Free Transit Toronto  
Friends and Families for Safe Streets  
Gilda's Club Greater Toronto  
Guelph-Humber Student Association  
Homes First  
Housing Connections  
Jane Finch Action Against Poverty  
Jane-Finch Action for Neighbourhood Change  
Jane's Walk  
KCWA Family and Social Services  
Let's Get Scarborough Moving!  
Malvern Action for Neighbourhood Change  
Move the GTHA  
Neptis Foundation  
North American Native Plant Society  
Older Women's Network  
Ontario Active School Travel  
Ontario Good Roads Association  
Ontario Motor Coach Association  
**Ontario Public Transit Association**  
Our Greenway  
Out of the Cold. Overnight Hostels  
Rexdale Community Hub  
Ryerson Students' Union  
Salvation Army  
Scarborough Campus Students' Union  
Scarborough Civic Action Network  
Scarborough Community Renewal Organization  
Scarborough Cycles  
Scarborough Residents Unite  
Scarborough Transit Action  
**Seneca Student Federation**  
Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario  
Senior's Strategy Leader  
Serve!  
Share the Road Coalition  
**Smart Commute**

Social Planning Toronto  
Society of Sharing: Inner-City Volunteers  
Sound Times Support Services  
South Etobicoke Transit Action Committee  
St Clare's Multifaith Housing Society  
Students Association of George Brown  
College  
Sunshine Centres for Seniors  
The Centre for Active Transportation  
The Discourse  
Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness  
Toronto Association of Business  
Improvement Areas  
Toronto Bicycling Network  
Toronto Community and Culture Centre  
Toronto Community Benefits Network  
Toronto Community Care Access Centre  
Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre  
Toronto Council on Aging  
Toronto Disability Pride March  
Toronto Electric Riders Association  
Toronto Environmental Alliance

**Toronto Green Community**  
Toronto Seniors Forum  
Toronto Trucking Association  
Toronto Workforce Innovation Group  
Toronto Youth Cabinet  
**Transport Action Ontario**  
Transportation Equity TO  
Transportation Options  
**TTCriders**  
**University of Toronto**  
University of Toronto Students Union  
University of Toronto Transportation  
Research Institute  
**Voice for Transit**  
Walk Toronto  
Waterfront Regeneration Trust  
West Side Community Council  
Wigwamen  
York Federation of Students  
Youth Action Network  
Youth Employment Service

## Attachment 3. Post-Meeting Feedback

Following the meeting, two additional email feedback were received. The feedback has been included below as they were received.

### Emailed feedback #1, June 20, 2019

Greetings:

Here are additional thoughts as a follow-up to last night's meeting. Some of these points were made in discussions, others are as one-of comments, and some are "net new".

First, at the risk of blowing my own horn, I cannot too strongly recommend reading two articles I have written recently. This will save a lot of duplicated effort.

<https://stevemunro.ca/2019/06/10/ttc-aims-too-low-for-future-service/>

<https://stevemunro.ca/2019/06/08/zero-short-turns-does-not-equal-better-service/>

From some of Mark's comments, it's quite clear that he has, but I am not so sure about others. He picked up on my point that it's not just routes with very high ridership numbers that are important, but also routes with high ridership relative to their length. This is important because the map is dominated by long east-west routes.

He also noted that there are corridors where multiple routes have high demand collectively. The map needs to be re-cast in light of heavy transit usage, not simply routes that have high total counts because there is little justification for transit priority measures along such routes end-to-end, while shorter routes or segments may have high demand but be missed.

This is a good change, and it is an example of the need for the TTC to move away from simplistic metrics that are superficially easy to understand and calculate, but which produce oddball effects when they are used to select/omit portions of the network for attention.

#### *Busy Stop Locations*

The map of busy transfer points and the comparison to GO stations does not take into account the fact that while a GO station is often a single platform, or at least a few platforms that can share a common waiting area with creature comforts for riders, transfer points have four separate quadrants. Mark confirmed at the "other" table that the 4,500 per location number consolidates traffic from all quadrants, but unlike a GO station, a single large, well-equipped waiting area cannot be shared among the quadrants even if there were room on the street for it. I made the point that collectively there are vastly more stops in the system whose combined demand would be well over the handful of nodes shown on the map, and the effort should be made to make stops in general more attractive/useful.

This is an example of a proposal that sounds good in theory, but which would only affect a handful of locations and, by extension, a minority of riders. If people are going to see change, it must be pervasive across the system, not at select locations. The feeling that "you're not on the map" should not arise from too narrow a selection of "fix" locations.

## *Cross Border Travel*

I asked Mark after the meeting about the stat cited in the presentation about the proportion of travel to Planning District 1 that originates outside of Toronto. The percentage is fairly high and this is cited as an example of why we need better fare integration. However, the map which is shown is of routes at the 905/416 boundary and trips on those routes represent a much smaller proportion of travel into Toronto which is dominated by GO train customers coming into Union. The implication that a large proportion of riders overall are cross-border is not valid. The issue at the border is the double fare plus the poor co-ordination of services and generally much lower service levels outside of Toronto. Fares are part but by no means all of the problem.

There is already a GO-TTC co-fare, although it is not available to TTC riders using a monthly pass. A table on page 26 of the Presto report at the last board shows a breakdown of fares by type, but notably absent is the number of GO-TTC co-fares. However, this table also shows that a large proportion of fares are paid by passes on Presto and these riders are not eligible for a discount.

I know that anything to do with co-fares will be messy because it involves other agencies and the Province, but there needs to be a discussion about discount strategies generally as they relate to cross-border travel. Riders should not have to choose between getting a co-fare discount, but only if they give up the value of a capped fare via a pass or other similar mechanism. (A very simple example: if there is a capped daily fare or weekly fare on TTC, would this override eligibility for a GO-TTC or 905-TTC discount?)

## *What to Measure*

It is no secret that I don't have much use for the metrics the TTC now uses to show how good its service is. Stats are published only for short turn counts and for so-called on time departures at terminals. Neither of these represents service quality overall, and they lead to a simplistic view of service management, not to mention skewed planning whose focus is to make those specific numbers look good.

The TTC should be measuring service quality at key points along routes, and with data broken out by time of day. It does not matter if weekly totals contain many relatively well-behaved trips operated in the off-peak if the peak service is a shambles.

The TTC should measure gapping and bunching with metrics such as "what percentage of trips operate at headways below X or above Y". Riders see service as it really operates with buses and streetcars in pairs (or worse) even when headways are well above values where some bunching is inevitable.

We hear a lot about how VISION and APC will allow better planning and measurement, but don't see much to substantiate this. The TTC publishes demand and crowding stats irregularly rather than as an ongoing metric, although this appears to be changing. Crowding should also be reported on the basis of a range of values, not just as averages, so that the effect of vehicle bunching is clear. An average load might be below the service standard, but the average condition riders see is on the crowded buses.

You talk about “customer focused metrics” but don’t report on the basis of what riders actually experience.

### *Pain Points*

There was a rather embarrassing situation at the “scheduling” table with a request that the handful of public (as opposed to TTC/City/Facilitator) members place dots on a map identifying their “pain points” in the system. The idea that some sort of network-level intelligence would be acquired in this manner is absurd.

More to the point is the general question of (a) identification of such points and (b) the policy decisions needed to ration road space, green time and transit resources in dealing with these. Riders of any route will know which areas affect them, and any operator can tell you where there are problems with congestion. However, this sort of thing can also be easily discovered and analyzed with the vehicle tracking data system-wide.

When the City of Toronto was looking at the effect of peak vs off-peak traffic regulations (parking, stopping, signal timings), they used analyses I produced from CIS tracking data of the downtown streetcar routes which showed fine-grained information about congestion locations along routes.

Although we were able to flag some locations where “shoulder peak” shaving could make some improvements to route operations these were (a) relatively small and (b) of course did not address conditions during peak periods. A related problem was that conditions could vary substantially, especially on King, because events such as reconstruction of the Gardiner and major sports games did not happen every day. This pointed to the need to analyze and plan for not just for average conditions, but worst case scenarios.

### *A Personal Note*

I have to make a personal observation here. Since 2007, I have been producing analyses of route operation based on CIS data, and the quality of this improved substantially when CIS shifted to GPS-based rather than signpost-based location tracking. I know that several people within the TTC have liked the sort of thing I produced and wished they could get it from their own staff.

It is deeply frustrating that the type of analysis I now produce quite routinely does not appear to be part of the new VISION system. At no point during its development did I receive a request from anyone even to suggest the sort of analytical capabilities that might be included as a helpful discussion over coffee, never mind any formal role.

### *The “Core Business”*

The point is made that the TTC’s core business is to move people. To that end, it is important that money and staff effort not be diverted to things that sound nice, but do not contribute to that business.



For example, we want nicer stops and prettier subway stations, but will tarding up the newsstands and adding products actually improve the subway's ability to carry riders? Attracting riders there is not our problem.

Better rider information is a need across the system, not just at a few busy locations. Is it more important that Wifi be available at major transit stops, or that service arrives reliably enough that people don't have time to whip out their phones (which have data plans anyhow). There was a discussion at the "other" table about the need for a basic and consistent level of presenting "next vehicle" information across the system. Riders should not need to pull out their phone to discover whether the next streetcar is just around the corner, or miles away.

### *The Role of GO/ST and Suburb-to-Suburb Trips*

Although it is a political hot potato, the question of SmartTrack (and GO) must be addressed. The plan includes the idea of improved connections from surface to rapid transit, but does not talk about the role that various RT services such as SmartTrack might play, especially at what appear to be the service level GO will actually operate.

How much capacity is realistically available on the GO network? Will the transfer penalty (vehicle to vehicle plus delay time due to wider headways) outweigh the benefit of faster rides? How, if at all, do new RT connections address travel demand that is not going downtown? What will be the effect of more attractive GO/ST/TTC fares? There is a risk that, as with major subway terminals, the surface routes could be gerrymandered to force feed SmartTrack while interfering with trips that are bound elsewhere. Planning is supposed to balance "convenience" vs "inconvenience" for route changes, and the core-oriented demand could tip the balance away from a network structure that serves non-core trips.

This begs the question of latent demand for suburb-to-suburb travel (including trips that don't cross the 905 boundary) which might go up if only the network tried to serve them. A big complaint in Scarborough is that you can only get from "here to there" if one end of the trip is Kennedy Station or STC. What is supposed to be a convenient grid system collapses into a radial/node system.

### *Big Picture Stuff*

There are two related issues at the large scale which, if not addressed, make all other discussion a waste of time.

First is the question of fleet constraints, and second constraints on operating and capital budgets.

### *Fleets*

Many of the things people want by way of better service depend on fleet size. It's been a few years since TTC observed that growth through use of "spare" off peak capacity was levelling off.

If we start off asking where we might improve things, people say "we want more service". The level of change that is possible through interventions such as TSP and local traffic modifications is small, and it is a one-time improvement that cannot be repeated each year.

For example, the saving in minutes from the King Street Pilot was small compared to overall trip times, and that saving was quickly lost again to padding running times to reduce short turns. The main benefit of the pilot was more reliable travel times, but it did not translate to a saving of vehicles that could be redeployed elsewhere.

On Queen Street, the scheduled headway will widen by 1/3. This will give operators more running time, but will make service noticeably worse especially if nothing is done to address irregular headways and bunching. Service capacity will actually go down, not up.

Extra running time sorts out some organizational problems but does not necessarily improve route capacity or service quality.

There is very little we can do without more buses, streetcars and subway trains, and yet each of these fleets is challenged, sometimes in more than one way (e.g. the subway fleet would actually support more service, but the signal system won't for another three years on YUS, and who knows when on BD).

A fleet buildup announced with much fanfare as John Tory's response to "we need more buses" was consumed substantially by an increase in the spare pool, not by additional service on the road.

There can be some improvement in effective (as opposed to scheduled) capacity of routes with more reliable service, but this requires the will to accept that there is more to this than simply padding the schedules.

PTIF Phase 1 money was used primarily to buy replacement buses and allow the transition to the 12-year replacement cycle. This was driven as much by timing limitations in PTIF (spend dollars NOW) as by any analysis showing this was the best investment of available money.

When we use up vehicles to address operational/organizational issues, the actual improvement in service may not be proportional to the change in fleet size. Council buys more buses, but does not necessarily get more service.

This history should be acknowledged in any discussion of fleet constraints. If the TTC persists in using up any new vehicles (or vehicles released by a change such as the return to full streetcar operation on that network) for internal purposes other than actually providing more service, Council should reasonably ask "where are our buses".

There is a desperate need for another bus garage beyond McNicoll, as well as more streetcar storage capacity with Hillcrest earmarked as a stopgap. The implications of fleet limitations and capital planning must be set out with blinding clarity so that we don't wind up talking about Wifi at bus stops, but have no buses to actually carry riders.

### *Capital and Operating Budgets*

There is too much of a "something for nothing" atmosphere around this entire exercise born of years of making do with available budgets. If the idea is to actually improve the TTC, then this will have a cost even after every "efficiency" one might find is implemented.

This fact must be addressed head on, especially in a multi-year plan. It is always possible to find a bit of money somewhere through creative accounting or deferral of programs to fund one year's pet project, but this cannot be replicated over and over again as a sustained funding strategy for growth.

There are also budget pressures from other initiatives such as the shift to electric buses and a shorter cycle time on vehicle replacement. One might well laud these for environmental reasons, or because they shift operating costs (rebuilding vehicles) to the capital budget (buying new vehicles) thereby attracting a different subsidy stream. The PTIF funding of the huge recent bus purchase is a classic example of something that probably would not have occurred without the need to spend all of those federal dollars as quickly as possible. The business case was secondary.

It is ironic that as the TTC moves into a more capital intensive shift to electric vehicles, there may be less subsidy money available for the bus network because PTIF money is earmarked for rapid transit projects.

In the midst of all this, the idea of spending money that will directly improve system capacity and provide more service is lost in the shuffle. This is an uncomfortable truth that must be spoken.

In my blog post, I noted that a 1% delta in the budget would filter out a lot of potential changes to the system, especially if this is measured against the subsidy (net budget) or total expense (gross budget). The worst thing any study can do is to filter out ideas before they see the light of day. List the proposals together with cost and benefit estimates and let the public and politicians decide which are worth pursuing.

### **Emailed feedback #2, June 24, 2019**

I didn't sit at the 'Integration with other agencies and other modes' group/table, but I think that is where this idea would go. It's an idea which is relevant to a very specific location, but also an idea for both GO Transit and the City of Toronto.

At Yonge & Sheppard you have two subway lines, the TTC bus station and what must be thousands of people who live and work in the area. The intersection is also a stop for numerous GO buses that travel to/from destinations including Mississauga, Milton, Brampton, Pearson Airport, Yorkdale, East Gwillimbury, Oshawa, Whitby, Ajax and Scarborough. Unfortunately, in terms of facilities there's nothing more than a GO sign on a post and a TTC shelter which GO customers can use.

It would be great if this intersection was treated more as a transit hub from a GO customer point of view, particularly for southbound GO buses e.g. a more substantial shelter, more bicycle parking, GO signage and information and perhaps even a bus bay if space and the City's REimagining Yonge project allows for it.

In regards to the TTC, I'd see its role being in supporting this and recognising it as an area where people can transfer between transit services. Signage within Sheppard-Yonge station that directs people to GO buses would be beneficial to this, as well as recognition on the TTC's

system maps that connections to GO Transit can be made at Sheppard-Yonge, much like you see for other subway stops such as Finch, York Mills, Yorkdale or Leslie.

### **Emailed feedback #3, August 19, 2019**

5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook –Status Update  
FoNTRA/SERRA comments  
As communicated to Councillor Jaye Robinson – July 11, 2019

We welcome the vision set out in the Plan and the intend to identify strategies to enhance mobility in the City of Toronto over the next five years and to provide a 10-year Outlook.

We also appreciate the focus on near-term improvements that can be delivered within five years that enhance the TTC's core-competency, mass transit: moving large volumes of customers safely, reliably and swiftly across the city.

We support the emerging opportunities as mentioned in the Report:

1. Improve surface transit schedules
2. Prioritize transit on key surface transit corridors
3. Enhance the customer experience at key surface transit stop areas
4. Provide new connections with new higher-order transit services
5. Accelerate integration with regional transit agencies and complementary modes of transport

We understand that the goal of this TTC Plan is to *improve service, including the relief of overcrowding, improvement of schedules, reduction of customer journey time, increasing ridership and expanding the higher order transit network.*

We are assuming that this applies to the whole of the TTC network.

We appreciate that the Plan will also strive to be realistic in the actions it identifies to ensure what is being planned can be delivered and that it is mindful of the constraints of the TTC Operating and Capital Plans.

The plan is already getting a welcome reception from the Toronto Star:

“TTC vehicles get caught in gridlock too often. Should the King Street pilot project be replicated?” (By [Ben Spurr](#) Transportation Reporter, Tues., July 9, 2019)

**We also belief that this is an excellent Plan and compliment the TTC on a comprehensive on-line customer survey.**

**We would like to share some comments and have several suggestions:**

#### **1) Information and data to understand the noted TTC Issues**

The Plan states that Task 1 of the 5-Year Service Plan &10-Year Outlook has been completed and that it consisted of a comprehensive background and technical review which set the foundation for the Plan.

However, little detail of this review such as the severity, locations, timing, etc. of the TTC noted Issues (overcrowding, customer journey time, etc.) is available in the report, making it difficult

for the reader to understand whether the scope of the Plan is appropriate to achieve the desired outcome of the Plan.

The Plan only provides high level System performance data and two graphs to highlight City of Toronto proposed residential and non-residential growth.

**We would request that a summary of the background and technical review be made available and that it be specific enough to understand where, when and to what extent Issues arise in the TTC network.**

## **2) Scope of the Plan**

As noted earlier the TTC has identified five emerging opportunities. We would like to comment on:

### **a) item # 2 - Prioritize transit on key surface transit corridors**

As a community group representing the Yonge corridor, we are very aware of the crowding, congestion and potential safety issues riders on the Yonge 1 Line experience during Peak travel times.

The Plan mentions 18 key bus and streetcar corridors of which only 3 are north-south routes and none in the vicinity of the Yonge Line 1.

At the April 11, 2019 TTC Board committee meeting a motion was adopted (B. Bradford), requesting the Chief Executive Officer of the TTC to report back in the TTC's Five-year Service Plan on the feasibility of the use of buses to address overcapacity, crowding, and safety on Line 1 during rush hour and to report back to the TTC Board at the Dec 12, 2019 meeting.

**We would like to request that the scope of item #2 be expanded to evaluate the need to establish additional "key surface transit corridors" with a specific focus on N-S corridors such as the Yonge one.**

### **b) item #5 - Accelerate integration with regional transit agencies and complementary modes of transport.**

The Plan states that an opportunity exists to integrate service with neighbouring transit agencies to improve transit for existing customers and new riders that travel across municipal boundaries.

However, an opportunity also exists with one of those providers, GO Transit, to integrate services with the TTC **inside** the City of Toronto municipal boundaries by making use of underutilized Go Transit capacity traversing City of Toronto neighbourhoods. SmartTrack is intended to provide such services and should be expanding to include TTC integration with the Richmond Hill Go Line. Such integration has the potential to greatly improve public transit access inside the City and also *has the potential to create a much more robust network, by creating alternate, high speed and high-volume routes as an alternative to Line 1 and 2 during Peak travel periods.*

**We would like to request that TTC transit integration be accelerated with GO Transit inside the City of Toronto municipal boundaries (expanded SmartTrack).**