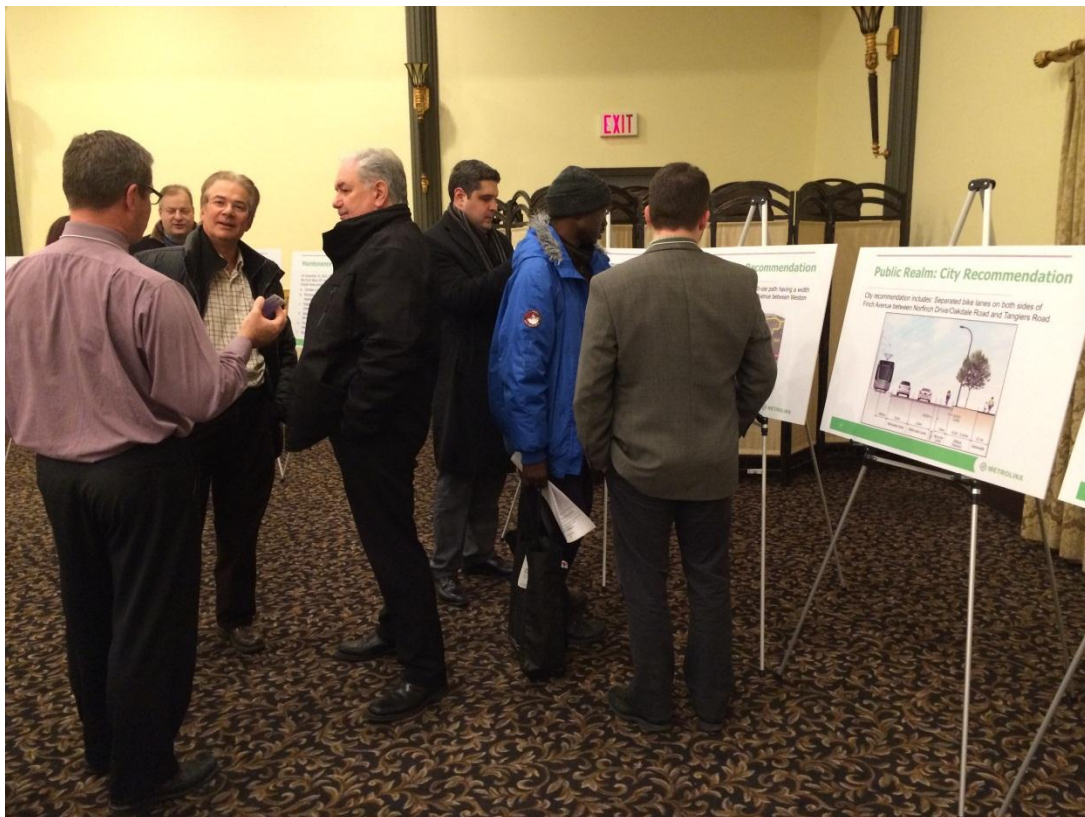


Finch West LRT

Public Open Houses: Reference Concept Design

January 11-13, 2016



1. Executive Summary

On January 11th, 12th and 13th of 2016, Metrolinx hosted three public information meetings along the Finch Avenue West corridor – at St. Wilfrid Catholic School, Julius Banquet Centre, and Father Henry Carr Catholic School. The format and content for all three meetings were the same.

The public information meetings provided an opportunity to update the community on the progress of the Finch West LRT project, but more specifically, they provided an opportunity to share the reference concept designs for the stops, information on the maintenance and storage facility, and detail on the public realm elements.

The meetings also provided an opportunity for the public to comment on the reference concept designs in advance of the release of the Request for Proposals, scheduled for spring 2016. The feedback from the meetings will be available for the proponents to consider in their bid submissions.

In addition to receiving the public meeting invitation by mail, approximately 130 property owners whose properties will be partially acquired received an additional letter inviting them to meet directly with the Metrolinx property staff to discuss the impacts.

Metrolinx representatives included the communications team, the project team and the property team. The City of Toronto planning department also attended.

Approximately 50-60 people attended each of the three public information meetings. The attendees were mostly comprised of local residents and some transit enthusiasts. The meetings were also attended by fourteen property owners who were facing impacts, as well as elected officials (Councillor Perruzza, Councillor Crisanti, and staff representing Councillor Mammoliti and MP Sgro) and business improvement areas (Emery Village BIA, DUKE Heights BIA).

In general, attendees suggested support for the project, and their level of knowledge varied greatly – from more general to some detailed technical aspects of the project.

Comment sheets were collected at the public meeting, and comments were also collected online from January 11 to January 20, 2016.

2. Public Notification

The public information meeting notice was distributed via Canada Post and advertised in newspapers and social media. A copy of the notice is provided in Appendix A.

Canada Post Drops

Between January 4 and January 6, 45,576 public notices were delivered to residents and businesses within an approximately 500m radius of the Finch West LRT corridor.

Newspaper Ads

On January 7, the notice was published in four newspapers (two local and two wider publications): 24 Hours, Metro, Etobicoke Guardian, and the North York Mirror.

Social Media

Between January 8 and January 13, tweets were sent out from the @finchwestlrt account promoting the public information meetings.

Website

The notice was also posted on the Metrolinx website on January 7. The presentation slides were also posted on the Metrolinx website (www.metrolinx.com/finchwest) on January 14.

Elected Official Briefings

Between January 7 and January 11, the Metrolinx communications team briefed elected officials who accepted the offer for an advanced presentation of the public information meeting materials.

- Councillor Vincent Crisanti, Ward 1 Etobicoke North (January 7, 2016)
- Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, Ward 7 York West (January 5, 2016)
- Councillor Perruzza, Ward 8 York West (January 11, 2016)
- MPP Sergio (staff), York West (January 5, 2016)

The elected officials who declined the offer for an advance presentation were provided with the public information meeting materials.

3. Photos



January 11 open house at St. Wilfrid



January 12 open house at Julius Banquet Centre



January 13 open house at Father Henry Carr

4. Summary of Questions/Comments received during Open House

General project information

For some participants, the meeting was the introduction to the Finch West LRT project. Participants were interested in whether the line will be surface or underground, and what the platforms would be like. Participants were concerned about potential construction and operational difficulties, comparing the Finch project to the St. Clair streetcar. Participants also asked about the ridership, completion date, and the procurement process.

Scope of the project

Participants had different preferences for the project's terminuses. There were suggestions to extend the line to Yonge, to south of Humber College, and to the airport.

Technical aspects of the project

Participants asked about more detail aspects of the operation including the locations of the power substations, the specifications of the platforms, and the power source of the line.

Impacts during construction

Local residents expressed concerns about noise and vibration as well as the traffic disruptions during construction. Truck drivers expressed concerns about traffic during construction. Participants asked about how the construction will be staged and how businesses can maintain access.

Impacts during LRT operation

Participants expressed concerns about car traffic when the LRT is in operation, for example, if left hand turns would be allowed, where U-turns are available, and the ability to turn into specific plazas. Participants are also concerned about the noise level once the LRT is in operation.

Humber College Terminus

Participants asked whether the Humber stop is underground or aboveground, what the Humber loop would look like, and whether the terminus station is accessible.

Maintenance and Storage Facility

Participants are interested in the footprint and the aesthetics of the MSF and whether community developments are possible.

Property Acquisition

Fourteen property owners (whose property Metrolinx will be partially acquiring) attended to speak specifically about their property, while other participants asked about the areas of land to be acquired and the expropriation process.

Public Realm / Bike Lanes

Participants were interested in how the LRT would look, and whether bike lanes and green tracks would be available.

Light Rail Vehicles

Participants asked about the speed of the LRVs, the functionality during the winter, if LRVs are accessible, and if there would be wifi. There were also concerns that Bombardier no longer manufactures the parts in Canada.

Accessibility

Participants were concerned about the distance between the stops and the accessibility of the stops.

Subway vs. LRT vs. Bus

Participants expressed that subways or a bus rapid transit are better options than an LRT.

Open House Format

Some participants preferred a presentation over an open house format.

5. Questions/Comments received during Open House

General project information

- Will the LRT be at surface or underground?
- Will any portion of the Finch LRT be underground?
- Will it look and operate similar to St. Clair?
- Will the stations be underground?
- Will the Finch LRT open all at once or in segments?
- How long will it take for the LRT to go from east to west?
- Will the LRT be similar to St. Clair?
- Will the LRT be in the middle lane and will there be a raised platform? How will it be separated from the roadway?
- Will the Finch West LRT be similar to St. Clair in terms of construction and operation? Why is the LRT down the middle of the roadway?
- What are the ridership levels?
- Who initiated the EA? And why was Finch identified?
- What is the speed of the LRT?
- How will Keele Station be connected with TYSSE?
- Is having the platform in the middle of the roadway safe?
- When will it open?
- Why is Finch West at-grade when the Crosstown is buried?
- Will it use PRESTO?
- When will it be complete?
- What is the timeline of the project?
- Will there be more or fewer LRVs than buses?
- How many cars will the LRT replace?
- Is this project for certain? Could it be cancelled?
- Will it have priority signalling?
- Other general questions regarding the project and the AFP.

Scope of the project

- Should start the Finch West LRT from Yonge instead of Keele.
- Should extend the alignment south of Humber College.
- Should connect the Finch West LRT to Yonge.

- Supportive of the new terminus, with the option to go to the airport.

Technical aspects of the project

- Will the LRT run on electricity?
- Where are the locations of the power substations? Why are they not indicated on the map?
- What are the specifications of the platforms?
- Should have all platforms on one side instead of in the middle.
- How will the LRT be built near CP?
- Will there be a local bus feeding into the LRT?

Impacts during construction

- What kind of disruptions will there be during construction?
- Concerns about truck traffic during construction.
- How will traffic be impacted during construction?
- Residents have already suffered from construction of TYSSE and the LRT will continue their suffering.
- Concerns about traffic (both during construction and once LRT is complete).
- How will the construction be staged?
- Concerns about maintaining access to businesses both during construction and once the LRT is built.
- Traffic on Finch is already an issue; concerned about construction phase.
- How is Metrolinx dealing with construction planning and implementation?
- Will there be lots of noise and vibration during construction?
- How will the construction be staggered/staged?
- Need to ensure there are enough lanes to accommodate truck traffic.

Impacts during LRT operation

Traffic

- How will traffic be changed when the LRT is in operation?
- How will left hand turns be arranged?
- How many lanes will be for cars after completion?
- Will bike lanes be moved off the road?
- How will traffic signals be arranged when in operation?
- There is a lack of coordination between the Spadina extension and the Finch LRT projects.
- What would happen if vehicles or pedestrians block the tracks?
- Would have to go out of the way to make daily trips due to LRT turn restrictions.
- Concerns about the ability to make left turns.
- Trucks need to be able to access industrial lands.
- Traffic will be chaos when LRT complete.
- Removing lanes of traffic will be detrimental to residents and businesses.
- What are the traffic impacts?
- One can't turn left into the plaza on the northwest corner of Albion Road and Finch. This is an access issue.
- Concerns about access to property on northwest corner of Milvan Drive (2450). A lot of trucks use the plaza and won't be able to make a U- turn.
- How will the cars make left turns?

- Will there be advance greens and U-turns allowed?
- Where will the U-turn lanes be?
- How will the EMS be affected?

Noise

- How much noise will the LRT make when in operation?
- Concerns about noise from the LRT (Hwy 27 & Finch area). Will there be noise walls?

Humber College Terminus

- Is Humber Station underground or above ground?
- How will traffic be impacted at Humber College?
- What will the loop look like at Humber?
- Will there be elevators at the Humber Station?
- Will buses continue to go through Humber?

Maintenance and Storage Facility

- Will the MSF be incorporated with residential development?
- Are there other developments at MSF?
- Will there be street front stores at the MSF?
- Can there be a community space provided and operated by Metrolinx? It is not enough to just provide the space – need to ensure that it is running.
- What is the MSF footprint? Will there be community space?
- Can we get a smaller parking lot?
- What are the improvements to the MSF?

Property Acquisition

- What are the impacts and process of expropriation?
- Is the Jane Finch Mall going to be acquired?
- How much land is Metrolinx taking?
- What are the impacts to the properties?
- How will property owners be notified? Is there a point where Metrolinx goes ahead and expropriate if it cannot get in touch with the property owner?

Public Realm / Bike Lanes

- Will the LRT have green tracks?
- Will there be on-street bike lanes between Jane and Keele?
- Concerns about bike path and safety with pedestrians.
- How will the bike path be arranged at the MSF and at 400?
- Explain where the bike lanes/cycle paths are?
- Will there be a green track?
- Will there be lighting on the bike lanes?
- The \$3million going towards the lanes under the CP bridge should come from the project not public realm amount.
- How does a multi-use lane work?

Light Rail Vehicles

- Why did Metrolinx select Bombardier when the parts are no longer made in Canada? What if the Bombardier deal falls through?
- What will be the height difference between the LRT and the platform? (for accessibility)
- Will there be wifi on the LRT?
- What is the speed?
- Will there be problems with the LRT in the winter (running, maintenance, causing delays)?

Accessibility

- The distance between stops is not safe for women and bad for people with accessibility challenges.
- Concerns about Humber stop's accessibility.
- How will passengers get to the platform?

Subway vs. LRT vs. Bus

- Should have subway instead of LRT.
- LRTs are streetcars.
- LRTs are a gimmick.
- Metrolinx is using outdated technology –should look at Japan and Turkey.
- How will the LRT be different from the streetcar?
- Isn't it faster to build a subway instead of an LRT?
- Build a subway not an LRT.
- LRTs will negatively impact the community (both during construction and once it is complete).
- Just increase the number of buses running on Finch and don't build LRT.
- Doesn't the LRT only benefit Humber College?
- Why don't we put in dedicated bus lanes instead?
- Why can't we use the CP railway tracks instead?
- Why not use buses instead?
- Why not BRT?
- Hate the LRV train.
- Why not use elevated guideway instead?

Community Benefit

- Will the jobs be going to the private sector?

Open House Format

- Are the boards available in PDF/online?
- Should provide handouts.
- Should provide a presentation instead of just boards.
- Should provide coffee.
- How come there is no presentation?

Other

- Supportive of LRT; will increase property value.
- The distance between stops is too long, it will take 15 minutes to walk to LRT, people would rather Uber or drive.
- Need to show the traction power substations on the drawings at the public open house .
- Can the bridge be constructed earlier?
- Will the TTC service be impacted?
- The stations need to be built within Emery Village BIA standards, consistent with its branding.
- Is it true that heavy tankers are not allowed to drive about subways?
- Metrolinx should take over the TTC.
- How can the residents stay informed?