

MANAGEMENT REPORT TO THE GREATER TORONTO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Board Meeting Date: August 24, 2007

Item Class: Chair's Item
 Decision
 In Camera
 Information
 Resolution / By Law

RECOMMENDATION(S):

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The GTTA assume a lead role in assessing the viability of redeveloping 90 Harbour Street as an inter-regional bus terminal serving the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, and beyond; and
2. Staff be directed to facilitate the coordination of potential stakeholders including, but not limited to, the City of Toronto, Waterfront Toronto, the Province of Ontario, GO Transit, the federal government and the Ontario Motor Coach Association; and
3. Staff be directed to propose implementation strategies for this project, should the assessment be positive; and
4. The Chair be authorized to advise the Province of Ontario of the GTTA's interest in this project and request that the Province take no action with regards to the site pending the outcome of the GTTA's assessment; and
5. Staff report back to the Board in February 2008 with a status update on this project.

RATIONALE

ISSUE:

In addition to the package of proposed quick-win projects described in Resolution 07-B42 – Identification of Early-Initiatives, staff are recommending a lead role for the GTTA in evaluating the viability of a longstanding proposal to establish an inter-regional bus terminal in the Toronto Union Station precinct.

BACKGROUND:

The window of opportunity to locate a bus terminal in the immediate vicinity of Union Station is closing, as the remaining stock of vacant land is replaced with new commercial and residential development.

One of the few sites in the precinct that could potentially accommodate the footprint requirements of a major bus terminal is 90 Harbour Street, a Government of Ontario landholding and former Ontario Provincial Police headquarters building.

This site is located immediately south of the Gardiner Expressway/Lakeshore Blvd. corridor (approximately 380 metres south of the main passenger concourse at Union Station) and could further enhance Union Station as a major inter-regional mobility hub.

Proposed Workplan

GTТА staff are proposing to lead a six-month workplan to evaluate the business case, conceptual site plans, and policy and planning rationale for a new inter-regional bus terminal. This work would build on recent substantial analytical work led by the Toronto Economic Development Corporation (TEDCO) and cost-shared by the federal department of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

The proposed GTТА-led assessment would address:

Development concept

- A new multi-level inter-regional and long-distance bus terminal in the Union Station precinct to replace the existing facility at Bay and Dundas streets
- Protected pedestrian access between the bus terminal and Union Station
- Integration with the PATH underground walkway system
- A design of architectural merit that enhances the public realm, travelling experience and urban form
- A mixed-use development that integrates the transportation component with public space, attractive streetscape and revenue-generating commercial and residential development
- Efficient bus circulation, including convenient, rapid bus access to the Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway (DVP)
- Potential link to the proposed/conceptual DVP dedicated bus lane project
- Underground public parking

Transportation Policy and Planning objectives:

- Toronto Union Station as seamless inter-modal mobility hub for the GTHA region and beyond
- Build on the concurrent investment program in Union Station, including:
 - City of Toronto-led rehabilitation,
 - Heritage preservation and commercial development activities in Union Station proper;
 - TTC second subway platform and waterfront light rail transit (LRT) expansion projects; and
 - GO Transit concourse, platform and track corridor improvements

Customer service excellence

- A strong, integrated hub with expanded modal choices and service quality for the inter-regional transit customer – in one general location
- A traveller information system that integrates all transportation providers at Union Station:
 - GO Transit rail and bus systems,
 - Private-sector commuter and long-distance bus carriers,
 - VIA Rail, Ontario Northland, Amtrak, and potential future rail link to Pearson International Airport
- A new downtown hub for tourism information and tourism service providers

Growth Plan objectives

- Downtown Toronto as the region's premier urban growth centre and a competitive global business centre sustained by high-quality transit infrastructure

Municipal land use and development

- The city's vision for a beautiful gateway and surrounding precinct, and a high standard of urban design
- A public place for connecting the downtown financial district, Union Station and the Lake Ontario water's edge
- Compatibility with the Toronto waterfront revitalization plan, and
- The expanding residential mixed-use community in the Central Harbourfront Area

Financial and governance model

- Capital cost-share model including:
 - Federal and provincial government cost shares and/or in-kind investment;
 - Debt-financing supported by long-term lease revenue; and
 - Potential reinvestment of proceeds from on-site commercial and residential development to support the bus terminal and public space project components
 - Terminal breakeven operating cost analysis
- Options for bus terminal ownership and governance structure, including a potential lead role for a GTTA subsidiary corporation

Consultation and Engagement

GTТА staff propose to undertake the workplan by working closely with the strong stakeholder interests in the bus terminal proposal. The key stakeholders include the City of Toronto, Province of Ontario, the federal government, GO Transit, other Union Station-based carriers and tenants, and the private-sector bus industry.

To protect a window for the GTТА-led workplan and stakeholder engagement, the Ontario government should be requested to safeguard 90 Harbour Street from other real estate disposition alternatives.

Policy Implications:

The inter-regional bus terminal project supports the GTТА mandate to develop a seamless transportation system, including an integrated network of transportation mobility hubs, across the GTHA.

The GTТА Integrated Regional Transportation Plan process will establish the broader network plan to support Union Station's critical, strategic role as the leading inter-regional mobility hub in the GTHA.

Operational Implications:

N/A

Resources Implications:

Human Resources Impact:

N/A

Financial Impact:

A detailed financial analysis of the proposed Toronto Union Station Inter-Regional Bus Terminal initiative will be developed as part of the GTТА-led evaluation of project viability and implementation options due in February 2008.

Professional consultant and stakeholder outreach costs associated with the evaluation exercise will be covered in the current GTТА budget.

Environmental Implications:

The evaluation work will identify any Environmental Assessment (EA) implications related to the bus terminal project.

Legal Implications:

N/A

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