
APPENDIX B

Key Themes Arising From Comments Received on the Draft Terms of Reference

**Georgetown South Corridor Service Expansion and
Airport Transportation Link between Lester B. Pearson and Union Station
Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference**

**Key Themes in Comments
Received on the Draft ToR**

Theme	Comment	Response
<p>Purpose of the Undertaking</p>	<p>The purpose of this project need to be better defined. Provide an explanation on why these projects are being studied together.</p>	<p>The purpose of the airport transportation link project has been refined including removing terms such as “express”, “direct” and “seamless”. In addition, more complete background information has been added to the ToR. The purpose now reads “this component of the study is to examine alternatives, both within and outside of the Georgetown South Corridor, in order to identify a preferred alternative to provide a frequent, rapid, reliable transportation connection between two of the busiest and fastest growing transportation hubs in the GTA (Union Station and LBPIA).</p> <p>Although the primary purpose of the study is to identify a preferred alternative to provide a frequent, rapid, reliable transportation connection between Union Station and LBPIA, the opportunity to derive local transportation benefits from the proposed services, where feasible, will also be examined. These opportunities include enhanced local transit connections (e.g., community has previously suggested additional stops) and will be developed when generating and evaluating alternatives.</p> <p>Although these projects service different and distinct purposes and objectives, they are being planned together in recognition that the preferred alternative could result in infrastructure improvements and service operations within the same corridor.</p>
<p>Clearly identify the problem statement, and define the intended travel markets/ customers being served.</p>		<p>In the case of the GO Transit Georgetown South Rail Corridor, the present service is at or near capacity, with standing room only on many trips. Because of both track capacity and operating restrictions, commuter rail service between Union Station and Georgetown is currently limited. As a result of population and employment growths expected in the service area, there is a need to expand the existing service capacity in order to meet the forecasted ridership demand. This capacity cannot be increased without significant rail infrastructure improvements in the corridor.</p> <p>In the case of the Airport Transportation Link between Lester B.</p>

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<p>Alternatives to the Undertaking</p>	<p>Opposed to a rail link between Union Station and the Airport. This alternative should be removed from the Terms of Reference.</p>	<p>Pearson International Airport and Union Station, there is currently no frequent, rapid, reliable transportation connection between LBPIA and Union Station, the two busiest and fastest growing transportation hubs in the GTA. Similar to other major world cities, the availability of a fast, convenient and reliable transportation link between the major city centre and its major airport is recognized as having a positive impact on the economic competitiveness of the region.</p> <p>The major markets for these services are visitors (tourism and convention travel) and the daily downtown business travelers. Benefits related to the Airport Transportation Link include the support of initiatives to increase transit use in order to enhance accessibility, while reducing vehicle emission, reducing congestion on adjacent roads, and minimizing the disruption on the built and natural environment.</p> <p>One of the major criticisms of the previous Class EA process was that a full range of alternatives for providing service between Union Station and Lester B. Pearson Airport was not explored. As a result of this, GO Transit agreed to initiate an Individual EA Process to ensure that a range of alternatives is explored and a clear rationale for the preferred alternative is provided. As such, this is an alternative to be considered.</p> <p>Please be assured that by subjecting the study to an Individual Environmental Assessment, the proponent is committing to <i>examine</i> and <i>evaluate</i> a full range of alternatives.</p>

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	<p>Improve public transit. Opposed to an Airport Transportation Link through the Georgetown South Rail corridor neighbourhood that won't improve local transit service.</p>	<p>We acknowledge the desire for improved public transit in the City of Toronto. However, the purpose of this study is not to address all the transportation problems within in the City of Toronto but is to address future capacity deficiencies associated with GO Transit travel demand in the Georgetown Corridor and to explore alternatives for a Transportation Link between Union Station and LBPIA.</p> <p>With regards to the Airport Transportation Link, in addition to the primarily purpose (a link from LBPIA to Union Station), the study will explore if the alternatives can derive local transportation benefits from both of the proposed services, where feasible, including enhanced local transit connections.</p>
	<p>Would like to know who will operate and fund the Airport Transportation Link if another corridor (other than the Georgetown South Rail Corridor) is recommended at the end of the EA.</p>	<p>In the case of the Airport Transportation Link, if one of the options other than the Airport Rail Link is chosen, the preferred option will be recommended to the appropriate authority. The appropriate authority would also have to fund that project</p>
<p>Evaluation of Alternatives</p>	<p>Question the level of detail being examined at various EA stages.</p>	<p>The approach outlined in the Terms of Reference is a standard and accepted approach to EA Planning. As the study progresses additional detail and impact assessment is undertaken. It should be noted that secondary source information includes current land-use and environmental information as well as recent air photography. Limited field investigations will also undertaken to verify the accuracy of this data. The ToR will be updated to reflect this.</p> <p>The use of 'proxy' measures at the Planning Alternatives phase is considered to be appropriate to provide an indication of potential nuisance effects to examine the various corridors. It is recognized that impacts to specific properties will not be identified at this stage however the analysis should be sufficient to indicate the number of features potentially affected. Detailed modeling will be undertaken during the Alternative Design stage to identify specific impacts and investigate mitigation.</p>

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	<p>Would like to know how trade-offs will be made between impacts to the natural and social environment, and how multiple value systems will be balanced.</p>	<p>We have chosen to use a Reasoned Argument Approach where the evaluation of alternatives and 'trade-offs' made by the Project Team will be clearly documented and explained throughout the planning process. It should be noted that stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on this process. It should also be noted that the Ontario Minister of the Environment is the ultimate decision maker. If an individual, group or agency disagrees with the rationale behind the decision making process, they have the right to submit their comments to the Minister and explain why they feel the Project Team made the wrong 'trade-offs'. The ultimate decision rests with the Minister of the Environment.</p>
	<p>Would like to know how the relative significance of each impact will be determined.</p>	<p>The assessment of impacts will be undertaken by the various project team specialists in order to determine the magnitude and significance of effects. The rationale and logic behind the comparison of the advantages and disadvantages leading to the selection of a preferred alternative will be clearly documented and explained in the EA Report (as well as through the various meetings that will be held during the process).</p>
	<p>Would like further explanation on how the "reasonableness" of each alternative for the Airport Transportation Link will be evaluated (Step one of the two-step process in the evaluation of Alternatives for the Airport Transportation Link)</p>	<p>The Terms of Reference will examine the "reasonableness" of the various alternatives for the Airport Transportation Link as a first step. This will be accomplished by examining how well the various alternatives address the primary purpose of providing service to the airport, how well the various alternatives provide ancillary benefits of enhancing the local transit network, the public costs to implement the alternatives and the ability to implement the alternatives in a timely manner.</p> <p>The first step of the evaluation process is focused on eliminating those alternatives that are not reasonable relatively quickly. We</p>

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Cost and Funding	Is public money being used to fund a private project?	do recognize that there is some concern there is the perception that process is designed to eliminate all alternatives, other than options within the Georgetown corridor, at the first step. To address this we have committed to adding the following words to Section 5.2.2 of the ToR. "Although the results of the first step analysis are not known at this time, the Project Team is committed to carrying forward alternatives in more than one of the corridors identified in Section 5.1.2."
Cost and Funding	Is public money being used to fund a private project?	No public funds will be used for the operation and maintenance costs of the Air Rail Link project. The Federal Government contributes to infrastructure improvements, such as upgrading along GO Transit's Georgetown Corridor (CN's Weston Subdivision), and the Union Station Rail Corridor. These corridor improvements are part of the \$385 million federal funding package for GO Transit announced in May 2004 for improvements to several GO Corridors. Infrastructure upgrades will facilitate the expanded operation of GO Transit, and benefits to VIA Rail service and CN's freight service. The upgrades would also allow for the Air Rail Link service, should it be selected as the preferred option through the EA process.
Process and Participation in Public Consultation	The Terms of Reference outlines a process to evaluate the Airport Transportation Link based on "reasonable cost". What is a "reasonable cost"? Concerned that comments are not being read or considered. Would like to know how to have an influential role in the EA process.	As no assessment has been completed to date on the alternatives, reasonable cost can not be defined. A reasonable cost in this case is relative to the alternatives being considered. (For example, if one alternative is 1 billion, and all the other alternatives are within \$400 to \$600 million, then \$1 billion is likely not a reasonable cost). A clear rationale will be provided as part of the Environmental Assessment Process. Comments and concerns expressed by the local community are encouraged and accepted throughout the process, and will be reviewed and responded to, as appropriate. Where ever it is warranted, input will be integrated into the Terms of Reference.

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		<p>and the evaluation of alternatives.</p> <p>You can provide input at any point during this study, through our website, by e-mail, fax, phone or mail. You can also provide input to the study through our website. We will respond to your questions as soon as possible. http://www.georgetownpearsonstudy.ca</p>
	<p>Object that there has not been adequate time to review the Terms of Reference. The document was not accessible enough.</p>	<p>The draft Terms of Reference was made available to the public in June 2006 on the project website in advance of the public meetings. Based on public comments, the document was also made available at local libraries (Weston, Mount Dennis, Rexdale, Blackcreek and the Central Toronto Reference library) on July 7th 2006. In addition, the draft Terms of Reference was mailed to all those on the Project Mailing list (including those who attended the June 21st Public Information Centre).</p>
<p>Impacts to the Georgetown South Rail Corridor Community</p>	<p>Concerned that the project will impact private property value.</p>	<p>While comments were encouraged on this document for August 11th 2006, input is welcomed at any time during the study.</p> <p>Regarding potential impacts to property values, the research and literature on this subject indicates that, in many cases, improved transportation infrastructure has a positive effect on property values as it improves accessibility and reduces congestion on other facilities. The research and literature also does suggest that transportation infrastructure could have negative effects if the project results in a significant change to nuisance effects (i.e. noise, air quality and aesthetics).</p> <p>As part of this study we will examine potential nuisance effects to determine potential adverse effects. Once these potential effects are identified the project team will examine mitigation measures (e.g. noise wall, grade changes, berming, landscaping) in an attempt to bring these effects back to preconstruction conditions as much as is technical and economic feasible.</p>

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	<p>Concerned that this project will impact local environmental health (e.g. air quality, noise, vibration), and important community features (e.g. schools, heritage buildings, trails and greenspace).</p>	<p>The evaluation methodology outlined in the Terms of Reference is intended to predict impacts, and lead to the selection of a preferred alternative that will avoid, minimize or prevent adverse environmental effects, including natural, social, economic and cultural features to the extent possible.</p> <p>Once the completion of the evaluation of Planning Alternatives is complete we will examine design alternatives. As part of this process, we undertake more detailed modeling relating to potential noise, vibration and air quality impacts. This is already included in Section 6.2.1 of the draft EA ToR.</p> <p>As part of this study we will examine potential nuisance effects to determine potential adverse effects. Once these potential effects are identified, the project team will examine mitigation measures (e.g. noise wall, grade changes, berming, landscaping, etc) in an attempt to bring these effects back to preconstruction conditions as much as is technically and economically feasible. This approach is consistent with virtually all EAs completed for transportation infrastructure in Ontario.</p>
<p>Design-related impacts</p>	<p>Would like to know if property is required for this project, how much greenspace will be removed, and what potential vibrations will do to local buildings?</p>	<p>Please be aware that we are currently in the draft Terms of Reference phase of an Individual Environmental Assessment. As we have not begun the process of generating and evaluating alternatives, it is too early in the process to address design-related issues (such as property requirements). Please continue to be involved as the Environmental Assessment moves forward.</p>