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June 9, 2005

Mr. Albert Pietersma
21 Cross Street
Toronto, ON
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Dear Mr. Pietersma:

Re: Air-Rail Link - Pearson International Airport to Union Station

We recently received your correspondence regarding the Air-Rail Link and would like to thank you for your thoughtful comments on the Air-Rail Link proposal and the concerns of Weston residents. Our transportation planning staff have reviewed your submission and offer the following comments:

City of Toronto Position

On October 1 and 2, 1998, City of Toronto Council adopted the recommendations in a staff report dated June 26, 1998 titled "A Rapid Transit Connection Between Pearson International Airport and Union Station". At that time, City Council:

- endorsed the concept of a rapid transit connection between Pearson International Airport and Union Station;
- supported upgrading of the Weston Rail Corridor for all-day GO service from Union Station to a new station in the vicinity of Woodbine Racetrack;
- supported the extension of the internal airport transit system from the airport to upgraded GO rail service in the CN Weston rail corridor;
- requested Transport Canada, in conjunction with the City of Toronto, Ministry of Transportation, GO Transit, the GTTA, Region of Peel and the City of Mississauga, to conduct a physical, operational and financial feasibility study for the extension;
- requested the Province and GO Transit to ensure that the upgrading of the CN Weston corridor for all-day GO service to the airport is a high priority for GO expansion; and
- requested the Mayor and Chair of Urban Environment and Development Committee to meet with the Federal Minister of Transport to discuss Federal support for the feasibility study and for early implementation of the rapid transit connection.

Council's support of the above was conditional upon the project including a portion of the financial cost of the required upgrades to the subway platform at Union Station.

On April 12, 13, 14, 2005, City Council adopted a motion that no streets be closed, as a result of the expansion of service in the rail corridor. In addition, City Council, on May 4, 2005, requested the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with appropriate City Officials, to report to Council for its meeting on June 14, 2005, through the Planning and Transportation Committee, with detailed information on:

- 1) any complete or partial closings of roadways which are being proposed as a result of the GO Georgetown/Weston Sub-Division Corridor;
- 2) the establishment of a station in Weston and a tunnelled alignment through Weston; and
- 3) any legal requirement that would necessitate a bump-up of the GO Georgetown/Weston Sub-Division Corridor Environmental Assessment.

On May 25, 2005, the Planning and Transportation Committee received a staff report (dated May 12, 2005) from the Chief Planner and Executive Director responding to City Council's Direction of May 4, 2005 regarding the Environmental Assessment being conducted for the Georgetown/Weston Sub-Division Rail Corridor. Planning and Transportation Committee recommended that City Council direct staff to report on the results of the GO Transit Georgetown/Weston Sub-Division Corridor Rail Expansion - Environmental Assessment following the completion of the current E.A. Study. At its meeting of May 17, 18 and 19, 2005, City Council adopted the Recommendation of the Planning and Transportation Committee without amendment.

A copy of the May 12, 2005 staff report is attached for your information.

Environmental Assessment Study

Since the May 12, 2005 staff report, a number of important decisions have been made regarding the E.A study.

At its meeting of May 13, 2005 the GO Transit Board passed the following motion:

WHEREAS GO Transit has initiated a Class "B" environmental assessment on the Weston Rail Corridor to accommodate increased rail service on the Georgetown Rail Line;

AND WHEREAS there has been considerable community concern raised regarding the current Class "B" environmental assessment process;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT staff are directed to elevate the status of the current Class "B" project, and initiate an Individual Environmental Assessment.

Also at the May 13, 2005 GO Transit Board meeting, SNC Lavalin offered to withdraw from the GO Transit Georgetown/Weston Subdivision Commuter Rail Service and Union Station to Pearson Airport Air-Rail Link Environmental Assessment. The SNC offer to withdraw was accepted by the GO Transit Board.

As a result of the Board's decision to "bump-up" the E.A and the decision by SNC to withdraw from the process, GO Transit is currently preparing a Request For Proposals (RFP) to retain another consultant to undertake an Individual E.A. This process will likely take 2 - 3 months.

Once a new consultant team has been retained, GO Transit and its consultant will develop a new Terms of Reference for the Individual E.A. There will be public consultation at this stage of the process as mandated by the MOE. This consultation will not likely take place until late Fall 2005.

Conclusion

The completion of the Georgetown/Weston Environmental Assessment is very important to the continued improvement and delivery of GO Transit service in the Greater Toronto Area. City Council has, in the past, supported and encouraged improved commuter rail service including a provision for an airport link in the Georgetown/Weston rail corridor. City staff will continue to work with the study team and report

to City Council on the findings of the Environmental Assessment, including any implications to the City, when the E.A. has been completed and filed on the public record for review. The information and input provided to GO Transit to-date has been very extensive and will likely be used to inform the new process as it moves forward as an Individual E.A.

GO Transit staff have indicated that GO will be opening a Neighbourhood Project Office in Weston to allow all interested parties to drop-in to ask questions, receive answers and discuss the study as it progresses through the E.A. process.

Once again I would like to thank you for your comments. If you have any further questions or comments, please contact me or Jeff Bateman at (416) 397-0254.



Rod McPhail
Director, Transportation Planning

c.c. Mayor David Miller