

Weston, ON M9N 2B8
November 24, 2006

Ms Hayley Berlin
Projects Officer
Ministry of the Environment
Environmental Assessment & Approvals Branch
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Dear Ms Berlin,

According to GO Transit, your office is now in receipt of the Terms of Reference for the Environmental Assessment for the proposed GO Transit expansion through the Georgetown Corridor, as well as for the so-called Air Rail Link (ARL). It is the ARL rather than the Go Transit expansion that is my concern.

It seems clear that the ARL has been made to piggyback on the GO Transit expansion and was, in fact, the sole reason for bumping up the original Class EA to an Individual EA. There are many things one could say against the ARL as proposed, not least that in catering to the business elite it excludes the general public, including the 70,000 employees at Pearson International Airport (LBPIA). Though the 70,000 LBPIA employees are duly noted in the Terms of Reference (4.1 the fifth paragraph), I would submit that this is window dressing, since the 'no-stops' express train is of no use to LBPIA employees unless they happen to live in the vicinity of Union Station. Furthermore, its fare structure (\$20.00 per single, one-way, trip) is scarcely promotes use on a daily basis. It is thus clear that the ARL is not intended to alleviate traffic congestion and gridlock in the north-west quadrant of the City of Toronto.

It is moreover difficult to understand why the Weston Corridor, identified on Toronto's Official plan as a "Higher Order Transit Corridor," is not being placed under the jurisdiction of the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority, established by your Government, one assumes, to attend to the long-term transportation needs of Toronto and its surrounding municipalities. And if not the Georgetown Corridor then what? It is surely no secret that the ARL, as proposed, will render the entire corridor unusable for public transit for the next half-century or more.

As for the Terms of Reference currently before you—I would submit that they are not terms of reference for an *environmental* assessment, since they violate the very Act on which they are said to be based in effectively limiting the environmental assessment to the preferred alternative. Allow me to refer you to 5.2.2 of the ToR, which delineates that a two-step process will be followed to shorten the list of Planning Alternatives to the Airport Transportation Link. Specifically, the second paragraph reads:

The first short listing step would focus on examining the reasonableness of the various alternatives. This will be done by examining [1] how well the various alternatives address the primary purpose of providing a frequent, rapid, reliable transportation service to the airport, [2] how well the various

alternatives provide ancillary benefits of enhancing the local transit network [3] and *the estimated public costs to implement the alternatives* (numbers & emphasis added).

Only when all three criteria are met will an environmental assessment be done.

What is meant by “ancillary benefits” [2] is not spelled out anywhere that I am aware of, but one assumes that it refers to the alleged complementarity of existing GO services in the corridor and the extra tracks needed for the ARL. If that is so, [2] clearly favors the Georgetown Corridor over most, if not all, alternatives. The third criterion, however, is crystal clear. It stipulates that “estimated public costs” will be a criterion for the selection of the preferred alternative. Since it has been alleged from the beginning that the ARL will cost not a penny of public money, it is safe to conclude that the proposed route will become the preferred route.

It is therefore patently and painfully obvious that the preferred alternative will be selected not on the basis of *environmental* consideration but on the basis of costs to the public purse. Therefore, I would submit that the Terms of References before you are *not* for an *environmental* assessment but for a *costs* assessment. Yet, as I read §6.1 of Ontario’s Environmental Assessment Act, it directs that an environmental assessment be done of *all* Planning Alternatives to the undertaking proposed. Since the ToR cannot do what they claim to do and since they are in violation of the EAA, I request that they not be approved by your Ministry.

Yours for good government,

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c.c. Imant Hausmanis

P.S. A copy of this letter has been sent by regular mail.