

## **Public Meeting Summary**

May 25, 26 and 31, 2016

### **Meeting Context and Format**

Metrolinx held three public meetings on May 25, 26 and 31. This is the second round of public meetings to discuss plans to expand GO service by adding a third track between Guildwood and Pickering GO stations. About 350 people attended the three meetings.

### **Major Themes and Key Points**

- **Concerns about GO ridership projections given the current off-peak service levels**

The initial business case for GO service expansion is available online at [metrolinx.com/en/regionalplanning/projectevaluation/benefitscases/benefits\\_case\\_analyses.aspx#gorer](http://metrolinx.com/en/regionalplanning/projectevaluation/benefitscases/benefits_case_analyses.aspx#gorer). It includes details about ridership and modelling across the GO network.

The region continues to grow by over 100,000 new people a year and the Greater Toronto Area is expected to have an additional 3.5 million people by 2031. These people will need transportation options to be able to travel throughout the region.

- **Concerns about noise and vibration impacts from increased service**

Metrolinx is finalizing the noise and vibration study. The study reviews any noise and vibration impacts and proposes mitigation measures where required in accordance with the Ministry of the Environment/GO Transit Noise and Vibration Protocol.

We will be releasing the results of the noise and vibration study shortly.

The noise frequency will be changing with electrification. The current diesel locomotive noise is a low frequency noise which is absent from an electric service. The noise from the electrified service, particularly at higher speeds, is dominated by the wheel on rail noise.

- **Clarification on plans for grade separating the Scarborough Golf Club Road rail crossing**

Metrolinx does not plan to lower Dale Avenue to meet the lowered Scarborough Golf Club Road in order to minimize the property impacts in the area. Instead, the plan is to redirect Dale Avenue to connect with Dunelm Street to maintain connectivity and create a true intersection.

Also, in order to maintain connectivity for the residents on Tillinghast Lane, Metrolinx is planning to purchase a property to create access for these residents from Dunelm Street. Please visit [metrolinx.com/GuildwoodPickering](http://metrolinx.com/GuildwoodPickering) to review the plans in the storyboards from the May 2016 public meetings.

- **Concerns about increased traffic as a result of grade separating the Scarborough Golf Club Road, Galloway Road and Morningside Avenue rail crossings**

Safety at Metrolinx is a top priority. That is one of the reasons why Metrolinx is planning to grade separate these three roads. A traffic study has been completed that concludes that there will not be a significant increase in traffic on these three roads and any other surrounding roads. Metrolinx is working with the City of Toronto Transportation staff to review existing traffic safety concerns raised by the community to ensure that all roads in the community remain safe. For example, investigating installing stop signs where Dunelm Street meets Scarborough Golf Club Road.

Other traffic calming measures will be finalized during detailed design in collaboration with City staff.

- **Concerns about the planned safety enhancements at Rodd Avenue (e.g. left turn at Rosebank Road, seniors residence)**

Metrolinx is committed to ensuring safety at all times. Several great ideas have been suggested including a countdown clock at the crossing, better signage in advance of the crossing, and the posting of a phone number to call to report unsafe behavior or other issues at the crossing. We will certainly be reviewing all of these recommendations as part of the enhancement of the crossing to ensure it continues to be safe after adding an additional track.

- **Metrolinx asked to revisit assumptions to help reduce the number of properties that have to be acquired to build grade separations**

Metrolinx has worked hard to minimize the amount of property that is required to add an additional track and grade separate three rail crossings. In fact, 17 properties were spared by not lowering Dale Avenue and rerouting the road to meet Dunelm Street in a true intersection.

As requested by some impacted property owners on Scarborough Golf Club Road, Metrolinx is in the process of adjusting the road slope design from 6% to 8% to determine the opportunities and impacts caused by the slope change. The City of Toronto will evaluate the outcome of the review and make a determination if this is an acceptable slope to ensure road

safety.

- **Concerns about how many properties Metrolinx needs to acquire as part of this project**

Metrolinx has identified 12 properties that need to be acquired as part of this project – 7 on Scarborough Golf Club Road (1 already purchased as it was for sale), 1 on Dale Avenue, 1 on Dunelm Street, and 3 on Galloway Road. There are 5 temporary partial properties needed for the Morningside Avenue road detour during the construction.

All of the affected property owners have been contacted and we are working with them to come to a fair negotiated settlement.

- **Concerns about construction hours including overnight work**

The regular construction hours are Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 7p.m.; Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Metrolinx tries to work as much as possible during regular working hours. There are times where it is not possible and we must work outside regular working hours. For example, track work, for the most part, can only be done when outside of train service.

Construction mitigation plans will be in place to minimize the noise from construction as much as possible. The community will be given advance notice of the construction staging plan and work schedule.

- **Concerns about construction staging (e.g. what roads will be used)**

It's too early on in the process to have a construction staging plan. The first step is to complete the environmental assessment and the design. Once we have a contractor on board, a construction staging plan and schedule will be created and reviewed. The City of Toronto will be involved in finalizing any City streets that will be used to haul or deliver material for the construction work. The community will be notified in advance of the construction staging plan and schedule.

- **Concerns about impacts to the Port Union Waterfront Trail, local wildlife, and vegetation/trees**

The Port Union Waterfront Trail will remain open for most of the time. There will be times where access will be restricted or closed on a temporary basis to move equipment or to maintain safety as we complete specific work in the area. The community will be notified in advance of any temporary closures or restrictions.

The environmental assessment looks at the impacts to the natural

environment and Metrolinx identifies windows for construction to avoid things such as bird nesting season.

The preliminary design of the rail corridor expansion has taken into consideration how to minimize the impact to the trail as much as possible. Metrolinx, in collaboration with Parks Canada, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and the City of Toronto, has created a draft plan which includes a combination of retaining walls, where necessary, and embankments to minimize impacts to the trail's naturalized environment.

- **Concerns about electrification impacts**

Metrolinx will design the overhead catenary system (OCS) to minimize its visual impact as much as possible without compromising safety and performance. Our design excellence team will be working with the project team to have the OCS reviewed by the Metrolinx Design Review Panel.

Metrolinx is completing an environmental assessment to electrify the GO service which is looking at any potential impacts from EMI/EMF. The proposed voltage for the electrified GO service is 25,000 volts which is comparable to the hydro wires that operate along main roadways such as Kingston Road. The proposed electrified GO service will use an alternating current design which cancels out the positive and negative currents reducing any possible electromagnetic radiation field directly next to the wires themselves. Other jurisdictions with electrified rail corridors report the EMI/EMF effects are negligible. More information on the final results of these studies will be available as the electrification environmental assessment completes its work. Please visit [gotransit.com/electrification](http://gotransit.com/electrification) for more information.

- **Changes to Rouge Hill Station**

The third track will be installed to the north side of the rail corridor which will impact some parking spaces, change how people access the GO service by travelling through a pedestrian tunnel to get to the platform, and change access to the Port Union Waterfront Trail – a new pedestrian/cycling tunnel underpass will be built west of the current Chesterton Shores rail crossing as this crossing will be closed to all but emergency service vehicles.

There are no plans to build a parking structure at Rouge Hill station. Metrolinx is working to implement its station access strategy to deal with the increase in customers and to reduce the need for more parking spots which is not a sustainable model. The strategy also includes more integrated local transit service, carpooling, and cycling to the station.

- **Clarity on grade separations**

Metrolinx completed a feasibility study for all of the existing 8 road-rail crossings from just west of the Guildwood to the Pickering GO Stations. The results showed that the Scarborough Golf Club Road, Morningside Avenue and Galloway Road were the top three road-rail crossings to be grade separated – they have the highest traffic volumes. The other five road-rail crossings had other opportunities to deal with the increase in rail traffic. Chesterton Shores and Poplar Road were screened as candidates for closing the rail crossing.

In the case of Chesterton Shores, the plan is to close the rail crossing to pedestrian and cycling traffic and to create a new pedestrian/cycling tunnel below the tracks just west of this crossing to maintain connectivity to the Port Union Waterfront Trail. The road-rail crossing will be fenced with gate access for use by emergency service vehicles only.

At Poplar Road, we are seeking feedback on two options: closing the road-rail crossing to all traffic or closing the crossing to vehicular traffic only and building an overpass/underpass for pedestrian and cycling traffic.

For the remaining road-rail crossings at Rodd Avenue, Manse Road, and Beechgrove Drive, we will be enhancing the rail crossing safety features in the short term. For the long term, Metrolinx will revisit these crossings at a later date to determine if anything further is required.

- **Concern that all the decisions have already been made**

Metrolinx is in the pre-engagement phase to complete an environmental assessment of the project to add an additional track between Guildwood and Pickering GO stations, widen the Highland Creek and Rouge River bridges, and grade separate the Scarborough Golf Club Road, Morningside Avenue, and Galloway Road rail crossings.

We have been engaging with municipalities, regulatory agencies, community groups, impacted property owners, and the community at large. At this stage, we are looking for feedback on our plans. All comments received will be responded to and recorded as part of the Environmental Project Report (EPR). The EPR will be shared with the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change for review.

The next step in the process is the commencement of the six-month Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP). This is the formal process to continue the public engagement and share the environmental studies for comment that will be part of the EPR. The community and other stakeholders will continue to have their say in this process. After up to a

120-day period, a Notice of Completion will be filed and the EPR will be made available for public review during the 30-day public consultation period. At this point, people are able to file a Notice of Objection on matters of provincial importance or a constitutionally protected Aboriginal or treaty right that was not identified or considered in the EPR.

After the public consultation period ends, the Minister of the Environment has 35 days to review the project. The Minister may exercise the options of issuing a notice allowing the proponent to proceed with the Project, issuing a notice requiring the proponent to further consider the Project, or can attach conditions to the Project if, in his opinion, the transit Project may have a negative impact on a matter of provincial importance that relates to the natural environment or a cultural heritage value or interest. The Minister may also consider matters that have a negative impact on a constitutionally protected Aboriginal or treaty right. The Minister is able to exercise these options no later than 35 days after the end of the public review period of the EPR.

Not all decisions will be made during the TPAP. Work will continue during detailed design. For example, traffic calming measures will be worked out in collaboration with the local municipality during this period and the community will be notified.

- **Opportunity to have a say on the project**

Metrolinx is working in collaboration with the local municipalities, the community, elected officials and other stakeholders to make this project the best it can be. All feedback received will be recorded and responded to. As well, all feedback will be reviewed by the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change as part of the Environmental Project Report.

Engagement will continue beyond the environmental assessment period. Metrolinx will continue the conversation with the community and stakeholders during detailed design and construction.

Some community members have asked about having Metrolinx funding to complete their own environmental studies. This is impractical and not a prudent use of taxpayers' money to complete the same independent, third-party environmental studies that are being completed by leaders in their respective fields.

- **Clarification of track alignment**

The new third track is aligned to the south at the Highland Creek Bridge and moving east, it then shifts to the north approaching Rouge Hill station to help minimize the impact to the Port Union Waterfront Trail. The track

then shifts back to the south at the Rouge River Bridge due to several factors: minimizing impacts to residences on the north side of the tracks, heritage and architectural features, reducing environmental impacts from construction, and overall construction feasibility.

For more information on this GO expansion project, please do not hesitate to contact us at [guildwoodpickering@metrolinx.com](mailto:guildwoodpickering@metrolinx.com) if you have any further questions or comments. You can also visit [metrolinx.com/guildwoodpickering](https://metrolinx.com/guildwoodpickering).