

Theme	Mr. Sullivan's Query	Metrolinx Response
Bike Path.	<p>We have repeatedly requested, since 2005, that provision be made for a bike path along this corridor. If we are expanding bridges and rights of way anyway, and if Metrolinx states that the provision of bike lanes is one of their priorities, why would we waste this opportunity to build a bike path along here? Because of the grade requirements for trains, there are no hills to climb. It is a direct route to downtown from the northwest of the city. It is an ideal addition. So far, GO has said no, and Metrolinx has said they don't do ancillary uses.</p> <p>The solution is to add a bike path along the whole route, at the time of construction. It will add little to the overall cost, and provide safe biking away from general auto traffic.</p>	<p>Metrolinx is working closely with the City of Toronto to integrate the plans for the Georgetown South Rail Corridor with the City's Bike Plan. To date, the north portion of the West Toronto Rail Path has already been incorporated into the design of the rail expansion.</p>
Clarification	<p>The CEAA project description states that the majority of the land use adjacent to the corridor is industrial. That may have been true 30 years ago, but it is not now. In the first 15 km stretch of the 21 km, almost all of the adjacent use is residential. There are two small pockets in that stretch which are industrial only. Will you be correcting this to the MTO and agencies?</p>	<p>The document submitted by CEAA is a very general description of the project. A detailed inventory of land use adjacent to the corridor will be submitted at the appropriate stage by Metrolinx to both the Ontario and federal governments.</p>
Consultation	<p>It states there will be meetings of the general public throughout the process, in addition to open houses. Can you advise as to when they will be?</p>	<p>Metrolinx regularly meets and communicates with community groups, residents associations, relevant public sector organizations, First Nations and individual citizens to hear suggestions and local concerns. The Notice of Commencement gives the dates and locations for the next round of Open Houses. A third round will be scheduled later in the process.</p>
Covered Underpass	<p>The public announcement was: "Maintaining Weston community connectivity by adding a GO rail tunnel in Weston". Those of you who went to the open house saw the mock-up, and realized that the 'tunnel' is the same ditch we had in 2005, with a 300 metre concrete lid between King and Church. The trains will be in the open, and partially or fully above ground, not in a tunnel, for most of Weston. Our position is that the promised 'tunnel' should be a tunnel (trains underground) for the entire length of Weston. We have also expressed some concern that they have not done technical studies as to the potential problems with underground rivers in Weston. We do not want a 'bait and switch' fiasco like with the Canada Line in Vancouver.</p>	<p>Extension of the tunnel beyond the Metrolinx proposal will have significant impact on the operation of the rail corridor. It is also very expensive and would add an additional \$300-400 million dollars to the project budget.</p> <p>Our technical team is drilling boreholes in the corridor to determine the height of the water table. By establishing the height of the water table, we will be able to make the appropriate plans and designs so that we can construct the tunnel and ensure that the proper engineering measures are in place.</p>

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Environmental Impacts	<p>This is a key issue for the city of Toronto. When completed, this project will have 368 diesel trains along the corridor, and if ViaFast service is built it will climb to 414. Even at 368 it is the busiest heavy rail corridor on the planet, so far as we can find. It is unconscionable that in this day and age, we are not electrifying this corridor which goes through some of the most densely populated parts of a major metropolitan area. Just the air rail link trains will produce 6 times more particulate matter pollution than the cars they take off the road, and provide only a small decrease in Greenhouse Gases over cars. So far as we know, no studies have been done to examine the effects of this level of heavy diesel traffic on human health, or on wildlife at the various river crossings.</p>	<p>The project will be completed in 2013. At that time, it is projected that 244 trains will travel through Weston. This inventory includes GO Transit, Union-Pearson Rail Link Trains, VIA Rail and freight. These train estimates are based upon current information and may fluctuate depending on technology, economic circumstances and ridership. We are also aware of the recent announcement around the Windsor-Quebec high speed rail proposal and will coordinate with that project team as appropriate.</p> <p>Metrolinx and our team of technical experts are currently working on the air, noise, vibration and human health impact assessments. We will provide results and potential mitigation strategies to the public once those assessments are completed.</p>
Environmental Impacts	<p>Those facts are: This line will be the single busiest rail corridor in North America (and we believe on the planet). It will traverse densely populated sections of Canada's largest city, with 74 schools within the vicinity of the line. If it is diesel, it will be, based on our research, the only diesel train in the world into an airport in cities of comparable size, and it is certainly the only diesel train to an airport being constructed at the present time. If, as promised, it will be Tier 3 diesel, the air-rail-link will actually cause as much as 10 times the pollution of the cars it takes off the road. Based on the 1.2 Million cars off the road figure, that results in 12 passengers per railcar, on average, over the year. (Two car sets, running 140 times per day, over 365 days per year). Tier 3 engines on this Air-Rail-Link will produce, on a per-mile basis, 21 times the Reactive Organic Gases, 104 times the Nitrous Oxide, and 117 times the Particulate Matter of an automobile. Our figures come from an EA study done in Santa Cruz with similar vehicles, in 2004. With only 12 cars being taken off the road per ARL vehicle, this is a significant increase in noxious pollution. It will generate the same quantity of Greenhouse Gases as the cars taken off the road. With a maximum capacity of 60 passengers, it will be physically impossible to reduce pollution. The problem can only be corrected by making the air-rail-link be electric.</p>	<p>In terms of the number of passenger trips per year, there are commuter rail services in New York City and Chicago that currently have volumes similar to those anticipated in the Georgetown Corridor in 2031. Metrolinx and our team of technical experts will be assessing the air quality impacts for the whole corridor based upon the full train volume, not just the Union Pearson Rail Link service. We will share the results and potential mitigation strategies with the public once the studies have been completed. In the meantime, GO Transit is moving forward on its green initiatives by replacing its locomotive fleet with Tier 2 compliant trains over the next few years. GO is already using ultra low sulphur diesel fuel in all its diesel train engines.</p> <p>Metrolinx will be working closely with the sensitive land use stakeholders along the whole corridor to address local concerns.</p>

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Fare Structure	<p>We did not discuss this at length in our meeting, due to the lack of time. We are very concerned that the private operator will be free to set fares to keep the vehicles from being overcrowded. In 2000, the fare at which the optimum profit was made was \$20 per person, per direction. That fare will be significantly higher today. It is intended to be a 'premium' service (despite using 55 year old Budd Railcars). It is not intended to serve the population of the city of Toronto, in any effective way. The extreme reluctance to add additional stops, and the repeated reference to 'premium' service in the documentation, means this is intended to serve mostly business visitors to Toronto. What that means is that despite landing a stop in Weston, it will be uneconomical for anyone to use the service in Weston (or likely at Bloor, or at Woodbine). Faced with a \$35 fare, I doubt if anyone would get on it in Weston. It will only be a matter of time before the operator decides we're not 'profitable' and closes the station.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Ontario is currently in negotiations with SNC Lavalin. The new fare structure will be confirmed with the public once the contract has been finalized. There will be a GO and UPRL stop in Weston. There is no plan to close this station if an Eglinton one is opened. The decision on the technology to be used for the Union Pearson Rail Link has not been finalized.</p> <p>This commitment was also confirmed by Jim Bradley, Minister of Transportation on March 2, 2009 in the Legislature. He stated the following: "I would also like to assure the member that there will be a stop in Weston and that this stop will stay open even if an Eglinton rail station is created."</p>
Fare Structure	<p>Apparently, like the 407 highway, the fare structure will be set so as to maintain the 'premium' level of service. That includes not overcrowding the vehicle. Many more people would take this service if it were priced lower, and hence many more cars off the road. But that is not what we are getting. The solution is to set fares in keeping with public transit options, with the usual premium (\$1 or so) for entering the airport directly. That will take more cars off the road, make the fares accessible to ordinary citizens, and attract a significant number of the airport workforce, which is currently over 50,000 people.</p>	<p>SNC Lavalin and Infrastructure Ontario are currently negotiating the contract. The new fare structure will be confirmed with the public once the contract has been finalized.</p>

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Federal EA	I note also from the timeline in the federal submission that there is a draft Environmental Study Report, and that there were flora and fauna studies undertaken in October of 2008. May we have a copy of same?	<p>Metrolinx will prepare a draft Environmental Project Report. Two draft reports will be published. A copy of the first document may be downloaded from the Metrolinx's web site on April 14, 2009. The first draft report will identify the site of the project and describe current environmental conditions, and present the preferred method.</p> <p>The second draft report will be available in May 2009. It will outline the impacts of the preferred method on the natural and built environments, economy and society and their interrelationships. It will describe measures which are being proposed to mitigate negative impacts and identify how the effectiveness of those measures will be checked.</p> <p>The two draft reports will be combined with the feedback Metrolinx receives from the public, government agencies, and First Nations to produce the Environmental Project Report.</p>
Federal EA	I asked Mr. Peltier what form and when the Federal Environmental Screening would be. I do not yet have a response.	Your inquiry has been forwarded to Mohammad Murtaza Senior Program Officer at the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.
High Speed Rail	Contract awarded to study high speed rail in Quebec City Windsor and impact on numbers	Metrolinx is aware of the recent project announcement. We have already been in contact with a lead on the project. We will coordinate with that team to address any potential impacts on the Georgetown Corridor as required in future.

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John Street	<p>John St. and Denison St.</p> <p>We have been given a variety of reasons for the closure of John St. CP rail apparently was offered the opportunity to be in the trench and declined, due to the grades in the trench. There was no offer to extend the trench with shallower grades, beyond Lawrence and Denison. The CP refusal means the Lawrence crossing must remain above the roadway. This means CN must climb out before Lawrence. This means John St will have CP tracks at grade, and CN Tracks half in and half out of a trench. Which means that a road bridge or tunnel is impossible, and only a pedestrian bridge will remain. Seniors have expressed concerns that the bridge will be a safety hazard, both for climbing, and because of the possibility muggings on the bridge. Our position is that the trench should be a tunnel, and the tunnel should continue under a reconfigured Lawrence, and under Denison. This would avoid closing John St, and avoid expropriations at Denison. It would allow CP to be buried in the tunnel as well as the GO Bolton services along that track. Although Metrolinx claims to have undertaken traffic studies to predict the effects of the closure of John St, and the relocation of the station, they have not provided same, despite repeated requests.</p>	<p>A traffic impact study has been completed for the John Street vehicular closing and the GO station relocation. There is a diversion of some vehicles in the peak hour in each direction to King Street and Ralph Street in order to access Weston Road. However, the volumes diverted are relatively small and intersections should be able to accommodate the increase at peak hours.</p>
Land Expropriation	Is property acquisition required	<p>Property acquisition is required for the preferred grade separation at Denison Road and potentially at Sam Frustaglio Drive depending on the intersection treatment chosen. Small amounts of property are required at the Etobicoke, Weston and Bloor GO Stations. Some property may be required at Marin Grove Road at Highway 427. At present, we are working at the preliminary design level of detail. Our technical team has worked very hard to minimize property impacts along the corridor. Metrolinx and GO Transit property experts will work with impacted property owners to advise them of their rights and property acquisition procedures.</p>
Notification	It states that 'property owners' within 30 Metres will be notified. Can you advise as to whether, in the case of rental properties, renters will be notified?	<p>Metrolinx will be notifying property owners as per the regulatory requirement. We have exceeded the regulatory requirement by notifying assessed property owners within 40 metres of the corridor. Letters will be sent to tenants where the information is available. In addition, we are email blasting interested stakeholders, and have posted our notification on our website and in the Toronto Star, L'express and other community newspapers.</p>

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Number of Trains	<p>I'm still confused. Will the EA be studying the environmental impact of 350 trains or 220 trains. Do we know already which day 'opening day' is?</p> <p>Your information still shows it as 220, when it is in fact closer to 350. Some of your team have suggested that it cannot include the GO improvements as those are not imminent, nor confirmed. However GO's own study predicted a need for 76 to 78 trains on this corridor (30 minute service) by 2011. Added to the air-rail-link, Via and freight, we are well over 220. It has also been suggested that the 4 tracks through Weston are necessary for the GO improvements (not imminent nor confirmed), not the Air-Rail-Link. So why are the GO improvements not being included in the total count of trains? GO's own study indicated that to run 76 to 78 trains, one additional track was necessary, not 3. Please provide some transparency as to which improvements are necessary for GO and which are only necessary due to the Air-Rail-Link.</p>	<p>We have projected opening day to be in 2013 assuming that a decision on the EA and funding approval. At that time, there will be 244 trains using the corridor. This includes GO Transit, Union-Pearson Rail Link Trains, VIA Rail and freight.</p> <p>Four tracks are needed to address future GO ridership demands as outlined in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan entitled "The Big Move".</p>
Project Details	<p>The solution is to start and end the ditch/tunnel further north and south. This will allow the inclusion of the CP tracks, the continued opening of John Street, and remove the requirement to expropriate land for the grade separation at Denison St. E.</p>	<p>Extending the tunnel to keep John Street open is neither a practical nor cost-effective solution.</p>
Public Transit	<p>Public Transit. There is a significant level of public investment in infrastructure attached to this project. Despite claims by Metrolinx and GO that none of the infrastructure is required only for the air-rail-link, the facts do not support that claim. GO's own studies in 1994 and 2002 needed only two tracks for expanded service, including with 15 minute headways. Metrolinx is insisting on 4 tracks between Union and Pearson. GO has already completed its EA for the portion of the line west of Pearson, and only 2 tracks are necessary along that length. The all-day 15 minute service will run both east and west of Pearson. An ordinary observer must conclude that the reason for 2 of the 4 tracks is the addition of the Air-Rail-Link. In addition to the physical tracks, bridges will need to be reinforced and widened that otherwise would not have. So significant public money is being spent to build infrastructure just for the air rail link. If it is public money, it should be public, not private, transit. If it is public transit, it should have fares and stops in keeping with public transit options.</p>	<p>Four tracks are needed to address future GO ridership demands as outlined in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan entitled "the Big Move".</p>

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Ridership Forecasts	Metrolinx Ridership Forecasts: methodology used by Metrolinx to do its ridership forecasts	Please see <a href="http://www.metrolinx.com/thebigmove/index.html">http://www.metrolinx.com/thebigmove/index.html</a> for details on the modelling methodology for the RTP.
Road Closures + Tunnelling	<p>Road Closures and Tunnelling. The City has now passed two unanimous motions demanding that all roadways remain open. John St. in Weston is the only roadway along the entire corridor which is slated to close. It is also the main connector roadway between the business community at Weston Road, and the residential community in Weston. It is also the site of the Weston Farmers' Market, which is a hugely popular spring to fall feature in the community. The closure of this roadway will have devastating consequences for the business strip, and for the market. The proposed 'pedestrian' crossing has been criticised by seniors as being too frightening to use. The Senior's Centre is on one side of the tracks and many who use it will not feel safe on a pedestrian bridge. Some of the GO services will not be in the ditch, as there is no plan to include the CP tracks in the ditch. The so-called tunnel is also only through a very very short piece of Weston, not the whole of the dense and close residential community. The community has many historic homes and features, whose cultural value will be lost if they are destroyed due to the increases in vibration. The quality of life for the citizens all along the corridor, but most particularly in Weston, will be seriously harmed by the seven-fold increase in traffic.</p>	<p>Closing John Street to vehicular traffic will require the least amount of property acquisition and is the most cost effective solution. Church and King Streets will continue to be open to vehicular and pedestrian/cycling traffic and will continue to connect the Weston community. The pedestrian bridge at John Street has not been formally designed yet. Metrolinx will be working with the community and local businesses over the coming months to maximize safety, accessibility and community sustainability opportunities around the proposed John Street pedestrian bridge.</p>

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RTP Recommendations	<p>I have asked to see studies picking Weston as the appropriate corridor for a single-technology option. Perhaps you misunderstood my question about the 'single technology' service. It cannot be BRT on only ½ of the route, and something else on the other ½ because then it wouldn't be 'single technology'. And could you point me to the studies used which determined the 'most appropriate' solutions as contained in the RTP? I'm presuming that those studies were used to develop the RTP, as you have suggested.</p>	<p>Metrolinx staff explored a version of this single technology rapid transit service as noted in the 15 Year Projection in the Big Move. The north half of this single technology connection is shown as a solid yellow line on Hwy 427 to the Airport. A solid yellow line denotes the transit technology as being BRT, LRT or AGT. This yellow line indicates that this is Project 32 "Hwy 427 South – Pearson Airport to Union Station". The 2031 AM peak hour ridership for this connection is relatively low at 1900 passengers per hour. It would be lower between AM and PM peaks. Therefore, for this north half of the "single technology rapid transit service" referred to in the EA Terms of Reference, a BRT system on Hwy 427 is the most economical approach. Metrolinx understands that the south half of the single technology rapid transit that you are referring to is an LRT, BRT or AGT connection along the Lakeshore GO Line or the Gardiner and then north on Hwy 427. The RTP did not recommend implementation of this option to complete the south half of this connection to Union Station. The existing TTC subway system completes the connect</p>
SNC Lavalin Negotiations	<p>Metrolinx also seems to not have any capacity to force the private operator of the air-rail-link to run electric at any time. We were told that the cost would be enormous (Billions). Our own research shows that electrification is generally pegged by the railroad industry at \$1 Million per kilometre. Our position is that the section of rail between Pearson and Union should be electrified immediately. The Air-Rail-Link should be electric from the start. GO transit should buy the newer dual-powered electric/diesel locomotives which can switch on the fly, to run along this corridor. As funds become available to electrify west of Pearson, GO's locomotives can therefore immediately take advantage of that.</p>	<p>Contract negotiations are currently being conducted by Infrastructure Ontario with SNC Lavalin in a separate process. At the moment, there is no approved provincial funding for electrification of any rail corridor in the region.</p>

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Subway	Can we please get copies of the studies which show the Subway option as costing 10 Billion dollars and not having the ridership necessary, and the Benefits Case Analysis of the projects being studied by the imminent environmental assessment.	Using recent project costs as a baseline, current cost estimates for a subway extending from Union Station to Brampton is projected at approximately \$300 million per kilometre. The Georgetown South Service Expansion/Union-Pearson Rail Link is not subject to the Metrolinx Benefits Case Analysis because it is a legacy project that received federal funding under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund in 2003.
Subway	Finally, the suggestion of a subway was what was originally asked for by the city of Toronto. Clearly a regional rail service will not have the same ridership as a subway, as the stops are farther apart and the frequency is less. However your representatives have stated the cost as \$10 Billion, which is roughly 3 to 5 times our estimate, and your representatives have stated that ridership won't support it, so I presume there is a study of potential ridership which shows this, not merely an estimate of ridership on a regional rail service. Does such a thing exist?	In 2007, there were 4700 GO passengers per peak period hour using the Georgetown Line between Bloor and Union Station. In 2031, the RTP estimates 24000 passenger per peak period hour for the same section . This is 22 years in the future on the busiest part of the Georgetown Line during the busiest hour of the weekday. The GO train service is regional rail service and volumes drop off between the peak hours. Subways are designed to handle volumes in the range of 25000 to 40000 passengers per hour on a continuous basis. Regional rail is capable of handling the lower volumes anticipated in the Georgetown Corridor more cost effectively than a subway.
Tracks	Re the infrastructure necessary for GO vs ARL. GO requires 2 tracks between Brampton and the Airport. Yet it requires 4 tracks between the Airport and Union. The service improvements predicted are for 15 minute service between Brampton and Union, which can apparently be accommodated by 2 tracks. Does this mean GO has as yet unstated plans to run GO trains to the airport in addition to the ARL? If not, why does GO require the extra 2 tracks, bridges, and other infrastructure? I note that none of the listing you gave includes electrification. Does that mean it will not apply to the ARL? Or that GO has decided not to electrify?	Four tracks are needed to address future GO ridership demands as outlined in the Metrolinx RTP. They will be operating all day, two way service and express rail in the future. They do not have plans to run trains to Pearson Airport at this time. Provincial funding has not been approved for electrification in any corridor in the GTHA.
Tracks	We were also told (again) that ALL of the rails (now 4 through Weston) and bridges and other infrastructure work is ONLY for the GO expansion, and that none of them were necessary because of the air rail link. We find that very hard to believe. GO Transit's own studies in 1994 and 2002 needed only 2 tracks to run 15 minute service. Why do they need 4 tracks today?	Four tracks are needed to address future GO ridership demands as outlined in the Metrolinx RTP. They will be operating all day, two way service and express rail in the future. They do not have any plans about which we are aware to run trains to Pearson Airport.
Traffic Study	Was there a traffic study done in conjunction with the EA process/GO's needs 3 years ago – please forward a copy	A copy is attached. However, a traffic impacts study for the closure of John Street and the relocation of the Weston GO Station has been completed, as noted on previous reply.

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Weston Station	<p>The public statement from Metrolinx was that Weston would get a real GO Station, and that the Air-Rail-Link would stop here. At the open houses, the station was listed as a 'proposed future GO station'. When questioned, GO representatives advised that if in the future, GO stops at Eglinton, it will in all likelihood close the Weston Station. Metrolinx when confronted with this contradiction, stated that the decision has not been made yet and it may be 10 years in the future. However, they refused to make a Weston Station and an Air-Rail-Link a 'commitment' as part of the Environmental Assessment.</p> <p>Also many who went to the open house noticed that the station would be moving from the centre of Weston to Weston road south of Lawrence. It will be less convenient to walk to for many patrons who live in the older part of the village, and may create traffic chaos at Weston and Lawrence, though no studies have yet been done. It was not planned to be one of Metrolinx's new 'mobility hubs', though Eglinton was marked as a possible 'hub'. Our position is that Weston Station must remain, and be made a hub with connections to the 6 city bus routes which go by.</p>	<p>There will be a GO and UPRL stop in Weston. There is no plan to close this station if an Eglinton station opens in the future.</p> <p>This commitment was confirmed by Jim Bradley, Minister of Transportation, on March 2, 2009 in Queen's Park, when in response to a question, he replied: "I would also like to assure the member that there will be a stop in Weston and that this stop will stay open even if an Eglinton rail station is created."</p> <p>Metrolinx will be working with the community in the coming months to design a station that addresses safety, accessibility, and community sustainability concerns.</p>

Georgetown South Service Expansion  
Union-Pearson Rail Link

Responses to Queries from Mr. Mike Sullivan, Chair, Weston Community Coalition

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