

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 2011

SUBJECT: ASHBRIDGES BAY
STREETCAR MAINTENANCE AND STORAGE FACILITY -
MOTIONS REFERRED BY BUDGET COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission:

- Support staff efforts to proceed immediately with the Soil Removal and Capping Contract for the Ashbridges Streetcar Maintenance and Storage Facility;
- Direct staff to investigate the feasibility and costs of locating some of the new streetcars at the Hillcrest Yard and/or the adjacent hydro corridor and Exhibition Place loop recognizing that additional streetcar storage at alternative sites does not change the need for the Ashbridges Bay Streetcar Maintenance and Storage Facility.

FUNDING

There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations in this report.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on January 24, 2011, the Toronto Council Budget Committee referred the following motions, related to the Ashbridges Bay Streetcar MSF, to the Chief General Manager of the TTC for a report back to the February 10, 2011 Budget Committee Meeting:

Motion 1 Submitted by Councillor McMahon

"That the Budget Committee recommend:

1. *That a directive from the Mayor requesting a 90-day study period to thoroughly investigate new information and changing conditions which may have significantly altered the assertion that the proposed Ashbridges Bay LRV Storage Facility is a cost effective, essential and urgent investment for the City.*

2. *That at the end of the 60 days, Councillor McMahon will provide a detailed report to Council evaluating this new information, these new conditions and potential alternative solutions.*
3. *That the TTC is provided with a further 30 days to digest the report and provide a response which can be considered at that time by Council.*
4. *That no tenders are to be awarded and no money is to be expended on the Proposed Ashbridges Bay LRV Storage Facility project during the 90-day period."*

Motion 4 Submitted by Councillor Mihevc

"Request TTC staff to investigate the capital costs and the long-term operating savings (achieved through decreased dead head times) of locating some of the new LRVs at Hillcrest thereby decreasing the pressure on the Ashbridges Site."

The Budget Committee also received the following motion submitted by Councillor Fletcher:

"That the Hillcrest Yards and associated hydro corridors be considered as the alternate locations for the maintenance storage facility for the new LRV's."

This report addresses the motions referred by the Budget Committee.

DISCUSSION

Councillor McMahon has raised a number of questions and issues regarding the need and location of the Ashbridges Bay Streetcar MSF.

Councillor Fletcher has also raised questions about alternative routes for the connecting track and the potential to reduce the size of the Ashbridges Bay Streetcar Facility.

In response to the issues raised by the Councillors, staff prepared extensive briefing information regarding the process and study of the Ashbridges Bay Streetcar MSF over the last three years leading to the approval of the project by the Commission on June 2, 2010, Toronto Council on June 8/9, 2010 and the Notice to Proceed by the Minister of the Environment on December 6, 2010. The information provided to the Councillors addressed need for the new facility to accommodate the new 204 vehicle streetcar fleet that will start arriving in 2013, the Streetcar Facility Master Plan that analyzed various streetcar facility options, the property search for the new site, the connection track analysis, community consultation, project design features including the landscape design competition, and TTC commitments regarding design, streetscape, noise

and vibration mitigation. Information was updated on the alternative sites and connection routings that were examined. Staff also provided supplementary analysis of the potential of other TTC sites to provide additional streetcar storage that could result in reducing the size of the Ashbridges Bay storage track area but would not change the need for maintenance facility.

The original schedule for the Streetcar MSF required completion of the project by late 2012 to accommodate streetcar deliveries starting in early 2013. Property acquisition issues and public consultation have delayed the project by about 9 months. The current schedule, with award of the soil removal contract in February 2011, would result in completion toward the end of 2013.

The 90-day study period and suspension of the project, as contemplated by the motion referred by the Budget Committee, would delay the start of the soil removal to after August 2011, because the Migratory Birds Convention Act (1994) restricts clearing of vegetation during the nesting season from April 14, 2011 to August 1, 2011. This would impose further delay of the project completion to mid-2014 requiring an interim storage provision for the new streetcars or could involve negotiating with Bombardier on a contract change to delay delivery of the new streetcars. Both of these actions would increase costs.

In recent discussions, the local Councillors and the Motions referred to by the Budget Committee have suggested using the Hillcrest Yard and the Exhibition Place loop for new streetcar facilities. The Hillcrest Yard is presently fully utilized. It is not possible to relocate the new streetcar maintenance and storage functions to Hillcrest Yard without displacing the existing necessary functions that would be very difficult to relocate. Staff will review the Hillcrest Yard and Exhibition Place loop to determine the feasibility, capital costs and operating costs to provide some storage and daily maintenance of the new streetcars at these facilities in the future including the practicality of relocating existing uses to accommodate streetcar storage. The results of the review of alternative streetcar storage sites would not change the need for the Streetcar Maintenance Facility at Ashbridges Site and does not change the need to commence the soil removal contract immediately. If alternative storage sites prove to be feasible and are pursued there may be an opportunity to reduce the storage track at Ashbridges Bay prior to the tender of the construction of the main facility in October.

As the Ashbridges Bay Streetcar MSF progresses, staff will continue to work closely with the local Councillors to keep them and their communities informed, to develop the plans for the connecting track and streetscaping on Leslie Street, to implement the landscape design for the project and to address issues and concerns through the construction.

January 27, 2011
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