

July 7, 2010

To: The Board of Governors of Exhibition Place

From: Dianne Young
Chief Executive Officer

Subject: **Dufferin Street Bridge Renewal**

Summary:

The City of Toronto is conducting a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment to examine the two bridges located just north of Exhibition Place which carry Dufferin Street over the Gardiner Expressway and the MetroLinx/GO Transit Rail corridor. As bridge replacement is required in the near future there is opportunity to address future transportation requirements for all users of the bridge including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists; the Toronto Transit Commission and its plans to extend the Harbourfront LRT west to Dufferin Street; the Transportation Department's plans to straighten Dufferin Street to Lake Shore Boulevard; as well as the MetroLinx/GO Transit plans for a rail track expansion.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board:

- (1) Formally inform the City Manager of the City of Toronto and other City officials that the Board strongly objects to any plan for Dufferin Street except one that would allow for managing the objective of straightening Dufferin Street southerly to connect Lake Shore Boulevard (Alternative I); and;**
- (2) Request that the City of Toronto design the bridge replacement so that it has little or no impact on the elevation of Dufferin Street as it enters Exhibition Place.**

Financial Impact:

There are no financial implications to Exhibition Place at this time, but potentially at a future date there may be some negative financial impacts.

Decision History:

At various meetings of the Board over the last 10 years, most recently at its meeting of May 27, 2010, the Board approved of a Development Plan that supports the extension of Dufferin Street directly south to Lake Shore Boulevard

Issue Background

On Monday June 21, 2010, the first Public Open House was held to learn about the bridge replacement project, study the recommendations, and the next steps in this process. Any replacement of the bridge over the rail corridor would require improvements to meet the Metrolinx GO/Transit rail corridor clearance and the need for two additional tracks and the

weight and size requirements for the TTC Harbourfront LRT Extension. To date, the study has identified three (3) alternatives that could potentially address the issues.

- a) Alternative I: Replacement of the bridges on the existing alignment;
- b) Alternative II: Replacement of the bridges on a different alignment from Dufferin Street to Yukon Place, with the pedestrian bridges along the existing alignment; and
- c) Alternative III: Replacement of the bridges on a different alignment from Dufferin Street to Lake Shore Boulevard West, with the pedestrian bridges along the existing alignment.

Comments:

Alternative I proposes the bridge will be raised just over 1 meter which would impact the existing elevations on the grounds including the Dufferin Gate/Dufferin washrooms and the entrance to the parking area north of Medieval Times. Saskatchewan Road would not be impacted. Given it would be difficult to maintain operation on Dufferin Street during the construction period, this alternative would however maintain the existing Dufferin St alignment; minimize crossing distance of both the rail corridor and Gardiner Expressway; accommodate the existing and proposed TTC Harbourfront LRT alignments; facilitate the previously identified extension of Dufferin Street directly south to Lake Shore Boulevard; and minimize private property impacts.

Alternative II proposes that the bridge structure would run through the north side of Parking Lot 6 west of Medieval Times; through the baseball diamond; and possibly impede the south entrance to Parking Lot 6. It requires the acquisition of private property; does not provide for a direct connection to Lake Shore Boulevard; will require changes to the proposed TTC Harbourfront LRT alignment; will be difficult to connect the LRT to Dufferin Street; and the bridge structure could produce visual impacts to residents. Alternative II, would however, maintain access and operations along Dufferin Street during construction; reduce any elevated grading along Dufferin Street within Exhibition Place; and reduce the need for a retaining wall along the rail corridor.

Alternative III is the most expensive option as the bridge structure would need to be longer; require acquisition of private property; will be difficult to connect the proposed TTC Harbourfront LRT to Dufferin Street; will require changes to the proposed LRT alignments; and the structure could produce visual impacts to residents and the users of the Gardiner Expressway. The structure will run directly through Lot 6, and ultimately reduce and eliminate viable tenant/event parking capability. This alternative however will maintain access and operations along Dufferin Street during construction, reduce grading impacts on Dufferin Street, and provide direct connection to Lake Shore Boulevard

Given the major impact of this project on Exhibition Place, Exhibition Place staff will be monitoring all proposals brought forward by the City and the Board will be kept updated. However, staff believe that it is important at this time for the Board to communicate its preferred option and direction to the City as soon as possible.

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