

From: Fred Winegust

Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2019 3:04 PM

To: Raynor, Christopher

Subject: Request to make a deputation at York Region - Committee of the Whole - Transportation - May 2, 2019 - Report E.1.2

Deputation Request – York Region – Committee of the Whole – May 2, 2019 – Item E 1.2

Hello Clerk Raynor

Keep York Moving (KYM) reviewed the staff report dated April 18, 2019 "York Region Transit York University Update" and is requesting the opportunity to make 2 deputations on May 2 on this important topic.

Fred Winegust and one other person will be making the deputations on behalf of KYM.

As outlined in the staff report, KYM met with YRT staff and key elected officials and senior staff for the Region on April 1 and 2. We have summarized additional findings below, which are not in the staff report.

After these meetings, Keep York Moving continued a series of meetings and communications with stakeholders who could change the underlying dynamics behind Clause 14.4 in which Toronto, TTC and York Region agreed not to have YRT buses on the York University campus after revenue service commenced.

- KYM met with **York University administration** representatives on April 9. We discussed current status and potential future scenarios where direct YRT bus service from York Region would be warranted. The university representatives indicated that, should the context change from today, the University would want to be at the table as new service is discussed
- KYM facilitated a meeting on April 10 between the **York Federation of Students and the YRT staff** to focus on the viability of the U-pass as an option, using information generated from a campus survey, including 3,200 students, faculty and staff who are residents of York Region and who have York University as their commuting destination. Results summarized below.
- KYM held 2 briefings on the York University issue and other transit related issues at **Queens Park** on April 17;
 - NDP
 - Jessica Bell, NDP Transportation Critic
 - York Region PC Caucus
 - Gila Martow - Thornhill
 - Daisy Wai - Richmond Hill
 - Logan Kanapathi - Markham-Thornhill
 - Billy Pang – Markham-Unionville
 - and EA's for
 - Michel Tibollo -Vaughan Woodbridge
 - Steven Lecce -King-Vaughan

- KYM sent a letter to **York University administration** on April 29 requesting a clear statement that YRT buses would be welcome on campus permanently, regardless of whether fare integration was in place.

These meetings have given us good insights into the problem and proposed approaches for council to consider. Our analysis is summarized below.

Contract restrictions. Clause 14.4 in the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding between York Region, Toronto and the TTC forbids YRT bus service to the campus once the subway extension commences revenue service operation. The same clause is part of the final contract executed between the same parties in 2017. We believe that York University's request that there be no buses on campus after the opening of the subway had a strong influence on the insertion of this clause. Once York University provides a clear statement that YRT buses are invited back to campus permanently, we believe there might then be the political will on all sides to reopen the contract. We are waiting for a response to our April 29 letter to President Lenton of York University .

Other buses continue to enter campus. Both TTC Route 41 and Zum Route 501A-C remain on Ian Macdonald today, which is not part of the "Common". The York University shuttle, which services multiple York University campuses in the GTA, uses York Boulevard to bring GO Train Barrie Line users from the York University GO Station to the heart of the Common. The Seneca@York Shuttle, which serves multiple Seneca campuses including King City, uses The Pond and other smaller roads on campus.

Student anger. Over 17,500 students, faculty and staff signed the recent YU Ride petition and over 13,000 of these responded to the transit survey appended to the petition, 3,200 with postal codes within York Region. It is clear from the comments that much anger remains in the student body about the loss of bus service. The opening of the subway should not have cost students, faculty and staff coming to campus from the east of Keele and north of Steeles more money and more time.

YRT ridership changes. YRT staff have confirmed that over 1,000 YRT bus commuters to York University have now elected to walk in from Steeles and not use the subway as it adds more time and more cost to their commute. These same commuters used to arrive directly on Ian MacDonald Boulevard, and have a 2-minute walk to enter York Lanes. These YRT bus commuters would not be generating revenue for the TTC subway, as their routing is from the north of Steeles and east of Keele, and the subway runs on a southeast to northwest angle, away from these bus routes.

U-Pass is not a viable option. The analysis of the 3,200 York Region resident responses to the York University Student Transit survey shows that a U-Pass arrangement is not viable as GO Transit is a critical requirement in their travel pattern. GO has shown no interest in being a partner in a U-Pass and have instead offered a \$1.50 discounted double fare supplement to joint TTC/GO users and a \$2.75 discounted double fare to YRT/GO users. The survey also confirmed that many students only visit the campus 3 days a week. Further, the Student Choice Initiative will drive up costs of the pass, as recent changes in Provincial legislation allow students to opt-out of transit pass programs. U-Pass depended on a mandatory opt-in. ***Keep York Moving recommends that council agree that the U-pass is not an option and recommend that staff suspend any further talks on the topic.***

Meeting with TTC Warranted. Ridership information recently developed by YRT shows that only 80 people per day are transferring between YRT and the subway as they journey to campus (ie "double taps" on Presto). Only about 300 people per day make the return trip by transferring from subway to YRT. Therefore any fare revenue loss to TTC by rerouting YRT buses directly to campus is very small and nowhere near the \$8.2 Million presented to council in September 2018. In other words, the financial consequences of striking Clause 14.4 are minimal. ***Keep York Moving feels that this conclusion warrants a meeting between YRT and TTC to discuss. We would like to have York Region Council endorsement of this activity.*** Even without an endorsement, as a citizens based group, Keep York Moving is working towards such a meeting with the TTC.

Fare/Service integration likely to follow subway upload. The 2019 Provincial Budget indicates that provincial uploading of the existing subway network is envisioned for 2020. Minister Yurek has stated that, once uploading is complete, "fare integration" will follow soon thereafter. KYM believes that fare integration will be followed by "service rationalization" or "route rationalization", where bus service across

municipal boundaries and to key destinations like York University will be optimized. Under this scenario, the contract restriction becomes moot. In this case we feel that York University would be viewed as a critical bus hub, especially for those coming from north of Steeles and east of Keele, who do not benefit from the new subway due to its South-East to North-West orientation. Instead of waiting for fare integration to occur, ***KYM recommends that council direct that discussions of route rationalization and honouring a 2-hour transfer should be initiated now between Toronto and York, rather than imposed later by the provincial government.***

Conclusion

We believe that, either through revision of the contract, or after fare/service integration is completed, there will be an opportunity for YRT buses to enter the campus without penalty.

We therefore have requested a clear statement from York University administration that YRT buses would be permanently welcome on campus at any time, with or without fare integration.

We are also recommending that York Region take the lead in discussions of route rationalization with TTC and in discussions for both agencies to honour a 2-hour transfer. We also suggest that YRT request Metrolinx to consider including citizen participation in the Fare Integration Forum, which right now is a staff only project.

Fred Winegust on Behalf of Keep York Moving

Peter Miasek, Ricardo Mashregi, Fred Winegust
Core Team Members
Keep York Moving