

Streetcar LRT effect on development (based in St. Clair streetcar LRT)

Source: Save Our St. Clair

During construction, the street is restricted to one lane of traffic east and west. Traffic congestion, mess, dirt, and noise are constant, and the businesses on the street are especially affected. The number of closures is significant.

Estimated Financial Implications in 2004 (Source: City of Toronto Staff Report)

\$25M for track replacement (already approved)

\$7M for the TTC platforms, intersection changes etc. for the ROW (already approved)

\$13M for civil works and streetscaping (new money, to be approved in 2005 budget)

\$2.4M for pavements and sidewalks, to be brought forward from other City division's budget

\$120,000 for new signal head lamps, to be brought forward from other City division's budget

\$204,000 for streetscape improvements from the 5 BIA capital cost program (new money)

\$6M estimated capital cost for three new parking projects (new money, to be approved in 2005 budget)

\$1-\$1.5M for a public square (new money, to be approved in 2005 budget)

\$500,000 for special treatment for the Lansdowne streetcar loop (new money, to be approved in 2005 budget)

\$?? for street tree replacement (not costed)

\$?? for street lighting improvements (not costed)

\$?? for expropriations (not costed)

The total cost of this proposal, so far is \$25M for track replacement and \$30.7M for the right-of-way and identified mitigation measures associated with the right-of-way. There is no guarantee that the new funding included in this estimate will be approved during budget planning in 2005.

According to the City/TTC EA Team, the cost of \$30M will result in a 1 minute savings for an average passenger trip, and reduce the current 1% hours lost to delay for all causes on the St.Clair streetcar route. An additional 8000 riders are expected to be attracted to this route, the same number lost since the number of streetcars was reduced on the St.Clair route.

Resulting Financial Implications as of 2010

The cost of this unpopular St. Clair project has exploded from an original \$32-million to \$65-million. And, additional costs, such as the burying of hydro wires from poles that would have to be removed to accommodate narrowed sidewalks, would push the cost closer to \$100-million. The cost of the project has increased three times in just six years.

How has the right-of-way affect residents?

Increased traffic would result on many local streets that are already experiencing heavy traffic. Public safety would be affected. Ambulances and Fire trucks will have greater difficulty accessing the neighbourhood.

More traffic can result in increased nuisance, noise and reduce air quality, decreasing the use and enjoyment of property, and property values.

How would the proposed right-of-way affect businesses?

The commercial district on or near St.Clair is dependent in large part on shoppers from outside the community, much like the city itself. Making the area less attractive discourages shoppers from travelling to this area. Local businesses cannot survive on the basis of local shoppers alone.

Reducing sidewalk widths eliminates recent street improvements, and restricts sidewalk cafes and store displays. These losses degrade the shopping experience.

At least 50 businesses have left St. Clair since construction of the streetcar dedicated right-of-way began in 2004 and their former stores remain vacant to this day as nobody has rented them again, mostly due to the loss of parking spaces since the transit line was built. If customers cannot park, they won't come there any more. More businesses are planning to leave the area.

How has the right-of-way affect safety?

Council discussed various motions regarding the recent letter from the Toronto Fire Services District Chief that concludes that "the TTC ROW on St.Clair Avenue West is without doubt unsafe". Here are some of the 'nuggets':

The Fire Chief reported that there have been 556 calls received from Yonge Street to Vaughan Rd. between 2007-2008. However, he also gave the following data:

Response time in 2005 was 4:03 minutes

Response time in 2006 was 4:28 minutes

Response time in 2007 was 4:44 minutes

If an Eglinton Subway had been built, as St. Clair residents wanted, St. Clair Avenue would have existed mid-point between two subways – Bloor and Eglinton – and this expensive and disruptive streetcar right-of-way would have been totally unnecessary.

Subway effect on development

Source: City of Toronto

The new 5.5 km Sheppard Subway, however, has spurred over \$1 billion of construction of new housing in only eight years, including several high-rise condominium towers, along its route as transit-oriented developments. Up to \$4 billion in new development will have been built along the route of the Sheppard Subway by 2015. This is bringing in hundreds of millions of dollars of new property tax to the city. Particularly noteworthy are the condominiums around Bayview Station, where none had previously existed prior to the 2000's.

In addition, between Leslie and Bessarion stations, a former Canadian Tire warehouse/distribution centre next to Highway 401 (the chain retains a store nearby) is being demolished and the land is being sold to Concord Adex Investments Limited of Vancouver. Plans are well underway to develop the large multi-condo complex, Concord Park Place, which includes a community park. Concord Adex is also responsible for the CityPlace condo mega-development at the vacant Canadian National Railway lands, currently under construction west of the CN Tower.

The Daniels Building Company has built a six tower development called NY Towers, Arc Condominiums on the northeast corner of Bayview/Sheppard, and terraced condos just east of their NY Towers. Shane Baghai has also built a multi-tower development in the area.