

Options for Davenport

☰ NAVIGATION

You are here: [Home](#) › The Issues

The Issues

UPDATE: In May 2016, Options for Davenport submitted a list of community questions to Metrolinx regarding the overpass plan, as part of the Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP). See our questions and their responses [here](#).

Davenport is a vibrant west Toronto community, made up of several growing neighbourhoods including Davenport Village, Bloordale and the Junction Triangle. The area has a rich cultural history, coming from industrial roots but now increasingly residential, with factories being transformed to lofts, art galleries, studios and office spaces for emerging small businesses.

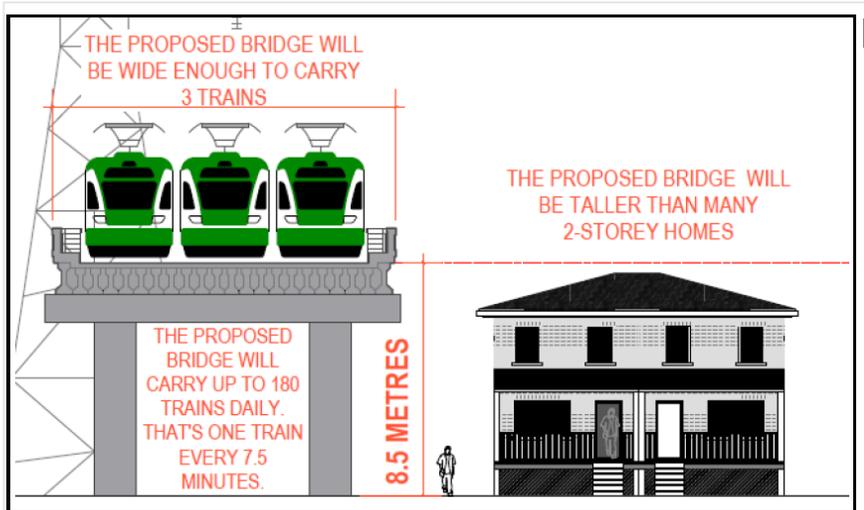
One of the legacies of the area's industrial roots is a network of railway tracks. One of these lines is a single lane of track that runs through Davenport between the city of Barrie and Union Station. Each morning and evening during rush hour, seven trains pass through our neighbourhood along these lines. This track crosses at ground level with a CP track, near the intersection of Dupont and Lansdowne, creating what is known as the [Davenport Diamond](#).



[CLICK TO ENLARGE IMAGE]

The proposed rail overpass will span 1.4 km from Bloor to Davenport, along the existing Barrie GO corridor. For many, this will mean an elevated train bridge passing directly behind their homes- in some cases, mere metres away.

As part of its plan to expand commuter service on this line from 14 trains daily up to 180, Metrolinx has proposed to tear up the Barrie corridor track and replace it with a 1.4-kilometre, 3-storey overpass. This will eliminate the “diamond” where the Barrie and CP lines intersect, to minimize delays as commuter trains will be carried through our residential neighbourhood- at the rate of approximately one train every 7.5 minutes. Until the corridor is electrified, these will continue to be diesel trains.



[CLICK TO ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

The proposed rail overpass will be 3 storeys high at its peak and will run directly past existing residential buildings, including new high rise condos as well as homes that have been in the neighbourhood for over 100 years. *Note: since this drawing was produced, Metrolinx has revised its design so the overpass will only be two lanes wide. Height and length of the structure remain the same.*

Herein lies the heart of the issue. While our community supports the building of better public transit and we embrace our railway roots, the proposed overpass is large enough in scale to be considered an elevated expressway for trains running through the heart of what is now a largely residential community.

Other feasible options exist for eliminating potential rail traffic at the Davenport Diamond, including tunneling beneath the CP tracks- which would reduce the visual and noise impact on the community versus an overpass, while unlocking

significant and valuable green space for public use. This is but one option that would benefit commuters while minimizing negative impacts on our neighbourhood; yet this option is not being considered by Metrolinx in its environmental assessment, which will narrowly considered a single option only- an overpass.

Whatever is built will have an impact on this community for generations to come. As such, this decision should not be based on the cost or length of construction alone. All levels of government, as well as the community, should be an integral part of this planning process.

The View from Campbell Park

Since the spring of 2015, Metrolinx has explained to our community that the trees in the Junction Triangle's Campbell Avenue Park, planted in 1970 after what was previously a quarry was converted to a community park, will need to come down when the overpass is built. Yet none of the overpass renderings released by Metrolinx in 2015 truthfully depicted that this overpass will run through a residential community where people live, work and play, focusing instead on images of the overpass at busy intersections and by parking lots. As such, it had been difficult for many residents to perceive the visual impact of the overpass.

In December of 2015, our group released this image depicting a very bleak-looking Campbell Park once the overpass is built. The beloved trees that now line the property and largely hide the GO train corridor from view, are gone, and the structure itself is littered with graffiti, much like other nearby Metrolinx property in our neighbourhood. As one of the few green spaces in our densely-populated community- many homes don't have backyards and this park serves that function for many families living here, as well as being a thriving community hub- the degradation of this space will be felt very deeply.

In January of 2016, Metrolinx responded to these images with their own revamped design renderings of the overpass, including news that they had found a way to save the trees at Campbell Park. This was a hopeful sign that Metrolinx is responding to some extent to community concerns; but for many, this gesture was still not enough.

[CLICK IMAGE TO ENLARGE](#)



Campbell Park 2015



Campbell Park 2017

OUR EA, OUR SAY

UPDATE: Check out the [Options For Davenport Community Environmental Assessment](#).

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



OptionsForDavenport
[@Opt4Davenport](#)

Follow [@Opt4Davenport](#)

[@misterb2016](#) [@thekeenanwire](#) [@Metrolinx](#) [@StevenDelDuca](#) we would be happy to take you on a tour and discuss the horrible plan for davenport.

about 1 week ago

[Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#)

RT [@KevinFrankish](#): "This Toronto team is dangerous" [@TBSNetwork](#) commentator. Very true!
[#OurMoment](#)

Options for Davenport

☰ NAVIGATION

You are here: [Home](#) › [media](#) › Residents' groups opposing Metrolinx' overpass for the Davenport Diamond pen open letter highlighting safety, community concerns

Residents' groups opposing Metrolinx' overpass for the Davenport Diamond pen open letter highlighting safety, community concerns

Posted on April 28, 2016 by  [Options for Davenport](#) in  [media](#)

By Lisa Rainford, [Bloor West Villager](#)

As residents viewed new panoramic images of the Metrolinx proposed elevated two-track train bridge during a public meeting Wednesday evening, several people shouted 'Shame on you' while others laughed.

A capacity crowd packed the gymnasium at St. Sebastian Catholic School in the Dufferin and Bloor West streets area to find out what the provincial transit agency's representatives had to say about initial results of an Environmental Assessment (EA), which included noise and vibration impacts, and to check out additional renderings for a better sense of the impact the bridge would have on nearby homes.

"When I look at this I don't see the response to the community. We are worried this is going to become a graffitied, dangerous place," said resident Janet Mador pointing to one of the panoramic views of the bridge through the neighbourhood.

She continued amid thunderous applause.

“The things that are important to the people in this community aren’t even on your radar,” Mador said.

Residents remain extremely skeptical about the EA’s findings regarding noise and vibration levels. Sam Kulendrum, a noise specialist with J.E. Coulter Associates, explained that without the overpass, there would be only a modest growth in GO Transit service with a total of 36 trains daily. With the bridge, as many as 180 electric trains could use the corridor and significant noise is predicted in the north and south sections of the overpass. The removal of the diamond would reduce the noise significantly.

Metrolinx’s preferred option is to build the elevated two-track bridge coined ‘The Guideway,’ to address the congestion on the Davenport Diamond rail crossing where GO Transit and CP freight trains converge. The bridge, Metrolinx says, is necessary in order to double the existing service on the Barrie corridor.

Its design will include a skylight, which will allow for natural light and greenery below, according to Metrolinx chief design excellence officer Beth Kapusta. It will also include different qualities of stainless steel. All that “luxurious” landscaping, pointed out one resident, would require ongoing maintenance over the years.

“Who is going to pay for that? The city? The province?”

Spokesperson Erin Moroz said Metrolinx needs community input and that its had initial meetings with the city about the maintenance.

“We need a partnership with the city,” she told her audience. “We’re committed to funding what’s shown on these images.”

Yet, Toronto City Council voted against the bridge back in December, pointed out one resident who said because of this, “the city’s not going to support your (maintenance) of the bridge.”

Community advocacy group Options for Davenport conducted its own EA, ‘Our EA, Our Say,’ which included a noise study, detailed community survey and an evaluation of deficiencies in Metrolinx’s current proposal. Standing beneath an elevated rail corridor while a GO train passes overhead will sound as loud as standing 300 metres from a jet taking off, charges the report.

“Metrolinx has talked about building a public square, farmer’s market and outdoor movie theatre under the overpass, but who is going to want to sit and watch a movie with a jet taking off overhead every seven minutes,” Options spokesperson Sam Barbieri said in a statement.

He questioned the amount of noise the elevated bridge would bring at Wednesday’s meeting.

“People will be under the bridge holding their ears,” Barberieri said.

Metrolinx admitted it hadn’t measured the predicted noise for below the bridge. A number of community organizations, including the Bloordale Business Improvement Area, the Bloor Improvement Group, Davenport Village Community Association, DIGIN, Friends of the West Toronto Railpath, Junction Triangle Rail Committee and Options, banded together to pen an open letter to Metrolinx.

“To be clear, our community recognizes and supports the expansion of public transit across Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area to create a stronger region. However, when this project was announced, we feel that our community was robbed of the opportunity to consider the risks, benefits, and opportunities between a bridge, tunnel, or trench,” the letter says.

The groups have serious concerns regarding the level of noise and vibrations that the project will bring to the community and are not satisfied with the lack of detail in the current studies.

“We also have major safety concerns related to this project and feel that Metrolinx has not been able to explain why an overpass is safer in comparison to the other options considered. The risks of derailments and related crash wall issues have not yet been addressed in a satisfactory manner for us and the city,” the letter says.

Davenport Councillor Ana Bailao attended the meeting Wednesday and agreed that everyone is in agreement that transit is needed.

“But, we feel we’ve been robbed of a decision about this,” she said. “We need to make sure the process understands the serious issues: noise, safety and a lack of vision. This needs to be a city building exercise – a cultural shift needs to happen at Metrolinx.”

Comments Off on Residents’ groups opposing Metrolinx’ overpass for the Davenport Diamond pen open letter highlighting safety, community concerns