

# Exhibition TOC Public Engagement Summary Report



Virtual Event (October 4,  
2021) & Online Engagement



# Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Outreach Materials .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Presentation .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Question and Answer .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Stakeholder Consultation and Project Governance .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Built Form.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Mix of Uses &amp; Housing .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Community Services and Facilities.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Public Realm .....</b>	<b>7</b>

## Introduction

Transit-oriented communities (TOC) are part of the government’s plan to build new, sustainable transit. TOC will enhance Ontario’s “[New Subway Transit Plan for the GTA](#)” by placing more housing and jobs near or at transit stations along the routes of the Province of Ontario’s (the Province) four priority subway projects, including the [Ontario Line](#), the [Yonge North Subway Extension](#), the [Scarborough Subway Extension](#), and the [Eglinton Crosstown West Extension](#).

The TOC proposal would transform Exhibition Station into a connected transit hub with new housing, office, and retail space. Transit riders will be able to connect to GO Transit, the TTC, and the Ontario Line subway, making it more convenient to get to this popular destination for sporting events, concerts, and other attractions, as well as the growing Liberty Village community. The Exhibition Station site consists of two sites, which have been identified as TOC opportunities. The sites will be developed by the Province in line with the [stated objectives of the TOC program](#).

## Outreach Materials

- Postcards distributed to area residents and businesses within a 500 m radius to proposed station site.
- Three (3) social media posts from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) supported (i.e., shared) by Infrastructure Ontario (IO).
- Community input received through the EngageIO website at [engageio.ca/en/exhibition](https://engageio.ca/en/exhibition).

## Presentation

As part of the public engagement process, on Monday, October 4, 2021, IO held a virtual public meeting for the Exhibition area TOC with an attendance of 65 unique viewers and a moderator serving to facilitate the presentation and questions. The meeting began with a land acknowledgement, introductions, and opening remarks from Associate Minister of Transportation Stan Cho, followed by a presentation on the Exhibition TOC by IO and the Ontario Line Technical Advisory team.

Minister Cho outlined the purpose of the Exhibition TOC—to bring together housing and employment opportunities within a 20-minute mixed-use, walkable community. Additionally, the TOC will operate as a transit hub, enabling greater convenience for transit riders across the city to connect to this location for recreation and entertainment purposes. Liberty New Street will aid in revitalizing and reconnecting this area to the rest of the city, which supports the Province’s vision of integrating transit and neighbourhoods based on sound planning principles.

The presentation started with a declaration of the Province’s objectives for the TOC program: increasing transit ridership, increasing housing supply, and catalyzing a complete community. Next, there was a discussion about engaging early and often with

multiple stakeholders to make sure the TOC program is a success. Two forums were mentioned to gather feedback and consultation: discussion with the City of Toronto (the City) and a Local Advisory Committee (LAC), which run parallel to the open house sessions. These forums provide an opportunity to collect feedback and information to help shape TOCs that reflect community character.

The timeline for the Exhibition TOC was provided—the planning documents were submitted in May 2021, which was followed up with the province’s announcement of the Exhibition TOC in June 2021. Since then, there have been LAC meetings leading up to the first virtual open house in October 2021, with a second open house set to occur in the coming months.

Next, the project team presented the draft TOC concept for the Exhibition station area. In addition to the TOC program objectives and principles, there are three important criteria for TOC including: 1) being technically feasible, 2) meeting market and community requirements to ensure that it can be delivered, and 3) being beautiful and demonstrating innovative solutions for the urban form, fulfilling both public and private needs. A key driver for the Ontario Line and TOC sites is the tremendous and ongoing growth of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

The Ontario Line is a proposed 15.5 km subway line that will travel from Exhibition Station in the west, through the downtown core along the GO corridor, in an underground configuration through Pape Station and Cosburn Station, continuing beyond to Science Centre Station. The line will be a catalyst that sparks growth in transit, housing, and communities. Details can be found in the presentation and related materials at [engageio.ca/en/exhibition](https://engageio.ca/en/exhibition).

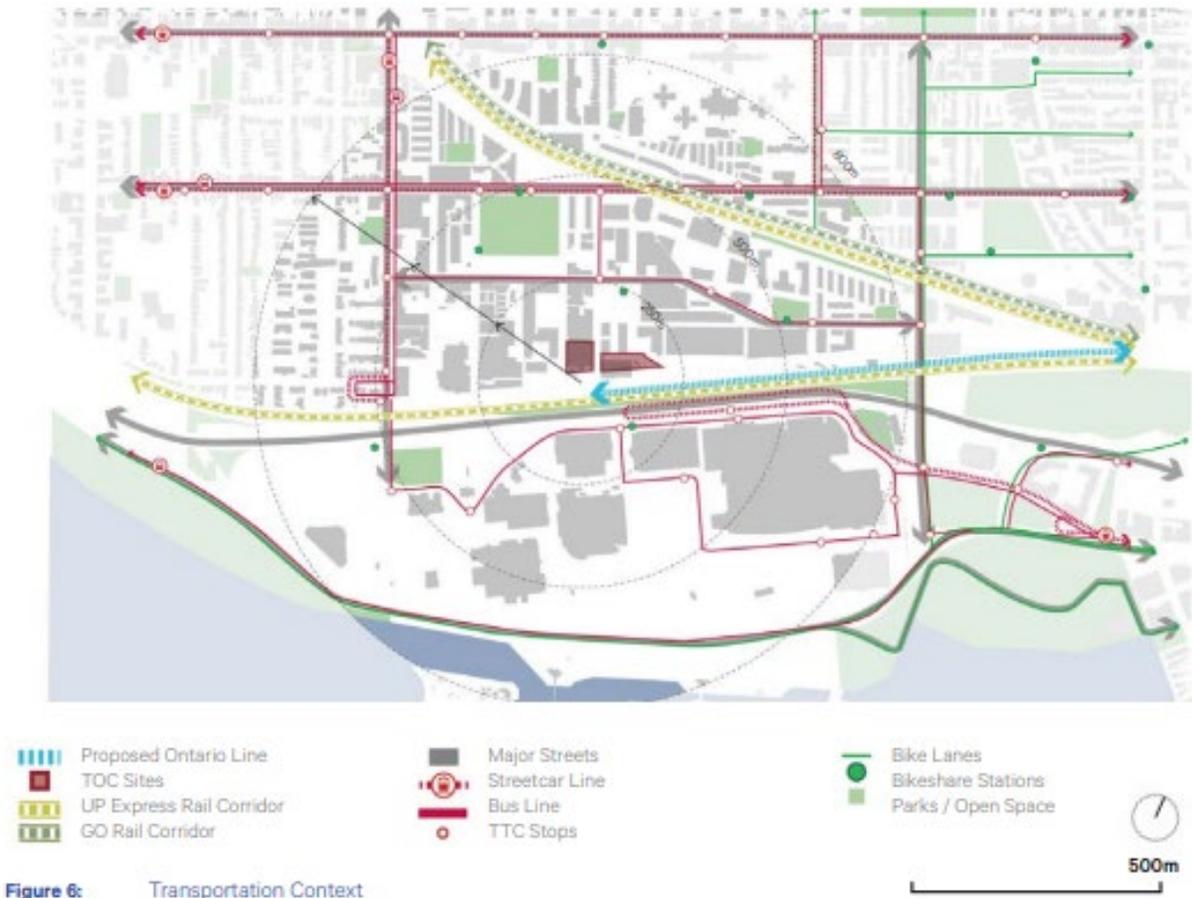


Figure 6: Transportation Context

## Question and Answer

Following the presentation, a question-and-answer period was conducted. Responders submitted questions over Zoom and on the phone. Those interested were also able to continue to submit their feedback via the EngageIO site following the meeting. A summary of the live discussion and the comments received online is presented below by theme. Questions and comments were categorized into the following themes: Stakeholder Consultation and Project Governance; Built Form; Mix of Uses & Housing; Community Services and Facilities; and Public Realm.

### Stakeholder Consultation and Project Governance

Responders were curious to know if any consultation had been done with Indigenous communities. Responders also asked about the proposed construction timeline and impacts, whether access to the GO station tracks would be maintained during construction, and how long Liberty New Street would take to construct. The Liberty Village Residents Association also asked to be consulted by the TOC team. One responder suggested hosting ‘walk-about’ to better understand the live, work, and play lifestyle of the neighbourhood. One responder asked if a Ministerial Zoning Order (MZO) would be utilized to deliver the TOC. Responders asked about other TOC open houses.

There were also questions about implementation and when the land will be sold to a developer.

In response to questions about consultation with Indigenous communities, the project team explained that their consultation process is underway and ongoing. The TOC work will not begin until the subway has been constructed so the engagement process will be lengthy and involved. The proposed timeline for the TOC is longer than a normal planned development, with an expected completion date in the 2030s, as construction cannot begin until substantial completion of the subway. The project team told responders that Liberty New Street should be in service with the end of transit construction around 2029. In response to questions about construction, the project team directed responders to Metrolinx. Information about other TOC open houses can be found at EngageIO.ca. At the time, the project team was not able to answer questions about a potential MZO because that power is reserved for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The project team responded to questions about the sale of land to a developer explaining that the land will first need to be conveyed to Metrolinx, and then to IO for the TOC.

## **Built Form**

Many responders raised concerns about the proposed heights of the TOC development, though some expressed support for additional height and density in the neighbourhood. Responders asked if the City had approved the proposed heights. Responders were passionate about the TOC proposal conforming to the existing character of the neighbourhood in terms of height, materiality, and form. One responder suggested mass timber as a potential material for the headhouse to reflect the existing character of West Liberty. Online responders recommended the development have a ‘warehouse’ look and feel. Questions were also posed about how the proposed heights impacted views to the lake and whether the TOC buildings would impose shadows on the neighbourhood. Responders were generally curious about transportation impacts and the site, specifically asking about the inclusion of pick-up and drop-off areas, site access, strategies to reduce car dependency, and address capacity issues. One open house responder referenced Dutch ‘woonerfs’ as the ideal street condition for the development.

The heights of the proposed developments were addressed in the presentation. Maximum heights in the TOC concept at Exhibition were informed by an assessment of the provincial and municipal policy directions, urban design and planning principles, existing and emerging built form context, and public realm impacts such as sky view, shadows, and views and vistas. The Growth Plan provides density targets for Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs); MTSAs around subway stations and higher-order transit are subject to the greatest density targets. Good planning and design principles suggest that the greatest heights should be located at nodes, along corridors, and edges, providing a downward transition toward lower-scale areas. The proposal amplifies the significance of the Exhibition GO MTSA by adding another higher-order transit node in

Liberty Village. The TOC establishes a new height peak at the MTSA and within the broader neighbourhood. In response to questions about views and impacts to adjacent condos, the project team referred to the required separation distance between buildings per City guidelines and the TOC's adherence. Further, the TOC sites are determined based on the Ontario Line alignment and construction requirements.

The project team responded to questions about materiality and neighbourhood character, explaining the designs are not based on a conventional tower-podium form, but inspired by warehouse and factory-style industrial buildings found in West Liberty Village. Materiality will be confirmed at a later stage when the developer is brought on board.

The project team agreed that site access is important and noted vehicle manoeuvring diagrams could be found on the EngageIO website.

## Mix of Uses & Housing

Responders asked about inclusionary zoning and the affordability of residential units. Questions were raised about the mix and tenure of residential units and the total unit count. Some responders expressed concern with the increase of density in the neighbourhood, noting a lack of community services and physical infrastructure to support an increase, while others favoured increasing residential density in the wake of Toronto's housing crisis. One open house responder asked about the opportunity to include live/work units. Open house responders asked if there will be retail in the concourse level of Exhibition station. Open house responders asked about the type of retail that would be included, specifically if there would be an increase in food options for residents and employees added to the neighbourhood, and responders were interested more generally in the type of employment being added to the neighbourhood. An open house responder asked whether there are opportunities to include trades work within the TOC. Another responder asked if the office uses would replace existing office space or add additional space.

In response to concerns about density, the project team explained that a balance of employment and residential is important to maximize value on the transit investment. The project team explained that higher order transit nodes are best candidates for increased density as MTSA's. The project team explained that at this stage, decisions about tenure and unit counts have not been finalized. In response to questions about affordability, the project team noted that City staff responsible for the Housing Now program have been involved in consultations, but decisions have not been made. In response to the question about live/work units, the project team suggested that the residential component of the TOC is flexible, so long as all uses could be balanced.

The project team described the retail spaces in the TOC, noting there were two retail opportunities within the TOC at ground level, medium-sized retail opportunities on the ground level, and potential retail opportunities connected to the station for smaller retail, restaurants or one larger opportunity. The project team referred to the current proposals

for commercial and retail space, noting that the employment uses would need to be compatible with residential uses. The project team also identified creative industries, offices, studios, retail, and food as possible uses and noted that there would be no noxious uses within the TOC. It was also explained that additional office space will be added through the TOC, beyond the existing conditions, adding jobs to the neighbourhood.

## **Community Services and Facilities**

Responders were passionate about increasing the quality and quantity of community services and facilities within the neighbourhood. Open house responders asked if the TOCs would align with the strategy in the ongoing Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services study currently undertaken by the City. Responders requested more substantial green and park space within the neighbourhood to support the increased density. In addition to green space, recreation space was requested, like basketball courts or soccer fields. Additionally, open house responders asked about plans for arts-based programming and future childcare facilities to support the increase in employment within the neighbourhood.

The project team responded to questions about the ongoing City study, acknowledging that they have been working closely with the City and the completed study will help to inform the amenities provided on-site. The project team appreciated the specific suggestions about recreational space and asked for more suggestions, as the site is relatively constrained and intended for multi-use. The project team noted that there is space in the TOC for commercial uses, including childcare, but decisions about specific tenants or services have not been decided at this time. Generally, the conversation regarding community services and facilities (including park space) is ongoing.

## **Public Realm**

Open house responders asked if the TOC would align with the Liberty Village Public Realm and Community Services study. Generally, responders asked about improvements to the public realm noting overcrowding and a lack of green space as pressing concerns for the neighbourhood. Responders were vocal about increasing park space in the neighbourhood, suggesting the Green P parking lot as a potential site. Improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and safety were suggested by online responders, and they requested that Vision Zero measures be implemented on existing and planned infrastructure. Responders were curious about how the construction of Liberty New Street would interface with the TOC and assist in providing capacity for the increased population. Online responders also asked how the TOC could accommodate and improve existing infrastructure. Generally, responders asked about active transportation strategies for the neighbourhood. One open house responder asked about TTC service for the existing 63 Ossington bus route. It was explained that while the TTC's future service plan details are still being developed, existing and future bus routes in the area would connect to the new Exhibition station.

The project team responded to questions about the ongoing City study, acknowledging, as with community services, that they have been in close engagement with the City and the completed study will help to inform the amenities provided on-site. The project team noted that discussions about both public realm and community services at this stage were ongoing. The project team explained that Liberty New Street is planned as a continuous street from Dufferin Street to Strachan Avenue and is being updated to incorporate the proposed TOC. Responders were referred to Metrolinx's website for details on the existing street network, enhancements to north-south streets, and the Liberty New Street. The project team responded to questions about improving existing infrastructure by noting that the development is hoping to improve movement and add midblock connections and laneways, which increase public space. The project team noted that the City has plans to improve the active transportation network and improve connectivity, and that the TOC program is collaborating with the City to align the plans.