

Date of meeting: January 10, 2017
Location: Fort Rouge Leisure Centre, Multi-Purpose Room
Purpose: Meeting with SORG to introduce the project and identify issues and comments

Project: Winnipeg Transit Garage Expansion
Project Number: 5516057
Author: Brock Feenstra
Revised: February 16, 2017

Project Team Attendees:

- Kevin Sim, Colliers Project Leaders
- Tim Vandekerkhove, Transit
- Scott Payne, Transit
- Brett Andronak, Office of Public Engagement (OPE)
- David Jopling, MMM Group
- Brock Feenstra, MMM Group
- Ken Wimble, MMM Group

Distribution: All Attendees and the following

Morgan Vespa, Office of Public Engagement (OPE)

Details

The Project Team met with some members of the South Osborne Residents’ Group (SORG) to introduce the Winnipeg Transit Garage Expansion Project and collect feedback on issues or opportunities it may have on the neighbourhood. The meeting began with a PowerPoint presentation introducing the project followed by a question and answer period and an informal round table style discussion on issues and opportunities in the neighbourhood.

The following points were brought forward at the meeting:

Parking

- Transit employees are using the local streets for parking their vehicles, which takes away on-street parking space for use of the residents and their visitors.
- Some adjacent streets to the Transit facilities have daytime time limits for on-street parking (1hr on Heatherington, 2hr max on others). SORG pointed out that Transit workers know how to beat the system because (1) traffic patrols take an hour to arrive and (2) their shift schedules help them because they start before the restrictions come into force.
- Residents can utilize the City of Winnipeg residential parking permit program allowing them to park on the street despite the time restrictions. The program is only applicable to home owners and the challenge is when residents have visitors or a service technician/provider park on the street longer than the hour or two hour limit, they are also limited to the time restrictions. SORG felt that although the parking permit program was good, there are some punitive impacts to the residents (visitors and some cost - \$25 per year). Also the permit is registered to one car of the landowner when in the past the pass could be transferred between vehicles. Can a parking pass be used for visitors? One participant felt that putting

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more restrictions would become a problem.

- Some transit employees are parking further south in the neighbourhood streets and using the bus rapid transit to ride to their building. While one SORG member felt this was not good, another did not see an issue with this as it reduces the parking pressure around the Transit buildings.
- The on-street parking problem seemed to be worse on streets closer to the transit buildings that did not have time restrictions, such as Daly Street.
- SORG wanted to know how many employees will be added. Transit responded that the transit garage expansion will not result in additional employees at this time – transit made a request to Council for an additional 1.5 FTE (full time equivalent) positions however Council did not approve the request. The overall fleet of buses has increased. One of the biggest drivers for the project is due to the problem last year of not all buses running because they were unable to maintain them all. Currently there is not adequate space to work on buses so some spaces meant for 1 are being used by 2 mechanics which is not an efficient use of space. Also, technology and the associated equipment is changing.
- Transit added that Traffic Services is currently using office space in the Transit building and that they would be vacating the space. Transit will use the vacated space with existing employees.
- SORG asked if any mechanics would come from the Main Street location. Transit responded that there would not be any mechanics coming from the Main Street location.
- What is the long term plan? – Over time there will be more demand but Transit recognizes that they probably can't expand much more at this campus and have recently included a study for a new transit garage in the Eastern Corridor proposal.
- The proposed permanent parking lot will hold 130 vehicles replacing a lot that had 109 spots, increasing the parking supply on site by 21 spots.
- SORG tried to determine if there was a time of day that on-street parking was better or worse, but the three shifts affected the on-street parking differently. Primarily the issue seems to be the daytime parking and traffic on Daly and Brandon in the morning. There are no parking restrictions on Daly. They felt that no parking on Daly would be great because it is narrow and becomes very busy.
- SORG would like Transit's support to lobby the city departments to complete a traffic and parking study for the area to start collecting accurate data on what is actually occurring there.
- Transit employees are charged \$32.00/month to use the surface parking lot.
- Some felt the price should be reduced but the cost does not appear to be the deterrent because SORG believes there is a waiting list of 450. Transit confirmed that the current waiting list is 395. Residents were confused as to why there seemed to be empty spaces in the lot each day.
- Others felt that more transit staff should take transit. Could there be incentives for transit employees to use the parking lot or to take the bus?
- Transit employees receive free transit, however many of the early shift transit bus drivers do not have the opportunity as the busses are not running.
- Transit has been developing some internal programs to encourage their employees – recently Transit switched to scramble parking rather than assigned parking. This means that employees can park in any of the scramble parking spaces on a first-come, first-served basis. Switching to scramble parking has improved parking usage by making more spaces

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available.

- Transit is instituting a preferred carpool parking spot program in 2017 to encourage carpooling. Those that carpool will be given parking spaces closer to the building. To start, there will be two carpool spots at the Brandon Garage and ten carpool spots at the Osborne Campus.
- SORG asked if the VIA Rail gate on Brandon Avenue will be open for use by employees and if there will be restricted hours? SORG also asked that the only entrance to the site be off of Osborne Street, north of Brandon Avenue.
 - Transit responded that although VIA Rail is not a 24/7 operation, there will be no time restrictions on the gate. In regards to Transit employee access on Brandon Avenue, Transit has requested that staff use the Osborne Street entrance rather than the Brandon Avenue entrance to access the parking lot. The existing gate that is located mid-block on the southeast of the campus, will continue to be used as it has in the past between 2:30 pm and 4:00 pm, but Transit will encourage all other travel to be within the campus site. Transit needs to continue the afternoon exit schedule between the times listed above so that employees leaving for the day do not interfere with buses that are exiting at the lights on Osborne Street for the afternoon rush hour run.
- Transit is currently taking space from another department and will see a net gain in parking space.
- Transit employees park on Rathgar and use it as a park and ride.
- With transit contributing to traffic issues, there is potential to encourage the City to create a neighbourhood parking plan / traffic study.
- SORG felt that the traffic study that was completed for the condos was based on calculations from a City that does not apply to Winnipeg.
- SORG said that they cannot get 70% buy in for residential parking restrictions because of renters. Parking restrictions are not a priority for them as they can be transient. Many houses have many students, all of whom need street parking.
- Are people only buying parking passes in the winter?
- If there is an increase in bike racks on buses it may help sell the plan. Cannot put bike racks on all busses because they would not all fit in garage due to increase bus length

Neighbourhood Traffic:

- Transit employees from the south are cutting through the neighbourhood to get to work creating traffic in the neighbourhood.
- Where will construction traffic go during the construction of the expansion? Sub-trades are also an issue. By the time a complaint is received, they are gone.
- An item will be put into the design-build contract to route construction traffic through Osborne entrance and through the campus. There will be a group that is responsible to 'police' the construction site and ensure contractors are using the appropriate routes.
- Have there been any concerns with fumes? SORG was not aware of any issues, and SORG requested that Transit's area become idle-free and that the new bards do not use toxic materials, ensuring no toxic fumes invade Lord Roberts.

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Building Design and Process:

- SORG believes that lighting from the proposed parking lot and building could be an issue and asked that measures be taken to restrict light from shining into homes.
- Would like the expansion to be hidden from view, maybe a mural on the side?
- SORG asked if the building design can be changed after the open house like it did in 2012. SORG does not want a repeat of the 2012 expansion. SORG said that in its two public consultations, Transit swore it would hide its new buildings behind berms, plant trees to camouflage them, and build far away from homes. Then it did the opposite. Transit will put requirements in the design-build contract that will be very prescriptive of what needs to be built. These requirements will be a result from technical advice and public input.
- Would like to know about the design-build process for this project

Off-Street Pathway

- If the bike path looks like the image it will great
- Cyclists do not like barriers so if it is continuous it will be ok

General

- SORG wants Transit to repair the damage the 2012 expansion caused: Brandon foundations, bumpy over-used streets, pollution, congestion, noise, and over-parking. SORG also asked Transit to prevent mechanics from gunning motors, idling and drag-racing at all hours. Maintenance supervisors have been notified of these issues and they will be monitored and if necessary, action will be taken.
- Worried that Osborne Village is becoming a ghost town because the majority of busses are gone. Busses do not come as frequently and it has become inconvenient.
- I am encouraged by this process, but I am also skeptical because I have been through this before and most of the meetings are a dog and pony show.
- If everyone is sincere about this approach then it is a good one.
- If Transit is upfront it will help to repair its role in the neighbourhood.
- I'm very pleased and I hope the next time the City does this, it is more this way than the way it has been done in the past.
- SORG indicated that their top requests were:
 - Be trustworthy and respectful of the neighbourhood.
 - Repair the damage the 2012 expansion caused.
 - Reduce Transit parking on our streets to zero.
 - Prevent Transit short-cuts through Lord Roberts.
 - Plant trees around the new parking lot.
 - Work together to get a neighbourhood traffic plan (because the developers' traffic study is biased and didn't include Transit's expansions)
 - Have only non-toxic fumes from new building.
 - Ensure idle-free parking.
 - Prevent drag-racing, motor gunning of buses.

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