

History of the Air-Rail Link.

1996 – Premier Harris cancels Eglinton subway – was eventually to go to airport.

1998 – David Collenette asks for study of transit options to airport (IBI Study).

1998 – City asks federal government for money to build a subway to airport through Weston

1999 – Collenette tells IBI to add a Heathrow-like Express train (an Air Rail Link, or ARL) to its study.

2000- Study says it's feasible, but other options need study.

2000- Collenette 'announces' study result as determining that express train is only option.

2000 – Collenette asks KPMG to study whether private sector could finance and build and run – KPMG says yes, estimates cost at \$315 Million, and says they should charge no more than \$14 per ride and they will make money in a year.

2002 – Collenette asks for expressions of interest – 4 consortia are prequalified.

2003 – Collenette requests 'Business Cases' from consortia and quietly hides the bulk of the cost into GO Transit's improvements. Bidders will only be on the hook for about 1/3 of the cost. Only one consortia 'bids' (Union-Pearson Airlink Group) (UPAG).

2003- UPAG is 'chosen' by selection group. Collenette 'announces' winner.

2004 – Province announces matching funding for GO improvements, commits city of Toronto to another huge chunk of the cost (1/3 of most of the costs).

2004 – GO Transit hires SNC Lavalin, one of the principals in UPAG, to run the 'Class' environmental Assessment for the GO improvements and for the ARL. EA process is criticized both for failing to stick to EA rules and for apparent conflict of interest of SNC Lavalin. SNC Lavalin advises UPAG will charge \$20 per rider, and will take over Track 1 at Union Station for the ARL (apparently connected to Union Station Group's lease deal with the City for Union station).

2005 – UPAG refuses to consider stopping anywhere else along the line to serve Toronto, except Woodbine Racetrack. Public pressure (3000 people at an EA meeting) causes GO to move EA to a full EA, and SNC Lavalin drops out as consultant.

2005 – Both Mayor Miller and the city Transportation Planner, Rod McPhail deny that the city will pay for any of the costs of the ARL.

2005 – City Council passes a resolution that 'no streets be closed' for the ARL.

2006 – Federal Access to information request results in release of Stakeholder agreements attached to request for Business Case. Airport Authority (GTAA) will get \$25 Million for its part, and \$1.20 per rider. They will sign a 53 year deal, and guarantee that no other rail transit can compete with UPAG. GO will pay CN to install the rails for the ARL, and for the road closures, grade separations and bridges. CN will own the rails and will lease them back to GO and UPAG. UPAG will build only the 2.3 km spur line to the airport and the lounges at the end, but will become a 'railway' as a result.

2006- Request from Alan Tonks to GTAA results in confirmation that they have indeed built the infrastructure for the ARL at the airport BEFORE the EA, apparently in violation of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. (No federal money can be irrevocably spent before the EA is final). Main estimates confirm that \$32 Million was transferred to the GTAA.

2006 – GO Transit EA finally starts – apparently awaiting confirmation from new federal government that it will proceed. EA is very strange. ARL portion is not 'project driven'. It will study ALL options and only if ARL proposal is found to be the chosen alternative, will UPAG and the ARL project become part of the EA.

2006 – GO Transit forms a 'Public Liaison Committee' of interested citizens, but denies several interested citizens access, claiming committee is too large, or too many are from Weston. At the same time GO Transit invites many who do not show up. GO controls the agenda for this committee, and refuses to allow time to properly discuss the 'Terms of Reference' for the EA.

2006 – A public meeting in Weston on the 'Terms of Reference' gets hundreds of members of the public, who ask so many questions GO is forced to schedule a second follow-up meeting in September. The follow up meeting again attracts many who criticize the Terms of Reference, and suggest that the Weston option be taken off the table.

2006 – Weston Community Coalition asks for substantial changes to the Terms of Reference, which appear to be skewed towards the Weston route. The proponents apparently plan to choose a route based primarily on cost, rather than environmental study, and will refuse to compensate for loss of property or business value if the ARL causes same. They also refuse to be specific about the standards or criteria they will use to make choices.

2006 – WCC meets with Donna Cansfield, new Provincial Minister of Transportation on the ARL and the Terms of Reference issues.

Among our concerns:

1. The 'fix' is in and we are wasting our time.
2. The real agenda is an express train to a casino at Woodbine.
3. The towns of Weston, Mount Dennis, Carlton Village, Liberty Village, and the Junction will be forever torn apart by the frequency and speed of trains, and will not derive one speck of benefit from the disruption.
4. The residents along the tracks, and the schools, will suffer immeasurable damage, loss of property value, and pollution.
5. The built Heritage of Weston, including historic buildings such as the only remaining adobe house in Ontario, will be damaged or destroyed by the proximity of high-speed rail.
6. The 150 year old trestle over the Humber will need to be torn down or doubled.
7. The government will walk away from GO Transit improvements if they don't get the ARL.
8. The city will NEVER be able to use the rail corridor for public transit once the ARL is in.
9. The city will NEVER be able to run a subway or light rail to the airport because of the anti-competition guarantee from the GTAA.
10. The province and the city have been pulled into a flawed federal scheme.
11. Up to \$315 Million of taxpayer money, including \$90 Million of municipal tax dollars will be essentially 'given' to private interests (CN) to build the infrastructure for a private railroad (UPAG) who in turn will run a profit.
12. There is no overall structural 'plan' for transit improvements in Toronto and the GTA. Additions to transit infrastructure are made on an ad-hoc basis based on political promises rather than an overall scheme. (Scarborough LRT, Sheppard Subway, York Region Subway, ARL). Toronto has a master plan for transit but no money to implement, and must accept provincial handouts for any infrastructure.