
**TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION
REPORT NO.**

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 25, 2006

SUBJECT: 39 Finch East – Revised Routing At Finch Station

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Commission:

1. Note that the recommended revised routing for 39 FINCH EAST buses at Finch Station, which involves introducing bus service on a short section of Bishop Avenue and Kenneth Avenue as described in this report, would reduce travel time and improve service reliability for customers, and can be implemented without additional resources;
2. Initiate a 10-week consultation process regarding this recommended service change, noting that the results of the consultation will be reported to the Commission;
3. Forward this report to Councillors Ainslie, Carroll, Cho, Del Grande, Fillion, Kelly, and Shiner, with a request that they provide comments on the service change recommendations by January 5, 2007.

FUNDING

This report has no effect on the TTC's operating or capital budgets.

DISCUSSION

The current routing of the 39 FINCH EAST bus route is via west on Finch Avenue to Finch Station (see Exhibit 1, attached). Buses enter Finch Station at the south entrance, and drop off customers on the west side bus platform. Buses then proceed clockwise around the station to the three boarding areas for the route, on the east side bus platform. They pick up customers at these locations, and then exit the station via the south entrance, making a south-to-east left-turn to proceed east on Finch Avenue.

This routing causes a number of delays to service. Westbound buses approaching the station are delayed by queues of westbound automobiles that stretch from Yonge Street to Kenneth Avenue, the first street to the east. These delays have been partly reduced by the construction several years ago, at TTC expense, of a bus-only westbound queue jump lane that begins west of Kenneth Avenue and extends to the station entrance. A further eastward lengthening of this queue jump lane through the Kenneth Avenue/Finch Avenue intersection is currently under review by TTC and City of Toronto staff, and is tentatively planned for construction in 2007.

The greatest cause of delay to 39 FINCH EAST buses is the time required for their departure from the station, which requires that an unsignalised left turn be made across two lanes of often-heavy westbound traffic. At busy times, 39 FINCH EAST buses can only exit the station if obliging westbound motorists stop and provide a gap in traffic, or if the TTC operator actively moves into the roadway and forces oncoming traffic to brake. Photos of typical congestion are shown in Appendix A, attached. The time taken to make this turn can be highly variable, and buses can be delayed for over two minutes. When this occurs, several buses on this frequent route can back up behind the delayed bus. The resulting congestion at the south end of the station often delays the departure of buses on the 36 FINCH WEST route (which also use the south exit, but go west from the station) and interferes with the circulation of the other routes within the terminal.

The delays result in poorer service for TTC customers. The 39 FINCH EAST is a very busy route that is used for approximately 35,100 trips each weekday. Of this total, approximately 10,000 customers exit Finch Station via this left turn.

City of Toronto staff have determined that it is not possible to place a traffic signal at the station exit, as it would be too close to the traffic signal at Yonge Street. There are no other effective traffic control measures that would assist 39 FINCH EAST buses exiting from the south end of the station.

In order to improve service for customers, it is recommended that the routing of the 39 FINCH EAST buses be changed so that they exit Finch Station onto Bishop Avenue at the north end of the bus terminal. As shown in Exhibit 1, they would travel east on Bishop Avenue, south on Kenneth Avenue, and east on Finch Avenue. This revised routing would allow buses to join Finch Avenue at the signalised Kenneth Avenue/Finch Avenue intersection. The boarding location in Finch Station for the 39 FINCH EAST route would be changed to the west side of the station, allowing buses to enter the station at the south entrance, as they do now, and then exit directly via the north entrance, without having to circulate within the station.

The change would reduce travel time for approximately 10,000 customers each day, by up to two minutes. Service reliability would also be improved, as the variation in the time required to exit the station would be reduced as would the tendency for exiting 39 FINCH EAST buses to leave the station in “bunches”. There would be no change in operating costs as a result of this change.

There would be no change to the 308 FINCH EAST overnight route, which operates along Finch Avenue and does not enter the station.

There is currently no scheduled service on Bishop Avenue, east of the Finch bus terminal, nor on Kenneth Avenue. As with any service change that introduces service on a new roadway, it is proposed that this recommended change be subject to a 10-week consultation period, during which time City Councillors can carry out community consultation and public meetings, as required. This consultation period would run from the adoption of this report until Friday, January 5, 2007. TTC staff would report back to the Commission at its meeting later in January 2007 on the results of this consultation. If approved, the routing change would begin in February 2007. The actual implementation date would be determined based on the time required to change station signage and to prepare and distribute customer information about the change.

The service change would be introduced for a trial period of at least six months, and would be subject to a post-implementation review, to ensure that it achieves the benefits that are expected. The results of the post-implementation review would be presented to the Commission.

JUSTIFICATION

The revised exit routing for 39 FINCH EAST buses at Finch Station would improve service for customers and would not increase operating costs.

October 5, 2006

11-55-57

Attachments: Exhibit 1 – 39 FINCH EAST Revised Routing at Finch Station
Appendix A – Photos

Appendix A - Photos

Photos of typical congestion on Finch Avenue at the Finch Station exit, just east of Yonge Street. Views are to the north east. Buses are on the 39 FINCH EAST route and are attempting to exit the station via a south-to-east left turn through long queues of westbound traffic.

