

What is being built?

The layover facility will include three one story buildings that will house train operators' facilities, as well as cleaning and mechanical facilities. Metrolinx will use the existing access road that is currently used by the City of Toronto and the adjacent Hydro One facility. No new track will be built, rather trains will be stored in a linear configuration on the existing Metrolinx-owned Don Branch which will be re-commissioned.

Where in the Don Valley will the facility be located?

The layover facility will be located just north of the Prince Edward Viaduct, between the Don Valley Parkway and the Don Valley Trail.



Why is Metrolinx building a layover in the Don Valley?

A layover site near Union Station is required to park unused train sets during off-peak times. This will allow trains to quickly cycle on and off the corridors to bring them off after morning peak and get them quickly back to Union station for the evening rush.

Metrolinx currently has 16 layover facilities with capacity for midday and/or overnight storage of 111 12-coach trains. With GO Expansion, 42 per cent more storage space will be required across the network to deliver increased service across the GTHA. For example, the Willowbrook facility on the west side of Toronto serves a similar midday storage function, to allow trains to quickly enter and exit into service.

The Don Valley Layover is one of 14 new or expanded layover and storage facilities that will support increased service, in addition to facilities already built including the Whitby rail yard and Lincolnville layover.

Why can't the Don Valley facility be built somewhere else, such as the west side of the Don Valley or by adding capacity to the Don Yard?

Several locations on the west side of the Don Valley were also considered, however new track would be needed to store the trains, as well as a new access road, resulting in a much larger footprint and impact on the Don Valley. The property impacts of building on the west side would also affect the City's multi-use trail adjacent to Bayview.

The Don Yard has already been expanded, and additional room within the Don Yard will be used by the Ontario Line portal.

After multiple design iterations and working closely with the City of Toronto and the TRCA, Metrolinx has landed on the current proposed site as it has the least impact to the Don Valley.

How has Metrolinx revised the design to address community concerns?

From day one, Metrolinx has understood that the Don Valley is an important feature to the local residents and the broader community and what the impacts of this facility would be and has worked closely with the City of Toronto and the TRCA to revise the design and location of the facility to have the least impact to the valley.

Initially a design was proposed with three storage tracks, as well as locating the facility south of the viaduct.

In response to community and stakeholder feedback after initial public consultations in February 2020, Metrolinx re-configured the design so that trains would be stored linearly on the existing Metrolinx-owned Don Branch. In addition, the facility buildings were moved to the north of the viaduct to avoid impacts to the City-designated environmentally sensitive area and the overall footprint was reduced by 23% from the original 3-track configuration.

Moving north of the viaduct also means that the facility will be in an area where greenspace was previously disturbed during the rehabilitation of the viaduct.

How will the facility impact users of the Don Valley Trail during construction and once complete?

Once complete, the facility will not impact users of the Don Valley Trail. During construction, there will be some impact to users of the trail, such as dust and noise. The impacts will be identified once a proponent is on board and construction staging and management plans will be developed to minimize any impact on the trail users. All potential impacts will be communicated to the community ahead of time through our Community Relations team.

Since the layover is being built in the valley, will Metrolinx consider building washroom facilities and drinking fountains for trail users?

Metrolinx is only funded to build and deliver transit projects. However, we are happy to work with the City of Toronto and other community groups to incorporate public amenities into the design of the facility such as washrooms or drinking fountains, should the City of Toronto make the request and fund such facilities.

Can the remaining Don Branch north of the facility be turned over to the City of Toronto and be turned into a recreational trail?

Metrolinx's planning group is reviewing the future use for the northern portion of the Don Branch. The potential trail option will be considered as part of planning, but at this time there are no commitments for a recreational trail on the Don Branch.

VIA Rail is planning high frequency rail between Toronto and Montreal and has cited the Don Branch as one potential route for the service, has Metrolinx consulted with VIA Rail?

Metrolinx and VIA Rail are working together and will seek to maximize the public benefit of all infrastructure investments. Metrolinx has shared its plans for the Don Valley Layover and the environmental assessment with all federal railway agencies, including VIA Rail, as part of consultations. We will continue to work with VIA Rail and the Canada Infrastructure Bank as they advance their planning and detailed design for high frequency rail.

When will the facility start construction?

Metrolinx just completed the TPAP (environmental assessment) in March. . Procurement is likely to conclude later this year, or early 2022, followed by detailed design. Construction could begin in early 2022.

Why are you still building to increase service, when COVID-19 has impacted the number of people working downtown and using GO?

While we expect COVID-19 to have impacts on commuting habits for the next two years, we are building a transit system for the long term. The region is experiencing incredible growth, with an estimated nine million people calling the region home by 2041. COVID-19 will likely have impacts on workforce patterns for years to come.

However, other trends are emerging such as a decrease in car ownership, and new travel patterns. Metrolinx is building a system for years to come, and will allow customers to move across the region, with two-day, all day service on GO, as well as new LRT, BRT and subway lines. This means more choices not just for commuters travelling downtown, but all transit users, travelling in all directions.

Pre-COVID, we ran 1,500 weekly trips on the GO Transit system. Each year we're adding more, and when we're done building, we'll be running over 6,000 weekly trips.