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Vaughan subway proposed as traffic-calmer for Toronto

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

Vaughan Mayor Lorna Jackson says she'll compete for future subway dollars next year by pitching a commuter rail line through Vaughan as the best way to save Toronto from suburban traffic.

Next year, when Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission move to shortlist some major improvements to their subway system, York Region and Vaughan will be boosting one in particular — extending the Spadina line up to Vaughan's future corporate centre zone at Hwys. 7 and 400.

"It's possible within a 10-year timeframe if there's support for it," Jackson said this week.

When the Vaughan extension is built, a connecting rail line could stretch eastward to Yonge Street, along a route already reserved along Hwy. 407 by the province for a future transitway, she said.

When stations open along the transitway, the hydro corridor through the region could serve as a huge parking lot for commuters, Jackson suggested.

"Then we can run some type of feeder line up to Canada's Wonderland and where the new mall (Vaughan Mills) is going to be."

Vaughan is trying to identify a route it can preserve from the corporate centre to York University, where the TTC may eventually extend the Spadina line first.

The university's subway extension from Downsview Station would cost $780 million.

A further conventional subway into Vaughan would be at least $625 million, including property costs and vehicles, said Charles Wheeler, project manager responsible for the design of the Sheppard subway.

Jackson said the Vaughan extension could also be built, less expensively, as an above-ground light rail line.

Her city will face determined competition from other interests wanting to see their projects put at the top of the list.

Next year, Wheeler will manage a TTC study looking at six possible projects that already have environmental approval, including the long-awaited York University extension, building the Scarborough LRT to Markham Road and Sheppard, and extending the Sheppard subway line further east.

Then, it will turn to new initiatives, the Vaughan extension being just one.

Jackson argued the TTC should choose the projects that would stop the most traffic from reaching Toronto. A Vaughan extension connecting with stations along a Hwy. 407 transitway could divert an awful lot of commuters, she said.

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FOCUS *on Faith*

Changing with the times

Unionville Presbyterian Church is now offering shorter, upbeat Sunday evening services for those too busy to attend the traditional service

Time — who has enough of it? Even 10 years ago, Sunday was a day of rest. Now Sunday is barely distinguishable from the rest of the week.

It's crowded with work, shopping, sports, cottaging and sometimes, the need to indulge in down time to recover from the exhaustion the rest of the week has inflicted upon us.

These demands often make it difficult, if not impossible, for many people to attend Sunday morning services.

Church representatives may whine about the shift in society, but it's unlikely that it will change or help the situation.

"THE WORLD IS CHANGING. THOSE OF US WHO ARE IN MAINLINE PROTESTANT CHURCHES MUST EITHER ADAPT TO THE NEW SITUATION, OR FIND OURSELVES BECOMING INCREASINGLY IRRELEVANT."

REVEREND WES DENYER

We live in a culture that expects, and even demands, choice. And yet, the church, particularly mainline denominations, usually offer only one option for worship — it's Sunday morning or nothing.

This may be convenient for the church and the minister, but it does little to meet the needs of the people the church is called to serve.

Since March, in addition to its regular 11 a.m. service of worship, Unionville Presbyterian Church has been offering an alternative worship time of 7 p.m. on Sunday evenings.

These services are a more casual than Sunday morning, and also shorter. The message is story based and the mood of worship is upbeat and contemporary. And yet, even those who prefer traditional worship find these services fulfilling and meaningful.

"We cannot stick our heads in the sand and pretend the world is not changing," said Reverend Wes Denyer, minister of Unionville Presbyterian Church. "The world is changing. Those of us who are in mainline Protestant churches must either adapt to the new situation, or find ourselves becoming increasingly irrelevant.

"We must certainly hold on to those things which are essential to the Christian faith, but as we enter the 21st century, we must have the courage to let go of the excess baggage of tradition and habit that we've carried for far too long."

"We hope people with busy Sunday mornings will give our Evening Service a try," Wes said.

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Memories Taken in Vain

Most of us grew up believing that the commandment "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," had to do with the use of profanity in language. However, the original interpretation of this commandment was much more profound. It meant that you shouldn't invoke God's name as part of a covenant or agreement to which you have no real commitment, no genuine intention of keeping.

It is with the original meaning of "not taking in vain" that we should approach Remembrance Day. Simply to remember the dead is trivial in comparison to our solemn commitment that we will not take their memories in vain. True homage comes from our action, action to continue the cause for which so many died, the quest to create a world in which everyone can live in peace and security and wholeness.

The United Nations and the World Federalist Organization are just two examples of the many instruments available to help us build a world of global peace. To truly honour our dead, we must plumb our individual gifts and resources and act decisively to contribute to a world of shalom.

Dr. Frederick A. Styles

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