

From: [Tom Connell](#)
To: [Chair of Metrolinx](#); [Chair of Metrolinx](#)
Subject: Submission to Metrolinx for December 1st Board Meeting
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To Donald Wright, Chair
Metrolinx Board of Directors

Dear Mr. Wright:

I'm writing to you and the Metrolinx Board to convey my objections to the proposed Don Valley Layover. I'm a resident of Toronto, and support various initiatives to improve public green space and parkland access within the City.

I believe the layover facility is a highly inappropriate way to use scarce green space within the City of Toronto, at a time when every effort is being made to protect and/or renaturalize such spaces in order to mitigate the future impact of climate change, as part of the response to falling biodiversity, and to fulfill city-wide ambitions for accessible parkland.

The layover facility will inflict substantial damage on the Environmentally Significant Area running between the Riverdale Footbridge and the Prince Edward Viaduct, while clearly endangering the Helliwell's Hill Wetland and surrounding areas to the north of the Viaduct. I anticipate this project will inflict particular devastation on the area around the old CP Rail bridge, which potential impacts were specifically omitted from assessment in the GO Expansion Environmental Project Report.

On top of the objectionable idea of using this green space for a train facility, it would seem to be a highly questionable decision from an operational standpoint, given the complexity of construction, limited and inflexible capacity, and the impact of regular crew and service vehicles interacting with car traffic around the site access route. Metrolinx has failed to provide a remotely convincing justification for this looming disfigurement of the Don Valley, and the inadequate disclosures that have been made to date raise more questions than they answer. The rationale for the layover is substantially weakened given the business case was based on pre-pandemic traffic levels, and the prospective trends for ridership growth and the expanding introduction of two-way service impose substantial uncertainty on the need for the layover.

As a matter of public accountability, I ask Metrolinx to consider indefinite suspension of plans for the Don Valley Layover, such that irreversible damage to the Don Valley habitat and parkland is avoided, along with commensurate damage to the reputation of Metrolinx along with public officials who allow this project to proceed. This would provide Metrolinx and the City of Toronto an opportunity to identify a way forward that protects the Don Valley while supporting needed transit system improvements.

Thanks for your consideration.

Tom Connell