

Civic Hospital Neighbourhood Association

Dow's Lake LRT Connection to New Campus Development

Key Messages April 10, 2024

The City of Ottawa Master Site Plan approval and the Federal land use approval both require a direct, accessible, and weather protected connection between Dow's Lake LRT station and the hospital's main entrance when it opens in 2028.

TOH has projected that by 2028 when the new hospital opens, 50% of all arrivals will be by car with a further reduction to 35% at full build out in 2048. In 2028 there will be more than twice as many staff compared to the existing Civic Hospital and approximately three times as many at full build out in 2048. Every day, thousands of people who must get to the new campus will not be able to park on the grounds.

The configuration of the Dow's Lake LRT connection to the New Campus Development will determine whether the LRT is a meaningful alternative to driving to get to the hospital, particularly for those who live far away. The trip from the station to the hospital building must be sufficiently convenient to make this an acceptable option.

In designing the LRT-to-hospital connection, the objective must be to minimize disadvantages for transit users.

One of the elements of the New Campus Development (NCD) is the construction of a connection between the Dow's Lake Station (DLS) of the LRT and the new hospital campus.

The City has taken over the design and construction responsibilities for this connection while The Ottawa Hospital (TOH) retains responsibility for the rest.

A design proposal for the connection will be released by the City in May or June 2024.

The campus site plan (approved by the City and the NCC), creates major challenges when it comes to moving LRT passengers from the DSL to the hospital building.

The hospital is located hundreds of metres to the west of the station and is on the top of the escarpment.

The DLS is on the north side of Carling while the hospital is on the south side. The connection will involve either a tunnel under Carling or a bridge over it.

There will be only one weather-protected walkway to the hospital building and it is on top of the four-story parking garage. It is called the Highline. The Highline serves both those who park in the garage and those who take the LRT. Most users of the garage will have closer access to the hospital building.

Just to get to the Highline, transit users will have to move 120 to 200 metres to the east end of the Highline on the south of Carling. They will then have to walk 450 metres (more than 4 football fields) to get to the hospital auditorium.

While such distances are a deterrent to using the LRT, a much greater impediment is the fact that the Highline is 30 metres above the DLS platform – the height of a 9-story building.

How the City addresses this impediment will greatly influence the *drive-versus-ride* decision of those travelling to the hospital. The height to be travelled rules out reliance on stairs and ramps. Escalators and elevators are the only viable options. The parallel use of escalators and elevators is essential for several reasons:

- Escalators accommodate surges in demand far better than elevators – a surge in demand occurs with the arrival of each LRT train (max 260 passengers)
- Escalators rising 30 metres can transport up to 166 people simultaneously – equal to 14 elevators, each with a capacity of 12 people.
- Escalators enable uninterrupted travel – elevators necessitate standing and waiting – the higher the volume of people, the longer the wait.
- With both escalators and elevators installed, the presence of escalators facilitates the use of elevators for those who need them.
- Escalators that stop can still be used as stairs. Elevators that stop provide no service.

