Infrastructure and Environment Committee

City of Toronto

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IE30.12 On-Street Logistics Mini-hub Pilot on St. George Street

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Preamble

- Thank you, Madame Chair and the committee for providing me with this opportunity to speak to you on the matter of the **On-Street Logistics Mini-hub Pilot on St. George Street**.
- I am Dr Judy Farvolden, the Executive Director of the University of Toronto Mobility Network.
- When I last had the opportunity to address the committee on the release of the Freight and Goods Movement Strategy in October 2020, I was speaking on behalf of the University of Toronto Transportation Research Institute, named as a partner in this item.
- A year ago, U of T acknowledged that the equitable and sustainable movement of people and goods is among humanities grand challenges and designated UTTRI as an Institutional Strategic Initiative, rebranded as Mobility Network.
- That's just a rebranding. We are still U of T, still transportation researchers, still keen on collaboration and pilot projects with the City of Toronto.

On-Street Logistics Mini-hub Pilot on St. George Street

- We live in an age of disruption. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted mobility patterns in ways we still do not understand that will reverberate for years to come. 21st-century technological advances are radically changing mobility patterns in ways not seen since the introduction of the automobile in the early 20th century – think sidewalk delivery robots. Yet, we must make our streets safer, address the long-overdue demands for more equitable mobility and meet the climate crisis with aggressive and innovative transitions to net positive transportation systems. And all while the Toronto Region must continue to prepare for growth.
- The St. George Mini-hub Pilot study project is one of 24 projects in CLUE: City Logistics for the Urban Economy, a five-year project funded by the National Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada. CLUE is led by Professor Matt Roorda and involves10 researchers from U of T, McMaster University and York University.

- Transportation Services is participating in several CLUE projects that align with the Freight and Goods Movement Strategy and the City of Toronto's Vision Zero, emissions reductions, and congestion management goals.
- The item before the committee "On-Street Logistics Mini-hub Pilot on St. George Street" is one of those projects. It supports those goals and represents progress towards two of the seven recommendations in the Freight and Goods Movement Strategy.
- The St. George Mini-hub Pilot study will 1) test the value of allowing motor assisted bicycles to have heavier, throttle operated electric motors and 2) explore business arrangements with courier companies to pilot the use of pick-up and drop-off locations in repurposed parking spaces, in this case, on St George Street.
- In this pilot study, Purolator Courier will replace delivery trucks in the study area with e-cargo tricycles operating from the 'microhub' on St George Street.
- The study area is Bathurst on the west to Bay Street on the east, Bloor Street on the North to College Street on the south.
- U of T is facilitating access to power for the hub and leading the collaborative research project.
- Over the course of the 18-month study, CLUE researchers will collect data on package deliveries, electricity charging, routes used, and parking tickets received, monitor the pilot project for performance, costs, safety and sustainability and interview Purolator truck and e-cargo tricycle drivers, micro-hub staff and other key stakeholders.
- St. George Mini-hub Pilot study is an excellent example of university/industry/government collaborative pilot studies to explore novel practices in a planned and controlled way that results in evidence that can inform future decision making.
- Purolator's intention is to deliver more efficiently and sustainably, with reduced pedestrian conflicts and truck parking and traffic impacts. The project is expected to demonstrate the potential for e-cargo tricycle deliveries from similar hubs across downtown Toronto, and potentially other locations in Canada. This pilot is therefore an opportunity for the City of Toronto to showcase its leadership in addressing congestion, climate and safety issues.
- And so, the St George Street mini-logistics hub also furthers "adaptability", the seventh of the seven goals of the Freight and Goods Movement Strategy. "Adaptability" is the ability to identify, anticipate and adapt to emerging trends, innovations and risks affecting the freight and goods movement industry. It is an excellent example of collaborative work being undertaken to identify, anticipate and adapt to emerging trends, innovations and risks affecting the freight and goods movement industry.
- We look forward to this project, to reporting the results in 18 months, and to future opportunities to support the City in achieving its goals for equitable, sustainable and prosperous mobility.

Closing

- Among the lessons of the past two years, we know we need to be able to anticipate and respond to emerging trends, because the future will not be like the past.
- Thank you, Madame Chair and thanks to the committee for allowing me this opportunity to speak on behalf of colleagues at the University of Toronto.