



Subway delays blamed on Ottawa

By Philip Alves
 Posted: 2008-03-13

Subway trainspotters waiting for shovels to break ground on the Spadina extension into Vaughan are widely condemning the recent federal budget.

Last month's budget, delivered in the House of Commons on Feb. 26, made no mention of the subway project or when the previously announced federal funds for the transit line would be made available.

"I'm completely, completely disappointed with the federal government," said a vacationing Regional Councillor Mario Ferri from Florida this week. "They had made a commitment that the money would be forthcoming, (but) it just seems that infrastructure — which is our biggest issue — is not on their agenda at all."

Close to \$700 million in federal funding for the Spadina extension from Downsview station through York University to the Vaughan Corporate Centre was announced in March 2007, but would not be made available until several conditions were met.

"The federal government has us jumping through hoops," Bruce Macgregor, York Region's chief administrative officer said this week. "The catch-22 with it all is that if you don't have their funding commitment, they don't pay for anything that you incur in advance."

Sponsored Advertisement



"There's no retroactivity, so you have to sit around and wait for them, or otherwise risk (losing) millions of dollars."

Vaughan MP Maurizio Bevilacqua and Thornhill MP Susan Kadis are also loudly decrying what they see as political grandstanding and needless foot-dragging by the federal government.

"They're good at making flashy announcements like the Spadina subway extension," Kadis said last week from Ottawa. "They're not so good on actually delivering the dollars."

In China on a City of Vaughan trade mission, Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco added her voice to the growing chorus of budget bashers by comparing the pace of progress on the Spadina extension to Chinese subway projects.

"On the lack of federal funding for the Spadina Subway line in the recent federal budget announcement, all I can say is that I'm again very disappointed," she said this week in an email. "On our current visit to Shanghai, the mayor ... took us on a tour of their subway system and told us that they currently have 240 kilometres of lines in their district, and are planning to add up to 400 kilometres by 2010 and to 500 kilometres by 2012."

"When they believe in a project and believe it is good for the people, they provide proper funding and labour to ensure the project gets completed."

For all the criticism, though, the detractors acknowledged the importance and value of having the federal government involved, despite the difficulties in convincing Ottawa to hand over the money.

"One of the curses here in Canada seems to be getting that perfect alignment between three levels of government and weaving your way in and out of elections in the process," Macgregor said.

Community Links

- Local forecast
-
- City of Vaughan
- City Playhouse Theatre
- Vaughan Public Libraries
- Vaughan Chamber of Commerce
- Vaughan Business Enterprise Center
- GO Transit
- Kleinburg BIA
- McMichael Canadian Art Collection
- York Region
- York Region Transit

- Print-friendly
- Email to a friend
- Digg it
- Facebook
- Del.ici.ous
- MySpace

Search VaughanToday.ca

Sponsored Advertisement



Our Readers write



—With files from Corey Lewis



Vaughan Today is published weekly (72,157 copies) by Multicom Media Services Ltd. and printed and distributed by NEWSWEB Printing and Distribution Inc, subsidiaries of Multimedia Nova Corporation, an integrated communications company publicly traded on the TSX Venture Exchange under the symbol MNC.A

Sister Publications

- ▶ Corriere Canadese
- ▶ Tandem
- ▶ Correo Canadiense
- ▶ The Town Crier
- ▶ Nove Ilhas
- ▶ Insieme

Our Address

101 Wingold Ave.
Toronto, ON
M6B 1P8
Tel: 416 785-4300
Fax: 416 488-3671

[Privacy Policy](#) | © 2008 Multimedia Nova Corporation | [Contact Us](#)