

DAILY COMMERCIAL NEWS

AND CONSTRUCTION RECORD

November 19, 2009

Infrastructure

Toronto capital budget includes over \$1 billion for transit repair, expansion

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Toronto's proposed \$2.4 billion capital budget for 2010 has 54 per cent of its funds earmarked for transit maintenance and expansion. TTC improvements alone clock in at \$827 million for 2010.

Included in this is funding for Transit City (\$301 million), Spadina Subway expansion (\$189 million) and Union Station improvements (\$128 million).

Overall transit improvements over the next 10 years will account for \$8.7 billion of Toronto's 10-year capital plan which carries a \$16.1 billion price tag.

Among the recommended expenditures during that time span are the purchase of 360 new subway cars and 390 new buses and continued construction of the Sheppard East LRT Transit City line (\$164 million in 2010 alone).

"These are times of almost unprecedented financial challenges and governments must do all they can to maintain services, create and maintain jobs and protect the economy," Councillor Shelly Carroll, Toronto's budget committee chair, said in a statement.

"The city must make these investments while keeping spending at an affordable level."

Rehabilitation of 150 bridges and structures and maintenance of 800 kilometres of roads is proposed to cost \$178 million in 2010, with approximately \$1.5 billion being spent in this area over the 10 years of the capital plan.

Redevelopment of the Six Points Interchange in Etobicoke, with improved access to the Kipling subway station has a \$41.54 million allocation from 2015 to 2019.

The capital plan also calls for \$22.6 million to be spent in 2010 on constructing 380 km of bicycle lanes, 140 km of shared roadways and 80 km of off-road paths.

Constructing new police stations for 11 Division by 2011 and 14 Division by 2012 and a property and evidence storage facility by 2013 is proposed to cost \$47.26 million in 2010.

Four new ambulance stations at Bathurst and York Downs, Chaplin Crescent, York-South Weston and Pape Avenue will get \$5.71 million in 2010.

The capital plan also includes more than \$170 million in Toronto Water projects including basement flooding relief, lead water service replacement and watermain replacement projects.

Andy Manahan, executive director of the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario, also sits on

the Toronto Board of Trade's infrastructure committee.

He says the board hopes Toronto's capital budget addresses congestion and gridlock through expansion of the region's transportation network.

"From the committee's perspective there is a case that we are not keeping up on all the infrastructure rehabilitation that needs to be done and we need to get a handle on that," Manahan said.