

# Council votes to look at Dennis and Queen as possible site of new downtown bus terminal (updated)

about 15 hours ago By: [David Helwig](#)



*File photo by David Helwig/SooToday*

City councillors voted unanimously tonight to go back to the drawing board on their proposed relocation of the main transit terminal to 111 Huron Street.

They decided they wanted proper consideration to be given to demolishing the existing downtown terminal five blocks east at Dennis and Queen streets, building a new terminal on the same site.

That decision could pose complications for the city's environmental assessment process and the matter will be brought back to City Council on Monday, June 28.

Councillors were to have voted tonight on finding a consultant to finish construction drawings and tendering to add the terminal to the current bus barn/administration complex at 111 Huron.

That didn't happen.

Tonight's decision doesn't mean they've abandoned the Huron Street location, only that council wants to also consider a new build closer to the city core.

"I really believe that based on the fact that, on the new build, we really don't have enough information to go ahead tonight," said Ward 4 Coun. Rick Niro.

"I would like to refer this back to staff, and bring back a report on the possibility of a new build at the present location," Niro said.

He said he had visited the down-at-heels Queen-Dennis terminal earlier in the day, and was convinced the existing terminal could continue to be used during the construction "so we wouldn't have to disrupt our transit routes severely."

Changes would need to be made to parking requirements on the bus terminal site imposed when the new Memorial Gardens was built.

Soo Greyhounds were among many downtown entities expressing opposition to the proposed relocation to Huron Street.

If City Council ultimately decides to build on Dennis Street, the project's timing could be affected.

Funding for the Huron Street relocation was announced last July under the Investing in *Canada* Infrastructure Program (ICIP).

Brent Lamming, the city's director of community services, told Niro tonight that a major change in the scope of the project would necessitate re-applying for the ICIP cash.

"If that's the will of council, we would have to put a request in to ICIP and wait back for their announcement," Lamming said. "So we would expedite that as soon as we would."

"The existing Dennis Street terminal obviously is beyond its useful life," Ward 3 Coun. Matthew Shoemaker said.

"But I don't know if we should limit ourselves to looking only at it as an alternative."

"I think that the vacant property in the Station Mall parking lot – the old ACR train station...." Shoemaker said.

"I realize we don't own that, so there's a limiting factor there. But it seems to me that if we were looking at options for rebuilding a new transit terminal using an existing building that could be refurbished, that would be a good place to look."

"It checks a lot of the boxes that I think would satisfy many of the folks who are in opposition to the move to Huron Street," Shoemaker said.

Malcolm White, the city's chief administrative officer, said Shoemaker's Algoma Central idea doesn't fit within the mandate of the current environmental assessment and could only be considered if neither the 111 Huron site or the Dennis-Queen site receives City Council approval.

Brent Lamming said that he and deputy chief administrative officer Tom Vair had early discussions with the owners of Station Mall about the ACR station as a possible option.

"At that time, it was not something that they would entertain," Lamming said.

Ward 3 Coun. Donna Hilsinger stressed that whatever council decides, it needs to help grow Sault Transit and improve service to its existing riders.

"How do we grow it? Hilsinger asked.

"How do we get more people taking transit, because it's efficient, it cuts down on greenhouse gases, etc. etc?"

City staff will prepare a report over the next two weeks outlining what process would be needed to proceed with a new build at Dennis and Queen instead of relocating the bus terminal to 111 Huron, as well as opening up the environmental assessment to include other possible alternatives.

---

## Trending in Local News

**14738**

Sault woman transforms self, seeks cover model prize

---

**4398**

COVID-19: Here's the situation in the Sault today

---

**4015**

Civic Centre entrance to get a \$428K facelift

---

**3676**

City takes aim at illicit hospital smokers

---

---

## We want to hear from you

### Add to the story:

Have a new perspective or unique thought to contribute?

### Report a mistake:

Can you help us make this story better?



### Ask a question:

Do you have a question for us about this story?

### Contribute to SooToday.com:

Have a story idea, news tip, photo, video or Letter to the Editor?