THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK

REPORT NO. 4
OF THE REGIONAL
RAPID TRANSIT PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON APRIL 9, 2003

For Consideration by
The Council of The Regional Municipality of York
on April 17, 2003

Chair: Regional Chair B. Fisch

Members: Mayor Wm. Bell
Mayo M. Di Biase
Regional Councillor D. Humeniuk
Regional Councillor B. O’Donnell

Also Present: Regional Councillor B. Hogg

Staff Present: L. Bigioni, S. Cartwright, J. Davidson, M. Garrett, D. Gordon, P. May,
K. Price, K. Schipper, D. Sinclair, B. Tuckey, and M. F. Turner

Others Present: L. Erskine, S. Perrin, S. Zimmerman, York Consortium;
D. Ferguson and B. McLellan, Weir Foulds

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee began its meeting at 11:05 a.m. on April 9, 2003.

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1. **PROGRESS REPORT**

   **YORK RAPID TRANSIT PLAN**

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, April 7, 2003, from the Executive Co-ordinator, York Rapid Transit Project:

1. **RECOMMENDATION**

   It is recommended that:

   1. The Monthly Progress Report for the month of March and schedule of work activities be received *(see Attachment 1).*

2. **PURPOSE**

   This report provides a detailed description of the progress made in delivering the York Rapid Transit Plan during March 2003.

3. **BACKGROUND**

   York Consortium is incurring anticipated expenses in accordance with the agreement between the Region of York and York Consortium dated June 27, 2002. The Consortium’s January and February 2003 invoices have been received and are under review. Table 1 summarizes the financial status of the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cost (excluding GST)</th>
<th>% of Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paid to December</td>
<td>$2,928,928</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan &amp; Feb - Under Review</td>
<td>$1,811,555</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Month (Mar.) est.</td>
<td>$800,000</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost to Date</td>
<td>$5,540,483</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Project Budget</td>
<td>$8,500,000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approximately 65% of the budget has been expended, representing approximately 65% of the work plan being completed.
4. **ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

4.1 **Progress Report**

The June 27th contract required York Consortium to file monthly progress reports with York Region. The February report was distributed at the Steering Committee meeting of March 19, 2003. The attached progress report (see Attachment 1) for the month of March has the following highlights.

4.1.1 **Funding**

On March 26, 2003, the federal Minister of Industry, the Honourable Alan Rock and the federal Transport Minister and Minister Responsible for the Greater Toronto Area, the Honourable David Collenette jointly announced that the Government of Canada is willing to provide $50 million to the *Quick Start* phase of the York Region Rapid Transit Plan. The federal commitment is contingent upon securing matching funding by the Provincial government and York Region.

In response to a question posed to the Honourable Janet Ecker, Minister of Finance following her March 27, 2003 Provincial Budget speech, she stated that the Province of Ontario will be matching the federal transit funding commitment that was announced on March 26, 2003. At the time of writing this report, no formal provincial announcement has been made.

On October 17, 2002 York Region Council approved spending $50 million as its share of the $150 million *Quick Start* Program, contingent upon the commitment of both senior levels of government to share equally in funding. The *Quick Start* element of the project is now at a critical stage to proceed to preliminary engineering in order to commence services in 2004. The issue of funding support to support preliminary engineering is the subject of a separate report to Committee.

4.1.2 **Communications**

The communications group was very active during March:

- Presentations were made to Joint Management Committee, Rapid Transit Steering Committee and Regional Council, GTA Transportation Summit, interview with Metropolitan (York Region) local newspapers.
- Arranged Environmental Assessment (EA) meetings for April 10th and 11th.
- Circulated draft communications plan to Communication team for review and finalization.
- Provide a short-term update of the Region’s website information on YRTP and began work on a completely revamped site.
4.1.3 Business Structure
Anticipated regulations pertaining to the implementation of a Share Capital Corporation were delayed.

4.1.4 Quick Start Program
The Quick Start draft report has been subject to detailed review since its completion in early January. Comments received from staff, local municipalities and other stakeholders and other changes reflective of enhanced information have been incorporated in the Quick Start plan report, which is the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

4.1.5 Program-Wide Transportation Planning
Program-wide Transportation Planning activity in March included:

- Completed traffic data collection to feed into EA’s.
- Developed draft travel demand model structure and model calibration/validation draft report, including service descriptions and ridership.
- Continued work responding to comments on technology survey; collected significant new data, including vehicle dimensions, seating and total capacity, top speeds, capacities and other performance parameters.
- Developed second draft of technical memorandum on rapid transit vehicle technology characteristics, including physical characteristics and performance parameters.
- Developed second draft technical memorandum on facility planning criteria, including BRT/LRT infrastructure design criteria, station design guidelines and detailed reference drawings of typical cross-sections.
- Completed draft technical memorandum on the ridership forecasting and model development activities, including forecasting procedures, 2001 base year validation and 2021 horizon year forecasts.
- Prepared draft of capital costing methodology report.
- Commenced capital costing of typical roadway cross sections based on various scenarios and on cut and cover tunnel sections.
- Continued to refine initial Capital Expenditure estimates for 5-year and 10-year intervals.
4.1.6 Environmental Assessments

EA presentations were made to Markham and Richmond Hill Transportation Committees on March 24, and April 1, respectively. An EA presentation is scheduled for Vaughan Transportation Committee on April 15. A meeting was held with the Markham Centre planning team and GO Transit to review transit ROW integration options.

Work in March pertaining to Environmental Assessments in general included:

- Met with MOE noise assessment staff to obtain approval of protocol for noise effects analysis for corridor EA’s.
- On-going updating of corridor inventories by environmental sub-consultants.
- Continued compilation of utility information for all corridors.
- Met with Town of Markham Transportation Committee to present status of all EA’s.
- Met with Town of Markham, City of Vaughan and Thornhill urban design consultant to address options for integration of RT into heritage district and review proposals prepared by Study consultant.
- Developed conceptual layout for Maintenance and storage facility sites.
- Provided input to development of station and streetscaping prototypical design concepts.
- Convened meeting with emergency services to address access concerns.

4.1.6.1 Yonge Corridor

York Consortium completed the evaluation of Yonge Corridor alternatives, including traffic impact assessment, to enable selection of the preferred option. The second set of Public Information Centres (PIC’s) was held in mid March, at which the evaluation of alternative designs and analysis of environmental effects was presented.

4.1.6.2 Markham N-S Corridor

The Need and Justification Study and Terms of Reference were submitted to the Steering Committee on March 19, 2003 and were subsequently approved for submission to the Ministry of the Environment (MOE). York Consortium continues to develop ridership and justification.

4.1.6.3 Highway 7 Corridor including Vaughan N-S Link

The Region is preparing responses to public comments and approval from MOE is expected by mid-April. A meeting was held with Vaughan’s land use planners as well as GO, TTC, YRT, etc. and alignment options are being developed. A meeting was held with the TTC EA team on March 27 to discuss the Steeles/York University interface.

4.2 Urban Transportation Showcase Program

York Region is one of 15 Canadian municipalities that have been short-listed for consideration under the federal Urban Transportation Showcase Program (UTSP). If selected, York Region could receive up to $10 million for the implementation of the first
stage of the full Bus Rapid Transit program on Yonge Street between Steeles Avenue and Highway 7.

On January 23, 2003 York Region Council endorsed a recommendation to finalize an agreement with Transport Canada to receive up to $30,000 to develop a detailed project submission under the UTSP for submission by May 16, 2003. That detailed proposal is currently being developed and will be brought forward to the Steering Committee next month.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT
There are no local municipal implications associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION
York Consortium and York Region staff made significant advancements in refining the Quick Start program, and Program-wide transportation planning in March. A major milestone was achieved with the federal funding commitment announcement of March 26th for the Quick Start program and we await formal provincial commitment for the program.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(A copy of the attachment referred to in the foregoing was circulated to all Members of Council with the April 9, 2003 Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee Agenda and is also on file in the Office of the Regional Clerk.)

QUICK START PLAN

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, April 7, 2003, from the Executive Co-ordinator, York Rapid Transit Project, subject to including the following recommendation:

6. Staff be requested to recover matching funding support for monies expended to undertake Quick Start preliminary engineering in advance of all funding announcements having been made from Provincial and Federal authorities.
1. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

   It is recommended that:

   1. This report and the *Quick Start* Plan Description (*Attachment 1*) be received and endorsed in principle.

   2. Council authorize an extension of the Stage 1 contract with York Consortium 2002 by $800,000 (plus GST) to progress preliminary design works for the next 30 days.

   3. Council authorize these funds from the Region’s share of the Quick Start project, pending the final funding agreements with the Provincial and Federal governments.

   4. YRTP staff report back monthly on the status of preliminary design progress and budget expenditure.

   5. YRTP staff continue to discuss and resolve various issues raised during the development of the *Quick Start* plan by GO Transit, the TTC and the City of Toronto.

2. **PURPOSE**

   This report describes the composition of the Quick Start plan description. The plan reflects modifications to the original draft report in response to comments provided by municipal and Regional staff, and other stakeholders, and as a result of more detailed information developed by York Consortium. It is important to note that the plan describes only the functional elements of Quick Start, not the operational decisions, such as vehicle technologies, suppliers and operators. This description will be used to undertake the preliminary design work necessary to a point where a Guaranteed Maximum Price can be determined. Also, certain policy decisions must be made to implement the Quick Start program including, fare levels and structure, operational relationships and interfaces and the cost confidence process must be completed before these can be specified in detail. The operational and policy decisions necessary to implement the Quick Start program will be the subject of subsequent reports. A final Quick Start plan is scheduled for Committee approval in May.

   In order to maintain the aggressive timetable to implement the Quick Start program by August 2004, it is necessary to advance to the next stage of implementation and proceed with preliminary design works to a point where the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) can be determined for the project. The GMP would then be subjected to the cost confidence process. In addition to preliminary design work, other activities need to be further developed, such as branding. This report seeks to expend one month of work in the amount of $800,000 prior to formal provincial announcement of support for the project.
3. **BACKGROUND**

This document defines the proposed YRTP *Quick Start* plan. The description is based on and consistent with the YRTP Business Plan (November 1, 2002), although further program and implementation details have been incorporated. The cost-confidence process will follow in order to procure Quick Start infrastructure.

The primary objectives for *Quick Start* include:
- Building ridership.
- Shifting the modal split.
- Stimulating land use intensification.
- Establishing the base upon which the full rapid transit system will be built.
- Minimizing construction and infrastructure redundancy.
- Stimulating integration of rapid transit with other service providers
- Providing new service in 2004.

*Quick Start* is positioned as the initial element of the full future rapid transit network in York Region. The primary objective of *Quick Start* is to begin to develop the rapid transit market in York Region. As such, it will provide an extensive network of bus operations on major routes that provide high quality, frequent, user-friendly service. *Quick Start* operations will be an integrated member of the family of transit services that operate in the GTA and its operation will be coordinated with YRT, GO Transit, the TTC and transit operations in neighbouring regions.

The ultimate rapid transit system in York Region will evolve over time in the four designated corridors. That network will be characterized by dedicated rights-of-way and permanent stations. The determination of the nature and location of that higher order rapid transit system is currently the subject of three environmental assessments in four corridors. *Quick Start* will be an interim measure in the development of that ultimate rapid transit network. The timing of the subsequent introduction of higher order rapid transit services in *Quick Start* corridors will depend on factors such as ridership, population and employment growth, development and redevelopment opportunities, and funding availability.

It is important to note that *Quick Start* will do more than simply replace existing GO Transit bus services in the Yonge Street corridor. *Quick Start* services will provide frequent all-day service, using buses with low floors and multiple wide doors for quick, easy boarding. Off-board ticketing will further reduce dwell times and customers will be assisted through the provision of real-time information services. Improved passenger waiting areas will be provided at all stations and stops. This does not mean that there will not be a role for GO Transit, which will continue to serve the long distance inter-regional travel market, while the YRTP will better serve the travel needs of York Region’s urban market.
Yonge Street is the most important primary urban transit corridor in York Region. As such, it is imperative that York Region be able to control its own urban transit destiny. The Quick Start program is the first essential component of the York Rapid Transit Plan, which will lead to greatly improved transit service levels.

During the development of the Quick Start plan a number of issues were raised by GO Transit, the TTC and the City of Toronto. YRTP staff continues to discuss and resolve those issues with the respective agencies.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Quick Start component of the York Region Rapid Transit Plan was developed within the context of York Region’s Transportation Master Plan. Population and employment growth and transportation pressures background information frame the environment within which the Quick Start plan has been developed. A brief summary of each section of the report follows. Also, those aspects of each section that require additional development are discussed. Such additional development will be the subject of future reports.

4.1 What is Quick Start?

This section positions the Quick Start plan within the broader integrated family of public transit services, specifies its goals and objectives and summarizes its main elements and benefits associated with early introduction. Quick Start incorporates all the elements of rapid transit (i.e., attractive stops and terminals, running ways incorporating queue jumper lanes and signal priority to bypass congested intersections, frequent all-day service, low floor, wide door dedicated vehicles) in a way that assures early implementation consistent with the basic tenets of the Environmental Assessment process.

4.2 Project Background

This section provides the population, employment, land use, current transportation, and planning context within which the Quick Start plan has been developed.

4.3 Quick Start Plan Description

The Quick Start Plan is described in Attachment 1, which is divided into the following sections:

- Quick Start Elements.
- Quick Start Service.
- Operations and Maintenance Facility.
- Implementation and Phasing.
- Changes to Quick Start Plan.
4.4 **Quick Start Ridership Forecasting**

Advanced computer based ridership forecasting models were used to develop the *Quick Start* plan. Ridership forecasts were developed for each of the five BRT routes for 2006 and predict overall daily boardings of 37,000 riders.

4.5 **Quick Start Communications**

When *Quick Start* implementation begins a communication strategy will be provided in the form of another report. This communications component of the *Quick Start* program, during the implementation period, will be one of the key elements of the larger YRTP communications plan. It will focus primarily on:

- Public awareness of the *Quick Start* elements.
- Branding and Livery.
- Service Roll-out.
- Coordination with EA communications.

4.6 **Performance Measurement**

A model will be implemented which will allow regular and frequent measurement of *Quick Start* performance. Performance measurement will relate to program development, program implementation and monitoring the operating system, including establishing performance indicators relating to transportation, Smart Growth and the environment.

4.7 **Quick Start Preliminary Engineering Work Needs to Proceed Immediately**

Over the past ten months, the work program of the York Region public/private partnership has proceeded post haste. All of the work undertaken has confirmed the urgent need to provide the earliest possible alternatives to car-based travel in the Region. Significant pent-up public frustration at the slow pace of delivery of new infrastructure to confront existing gridlock is compounded by the pending major new development applications in the emerging centres that await approval. The pressing need for urban rapid transit to accompany this growth with dedicated transit running ways and station stops needs funding support to be secured at all levels of government.

At this juncture, funding support has been conditionally secured from the Regional and Federal levels of government. While comments were made following the Provincial budget of support for the YRTP, a formal announcement has not, at the time of the writing of this report, occurred.

In order to meet its commitment to deliver rapid transit by late summer 2004, preliminary engineering works must commence immediately. While it was hoped that funding support would be committed and costs shared for the preliminary design, it is recommended that work proceed now on a month-to-month basis funded over the next 30 days by the Region. If funding has been secured over the intervening period, work would continue on the preliminary design. If however, funding has not been secured, a report
for Steering Committee’s consideration will be prepared to determine if further expenditures will be approved.

The following table illustrates the desired sequence of activities and latest dates for initiating those activities in order to keep the project on schedule.

### Table 1
Activity Sequence and Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence of Activities</th>
<th>Latest Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notice to proceed on preliminary engineering for $150 million Quick Start Project.</td>
<td>April 17, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalize outline strategy for bus operations</td>
<td>July, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision of Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for $150 million Quick Start Project.</td>
<td>August, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undertake cost confidence process.</td>
<td>August/September, 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commence construction of Quick Start.</td>
<td>October, 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The following table provides a breakdown of *Quick Start* Plan Capital Costs.

### Table 2
Project Cost Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COST SUMMARY</th>
<th>Project Costs ($ millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersection Improvements</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stations &amp; Intermodals</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park &amp; Ride</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fare Collection</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITS</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Facility</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Costs</strong></td>
<td><strong>150.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The original $8.5 million agreement between York Region and York Consortium 2002 included preliminary design and the development of a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for *Quick Start* plan. However, at the time the agreement was drafted, a much smaller *Quick Start* plan ($30-$50 million rather than $150 million) was contemplated. Work beyond that contemplated in the original agreement must be undertaken very quickly over the next few months to feed the rigorous cost confidence process in order to arrive at an agreed GMP. The most important aspect of this additional work is the development of preliminary designs for the *Quick Start* plan. The additional cost of the expanded work program will be $800,000 (plus GST) to cover anticipated expenditures over the next 30 days. Additional funding for the preliminary design will be required beyond the $800,000, however, authorization for any additional costs will be sought at the next Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee meeting.

To fund the additional cost for the expanded preliminary design of Quick Start, it is recommended that the Stage 1 agreement with York Consortium 2002 be extended by $800,000 (plus GST). This cost will be included in the total $150 million budget for the *Quick Start* project. Therefore, authorization from Regional Council is requested to permit the additional $800,000 expenditure until confirmation of the matching funding from the Provincial and Federal governments. Staff will monitor these additional costs and report to the next Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee meeting.

6. **LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

There are no local municipal implications associated with this report.

7. **CONCLUSION**

York Consortium has further defined the *Quick Start* plan during March and all elements have been thoroughly reviewed by York Region staff. The *Quick Start* plan specifies the functional aspects of delivering the program, such as types of vehicles and systems, it does not seek decisions on specific technologies and suppliers, nor does it reflect some key policy decisions that must be made prior to implementation. Further specification of needs and design, and consideration of policy decisions will occur during the coming months. Council will be advised in future reports of preferences regarding technologies and suppliers and key policy decisions prior to their incorporation into the *Quick Start* program. In order to maintain the timetable to implement the *Quick Start* program by August 2004, it is necessary to proceed to the next stage and develop preliminary detailed designs in order to determine a Guaranteed Maximum Price for the program. The GMP will then be subjected to the cost confidence process.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.
(A copy of the attachment referred to in the foregoing was circulated to all Members of Council with the April 9, 2003 Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee Agenda and is also on file in the Office of the Regional Clerk.)

3

YONGE CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PRELIMINARY PREFERRED ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVE

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, April 7, 2003, from the Executive Co-ordinator, York Rapid Transit Project:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS
   It is recommended that:
   1. The following report be received for information by Committee and Council.
   2. Copies of this report be forwarded by the Regional Clerk to the Clerks of the Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill and the City of Vaughan, requesting their input by May 15, 2003.

2. PURPOSE
   The purpose of this report is to inform Committee and Council that a detailed evaluation allowing a Preliminary Preferred Alignment Alternative to be identified for the Yonge Corridor Environmental Assessment (EA), has been completed and to provide a synopsis highlighting the key findings and the rationale for the selection of the preferred alignment.

3. BACKGROUND
   The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) on January 14, 2003, approved the Terms of Reference for the Yonge Corridor Environmental Assessment Study.

   York Region’s Official Plan places a high degree of emphasis on significantly increasing transit use to accommodate future transportation needs and human services. York Region’s 2002 Transportation Master Plan has reaffirmed the need to implement rapid transit in four corridors. Three are north-south rapid transit facilities, in the Yonge Street corridor connecting to the Yonge Subway, from the Vaughan Corporate Centre to the Spadina Subway and from Markham Town Centre to the Sheppard Subway. One is an east-west rapid transit facility in the Highway 7 corridor connecting to all three of the north-south rapid transit links, to the Region of Peel in the west and to the Region of Durham in the east.
In June 2002, Regional Council endorsed the proposal of York Consortium to establish a public private partnership for implementation of the York Rapid Transit Plan (YRTP), a program of rapid transit projects designed to form a transit network in York Region. The Individual Environmental Assessment (IEA) study for the Yonge Corridor was commenced in August 2002 in anticipation of MOE approval of the Terms of Reference developed in 2001 and 2002.

The study area used to evaluate the route alternatives is between Steeles Avenue and 19th Avenue as illustrated in (Attachment 1). The City of Toronto is conducting a parallel Class EA for Bus Rapid Transit on Yonge Street between Steeles Avenue and the Finch Subway Station.

On March 27, 2003, YRTP staff met with GO Transit Planning and Bus Operations Management to begin the process of reconciling GO Transit and YRTP operations in the Yonge Corridor.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The first phase of the Yonge Corridor EA developed alignment alternatives along the two primary route options identified in the Terms of Reference and shown in (Attachment 1). These alignments were presented to the Public at the second series of Public Information Centres held at two locations in January. A proposed methodology and set of criteria for evaluation of route alternatives was also presented for public review.

It should be noted that the analysis was neutral regarding the type of technology and the findings would apply to either a BRT or LRT technology option.

4.1 Description of Route Alternatives

4.1.1 Alternative 1: Transitway entirely on Yonge Street

In this alternative, the entire length of the transitway would be located in the median of the existing Yonge Street cross-section and comprise two lanes reserved exclusively for transit vehicles. All intersections would be crossed at-grade with the traffic signals modified to give priority to transit vehicles.

In the Thornhill Heritage District, discussions are on-going with the community and the consultant carrying out the community revitalization and beautification study for the Town of Markham and City of Vaughan. Options to reduce the widening of Yonge Street to accommodate the transitway through the community are being investigated. These have included the feasibility of pre-building a section of a future subway tunnel for use by Yonge Street road traffic in the intervening period until such time as the subway is constructed to Highway 7. A shallow underground section, independent of any future subway has also been considered and found to require a length of one kilometre to avoid
the ramps at each end conflicting with major intersections at John and Arnold Streets. More detailed analysis of both surface and underground options is continuing.

For most of its length, the Yonge Street road right-of-way is wide enough to accommodate the addition of the transit lanes by a reduction in the width of the existing boulevard between the curbs and property lines. The one exception is the approximately one kilometre section between Major Mackenzie Drive and Crosby Avenue passing through the old Richmond Hill Business District. As this section is too narrow to permit the insertion of transitway lanes without major property acquisition and disruption, the only alternatives are to either operate the rapid transit in mixed traffic lanes or construct a two-lane tunnel beneath the existing roadway for rapid transit vehicles only.

As a first step prior to comparing the Yonge Street route with the alternative routing along the GO Rail Line, the cost-effectiveness of the underground alternative was assessed. It was determined that constructing the tunnel would be complex in the narrow roadway, extremely disruptive to traffic and business activity and add approximately $100 million to the capital cost of the Yonge Street option as well as on-going operation and maintenance costs for the tunnel electro-mechanical systems. In addition, the station at the north end of the underground section would have to be placed further from the business district to accommodate the tunnel portal structures. The off-setting benefits would be a saving of 1.5 to 2 minutes in travel time through Richmond Hill and the separation of the high volume of transit vehicles from the general traffic lanes through the business district. A cost-benefit analysis, considering amongst other factors, the value of the travel time saving for transit users over the planning period, is being pursued to assess whether the high capital cost of the underground option can be justified.

4.1.2 Alternative 2: Transitway on Yonge Street and alongside the GO Rail Line

For this alternative, the transitway would be in the Yonge Street median between Steeles Avenue and Highway 7 (Langstaff Intermodal Station) from where it diverts to a new right-of-way adjacent to the Richmond Hill GO Rail Line. It continues along the west side of the GO Line crossing 16th Avenue and Major Mackenzie Drive and then returns to Yonge Street across private industrial land south of Elgin Mills Road. From this point north to 19th Ave., the transitway would again be in the Yonge Street median as in the first alternative.

Throughout its length, the transitway remains at-grade passing under existing rail grade separations at High Tech Rd., Bantry Ave. and 16th Ave. and over Major Mackenzie Drive on a new transit only bridge. All other east-west roads would be crossed at-grade. The new right-of-way has been protected between the Langstaff Station site and a point just south of 16th Avenue. The remaining right-of-way, northward to the point where the route returns to Yonge Street would have to be acquired mostly from private owners.
4.1.3 Alternative 3: Transitway on Yonge Street, Weldrick Road and alongside the GO Rail Line

This alternative combines the southern portion of Alternative 1 with the northern section of Alternative 2 by a link along Weldrick Road. For the section between Steeles Avenue and Weldrick Road, north of Hillcrest Mall, this alternative is identical to Alternative 1, described in Section 4.1.2. At Weldrick Road, this route alternative turns to the east and continues along Weldrick Road to the GO Rail Line right-of-way. Immediately west of the Weldrick Road rail crossing, the route turns north and follows the rail line on the west side as described for Alternative 2.

In the link along Weldrick Road, the transitway is located in the roadway median up to Church Street South where it swings to the south side to avoid preventing left turns into numerous residential driveways on the north side. Near the rail line, transit vehicles would cross to the north again before turning northward adjacent to the rail right-of-way.

4.2 Evaluation Methodology for Selection of Preferred Alignment

The detailed evaluation, summarized in this report, considered the ability of each of the alignments to respond to the five main objectives of YRTP. These included:

- Improving mobility.
- Protecting and enhancing the social environment.
- Protecting the natural environment.
- Promoting smart growth and economic development.
- Maximizing cost-effectiveness of the rapid transit system.

For each of the above objectives, a range of goals and indicators was established to provide a measure of the effectiveness of each alternative in meeting the objectives.

4.3 Alignment Evaluation Findings

A synopsis of the detailed evaluation is presented in Table 1 (see Attachment 2). The effectiveness of each alternative in meeting the goals and objectives is reflected in the qualitative assessments summarizing the quantitative analysis carried out under each objective.

4.4 Preliminary Preferred Alignment Alternative

The evaluation leads to the conclusion that the transitway alignment located entirely on Yonge Street; i.e., Alternative 1, should be identified as the Preliminary Preferred Alignment for the following reasons:

- The Yonge Street alternative has the potential to attract 7-10% more AM peak period transit boardings in the corridor, both home and work-based, and provides the most
convenient pedestrian access to major community activity centres along the corridor such as shopping malls, community centres, old Richmond Hill.

- Rapid transit will reinforce the “main street” role of Yonge Street by encouraging mixed use redevelopment and intensification of existing adjacent land use, particularly around station nodes outside the old Richmond Hill district.

- Overall travel time is not increased by the reduction in service speed likely in the short section of mixed traffic operation through old Richmond Hill compared to the GO Rail alignment because the overall length of the Yonge route is two kilometres shorter. Also, traffic signal optimization incorporating transit priority can reduce the speed penalty.

- Although the transitway insertion will require a change in traffic patterns on Yonge Street, it will cause no other significant adverse effects on adjacent communities, offer good access to stations and local transit, and can support a major improvement in the urban design of the corridor. The latter benefit is much less achievable with a transitway along the GO Rail corridor because of its industrial character and frequent freight service.

- Although marginally more costly to construct, transitway construction mostly within the existing street right-of-way, avoids significant property acquisition and displacement of residential units that would be required for the alternative GO Rail alignments.

- Assuming the urban structure of the north-south corridor through Richmond Hill is to be concentrated around Yonge Street, rapid transit service entirely on the street will best support this planning objective.

While a transitway along the GO Rail corridor does avoid some of the traffic integration issues on Yonge Street, its ability to attract transit ridership along the north-south spine of YRTP depends on the degree to which surrounding land use can be changed to broaden the Yonge Street urban corridor, particularly around stations. This is in doubt particularly with respect to residential uses because of the continuing presence of CN freight operations and their effect on the station environment.

4.5 Alignment Protection Strategy

Efficient long-term operation on the Yonge alignment will hinge on effective management of road traffic in the corridor. Therefore, continued alignment protection of right-of-way alongside GO Rail is recommended to provide additional transportation capacity, if and when needed in the Yonge corridor for either general purpose through traffic or express transit.
5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The budget for the consulting services to complete the EA for the Yonge Corridor are included as part of the first stage agreement between York Consortium and York Region. No additional costs will be incurred as a result of completion of this work.

6. **LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

Representatives from the Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill and the Cities of Toronto and Vaughan have participated on the Technical Advisory Committee and will be requested to continue their involvement during the remainder of the study. This report is to be circulated to Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan for review and comment.

7. **CONCLUSION**

The Yonge Corridor EA study has completed a detailed evaluation of alignment alternatives for a rapid transit facility within the study area. The evaluation has identified a Preliminary Preferred Alternative Alignment for a rapid transit service between Steeles Avenue and the Elgin Mills area. The alignments evaluated can accommodate either bus rapid transit (BRT) or light rail technology (LRT).

The details of the preferred alternative and the justification for its selection will be presented to the public at upcoming information centres in mid May. After incorporating public and other stakeholder input, the final recommended alignment alternative will be tabled in the Draft EA report expected to be completed in June.

The EA will seek approval for the use of both technologies on the Preliminary Preferred Alignment to accommodate the potential for transition from BRT to LRT at some point during the YRTP network evolution.

The Yonge Corridor is an important transit initiative, both to stimulate transit use, accommodate the growing travel demand and to foster a number of urban form initiatives in the study area, specifically in southern Richmond Hill, one of the four Regional Centres.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

*(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing was circulated to all Members of Council with the April 9, 2003 Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee Agenda and is also on file in the Office of the Regional Clerk.)*
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UPDATE - COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee advises Council of the following matters having been considered by the Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee with the following action:

PRESENTATIONS

1. The following presentations were made to the Committee: Progress Report, Mary-Frances Turner; Quick Start Plan, Sam Zimmerman; Yonge Corridor Environmental Assessment Preliminary Preferred Alignment Alternative, Paul May and Linton Erskine; and Next Steps, Mary-Frances Turner. (A copy of the slide presentation is on file in the Office of the Regional Clerk.) Received.

OTHER BUSINESS

2. Committee directed staff to prepare a "Communications Paper" to be presented to Council on April 17, 2003 for review and discussion purposes relating to the York Rapid Transit Plan Project Overview.

3. Committee was advised that a report regarding the share capital corporation will be presented to Council as soon as the Regulations are passed by the Province.

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

April 9, 2003
Newmarket, Ontario

B. Fisch
Chair

(Report No. 4 of the Rapid Transit Public/Partnership Steering Committee was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting on April 17, 2003.)