



FOR INQUIRIES: PLEASE QUOTE ITEM & REPORT NO.

May 30, 2011

Mr. Denis Kelly, Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street, Box 147
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

**REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE**

FILE No. - *P43*

Dear Mr. Kelly:

**RE: REGION OF YORK WESTERN VAUGHAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS
INDIVIDUAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
WARDS 1, 2 AND 3**

Attached for your information is **Item 10, Report No. 25**, of the Committee of the Whole regarding the above-noted matter which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan at its meeting of May 24, 2011.

I draw your attention to Clauses 2 and 3 of the staff recommendation as follows:

2. *That York Region be requested to work together with the City of Vaughan during the design phase for each road segment identified for improvements in the Western Vaughan IEA so that the appropriate City infrastructure can be implemented concurrently with the road works; and*
3. *That York Region be requested to advance the improvements to the segment of Major Mackenzie Drive between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road to accommodate the current and near term growth in the immediate area.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Abrams', written over a circular stamp.

Jeffrey A. Abrams
City Clerk

Attachment:

- Extract
1. Study Area
 2. Six Lane Cross Section (36 metre Right-of-Way)
 3. Recommended Components of the Preferred Undertaking
 4. Phasing of the Preferred Undertaking

JAA/as

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CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 24, 2011

Item 10, Report No. 25, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 24, 2011.

**10 REGION OF YORK WESTERN VAUGHAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS
INDIVIDUAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
WARDS 1, 2 AND 3**

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, dated May 10, 2011:

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works recommends:

1. THAT Council endorse the recommendations of the Region of York's Draft Environmental Assessment Report for the Western Vaughan Transportation Improvements Individual Environmental Assessment (Western Vaughan IEA);
2. That York Region be requested to work together with the City of Vaughan during the design phase for each road segment identified for improvements in the Western Vaughan IEA so that the appropriate City infrastructure can be implemented concurrently with the road works;
3. That York Region be requested to advance the improvements to the segment of Major Mackenzie Drive between Pine Valley Drive and Weston Road to accommodate the current and near term growth in the immediate area; and
4. That a copy of this report be forwarded to York Region.

Contribution to Sustainability

The recommendations of the Draft Environmental Assessment Report for the Western Vaughan IEA contribute to sustainability by proposing a multi-modal transportation network within the Western Vaughan area. The network will provide for transit/high occupancy vehicles, and bike lanes to encourage active transportation.

In addition, the Western Vaughan IEA integrates regional sustainability objectives, including preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, economic vitality and healthy communities, while providing safe and efficient services for residents in York Region.

Economic Impact

There are no immediate economic impacts associated with this report.

Communications Plan

York Region will be apprised of any resolution passed by Council relating to this item.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of the conclusions and recommendations of the Draft Environmental Assessment Report for the Western Vaughan IEA.

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Background - Analysis and Options

York Region initiated the Western Vaughan IEA in 2007 to establish a transportation system within the western portion of the City that will improve transportation mobility and facilitate more convenient and reliable transportation choices as growth occurs over the next 25 years.

The specific study area encompasses the western portion of the City from Highway 400 in the east to Highway 50 in the west, and from Highway 407 in the south to Teston Road in the north including the Boyd Conservation Area and Kortright Conservation Area as shown on Attachment No. 1. The subject area is undergoing a transformation with respect to both land use and transportation. There is rapid urbanization along with the planned northward expansion of the residential/commercial land base. Due to this rapid growth in population and employment many of the corridors in the study area are already experiencing traffic congestion and long delays.

The Western Vaughan IEA builds on the recommendations of previous studies and the recommendations of the Region's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Update. There are several planning studies that affect the future infrastructure in the area including finalization of the *Places to Grow* legislation, the City's New Official Plan, the Western Vaughan Employment Area Secondary Plan and the North Kleinburg-Nashville Secondary Plan. In addition, a number of transportation studies were considered in the Western Vaughan IEA including the Highway 427 Extension Environmental Assessment, GTA West Corridor Study, Peel Region's Highway 427 Extension Area Master Plan Study, the Region's Transportation Master Plan Update and the City's Transportation Master Plan.

The Western Vaughan IEA – Environmental Assessment and Public Consultation Process

Unlike a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment that has an established process that is pre-approved by the Ministry of Environment, an Individual Environmental Assessment requires the Minister of the Environment to approve the specific scope and process that must be followed in the study.

The Western Vaughan IEA Study has been conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference (ToR) that were approved by the Minister of the Environment on February 13, 2006. The ToR identified six alternatives to be considered individually and in combination in the Western Vaughan IEA Study including:

1. Do Nothing;
2. Planned Road and Transportation Improvements, other than those on Pine Valley Drive south of Rutherford Road;
3. Travel Demand Management (TDM) Measures;
4. Transportation System Management (TSM) Measures;
5. Other Public Transit Initiatives; and
6. Other Additional Area Road Improvements.

The Western Vaughan Transportation Improvements IEA consisted of five stages and related consultation rounds, as overviewed below:

Stage 1. – Purpose of/Rationale for the Undertaking (Consultation Round No.1)

Determined both current and future traffic conditions within the Study Area and identified future transportation needs.

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Stage 2. – Alternatives to the Undertaking (Consultation Round No's.2 and 3)

Examined nine different alternatives ranging from maintaining status quo to providing transportation demand management measures (TDM), transportation system management measures (TSM), improving roads and transit. The assessment compared the three short-listed alternatives and identified the recommended alternative that best addressed the transportation challenges in the study area and minimized impacts on the environment.

Stage 3 – Alternative Methods of Carrying Out the Undertaking (Consultation Round No's.3 & 4)

Several methods of carrying out the preferred alternative in the form of road alignment variations were developed in order to determine the preferred method of carrying out the undertaking.

Stage 4. – Effects Assessment of the Preferred Undertaking (Consultation Round No.5)

A complete Effects Assessment was carried out including a thorough examination of potential effects based on which avoidance, mitigation, compensation, and enhancement measures were derived.

Stage 5. – Prepare/Submit IEA Report (Pre-Submission Consultation Round)

The analysis conducted during the first four stages of the IEA was documented in a draft IEA report. The report was made available to key Review Agencies including the City of Vaughan for review and comment.

Given the large study area, York Region undertook a comprehensive public and stakeholder consultation program throughout the IEA study. In order to better accommodate local residents there were five rounds of Public Consultation Centres (PCCs) with two to three PCCs per round at different venues within the Study Area. A comprehensive notification strategy was utilized for each public meeting to engage residents and stakeholders in the study process. Each PCC was publicized through multiple notices in the Vaughan Citizen and Toronto Star, project website notification, and by placing copies of the notice at local community centres and libraries. The notice was also mailed to nearly 30,000 homes within the Study Area and mailed and e-mailed directly to individuals in the project contact database.

In addition to the formal public meetings, local stakeholder consultation was undertaken as requested by residents in specific areas, such as Kleinburg Area Rate Payers Association, the Sonoma Heights Ratepayers Association (Rutherford Road near Islington Avenue), area residents on Rutherford Road near Clarence Street, and the West Woodbridge Ratepayers Association (Highway 27 near Langstaff Road).

Two advisory committees were formed to guide the study and provide input at key stages of the study. The Community Stakeholders Advisory Committee (CSAS) was established to obtain input from community and business leaders. Meetings were held regularly with the CSAC to update the status of the project, obtain feedback on each stage of the IEA, and outline future steps in the study process. The Review Agency Advisory Committee (RAAC) was comprised of staff from the Region of Peel, GO Transit, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transportation, Region Conservation Agency, CP Rail and the City of Vaughan. There were a total of six RAAC meetings held over the course of the study to obtain feedback on each stage of the Western Vaughan IEA prior to relaying information to the public, and to outline future steps in the study process. Staff from the City's Policy Planning and Development/Transportation Engineering Departments sat as members of the RAAC.

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Overview of the Preferred Undertaking

Based on the assessment of existing operational conditions, the Western Vaughan IEA determined that several corridors in the study area are near capacity and the congestion levels are projected to increase significantly between now and 2031. Congestion will particularly be a problem along a larger portion of the Study Area, including Major Mackenzie Drive, as well as expanded segments of Highway 50, Highway 27, Weston Road, and Rutherford Road. By 2031, 60% of the roadways in Western Vaughan area are projected to be congested. Accordingly, the Western Vaughan IEA concluded that approximately 36 km of road/transit improvements are required to support the long term growth in the study area. Transit/HOV lanes are recommended on all road sections with the exception of 4 km on the portion of Highway 27 north of Major Mackenzie Drive as per the Region's six lane design standard shown on Attachment No.2. The extent of transportation improvements identified is generally consisted with the Region's 2009 Transportation Master Plan Update.

The following is a summary of road and transit improvements that are proposed as part of the preferred transportation network (shown on Attachment No.3):

- Expansion to six lanes of motor vehicle traffic including two dedicated transit/high occupancy vehicle lanes, and the addition of two bicycle lanes on:
 - Major Mackenzie Drive between Highway 50 and Highway 400
 - Highway 27 between Major Mackenzie Drive and Steeles Avenue
 - Rutherford Road between Highway 50 and Weston Road
 - Weston Road between Major Mackenzie Drive and Steeles Avenue
 - Pine Valley Drive between Highway 7 and Steele Avenue; and
- Expansion to four lanes of motor vehicle traffic on Highway 27 between north of Nashville Road and Major Mackenzie Drive; and
- Elimination of the jog at Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 27

The following provides a description of the Preferred Undertaking:

Roads and Transit Improvements

- Major Mackenzie Drive (Highway 50 to Highway 400): Expansion to six lanes of motor vehicle traffic including two dedicated transit / high occupancy vehicle lanes, and the addition of two bicycle lanes (currently two lanes). This widening requires a right-of-way width of 42.6 metres.

Since Major Mackenzie Drive is an important east-west arterial road and provides connectivity across the Region, it was determined that the "jog" on Major Mackenzie Drive at Highway 27 needs to be corrected to improve east-west travel. Therefore, this undertaking proposes a long-span bridge across the Humber River and a grade separation of Major Mackenzie Drive at the CP Rail line, which will eliminate the "jog" at Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 27. The existing bridge at the Main Humber River will be widened to accommodate the additional lanes. The northbound and southbound lanes will be separated by a 1.5 metre wide median.

- Highway 27 (Nashville Road to Steeles Avenue): Expansion to four lanes of motor vehicle traffic between north of Nashville Road and Major Mackenzie Drive (currently two lanes) and expansion to six lanes of motor vehicle traffic which includes two dedicated transit / high occupancy vehicle lanes, and the addition of two bicycle lanes between Major Mackenzie Drive and Steeles Avenue (currently four lanes). The widening to four lanes requires a right-of-way width of 26 metres, and the widening to six lanes requires a right-of-way width of 42.6 metres. The proposed improvements on Highway 27 are long term needs based on the

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assumption that the Highway 427 extension will be implemented in the near term, and will likely handle much of the demand in this corridor until the lands immediately adjoining Highway 27 are developed.

- Rutherford Road (Highway 50 to Weston Road), Weston Road (Major Mackenzie Drive to Steeles Avenue) and Pine Valley Drive (Highway 7 to Steeles Avenue): Expansion from four to six lanes of motor vehicle traffic including two dedicated transit / high occupancy vehicle lanes, and the addition of two bicycle lanes. This widening requires a right-of-way width of 42.6 metres.

The recommended components of the Preferred Undertaking are illustrated on Attachment No. 3. The recommended phasing plan of the Preferred Undertaking is outlined in Table 1 below and illustrated on Attachment No.4. The phasing plan is subject to change as the implementation schedule progresses and based on future traffic conditions.

Table 1 –Phasing Plan of the Preferred Undertaking

Road	Section	Timing
Major Mackenzie Drive	Highway 50 to CP McTier Subdivision CP McTier Subdivision to Highway 27 Highway 27 to Pine Valley Drive Pine Valley Drive to Weston Road	2016 2014 2014 2013 (Capital Programme Year)
Highway 27	Steeles Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive Major Mackenzie Drive to Teston Road/Nashville Road (4-lane cross-section without HOV lanes)	LongTerm (2031+) Long Term (2031+)
Rutherford Road	Highway 50 to Highway 27 Highway 27 to Pine Valley Drive Pine Valley Drive to Weston Road	Medium-Term (2020-2030) Long Term (2031+) Long Term (2031+)
Weston Road	Steeles Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive	Medium-Term (2020-2030)
Pine Valley Drive	Steeles Avenue to Highway 7	Medium-Term (2020-2030)

Travel Demand Management Improvements:

Travel Demand Management (TDM) refers to a means of reducing the number of cars on the roads during peak hours by promoting carpooling, telecommuting, and variable work hours. The TDM measures recommended in the Western Vaughan IEA include:

- The Region continuing to work with Metrolinx and the City of Vaughan to establish and support a Western Vaughan Transportation Management Association (TMA) with a focus on ridesharing in key employment corridors;
- Apply conditions through the development review process to require trip reduction plans for all new developments with over 5000 square metres of employment use;
- Support reduced parking provisions for all new developments within Rapid Transit and Transit Priority corridors, including Highway 7 and Major Mackenzie Drive throughout Western Vaughan and along Highway 27 and Weston Road South of Major Mackenzie Drive;
- Consistent with the Regional TMP, implement a network of carpool lots within Western Vaughan along freeway and HOV corridors;

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- Implement cross boundary transit fare and service integration schemes between York Region Transit (YRT) and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and between YRT and Brampton Transit;
- Continue to promote Transit Oriented Development (TOD) by vigorously applying the Regional TOD Guideline adopted by Council in September 2006; and
- Integrate bicycle and public transit travel, including improved cycling access and bicycle storage at transit stops and stations, and the ability to carry bikes on transit vehicles.

Transportation System Management Improvements:

Transportation System Management (TSM) refers to a means of optimizing the existing road network to increase its capacity and improve its efficiency. The TSM measures recommended in the Western Vaughan IEA include:

- Providing queue jump lanes to allow buses to move to the front of the queue, as well as shifting transit stops to the far side of the intersection (i.e., past the traffic light), with the aim of reducing the frequency of buses being stopped at red lights, thereby minimizing conflicts between right-turning vehicles and transit/HOV traffic;
- Providing transit signal priority at intersections, integrated with bus schedules, and incorporating user-definable parameters in the local traffic signal controller software to allow buses behind schedule to ask for green extension / red truncation;
- Providing off-board fare collection and real-time service information for travellers at transit stops, to reduce the real and perceived delay for the users of the system;
- Offering web-based delivery of real-time traffic information to assist drivers in determining times and routes for travel;
- Improving the co-ordination of traffic signal timing along heavily travelled corridors, and introducing a system of adaptive signal control on key urban arterials for the purpose of minimizing delay and optimizing overall traffic flow;
- Discontinuing the use of push-buttons for pedestrian phases across the "minor" street with a short pedestrian walk distance, subject to evaluation by traffic specialists as a limited-scope program before wide-spread implementation; and
- Reviewing the location of left-turn lane detector loops on arterial roads, and ensuring that they are set back from the stop bar to the location of the third vehicle in the turning stream.

Staff Comments

Staff is generally satisfied with the report's recommendations and believes that in order to accommodate current and near term growth in the study area, the proposed improvements that have been identified for Major Mackenzie Drive should proceed expeditiously. This immediate need is related to the Ministry of Transportation recently approved Highway 427 extension from Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive, and approved development within the Planning Block 61. In addition, the Region of Peel has completed its master plan for potential changes to their roads west of Highway 50, including realignments that will result in increased access from Peel to the planned Highway 427 terminus point at Highway 427 and Major Mackenzie Drive. Accordingly, staff support the early implementation of proposed improvements along Major Mackenzie Drive.

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Staff notes, however, that the Region's proposed standard six lane 36.0 metre right-of-way cross-section, as shown on Attachment No. 2, only provides a 3.4 meter boulevard which may not be wide enough to accommodate sidewalk, streetlighting, streetscaping and a utility corridor. In consultation with the Region, most six lane cross-sections will require a right of way width of 42.6m. Constrained areas - where the right of way width of 42.6m cannot be achieved - will require further consultation with the Region of York before the Western Vaughan IEA is finalized.

Regional Implications

The Region of York issued a pre-circulation of the draft Western Vaughan IEA document to affected agencies and the Review Agency Advisory Committee on January 7, 2011. Meetings with agencies to finalize the document for formal submission will be undertaken in the second quarter of 2011 and it is anticipated that the final IEA document will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment shortly thereafter.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council Vaughan Vision 2020 strategic initiatives:

- To enhance and ensure community safety, health and wellness;
- To pursue excellence in service delivery;
- To lead and promote environmental sustainability; and
- To plan and manage growth and economic vitality.

This report is therefore consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

Conclusion

On January 7, 2011, the Region of York issued the Draft Environmental Assessment Report for the Western Vaughan Transportation Individual Environmental Assessment to affected agencies and the advisory committees for review. The IEA Report was based on the Places to Grow legislation and subsequent Regional and local municipal planning documents that identified planned growth areas in Western Vaughan. Based on these growth plans, the IEA has identified the transportation network that will be required to support the proposed development. The study has identified the need to widen roads to provide for six-lane road cross-sections with transit/HOV lanes along major corridors. These lanes will provide priority for multi-modal travel including transit, bicycles and carpoolers. The IEA also identified some additional TDM and TSM measures that will be considered during the detail design and operation of the road network and transit improvements. These measures are supported in the Region's recently approved Transportation Master Plan Update.

Staff has reviewed the technical aspects of the Western Vaughan IEA and is generally satisfied with its recommendations. York Region expects to submit the final IEA document to the Ministry of Environment in the second quarter of 2011. In the meantime, Vaughan staff will be working with our municipal and provincial partners on the planning and implementation of other higher-order transit services in the City of Vaughan.

Attachments

1. Study Area
2. Six Lane Cross Section (36 metre Right-of-Way)
3. Recommended Components of the Preferred Undertaking
4. Phasing of the Preferred Undertaking

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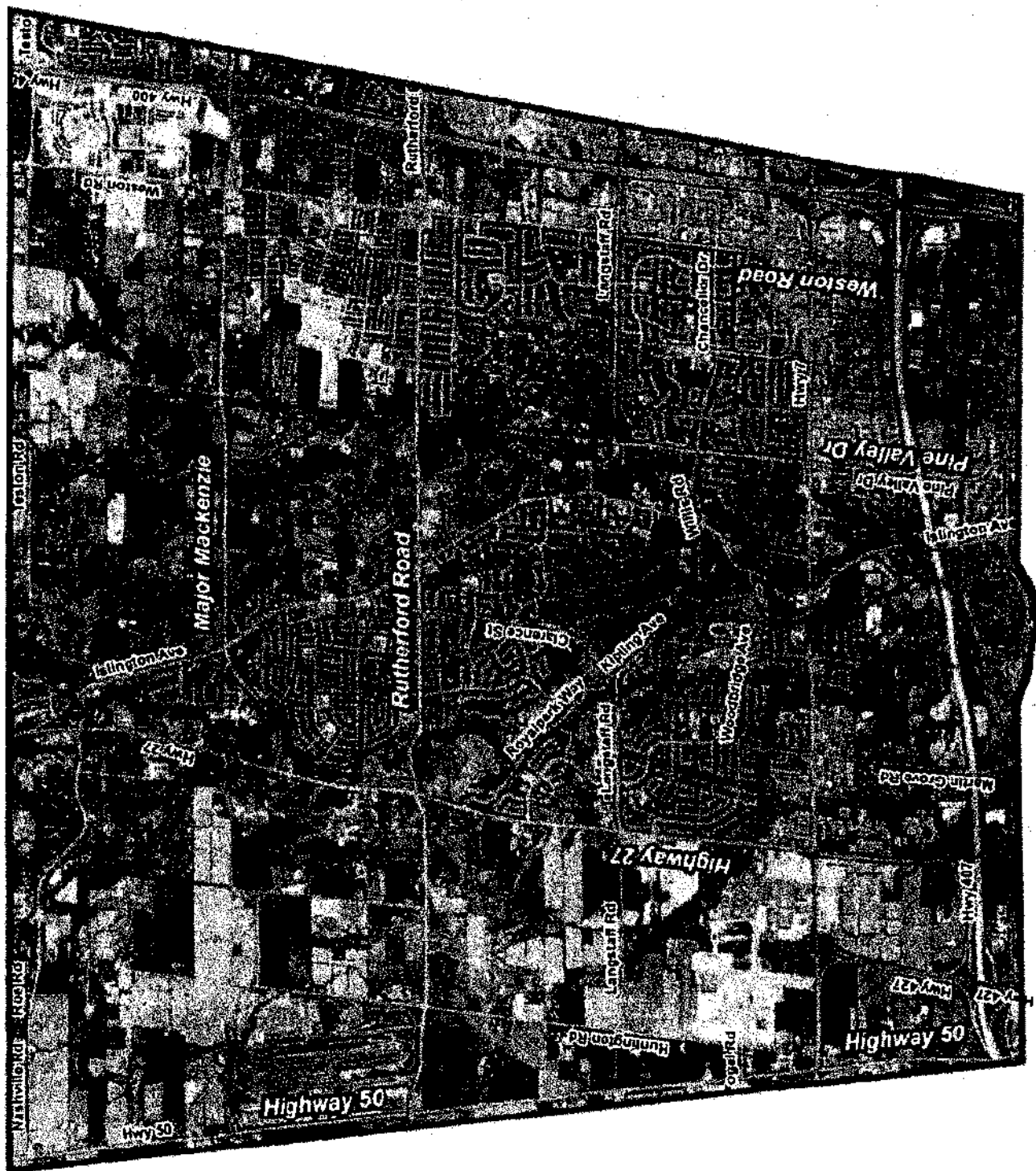
Report prepared by:

Selma Hubjer, P.Eng., Transportation Engineer-Ext.8674

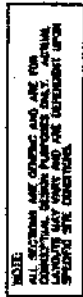
Mehrak Hakimi, P.Eng., Transportation Analyst-Ext.8295

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)

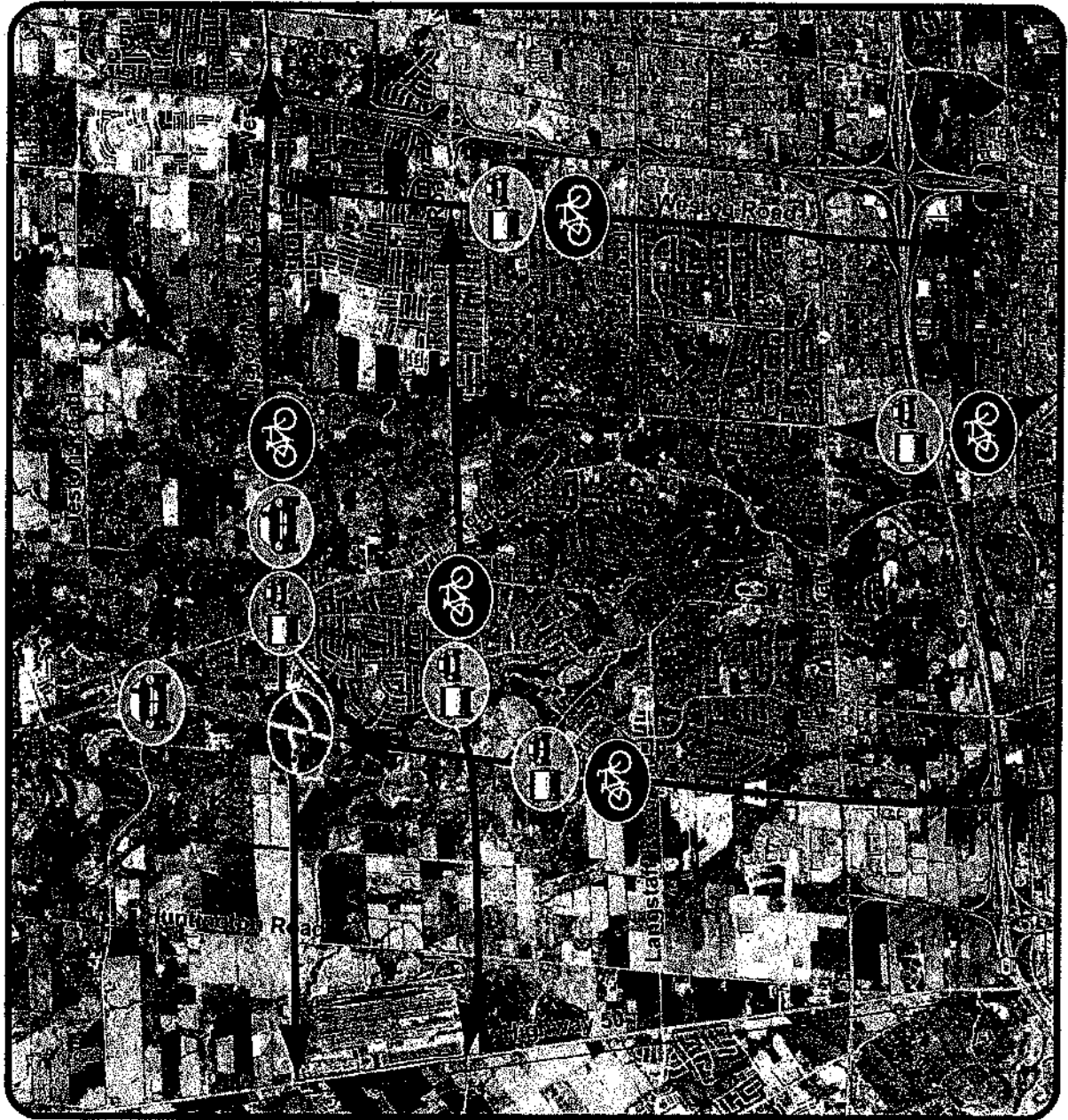
Attachment No. 1
Study Area



10.10



Attachment No. 3 Recommended Components of the Preferred Undertaking



Legend



Dedicated Bicycle lane



Two additional lanes

dedicated for transit and high occupancy vehicles



Four additional lanes with two lanes for transit and high occupancy vehicles and two lanes for all traffic.



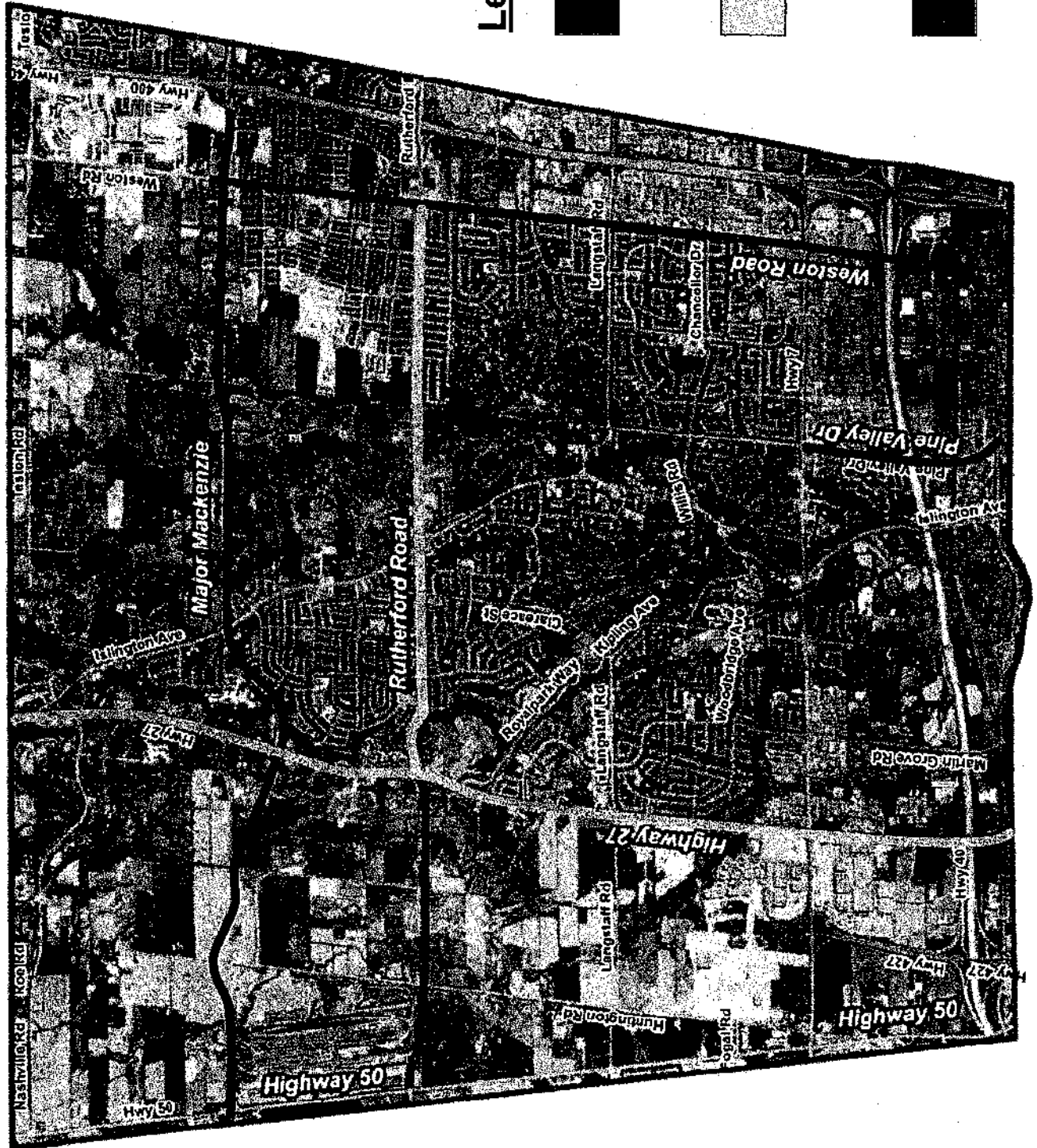
two additional lanes for all traffic.



Removal of the discontinuity at Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 27 by extending Major Mackenzie Drive westerly from the south intersection

Attachment No. 4

Phasing of the Preferred Undertaking

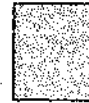


Legend

Short-term
(2012-2020)



Medium
term
(2020-2030)



Long term
(2031+)



10.12