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MID-BLOCK COLLECTOR FREEWAY CROSSINGS STATUS UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK DISCUSSIONS TOWNS OF MARKHAM AND RICHMOND HILL

The Transportation Services Committee recommends:

- 1. Receipt of the correspondence from Kimberley Kitteringham, Town Clerk, Town of Markham, dated December 4, 2009, regarding ‘Highways 404 & 407 Flyover Working Group’; and**
- 2. Adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated December 18, 2009, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services.**

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides an update with respect to the issue of planned mid-block collector road crossings over Highways 404 and 407 to connect the local road networks in the Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill.

3. BACKGROUND

In June 2009, Regional Council requested the Councils of Markham and Richmond Hill to direct their staff to participate in developing an implementation framework with Regional staff

Over the last few years, Regional staff has been working with the Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill to plan the five identified crossings of 400-series highways connecting the local road networks in the two communities. The five crossings are at varying stages of planning/implementation. In May and June 2009, Regional Council dealt with two reports dealing with issues pertinent to two of these planned crossings. In considering these reports, Regional Council directed Regional staff to continue working towards the implementation of one specific crossing, and continue to protect for another.

Furthermore, in June 2009, Regional Council also requested “the Councils of Markham and Richmond Hill to direct their staff to participate in developing an implementation framework with Regional staff for the long-term protection, funding, and construction of

planned mid-block crossings of Highway 404 and Highway 407 and to report back to the appropriate Committee in the fall of 2009 on the outcome of these discussions.”

The status of the crossings is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Status of Planned Mid Block Collectors
Between Markham and Richmond Hill

Location	Status
Highway 404 crossing between Highway 7 and 16 th Avenue	• Class EA cleared • Detailed design to get underway in early 2010 with construction to follow • Property required
Highway 404 crossing between 16 th Avenue and Major Mackenzie Drive	• Feasibility study and Class EA study required
Highway 404 crossing between Major Mackenzie Drive and Elgin Mills Road	• Class EA suspended • Region continuing to protect for future crossing
Highway 404 crossing between Elgin Mills Road and 19 th Avenue	• Class EA study required
Highway 407 crossing at Cedar Avenue	• Structure pre-built subject to transportation planning now underway for Richmond Hill Centre and Langstaff Urban Growth Centre

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

On December 1, 2009, the Town of Markham authorized staff to participate in developing the framework for the crossings

At its meeting on December 1, 2009, the Town of Markham considered the Region’s request and a Town staff report and passed a resolution which directed that “staff be authorized to participate in a Working Group with the Region of York and the Town of Richmond Hill to develop a framework to protect, fund and construct mid-block crossings of Highway 404 and Highway 407”. Furthermore, Markham Council also resolved that the scope of the work to be undertaken “be expanded to include the Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue”. It is also noted that Markham Council also reaffirmed its earlier position on one of the crossings by resolving that “the Regional

Municipality of York and the Town of Richmond Hill be again informed of the Town of Markham Council's decision to not support any flyover in the Cathedral Community immediately north of Major Mackenzie Drive".

Town of Richmond Hill staff has indicated verbally that it remains authorized to develop the proposed implementation framework

Regional staff discussed the issue of developing an implementation framework for all of the proposed crossings with management staff of the Town of Richmond Hill. In November and December 2009, Richmond Hill staff indicated verbally that it remains authorized to participate in the development of such a framework, and that it does not intend to report back to Richmond Hill Town Council at this time.

The first meeting of the working group of Richmond Hill, Markham and York staff has been scheduled for January 4, 2010

Regional staff have now scheduled the first meeting of the management staff to be included in these discussions for January 4, 2010. In light of the number and diversity of issues affecting the five proposed crossings, and with Markham's stated intention of expanding the scope to include consideration of the planned Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue, it is difficult to predict a timeframe for the resolution of issues or conclusion of discussions. Regional staff now intends to report back on the progress of these discussions before the summer of 2010.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Although there may be substantial financial implications associated with potential resolutions evolving from the planned discussions and a potential implementation framework, there are no implications of engaging in the discussions at this time.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The transportation benefits of the proposed freeway crossings have been well documented in both Regional and local municipal transportation plans. The proposed crossings will provide additional transportation capacity through improved road connectivity and transit serviceability to the developing areas on both sides of the freeways which form the municipal boundaries at these locations. These collector roads will also provide additional alternative safe linkages for pedestrians and bicyclists.

7. CONCLUSION

The Towns of Markham and Richmond Hill have now authorized staff to participate in discussions towards the development of an implementation framework for the five

proposed mid-block collector crossings of Highways 404 and 407 between the two municipalities. The Town of Markham has also requested that the scope of these discussions be expanded to include the potential Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue. The initiation meeting for this effort has now been scheduled, and Regional staff intends to provide a further status update report before summer 2010.

For more information on this report, please contact Paul Jankowski, General Manager of Roads at extension 5901.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.



December 4, 2009

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

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE
FILE No. - P43



RE: HIGHWAYS 404 & 407 FLYOVER WORKING GROUP (5.10)

Dear Mr. Kelly:

This will confirm that at a meeting held on December 1, 2009, Town of Markham Council adopted the following resolution:

- "1) That the report entitled, "Highways 404 & 407 Flyover Working Group", dated November 17, 2009, be received; and,
- 2) That staff be authorized to participate in a Working Group with the Region of York and Town of Richmond Hill to develop a framework to protect, fund and construct mid-block crossings of Highway 404 and Highway 407; and,
- 3) That the Working Group's scope of work be expanded to include the Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue; and,
- 4) That Staff report back to Council on the findings and recommendations of the Working Group for consideration and approval; and,
- 5) That the Regional Municipality of York and the Town of Richmond Hill be again informed of the Town of Markham Council's decision to not support any flyover in the Cathedral Community immediately north of Major Mackenzie Drive; and further,
- 6) That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution." (Item 6 of Report No. 73)

If you have any questions, please contact Brian Lee, Manager, Development Engineering and Transportation, at 905-477-7000 ext. 4838.

Yours sincerely,

Kimberley Kitteringham
Town Clerk

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Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: November 17, 2009

SUBJECT: Highways 404 & 407 Flyover Working Group

PREPARED BY: Brian Lee, Manager, Development Engineering and
Transportation, Ext. 4838

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report entitled, "Highways 404 & 407 Flyover Working Group", dated November 17, 2009, be received;
- 2) And that staff be authorized to participate in a Working Group with the Region of York and Town of Richmond Hill to develop a framework to protect, fund and construct mid-block crossings of Highway 404 and Highway 407;
- 3) And that the Working Group's scope of work be expanded to include the Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue;
- 4) And that Staff report back to Council on the findings and recommendations of the Working Group for consideration and approval;
- 5) And that the Regional Municipality of York and the Town of Richmond Hill be again informed of the Town of Markham Council's decision to not support any flyover in the Cathedral Community immediately north of Major Mackenzie Drive;
- 6) And that staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council's authorization for staff to participate in a Working Group to review issues related to the mid-block crossings of Highway 404 and Highway 407.

BACKGROUND:

On June 25, 2009, Regional staff brought forward a report regarding protection of Highways 404 and 407 mid-block crossings. Regional Council also adopted a recommendation which states:

"Regional Council request the Councils of Markham and Richmond Hill, direct their staff to participate in developing an implementation framework with Regional staff for the long term protection, funding, and construction of planned mid-block crossings of Highway 404 and Highway 407, and that Transportation Services staff report back to the appropriate Committee in the Fall of 2009 on the outcome of these discussions."

On September 16, 2008, Markham Council also passed a resolution requesting the Region to commence planning of the Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue with the Ministry of Transportation and Town's of Richmond Hill and Markham.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

The draft Regional Transportation Master Plan Update and draft Regional Official Plan confirmed the benefits of 400-series highway crossings as part of the overall transportation network, as they can assist in transit servicing, increase walking and cycling opportunities and create a finer grid road pattern reducing demands on arterial roads. The Region also recognizes that some of these crossings are not required in the short term but considers that it is prudent to protect these corridors for the longer term. The benefits of these crossings have to be balanced by the need to protect residential neighbourhoods and environmental impact, and have to be thoroughly examined under the Class Environmental Assessment process.

The Region has examined a number of options to continue to protect these corridors and decided that an implementation framework to establish the need and justification of the crossings, protection mechanism, funding and implementation with Markham and Richmond Hill is required. The Region's Transportation Master Plan Update identified 5 mid-block crossings between Markham and Richmond Hill on Highway 404 and Highway 407. The status of each crossing is listed below.

The Region is aware that on March 4, 2008 Markham Council passed a resolution which includes:

"That the Town of Markham withdraw as a proponent of the Environmental Assessment for the Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing between Major Mackenzie and Elgin Mills Roads and that the Region of York and the Town of Richmond Hill be advised that the Town no longer supports the Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing."

However, Regional Council endorsed Regional staff recommendation that this corridor should continue to be protected.

Markham Council has requested the Region to initiate the planning of the Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue with the Province and Richmond Hill to support the long term growth of the Highway 404 North Employment Secondary Plan (OPA 149). This infrastructure is also identified in the draft Regional Official Plan. As the timing of the implementation of this interchange is related to the flyovers, the study of the interchange should be included.

	Crossing Location:	Hwy	Status
1.	Elgin Mills to 19 th Avenue	404	Feasibility Study completed by Markham's Engineering Department, Class EA Study required to finalize such
2.	Major Mackenzie to Elgin Mills	404	Class EA undertaken by Markham's Engineering Department has been suspended by Markham Council and Council no longer supports this crossing. Regional Council endorsed that this crossing is to be protected in the June 2009 report.
3.	16 th Avenue to Maj Mackenzie	404	Feasibility Study completed by Markham's Engineering Department with Class EA study required to finalize such

4.	Hwy 7 to 16 th Avenue	404	EA approved, detailed design and property protection to commence December 2009
5.	Cedar Avenue	407	Underpass was constructed as part of Hwy 407 construction but approach roads are not designed. Identified as an important link by the Langstaff master plan
6.	19 th Avenue Interchange	404	Identified in 404 North Employment Business Park as needed in the long term

The purpose of the Working Group is to create a forum to continue dialogue between staff of the Region, Markham and Richmond Hill in examining the various Highways 404 and 407 crossing opportunities between Markham and Richmond Hill. The Working Group will develop an implementation review framework, establish responsibilities and commitment to plan for and implement crossings that balance the long term needs of the Region, Markham and Richmond Hill.

Engineering staff have been meeting with Region of York and Richmond Hill over the past two years on the Highway 7, 16th Avenue and the Elgin Mills, Hwy 404 crossing and interchange improvement and are of the opinion that Markham should continue to participate in the Working Group. Markham staff will reaffirm in the upcoming Working Group sessions the position of Markham Council in opposition to any flyover in the Cathedral Community immediately north of Major Mackenzie Drive.

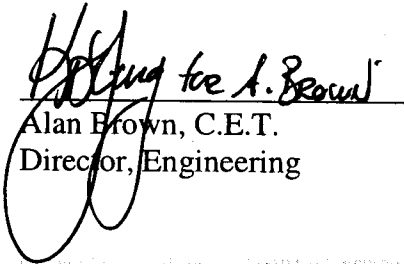
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

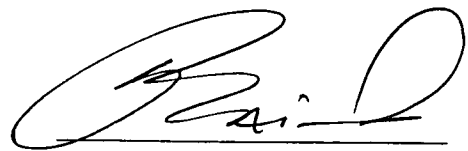
An overall finer grid road network provides better distribution of road traffic and supports additional transit routes. A finer grid offers more opportunities to cross a physical barrier such as a 400-series highway also provide shorter walking and cycling distance between communities. Even with multi billion investment in transit, population/employment forecast will require additional road capacity.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Not Applicable

RECOMMENDED BY:


Alan Brown, C.E.T.
Director, Engineering


Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner, Development Service