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TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the following:

- 1. The presentation by Loy Cheah, Manager, Transportation Planning, be received;**
- 2. The recommendations contained in the following report dated October 28, 2008, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services and the Commissioner of Transportation Services be adopted; and**
- 3. A copy of this report also be forwarded to GO Transit.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council receive the draft recommendations of the Transportation Master Plan Update study as outlined in *Council Attachments 1, 2 and 3*.
2. Regional Council authorise staff to present these draft recommendations at the final round of public consultation centres.
3. The Regional Clerk forward a copy of this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities in York Region, City of Toronto, Durham Region, Peel Region, Simcoe County and Metrolinx.

2. PURPOSE

This report seeks Regional Council endorsement of the draft Transportation Master Plan Update recommendations and authorisation to present them at the final round of public consultation centres.

3. BACKGROUND

The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is being updated in response to major changes in Provincial and Federal planning and funding policies

Since the Transportation Master Plan was first approved in 2002, there have been significant changes to federal and provincial land use planning and transportation funding policies impacting the Region's transportation and infrastructure planning direction. In response, key initiatives by the Region including the Growth Management Plan (Planning for Tomorrow), the Sustainability Strategy and the update of the Transportation Master Plan have been undertaken to address the new planning context and make York Region a leader in sustainability.

Integration and coordination with York Region's Sustainability Strategy and growth management initiative are integral to the TMP Update study

A decision was made early in the study to take a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to planning in York Region particularly in terms of land use and infrastructure planning by integrating and coordinating components of the study with the Sustainability Strategy and Planning for Tomorrow initiative.

Impact analysis of different growth intensification scenarios and detailed analysis of the preferred growth scenarios have been conducted

A major component of the Planning for Tomorrow initiative is to prepare growth scenarios that would be assessed for infrastructure, human services and fiscal implications before a preferred growth scenario is arrived at. Four different growth intensification scenarios were analysed for impacts including transportation impacts.

Following its adoption, a detailed analysis was carried out on the preferred growth scenario to determine transportation demands and requirements for 2031. These findings were input into a process that led to the development of draft transportation network and policy initiative recommendations.

A comprehensive consultation program is an important component of the study

The comprehensive study consultation program includes the following elements:

- Public consultation centres
- Symposia
- Stakeholder meetings
- Public opinion survey
- Newsletters

- Project website
- Newspaper notifications

This report seeks Regional Council approval to release and present the draft recommendations at the final public consultation centres

This report presents the draft updated 2031 network and policy recommendations for the Transportation Master Plan as well as the schedule for the final round of public consultation centres in November 2008.

The draft network and policy initiative recommendations and ancillary information on how these recommendations were developed will be presented at the final round of public consultation centres scheduled in November 2008 and described below.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

UPDATING THE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

Challenges and opportunities in addressing growth and input from the public and stakeholders guide the development of an aggressive plan

In addition to reviewing best practices in sustainable transportation across Canada and elsewhere in addressing growth, the input from the public and stakeholders proved to be invaluable in guiding the development of recommendations for the Transportation Master Plan.

Input received from the public meetings and first symposium included calls for the Master Plan to be sustainable, bold and innovative in addressing traffic congestion and the continuing rapid growth in York Region.

Sustainability is the foundation of the new Transportation Master Plan

It became clear early on that the input from the public and stakeholders regarding the need for the Master Plan to be sustainable was the right course of action if York Region is to grow to 1.5 million people and 800,000 jobs and continue to maintain a high quality of life. To address travel demands in the future and be successful in meeting the goals of the Sustainability Strategy, sustainability principles must be the foundation of the updated Transportation Master Plan.

This direction led to the development of a set of 11 transportation sustainability principles that guided the development of both network and policy initiative recommendations. The 11 sustainability principles are:

- Put pedestrians and transit first
- Integrate transportation and land use planning
- Protect/enhance the environment and cultural heritage
- Support our economic well-being
- Provide access and mobility for everyone
- Adopt energy efficient transportation systems
- Conduct on-going performance measurements and monitoring
- Ensure fiscal sustainability and equitable funding
- Further encourage communications, consultation and engagement
- Implement and support transportation supply management
- Implement and support transportation demand management

A development process that favours sustainable modes of transportation was used in arriving at the network and policy initiative recommendations

In keeping with the direction of sustainability being the foundation of the Master Plan, the process used to arrive at the draft 2031 recommendations began with the most extreme and bold proposals for transit infrastructure and transit-supportive policies. For instance, our analysis began with a transit network assumption of rapid transit services along east-west and north-south urban corridors spaced roughly every 4 kms. In conjunction with that bold transit scenario, the road network was assumed to be the current road system with basic improvements.

The iterative process then evaluated the feasibility of the rapid transit lines from a ridership and network connectivity perspective to arrive at a draft transit network. On the road side, improvements were incrementally added to the basic network to reduce traffic congestion and not significantly reduce transit ridership.

THE DRAFT UPDATED TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

A typical transportation master plan would consist of the following major components:

- Transit network.
- Road network.
- Pedestrian and cycling (or active transportation) master plan.
- Policies and strategies.

The sustainability of the plan is measured by the emphasis and effort placed in reducing the amount of travel, accommodating travel on the most sustainable modes starting with pedestrian movement, cycling, transit, car or van pooling and finally the amount of travel that must be accommodated on the single occupant vehicle mode.

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan has been endorsed and approved for implementation by Regional Council

York Region's Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan was endorsed in April 2008 and approved for implementation in September 2008 by Regional Council.

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan was developed as a separate component of the Transportation Master Plan. It consists of network, outreach and policy programs that will create a walking, cycling and transit supportive environment that connects communities and people of all ages with where they live, work and want to go.

An expanded transit network brings more residents closer to rapid transit services

With a transit-first perspective in the 2002 Transportation Master Plan, the recommended rapid transit network consisted of two main corridors, Yonge Street and Highway 7, plus two north-south connections from Highway 7 to the TTC subway system. This transit focus is enhanced and expanded in the 2008 draft Transportation Master Plan. With more growth legislated for York Region and a sustainability direction, more rapid transit corridors are needed. *Council Attachment 1* presents the recommended 2031 draft transit network.

Previously planned rapid transit lines carried forward are:

- Extensions of the Spadina and Yonge subway lines to Highway 7 at the Vaughan Corporate Centre and Richmond Hill-Langstaff Centre respectively.
- Yonge Street rapid transit line from the Richmond Hill-Langstaff Centre to the Newmarket Centre.
- A Highway 7 rapid transit line from the City of Brampton to the City of Pickering.
- A Markham north-south rapid transit line in the Warden Avenue corridor.

The following new rapid transit corridors are proposed:

- An east-west line in the Major Mackenzie Drive corridor extending from Weston Road in the City of Vaughan to Ninth Line in the Town of Markham and connecting to the Highway 7 rapidway along Ninth Line.
- An east-west line in the Steeles Avenue corridor extending from Highway 27 in the west to east Markham and connecting to an extension of the proposed Malvern rapid transit corridor.
- A north-south extension of the proposed Jane Street LRT line from the City of Toronto to the Major Mackenzie Drive corridor.
- A north-south line in the Bathurst-Dufferin Street corridor.

- A north-south extension of the proposed Don Mills LRT line from the City of Toronto to the Beaver Creek-Commerce Valley employment node at Highway 7 along Leslie Street.

In addition to these rapid transit lines, a revised network of transit priority corridors is recommended where conventional bus services can efficiently feed the rapid transit lines. In these transit priority corridors, buses can be prioritised through cost effective measures such as traffic signal priority, queue jump lanes at congested points such as signalised intersections, high occupancy vehicle lanes, reserved bus lanes or a combination of them. Which of these priority measures used will depend on the level of traffic congestion and transit ridership specific to each corridor segment.

A draft road network that promotes efficient transit services and goods movement is recommended

To increase the sustainability of the 2008 draft Master Plan, road improvements were identified mainly to improve the movement of transit vehicles and cycling connections. Road capacity is added only when no other viable options exist.

A refined road network of improvements is recommended and shown in *Council Attachment 2*. It is primarily made up of the improvements associated with the transit priority corridors identified in the transit network and widenings of two-lane roads to four lanes in the emerging travel corridors of York Region.

Not shown in the map are road reconstruction projects that will be needed to bring some segments of the Regional road network up to Regional standards. These projects will be identified in the final Master Plan.

Key policies and strategies that support and promote the use of sustainable transportation modes are recommended

For the transportation system in York Region to function reliably, a series of complementary policies and strategies is recommended (*Council Attachment 3*). They would include policy initiatives relating to:

- Transit service coordination.
- Transit oriented development.
- Land use planning and urban design.
- Intelligent transportation system and new technologies.
- Road design and operation.
- Transportation demand management.
- Parking management.

Out of a list of over 100 draft policy and strategy recommendations, 16 are considered key actions that must be implemented and are fundamental to the sustainability foundation of the updated Master Plan. Otherwise, the Master Plan may not succeed in

addressing York Region's growth to 2031. These key *Sustainable Transportation Policies* include the following:

- Transit, walking and cycling networks, policies and programs that shape sustainable growth.
- Aggressively implement the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.
- A strong policy framework focusing on disincentives to single occupant vehicle use.
- Educate the public with respect to their travel behaviour and role in a sustainable transportation system.
- Parking strategies for Regional Centres and Corridors that limits the supply of parking and charges that discourage all-day parking.
- Strongly promote the creation of an effective mid-block collector road system.

Altogether, these policies and strategies will require the collaboration and partnership of York Region with other agencies including the local municipalities, the Province, Metrolinx, GO Transit and adjacent municipalities in implementing them. The specific roles and responsibilities of each partner and York Region will be addressed in general terms at the Master Plan stage and will be further refined and defined during the implementation of the programs.

Draft network plan contains recommendations for some specific road issues

A number of road network issues were identified during the study, some of which are contentious in terms of public opposition or having potentially significant natural environmental impacts. *Council Attachment 4* lists these projects and summarises the draft recommendations and rationale for the recommendations.

The list of issues includes the Bradford Bypass, the mid-York East-West corridor, and the missing link on Teston Road between Dufferin and Keele Streets.

These draft Transportation Master Plan recommendations are generally consistent with the recently released Metrolinx Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The recommended 2031 draft transit network takes into account the Metrolinx Draft Regional Transportation Plan and its recommendations. The draft TMP transit network contains all of the future transit lines recommended in the Metrolinx RTP but goes beyond it in terms of additional services required to support the overall growth projected for York Region.

The recommended policy initiatives are also consistent with the Metrolinx RTP policy actions except that, where appropriate, additional details specific to municipal jurisdiction are described.

A staff report to the October 2008 Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee expressed general agreement and support for the Draft RTP and provided a set of comments to Metrolinx as part of the consultation process to finalise the RTP. One of the comments is that recognition should be given to municipalities with a completed transportation master plan that provides greater details on the transportation and transit needs of the municipality.

In the case of the current Transportation Master Plan Update, the draft recommendations identified transportation needs beyond the projects in the Draft RTP in terms of the timing for some projects such as the Major Mackenzie rapid transit corridor as well as the basic need for other projects such as the Bradford Bypass.

COMPLETING THE CONSULTATION PROGRAM

Two transportation symposia were held to receive input from stakeholders

In addition to five technical advisory committee meetings that invited input from municipal and agency stakeholders, two transportation symposia were held to receive input from senior staff of these municipal and agency stakeholders and any other agencies that are not part of the advisory committee.

The first symposium was held in June 2006 where participants provided input on what transportation direction and initiatives are appropriate for York Region. In the second symposium in October 2008, participants were asked to comment on the preliminary draft Master Plan recommendations. Input from the second symposium led to some adjustments being made to the draft Master Plan recommendations.

Public opinion survey results have provided helpful information affecting development of the draft recommendations

A public opinion survey was conducted across June and July of 2008 to gauge resident opinion on transportation issues and solutions. The results of the survey is summarised as follows:

- Transportation and traffic congestion are the most important issues facing York Region.
- Public transit solutions are favoured.
- Significant support remains for road network expansion.
- Other sustainable transportation solutions such as high occupancy vehicle lanes, transportation demand management and pedestrian and cycling facilities are also supported.

As reported in September 2008, these results validate the “transit-first” approach to network planning used in the study, confirm support for some road network expansion and prompted an expansion of the final round of public consultation centres.

Public consultation centres have been or will be held in every local municipality in York Region

Three rounds of public consultation centres were planned as part of the study. Two rounds have been conducted with the first round in 2006 and the second round in 2007. The third and final round is scheduled in November 2008 as follows:

Latcham Hall -----	November 12
Vaughan Council Chambers -----	November 18
Markham Council Chambers -----	November 20
Newmarket Council Chambers -----	November 25
50 High Tech Rd, Richmond Hill -----	November 27

The agenda for these public consultation centres are tentatively structured with an open house period followed by a formal presentation and finishing with a facilitated discussion with members of the public.

Public consultation materials and notices have been drafted

The third study newsletter has been drafted and is presented in *Council Attachment 5*. In addition to providing readers with a summary of the draft Master Plan recommendations, the newsletter serves to provide a notice to the upcoming public consultation centres.

Finally, *Council Attachment 6* presents the draft newspaper notice for the final public consultation centres. This notice will be in the Metroland Group of local papers twice before the start of the public meetings.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Preliminary capital cost estimates for the draft updated Transportation Master Plan is anticipated to be substantially higher

In comparison to the 2002 Master Plan, the draft recommendations from the Updated Master Plan will represent a higher capital investment due mainly to a larger recommended rapid transit network as well as the effects of inflation and higher oil prices on engineering and construction costs in general.

Transit network capital investment is anticipated to double

As noted in Section 4, the current rapid transit network being implemented in York Region as recommended in the 2002 Master Plan consists mainly of two subway extensions to Highway 7 and BRT lines on Highway 7 and Yonge Street. The

preliminary capital cost estimate of the transit network recommended in the 2002 Master Plan was \$4.1 billion in 2001 dollars. Today, that number is around \$7.1 billion.

In addition to the previous rapid transit network, the draft updated transit network recommendation consists of two new east-west and three new north-south rapid transit lines. These new lines represent more than a doubling of the length of rapid transit lines in York Region. As such, staff anticipates the capital investment necessary to implement the updated network to double.

Road network capital investment is anticipated to hold constant

On the road side, the draft road network recommendation represents a reduced number of road improvement projects in comparison to the 2002 Master Plan. However, the capital cost estimate for the draft recommended road improvements will likely not decrease due to the effects of inflation and higher oil prices as been experienced in current road projects where engineering and construction costs have risen significantly. Therefore, the \$2.3 billion estimated for the road network in the 2002 Master Plan will likely apply to the Updated Master Plan as well.

Needed program and strategy investment will be small

The cost for this component of the Master Plan was not estimated in the 2002 Master Plan. However, in comparison to the capital investments needed for the draft recommended transit and road networks, the investment for the programs and strategies component will be minor. Staff anticipates the draft program and strategy investment will be less than 1% of the total network capital investment.

Many of the rapid transit projects are included in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan

Metrolinx is in the process of finalising its Regional Transportation Plan, a transportation master plan for the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area. Included in that process are approval from the Province for the Plan itself and also the funding for construction. For York Region projects, the two subway extensions and the BRT/LRT lines on Highway 7 and Yonge Street and Jane Street and Don Mills/Leslie Street south of Highway 7 are included in the draft Metrolinx plan.

Preliminary cost estimates to be presented in December 2008

Preliminary capital and operating cost estimates being developed will be reviewed with Finance Department, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, York Region Transit and Roads Branch. A report on this will be brought to this Committee in December 2008 with details of the cost estimates.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The preferred growth scenario from the Planning for Tomorrow initiative projects growth for each local municipality as well as small areas called traffic zones in each municipality. The draft recommendations developed addresses the transportation needs derived from these traffic zones and therefore, collectively address the transportation needs of the local municipalities.

Local municipal and agency staff participated in the development of this draft updated Transportation Master Plan through the technical advisory committee as well as the symposia.

Staff has received requests and will present the draft recommendations to local councils at predetermined times over the next few months.

7. CONCLUSION

After two and a half years of extensive analysis and consultation, through an integrated process with the Planning for Tomorrow growth management initiative, draft network and policy recommendations have been developed to update the Transportation Master Plan.

This report seeks Regional Council endorsement of these draft recommendations and authorisation to present them at the final round of public consultation centres in November 2008.

For more information on this report, please contact Loy Cheah, Manager, Transportation Planning at 905-895-1200 Ext. 5024.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The six attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)