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## **DOANE ROAD ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY UPDATE YONGE STREET TO WOODBINE AVENUE TOWN OF EAST GWILLIMBURY**

**The Transportation Services Committee recommends:**

- 1. Receipt of the presentation by Mark Nykoluk, Project Manager, Transportation Services, Roads;**
- 2. Receipt of the communications from Wendy Nott, Walker, Nott, Dragicevic Associates Limited, dated January 27, 2012, on behalf of the Queensville Southwest Landowners Group, Amanda Black, Resident, East Gwillimbury, dated January 31, 2012, Melanie Logan, Resident, East Gwillimbury, dated February 1, 2012, Rob Baldwin, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, dated February 1, 2012 and Donald and Colleen Black, Residents, East Gwillimbury, dated February 1, 2012; and**
- 3. Adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated December 20, 2011, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Community Planning.**

### **1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

### **2. PURPOSE**

To inform Council that the preferred alternative identified through the Doane Road Improvements Schedule C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) is to reconstruct/widen Doane Road along the existing alignment between Old Yonge Street and Woodbine Avenue, in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

**Growth in East Gwillimbury is being accommodated through community plans, including the Queensville Community Plan (OPA 115 and 89)**

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (June 2006) (The Growth Plan) indicates that the Region will experience significant growth in population and

employment in the coming decades. A significant component of this growth is planned to occur in the Town of East Gwillimbury and specifically within the community of Queensville.

Prior to the release of The Growth Plan in June 2006, the Queensville Community Plan (OPA 89, 115) was developed as a means of planning for future population and employment growth in this area. The Queensville Community Plan is depicted in *Attachment 1*.

**Doane Road will be a major arterial road in the Town of East Gwillimbury and in the 1998 Queensville Community Plan had been shown to be re-aligned on a new southerly alignment**

Existing Doane Road is a two-lane road located north of Mount Albert Road and south of Queensville Sideroad, and extends from Yonge Street easterly to McCowan Road. A context plan is provided (*See Attachment 2*) and a location plan is provided (*See Attachment 3*).

Doane Road is under the jurisdiction of the Region between Yonge Street and Woodbine Avenue, and under the jurisdiction of the Town of East Gwillimbury east of Woodbine Avenue. Doane Road has not been improved since being transferred from the Town of East Gwillimbury to the Region in 2000.

The future Doane Road will be a critical component of the Queensville Community Plan serving east-west travel to and from the community of Queensville.

Within the Queensville Community Plan, Doane Road was envisioned to be realigned to a southerly alignment, as indicated in *Attachment 1*, subject to the completion of an Environmental Assessment Study.

**The Doane Road Improvements Class EA began in March 2009**

In March 2009, York Region initiated a Class EA and preliminary design study to identify potential improvements to Doane Road between Yonge Street and Woodbine Avenue in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

The Class EA involved confirming the need for improvements to Doane Road through a traffic analysis, assessing and evaluating “Alternative Solutions”, and generating, assessing and evaluating various alternative designs based on the potential impacts to all aspects of the environment, as well as transportation and cost considerations.

**A broad range of alternative solutions were developed and assessed during the Class EA, including widening along the existing alignment, northerly and southerly shift in the alignment and non-widening alternatives such as transit improvement, and travel demand management**

The primary objective of the Class EA was to investigate the need for improvements to Doane Road, to assess and evaluate various alternative solutions (e.g. improve existing Doane Road, realign Doane Road, transit improvements, improve other municipal roads, etc.), to assess and evaluate various alternative designs corresponding to the alternative solutions that were carried forward, and to complete the preliminary design of the preferred alternative design.

**The Class EA confirmed that widening Doane Road to four lanes between 2nd Concession and Woodbine Avenue is necessary to accommodate the planned growth in the Queensville Community Plan**

Traffic analysis indicated a need to widen Doane Road to four lanes between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and Woodbine Avenue, while maintaining the existing two lanes between Yonge Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession. This information was presented at the second Public Consultation Centre (PCC) held in June 2009. As a realigned Doane Road was indicated in the Queensville Community Plan, the project team was obligated to include this realignment as an option to be investigated as part of the next stage of analysis. The range of options that were to be considered during the subsequent stages of work is provided (*See Attachment 4*).

**Through the work undertaken during the Class EA, widening Doane Road along the existing alignment was determined to be the preferred solution**

Following an extensive analysis and evaluation of realignment options to the south including the OPA 89/115 option, options along the existing alignment, and options to the north, the preferred solution to widen Doane Road along the existing alignment was identified.

**The preferred solution was presented at the second Public Consultation Centre in April 2010, and consisted of widening Doane Road along the existing alignment**

The recommendation for improving existing Doane Road was presented for review and comment at the second Public Consultation Centre held on April 14, 2010. At that meeting, valuable feedback from residents along Doane Road as well as other stakeholders was provided.

The recommended solution included widening Doane Road along the existing alignment to four lanes between 2nd Concession Road and Woodbine Avenue, with a minor realignment to the south at Leslie Street to accommodate an at-grade intersection. The

recommended solution included eliminating the jogs at Woodbine Avenue and 2nd Concession Road, and addressing alignment issues along the two lane section of Doane Road between Yonge Street and 2nd Concession.

**Some stakeholders voiced their objection to the recommended solution to the Town of East Gwillimbury Council in April 2010**

On April 19, 2010, a delegation of local residents addressed the Town of East Gwillimbury's Council and expressed their concern regarding the recommended solution to widen Doane Road along the existing alignment between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and Woodbine Avenue. Objections included impacts to the natural environment and to existing residents.

**In May 2010, East Gwillimbury Council expressed that they do not support the recommended solution to widen Doane Road along the existing alignment between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and Woodbine Avenue**

On May 3, 2010, East Gwillimbury Council passed a resolution (CWC2010-156) stating that "Council supports the need for the Doane Road improvements from Yonge Street to Woodbine Avenue including a Highway 404 full interchange to support the Town's growth projections in accordance with the approved alignment in the Queensville Community Plan subject to minor modifications following a southerly realignment". The resolution further stated "that council does not support the preferred alignment that York Region has chosen through the EA process and that Council notify the Region and residents concerned with their issue of this decision".

#### **4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS**

**In response to stakeholder and Town comments, two alternative solutions, one along the existing alignment and one along a southerly realignment, were developed to a preliminary design level of detail**

Before, during and after the second Public Consultation Centre (PCC), the project team received valuable feedback from residents along Doane Road as well as other stakeholders, both in support and opposition to the recommended plan. A number of key concerns were raised during the second PCC and subsequently submitted to the project team involved the potential impacts associated with widening Doane Road to four lanes between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession Road and the Highway 404 Extension.

**Further consultation with residents and Town of East Gwillimbury staff took place to ensure our project team had a complete understanding of the existing and future conditions in this area**

In an effort to address these concerns, York Region invited the stakeholders between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and the Highway 404 Extension that were impacted by the recommended solution to attend a Focus Group Workshop which took place on June 29, 2010. All stakeholders were welcome to attend, however, the workshop focused only on the section of Doane Road between 2nd Concession Road and the Highway 404 Extension. The Focus Group Workshop provided details on the selection of the recommended plan, and allowed those who would be potentially impacted to have their questions answered and concerns addressed.

Following the Focus Group Workshop and in an effort to respond to the concerns raised regarding the impacts of improving existing Doane Road, the project team decided to develop both the recommended Existing Doane Road Alternative and the most preferred Southerly Realignment Alternative (2A) to a preliminary design level of detail to verify the results of the evaluation. A letter notifying of the commencement of the preliminary design stage was mailed to all stakeholders on the project team's mailing list on August 18, 2010.

**The additional consultation and analysis reconfirmed the recommended alternative of widening Doane Road along the existing alignment and this was presented at the third Public Consultation Centre in April 2011, and consisted of widening Doane Road along the existing alignment**

The third Public Consultation Centre was held on April 5, 2011 to present the findings of the work to date. Approximately 90 stakeholders attended. The recommended solution remained widening Doane Road along the existing alignment. Additional information was presented in terms of impacts and mitigation.

**Feedback on the recommended design presented in April, 2011 has been generally positive, however some objections remain**

Prior to the public meeting, members of the project team met with stakeholders whose properties would be directly impacted as a result of the recommended plan. These one-on-one meetings provided valuable input to the study process, and in some instances have resulted in refinements to plan as presented to the public in April (*See Attachment 5*).

Response letters have been provided to all stakeholders who provided comments to the Region. As well, many one-on-one meetings including site meetings and telephone conversations have taken place to obtain feedback and discuss concerns.

**The Town of East Gwillimbury was advised of the Region's intent to file the Environmental Study Report for the Doane Road EA Study in late June 2011**

A presentation to the Town of East Gwillimbury's Committee of the Whole occurred on June 6, 2011. The purpose of the presentation was to provide an update to the Town following the third public open house meeting held on April 5, 2011, and to advise in advance of the Region's intent to file the Environmental Study Report at the end of June.

In response to continued concerns raised by the Council of the Town of East Gwillimbury, filing the Environmental Study Report was deferred until after further consultation with residents, stakeholders and Town of East Gwillimbury staff.

**Following additional consultation, the Region's preferred design was presented again to the Town of East Gwillimbury's Committee of the Whole in August, 2011**

At the Town of East Gwillimbury's request, the Region presented its preferred design to the Town of East Gwillimbury's Committee of the Whole on August 29, 2011. Following the presentation, issues pertaining to increased property costs, increased impacts to tributaries of the Holland River, and less efficient community planning associated with the realignment alternative were discussed. At the conclusion of the presentation, the Committee of the Whole recommended that the Town of East Gwillimbury's Council accept the Region's preferred alternative for improvements to Doane Road along the existing alignment.

**The Town of East Gwillimbury's Council did not adopt the Committee of the Whole recommendation**

At its September 19, 2011 Council meeting, the Town of East Gwillimbury's Council considered the recommendation by the Committee of the Whole to accept the Region's preferred design. Six deputations were received: One in support and five not in support of the Region's preferred design. Council did not adopt the Committee of the Whole recommendation to accept the Region's preferred design along the existing Doane Road.

**Issues identified in the five deputations not in support of the Region's preferred design have been addressed during the course of the Class EA**

The main issues identified during the deputations not in support of the Region's preferred design have been addressed during the Class EA. These issues generally pertain to:

- Validity of the process followed
- Impacts to the natural environment
- Impacts to drinking water and septic beds
- Support by local residents

Both the Region's legal counsel and Ministry of the Environment staff have confirmed that the process being followed is correct and required.

Regarding impacts to the natural environment, extensive consultation with Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority has taken place, resulting in their support for the preferred alternative.

The preferred alternative was reviewed with local residents including a site visit on April 18, 2011 to identify concerns to septic beds and property specific features. This resulted in a revision to the design to avoid impacts to septic beds, vegetations, etc.

Future municipal services have been proposed by the Town of East Gwillimbury along Doane Road within the study area. While the size and precise location of these utilities have not been confirmed, utilities will likely include a municipal trunk watermain and trunk gravity sewer. The Town of East Gwillimbury's Water and Wastewater Master Plan identifies a 300 mm diameter watermain along Doane Road between Anchor Court and Woodbine Avenue. Based on discussions with the Town of East Gwillimbury, it is envisioned that the watermain along Doane Road will be installed at the time of constructing the Doane Road improvements, and that the watermain will be active and available to residents subsequent to construction.

The study team has received comments both in support and opposition to the Region's preferred alternative by local residents.

**A number of options have been considered in response to East Gwillimbury Council's decision to reject the Region's preferred alternative**

The following options have been considered in response to East Gwillimbury Council's decision to not support the Region's preferred alternative:

- File the Environmental Study Report in February 2012
- Conduct an additional study
- Adopt the "Do Nothing" alternative
- Transfer ownership of Doane Road back to the Town of East Gwillimbury

The Environmental Study Report is in the process of being finalized and could be available for filing as early as February 2012. As the study began in March 2009 and has lasted almost three years, recent comments from stakeholders include a desire to complete the Class EA. Some residents in the area have experienced difficulty in selling their properties due to uncertainty. The filing of the Environmental Study Report and its resolution would result in "closure" allowing land owners to resume their interests.

The Class EA has undergone extensive study. Three Public Consultation Centre meetings have been held including numerous meetings with stakeholders and agencies. In response to comments received, the Region has gone beyond the normal requirements for this type

of Class EA by developing two preliminary designs in an effort to fully understand their impacts. Additional study is not warranted.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (June 2006) indicates that significant growth is planned to occur in the Town of East Gwillimbury and specifically within the community of Queensville. Traffic analysis indicates a need to widen Doane Road to four lanes between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and Woodbine Avenue, while maintaining the existing two lanes between Yonge Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession. The “Do-Nothing” alternative is not preferred.

Transferring ownership of Doane Road back to the Town would result in the Town, as proponent, to undertake a new Class EA, resulting in additional costs to both the Town and Region.

**Regional staff are planning to file the Environmental Study Report on the public record in February 2012, recommending the preferred alternative of reconstructing and widening Doane Road along the existing alignment**

A Notice of Study Completion will be placed on the public record in February 2012 for review in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*. The Environmental Study Report will recommend reconstructing and widening Doane Road along the existing alignment between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and east of Leslie Street.

Notification letters will be mailed to all individuals on the project team’s mailing list. The letters and the newspaper notice will provide information about the locations where the Environmental Study Report can be viewed, as well as contact information for individuals wishing to comment on the Environmental Study Report.

**Improvements to Doane Road between Yonge Street and Woodbine Avenue are necessary to accommodate the planned and legislated growth within the Town of East Gwillimbury**

The future Doane Road will be a critical component of the Queensville Community Plan serving east-west travel to and from the community of Queensville. Transportation planning and traffic analysis has identified the need to improve Doane Road to Regional standards and provide additional capacity between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concessions and east of Leslie Street. This need is further supported by a resolution from the Council of Town of East Gwillimbury, which was passed at their meeting on May 3, 2010.

Following extensive analysis and consultation the preferred alternative is to widen along the existing alignment between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and east of Leslie Street. This alternative is preferred because of the lower property cost, lower impacts to the natural environment and an enhanced community layout.



## **Objections to the Region's preferred design can be made through a Part II Order request to the Ministry of the Environment**

The filing of the Environmental Study Report does not preclude individuals from objecting to the study results. If concerns cannot be resolved through discussions with the Region, a person may request the Minister of the Environment issue a Part II Order. The Part II Order is an order that the project be subject to a full individual environmental assessment with formal governmental review and approval under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

## **Link to Key Council – approved Plans**

The recommendation of this report has a direct linkage to *Vision 2026 - Towards a Sustainable Region*. Specifically, Developing an Integrated Transportation Network, Quality Communities, and Being a Region that involves its Citizens. The project team conducted meaningful and extensive consultation with stakeholders in the study area, including citizens, members of the development community, farm and business owners, and the local social service provider: New Leaf Living and Learning Together Inc.

The recommendation of this report has a direct linkage to the 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan, specifically continue to deliver and sustain critical infrastructure.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are sufficient funds in the approved capital 2011 budget for the subsequent stages of this work, including detailed design and construction.

## **6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT**

Road improvements to Doane Road between Yonge Street and Woodbine Avenue will address anticipated future transportation servicing deficiencies in York Region, specifically in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

The Region's preferred design includes provision for sidewalks and on-street bike lanes between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and Woodbine Avenue. The preferred design also includes future municipal services which have been proposed by the Town of East Gwillimbury along Doane Road within the study area. While the size and precise location of these utilities have not been confirmed, utilities will likely include a municipal trunk watermain and trunk gravity sewer. It is envisioned that the watermain along Doane Road will be installed at the time of constructing the Doane Road improvements, and that the watermain will be active and available to residents subsequent to construction. Additional consultation between York Region and the Town will be required during the detailed

design stage to ensure coordination of the watermain and other Town services with construction of the Doane Road improvements.

The recommended solution to widen Doane Road along its existing alignment is not reflected in the Queensville Community Plan (OPA 115).

In June 2010 the Town of East Gwillimbury adopted a new Official Plan. Schedule B-2 of the new Official Plan states that “Doane Road Alignment Under Review Through the EA Process”. The Town’s new Official Plan is not yet approved and has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. The Town’s new Official Plan will need to reflect the conclusions of the “approved” EA.

Upgrading this road to the Regional standards will provide a strong backbone to support the current and planned developments along this corridor, and the anticipated increase in level of traffic that will be generated.

Regional staff will continue to work closely and cooperatively with staff from the Town of East Gwillimbury to accommodate local municipal requirements.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

The Town of East Gwillimbury has stated its support for the reconstruction of Doane Road between Yonge Street and Woodbine Avenue, including the Highway 404 interchange. However, the Town has indicated to date that they do not support an alignment along the existing right-of-way between Leslie Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession.

The Class Environmental Assessment for improvements to Doane Road began in March 2009. Three Public Consultation Centre meetings have been held including numerous meetings with stakeholders and agencies. In response to comments received, the Region has gone beyond the normal requirements for this type of study by developing two preliminary designs in an effort to fully understand their impacts.

The recommended solution resulting from the work done to date indicates that improvements to Doane Road should occur along the existing alignment, with a widening to four lanes between 2<sup>nd</sup> Concession and Woodbine Avenue.

For more information on this report, please contact Stephen Collins, Manager Engineering Roads at extension 5949.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

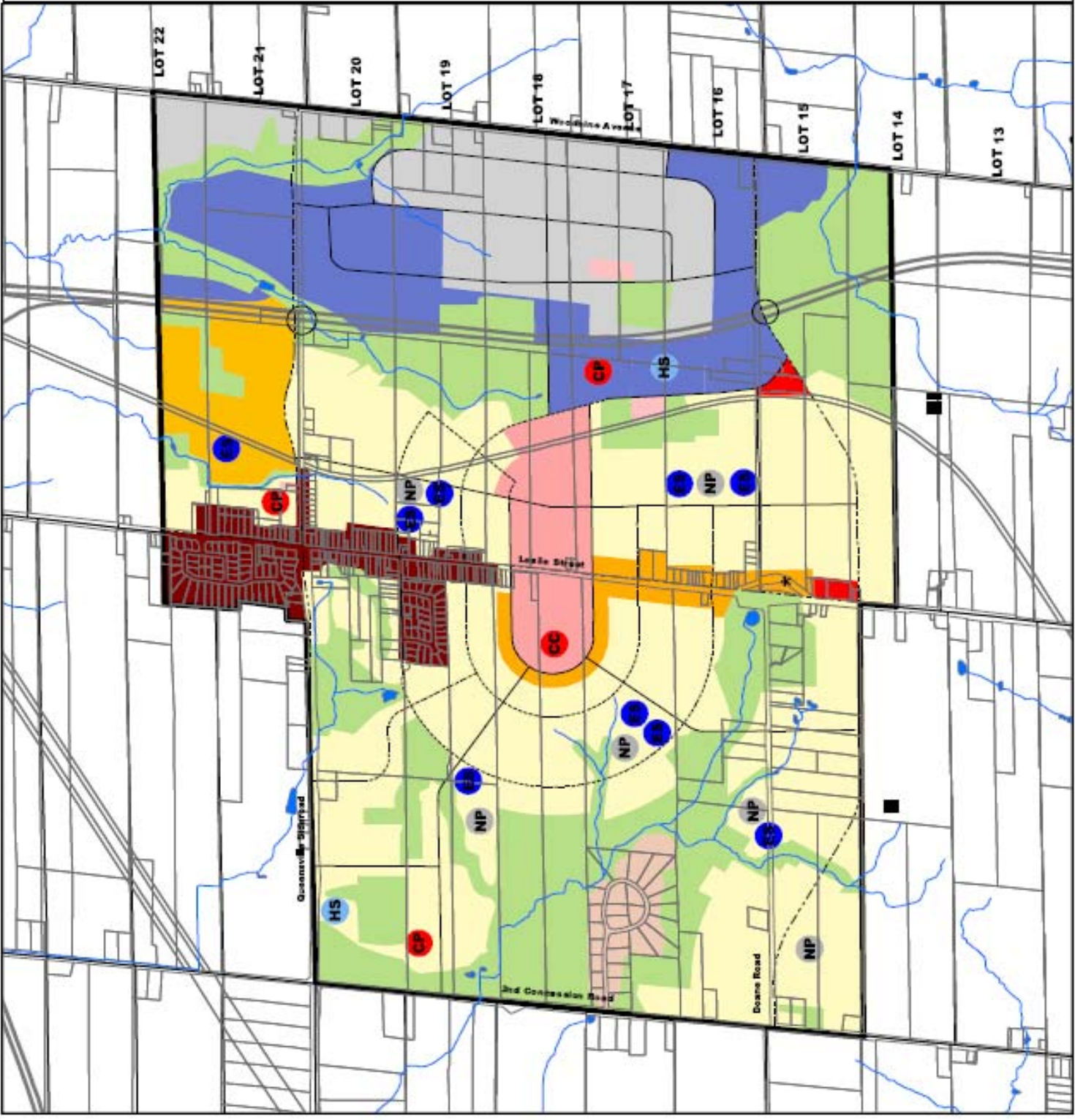
*(The five attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)*

**OFFICIAL PLAN  
AMENDMENT # 115**

Schedule A  
Land Use & Transportation Plan



- Legend**
- General Industrial
  - Harbour Residential
  - Highway Commercial
  - Institutional
  - Low Density Residential
  - Medium Density Residential
  - Open Space
  - Precinct Industrial
  - Special Estate Residential
  - Town Centre
  - University
  - Community Park
  - Elementary School
  - High School
  - Neighbourhood Park
  - Major Collector
  - Minor Collector
  - Aerial
  - Proposed Interchange
  - \* See Policy 3.2.2 (M)





# REGIONAL CONTEXT MAP

## DOANE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

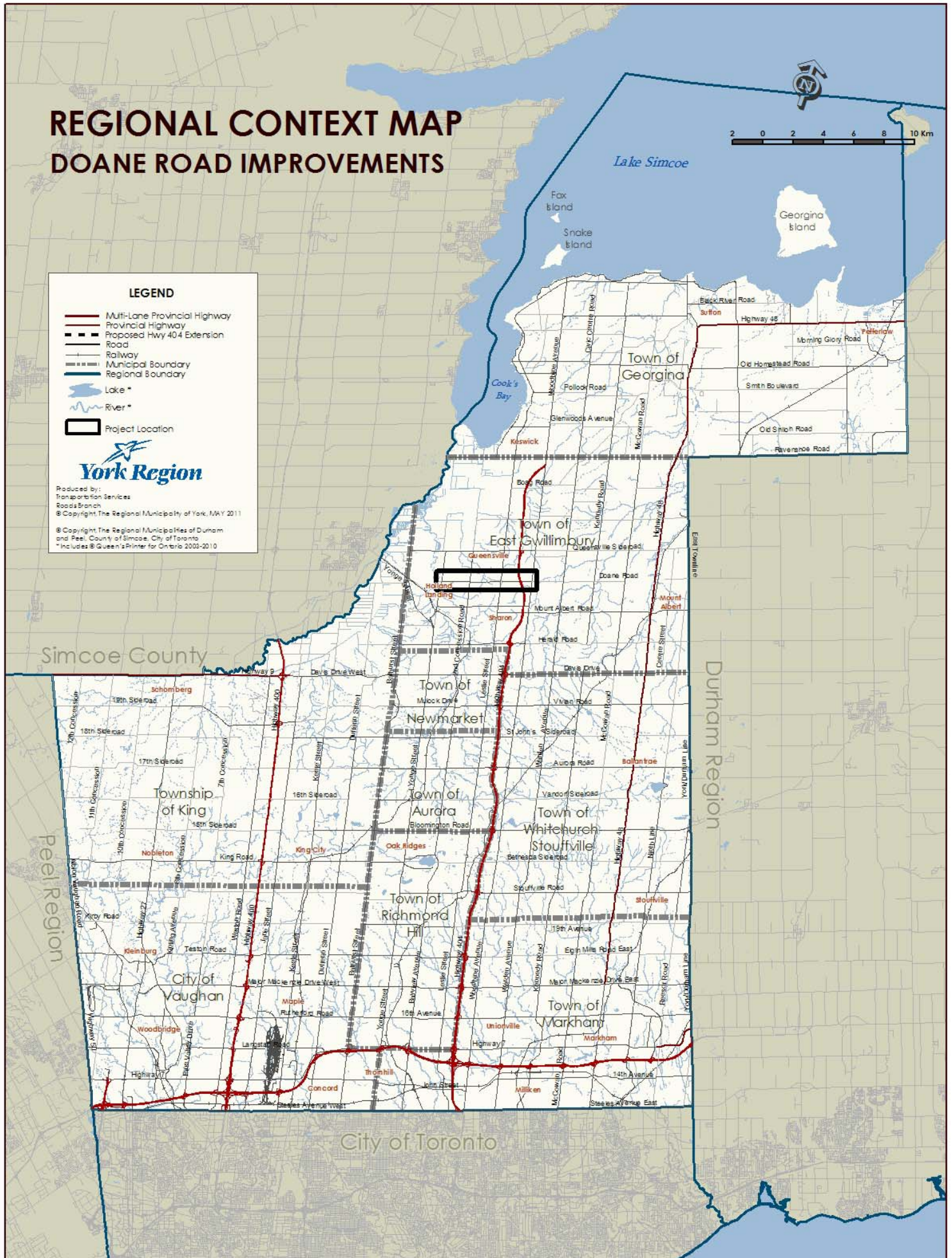
### LEGEND

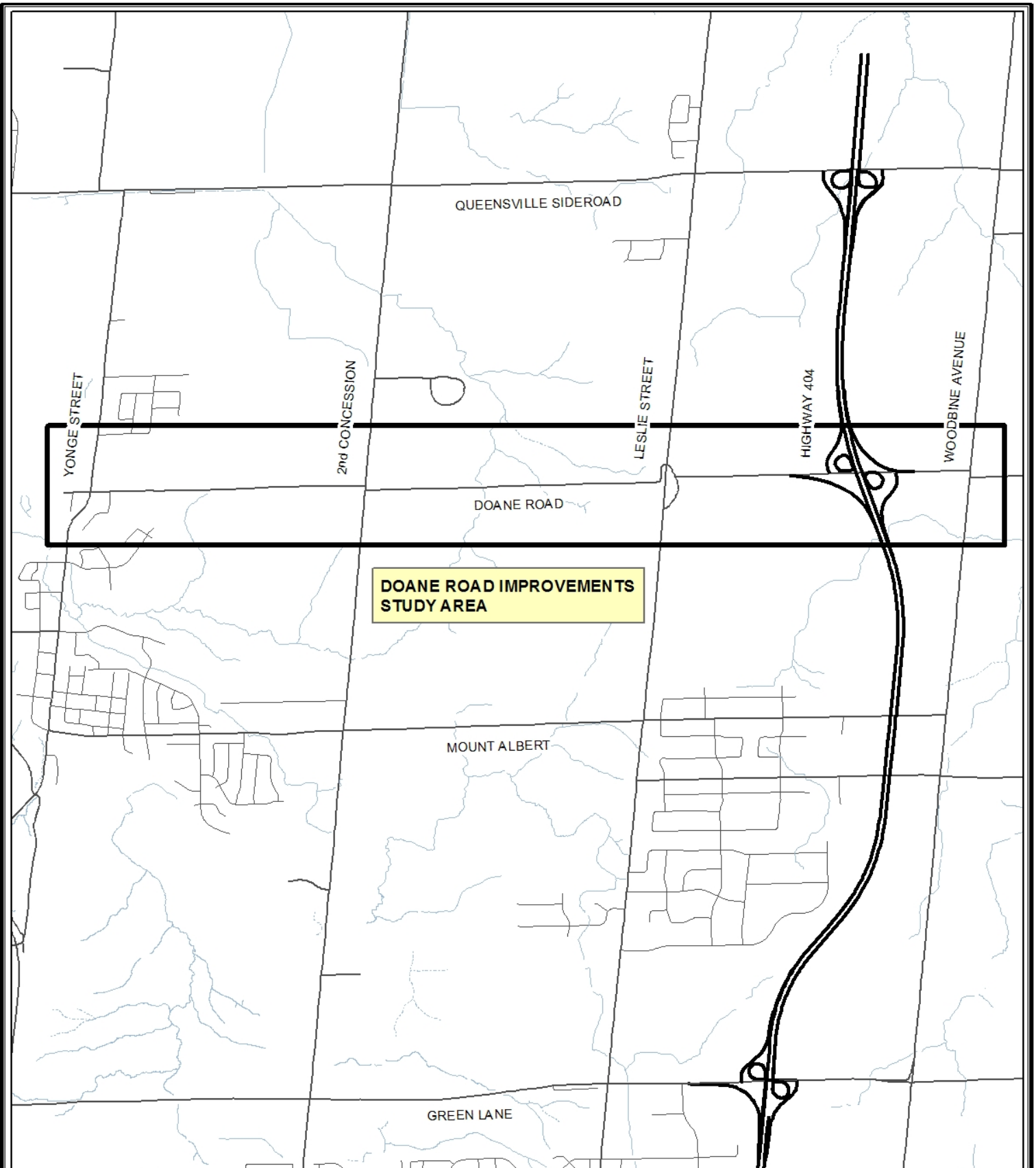
- Multi-Lane Provincial Highway
- Provincial Highway
- Proposed Hwy 404 Extension
- Road
- Railway
- Municipal Boundary
- Regional Boundary
- Lake \*
- River \*
- Project Location



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## DOANE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS LOCATION PLAN

DOANE ROAD  
YONGE STREET to WOODBINE AVENUE  
TOWN OF EAST GWILLIMBURY



510 255 0 510 Meters

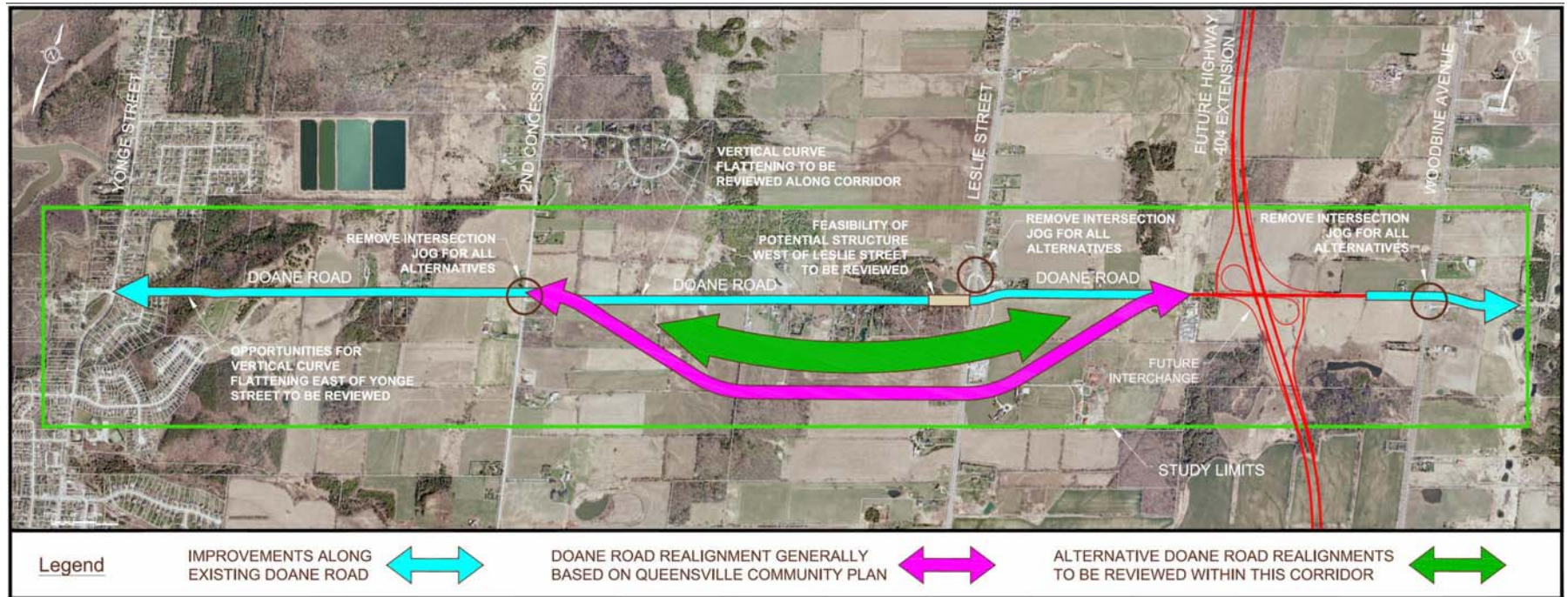


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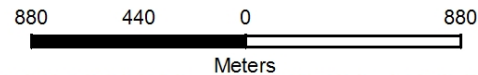


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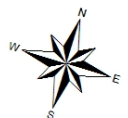




**Alternative Solutions Presented at the First Public Meeting  
Doane Road - Yonge Street to Woodbine Avenue  
Town of East Gwillimbury**



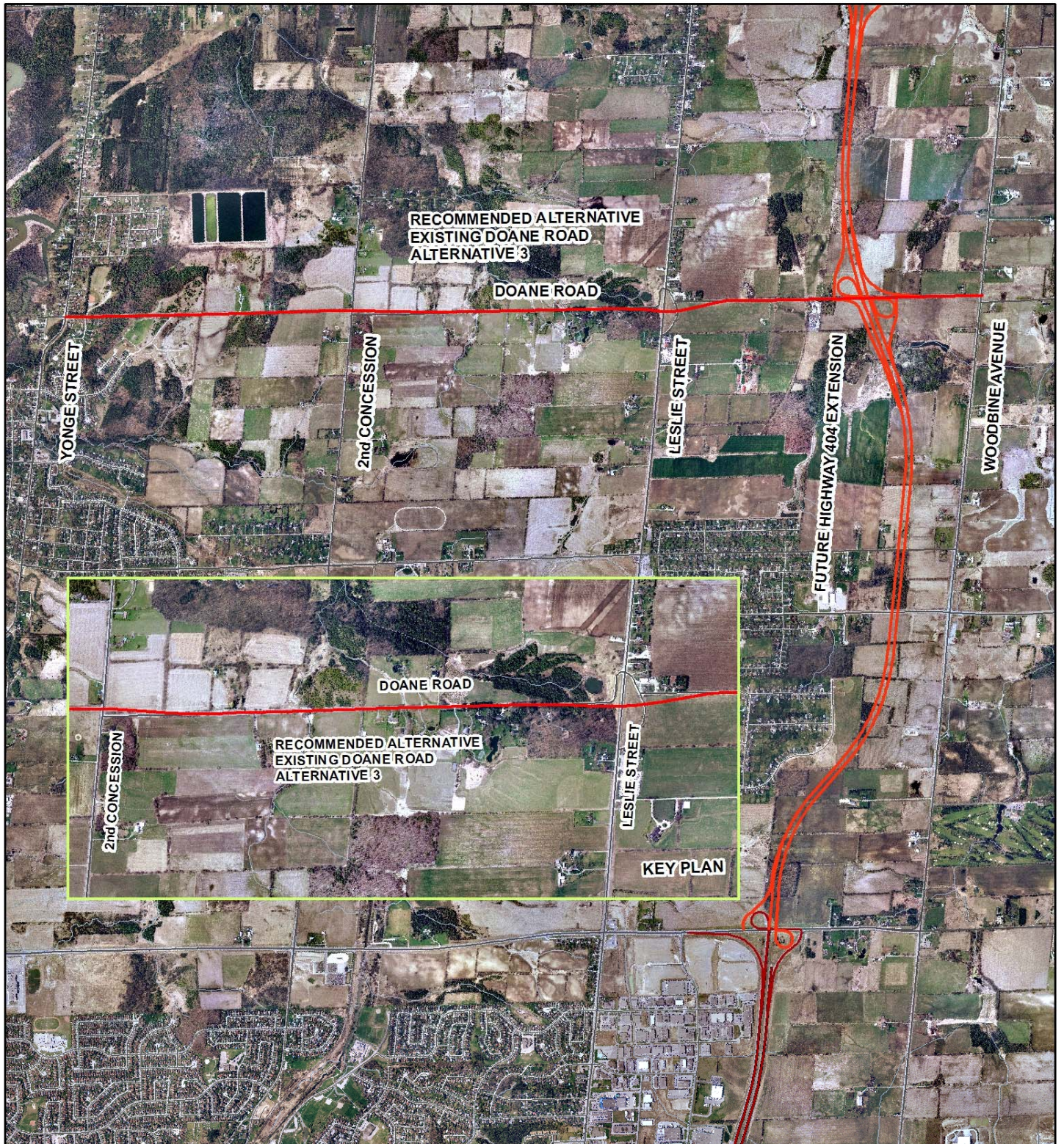
**ROADS BRANCH - CAPITAL DELIVERY**



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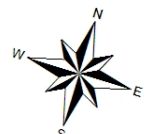
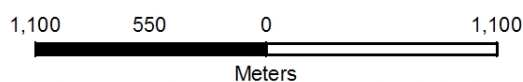


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**Recommended Alternative Solution**  
**Doane Road - Yonge Street to Woodbine Avenue**  
**Town of East Gwillimbury**

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