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YORK REGION COMMENTS ON THE CITY OF TORONTO SPADINA SUBWAY EXTENSION (NORTH TO STEELES AVE.) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY

The Rapid Transit Public/Private Partnership Steering Committee recommends the following:

- 1. The presentation by Paul May, Director, Infrastructure Planning Branch, be received; and**
- 2. The recommendations contained in the following report April 12, 2006, from the Vice President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation and Commissioner of Planning and Development Services, be adopted:**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Region endorse the recommended City of Toronto Spadina Subway Extension Alignment (north to Steeles Ave.) and the Steeles West Station Concept as identified in the Spadina Subway Extension Environmental Assessment Study Report dated February 2006.
2. Copies of this report be forwarded by the Regional Clerk to the Minister of the Environment, and to the clerks of the municipality of Vaughan, City of Toronto and the Toronto Transit Commission.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise and seek endorsement of Committee and Council on the City of Toronto Spadina Subway Extension Environmental Assessment (EA) Study Report submitted to the Minister of the Environment.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Spadina Subway Extension EA

In 1994, upon review of the EA Report for the Yonge-Spadina Loop EA Project, the Minister of the Environment and Energy authorized the extension of the Spadina Subway from Downsview Station to York University only. At that time, it was anticipated that completion of the entire "Loop" from York University to Finch Station would be many years into the future. Since then, several important policy changes, planning initiatives,

transit improvement projects, land development decisions and property acquisition activities have occurred. These changes require that a new EA study be undertaken for the extension of the Spadina Subway. In addition, a new EA represents an opportunity to consider a subway extension that will better serve the Keele St area, York University, York Region residents and Bradford GO Rail Line passengers and complements the EA study undertaken by the Region north of Steeles Avenue.

The City of Toronto, and the Toronto Transit Commission are joint proponents for the new individual EA (in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act), for a 6.2 km, 4 station underground extension of Spadina Subway from Downsview Station to Steeles Ave West, with related commuter facilities (bus terminals, passenger pick-up and drop-off and commuter parking) up to and including the subway station on Regionally owned lands north of Steeles Avenue.

At its meeting of April 22, 2004, Regional Council approved staff participation in the Spadina Subway Extension EA being undertaken by TTC and City of Toronto and authorized a funding contribution of \$100,000.

The TTC and the City of Toronto prepared a Terms of Reference (ToR), as required by the Environmental Assessment Act (EAA). The ToR was approved by the Minister of the Environment in September 2004.

URS Canada Inc. was retained in October 2004 to conduct the EA Study. The EA study was conducted in three phases, as follows:

- Routes and general station location.
- Alignments and station concepts.
- Detailed assessment of the effects of the undertaking.

The TTC/City has submitted the Spadina Subway Extension EA to the Minister of the Environment for review and approval. Comments on the EA were to be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment by April 6, 2006, however, staff have indicated that York Region comments would be forthcoming following the Regional Council meeting on April 27, 2006.

3.2 Vaughan North-South Link Public Transit Improvement EA

The Region has completed the Highway 7 Corridor and Vaughan North-South Link Public Transit Improvements EA. The EA report was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment on September 1, 2005 for formal review and approval.

The proposed undertaking includes a median transitway in the Vaughan North-South Link from the Vaughan Corporate Centre at Highway 7 to Steeles Avenue at York University and also includes the details to support subway technology to meet the Spadina Subway at Steeles Avenue. Given that the Region's EA pre-dated the City of Toronto Spadina Subway Extension EA, the Region's EA is seeking approval of the

underground alignment with the option of amending, where necessary, the portion south of Highway 407 to tie into Spadina Subway Extension alignment and the proposed Steeles West Station.

On March 23, 2006 the Province of Ontario announced its funding support for the capital construction of the Spadina Subway all the way to the Vaughan Corporate Centre. The Region proposes to immediately commence the additional study work necessary to support and to submit the EA amendment report immediately upon MOE approval or concurrent with their review and approval of the preferred designs for the Highway 7 and Vaughan North-South Link Public Transit Improvements EA and the Spadina Subway Extension EA.

In addition to the recommendation and assessment of preferred subway alignment at the Region's transit terminal site (identified as the Steeles West Station in the Spadina Subway Extension EA), the TTC/City of Toronto's EA has developed locations and configurations at this location for ancillary inter-regional transit terminal facilities serving the Spadina Subway terminus at Steeles Avenue (Council Attachment 2). The conceptual station layout will be refined as part of the transit oriented development on this site.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Spadina Subway Extension EA updated the 1994 approved EA and developed and analyzed alternative alignments and station locations including the subway extension to a terminal station at Steeles Avenue.

4.1 Recommended Alignment

The study team developed a comprehensive list of indicators, which were refined based on public and stakeholder agency comments received during consultation. Further, both a qualitative and numerical analysis methodologies was used to evaluate the alternative alignments and station concepts.

Following the detailed analysis of the northern and southern alignment sections within the study area, the technically preferred alignment ES-21 (Council Attachment 1) was recommended as the preferred Spadina Subway Extension alignment.

Subway stations are to be located:

- At an interchange with the GO Bradford Line (Sheppard West Station).
- Near the intersection of Keele Street and Finch Avenue West (Finch West Station).
- On the York University campus (York University Station).
- At Steeles Avenue West (between Keele and Jane Street).

The alignment at the Steeles West Station provides for the further extension of the Spadina Subway to the Vaughan Corporate Centre at Highway 7 that will be detailed in the York Region Highway 7 / Subway addendum.

4.2 Preferred Station Layout – Steeles West Station

For the Steeles West Station, the challenge is to provide adequate facilities to meet rapidly increasing demand for bus services from York Region and beyond to York University and the proposed subway extension, while ensuring that Regional, provincial and local objectives for transit oriented development on and adjoining the station are attached.

In 2001, York Region acquired property on the north side of Steeles Avenue for an 18 bay bus terminal. Since that time, due to growth in GO Transit, York Region Transit and Viva services, the required number of bus bays for the Steeles West bus terminal has more than doubled and can no longer be entirely accommodated on the intended site.

Option ES-26 (Council Attachment 2) was recommended as the preferred Steeles West Station Concept. This concept provides for surface level facilities, north and south of Steeles Avenue and are more easily adaptable to changes in bus demand. The location of the bus terminals will result in shorter bus terminal to subway platform transfer times. As well, the terminals are adjacent to each other and will allow for combining into one single platform if deemed desirable during the detailed design phase of the project. Further, the orientation of the bus terminals preserves the affected north and south frontages of Steeles Avenue for future transit supportive development on or adjacent to the terminals. Opportunities for integration of station entrances and bus terminals with new developments will be explored further during the design of Steeles West Station.

The Region has received a site plan application for the expansion of the UPS Canada parcel distribution facility located at 2900 Steeles Avenue West. The proposed expansion of this facility will have a direct impact on the proposed Steeles West Station concept and possibly the future extension of the Spadina Subway to the Vaughan Corporate Centre. Staff are currently in discussion with UPS Canada, the TTC and the City of Vaughan to resolve this issue.

4.3 Project Duration and Cost

The anticipated duration of a project of this scope would be approximately 6.5 years, including the following overlapping activities:

- Design (1 to 2 years).
- Construction (3 to 4 years).
- Testing and commissioning (1 year).

The actual duration of the project would depend on a number of factors, including project financing, property acquisition and construction methodology and procedures.

The order of magnitude cost estimate for the 6.2 km subway extension, including design and construction costs, property, yard improvements and vehicles, is \$1.5 billion in 2005 dollars, inclusive of the Steeles Avenue terminal.

4.4 York Region Participation

Regional staff have actively participated in both the technical advisory committee and the preparation and evaluation of alignment alternatives and future facilities design alternatives for each of the stations.

Regional staff's comments on the draft EA report have been satisfactorily incorporated into the final EA report. Therefore, staff have no outstanding concerns and is in support of the proposed TTC/City of Toronto undertaking.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no financial implication resulting from this report. York Region has previously agreed to contribute \$100,000 from the 2004 rapid transit capital budget to the Spadina Subway Extension EA Study. Details surrounding the costs associated with the recent Provincial capital funding announcement and the expected Regional/local contribution to both capital and operating costs are under discussion with all the stakeholders and will be the subject of future reports.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

No immediate local impacts are associated with this report.

7. CONCLUSION

The recommendation of the Spadina Subway Extension EA has been developed in consultation with community and stakeholders, including the Region and the City of Vaughan. The study recommends an updated alignment for the extension of the Spadina line with stations at Sheppard Ave./GO Bradford line, Keele St./Finch Ave. W., York University and at Steeles Ave. W. between Keele and Jane Streets.

Staff are satisfied that all Region of York issues have been properly addressed in the EA Report.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachments referred to in this clause were included in the Agenda for the April 20, 2006 Committee meeting.)