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RAPID TRANSIT PARK AND RIDE STRATEGY

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

- 1. The presentation by David Clark, Chief Architect, Infrastructure and Development, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, be received; and**
- 2. The recommendations contained in the following report, June 7, 2007, from the Vice-President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, be adopted:**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council endorse the development of a comprehensive park and ride strategy and implementation plan to support the growth and health of the rapid transit network.
2. Rapid transit staff be directed to identify opportunities and bring back appropriate business and partnership models for the delivery of the commuter parking strategy as well as recommendations for an appropriate governance model or models for Council's consideration.
3. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the area municipalities for information.

2. PURPOSE

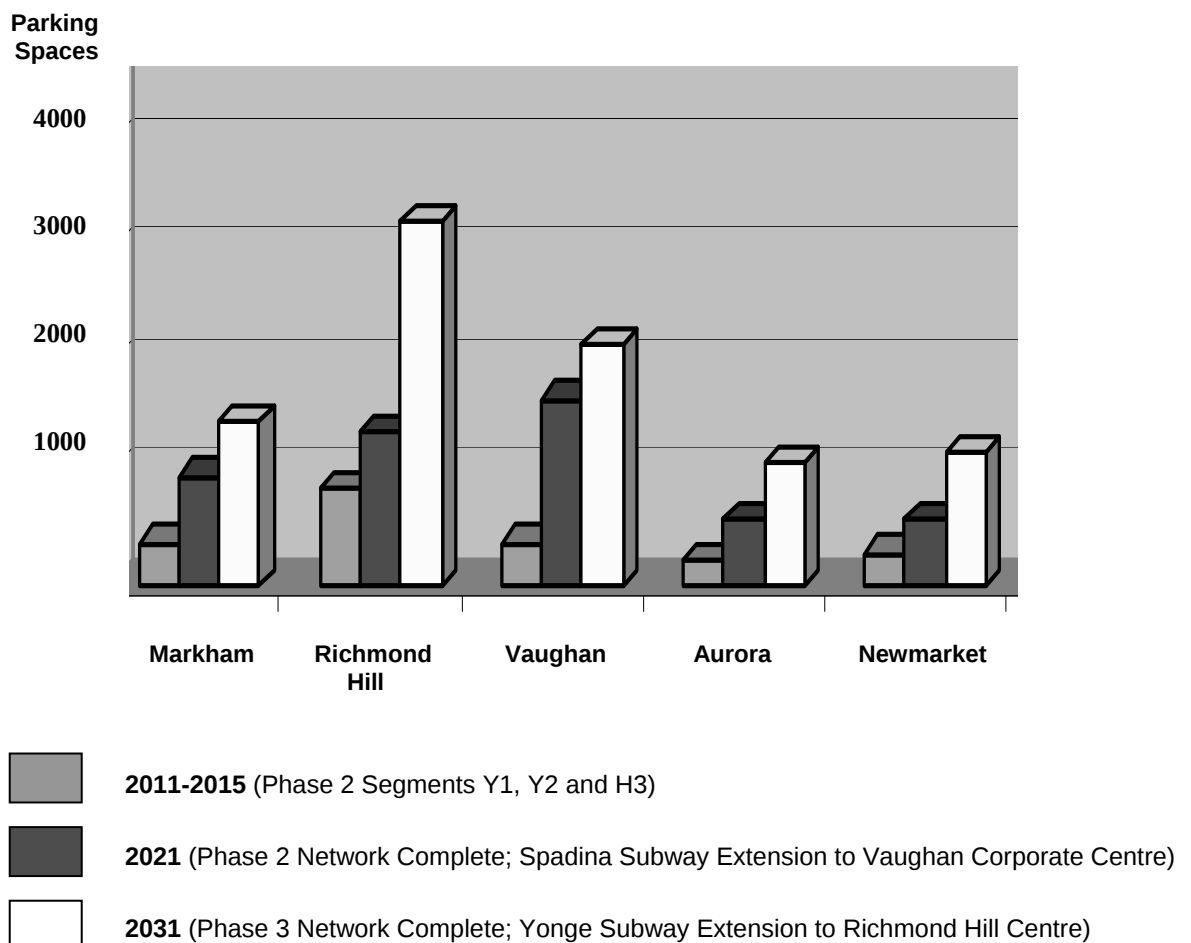
The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the development of a comprehensive strategy and implementation plan for the delivery of commuter park and ride facilities across the extent of the Regional rapid transit network to support system wide ridership growth as the rapid transit network is implemented over time and technologies are adapted to meet increased ridership demand on the segments of the network. The development and delivery of the commuter parking strategy provides key opportunities to also deliver transit supportive mixed use development at these nodes across the Regional rapid transit corridors.

3. BACKGROUND

The recent 2007 draft update to the 2003 Network Configuration Plan identified the need to establish a commuter park and ride strategy and implementation plan to support the

system wide ridership growth across the 100 kilometres of the regional rapid transit network. As rapid transit ridership grows through the expansion of the network, commuter parking supply at key intercept locations is a critical component of an integrated ridership ‘feeder’ system, which includes local transit. Commuter parking facilities help to sustain and support the ridership growth potential as the technology adaptations are implemented to meet the demand on individual segments of the network. A preliminary forecast of commuter parking supply targets is shown in Figure 1 and illustrates the increase in commuter parking demand through the ten year growth horizons of the rapid transit network. The chart also reflects the dramatic impact on commuter parking demand consequent on the commencement of subway operations along both the Vaughan corridor and in the potential requirements along the Yonge Street corridor from Finch Avenue north to the Richmond Hill terminal should the Yonge subway line be extended.

Figure 1
Commuter Parking Supply Targets – Preliminary Forecast¹



Note: ¹While detailed analysis work will be required to refine the preliminary forecast numbers, the chart indicates that a potential significant investment in the delivery and operation of commuter parking facilities will be required to meet the rapid transit network demand over the next 25 years.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

At present, Regional and local municipal involvement in the supply of commuter parking is in its infancy. Currently, associated with the delivery of transit services in the Region, limited business arrangements are in place in a number of locations along the rapid transit corridors for the supply of commuter parking, such as arrangements on private land adjacent to Markville Mall. Parking also occurs in the absence of arrangements in other locations along the corridors. The arrangements generally permit commuter parking on commercial properties where transit parking peak demands do not conflict with the peak commercial use. Such arrangements are essential building blocks of a comprehensive commuter parking strategy, but as such, need to be established with the assurances and stability that will be required to sustain ridership growth and the long term health of the transit network.

Commuter parking is integral to the delivery of TOD

The delivery of commuter parking facilities is an integral component of the support and promotion of transit supportive mixed use development across the regional rapid transit corridors. As the Region urbanizes, new delivery models will be required as densities increase and land becomes more valuable. Increasingly, commuter parking will be delivered in concert with transit oriented development (TOD) opportunities in a variety of structured, shared use facilities.

Governance and delivery models must be robust

The governance models for the delivery and operation of commuter parking must be robust to adapt to evolving and new business opportunities. New parking policies will have to be identified, and pricing policies flexible enough to establish an appropriate balance between parking and transit costs, promoting transit use, while at the same time maintaining the financial viability of parking operations.

A number of key tasks should be undertaken

The 2007 Network Configuration Plan update identified a number of key tasks that should be undertaken to support the development of a network wide park and ride strategy. The following is an outline of the steps that need to be taken in order to develop a comprehensive park and ride strategy and implementation plan.

1. Refine the park and ride demand model

The delivery of a comprehensive park and ride strategy will require further technical analysis. The preliminary forecast model will need to be refined to determine overall

demand to support the system. Local and international best practice examples and models, as well as parking support policies, should be identified and analyzed for their applicability to the York regional context.

2. Identify segment by segment supply targets

Assign parking supply targets to each of the rapid transit network segments at each horizon year to align with the expansion of the system, changes in technology and support for ridership growth.

3. Identify and evaluate commuter parking delivery models

Identify and evaluate a range of potential commuter parking delivery models, including land acquisition, strategic alliances, and business and partnership opportunities along the rapid transit corridors. Appropriate parking delivery, governance and business models will be identified and evaluated against local and international best practice examples. It should be noted that the park and ride strategy should not present environmental assessment (EA) implications, as they are addressed within the approved Environmental Assessments along the rapid transit corridors.

4. Undertake a comprehensive consultation programme

As local area municipalities become involved in the delivery of parking facilities to meet their transportation, urban design and development objectives, it will become increasingly important that Regional initiatives with respect to commuter parking are well coordinated with existing and emerging municipal programmes and facilities. As parking support policies are identified and considered, municipal consultation will be critical to the identification of potential conflicts with existing area policies. Mutual strategies will have to be developed to address potential conflicts and harmonize the parking policy frameworks.

Consultation and coordination with area municipalities is a critical element in the delivery of any commuter parking facilities along the rapid transit corridors. In addition, the consultation programme will also have to include other stakeholders, including senior levels of government with landholdings along the corridors, other transit agencies, such as GO Transit, and private landowners. The consultation programme will help to identify and inventory land and potential business and strategic partnership opportunities where commuter parking facilities can be delivered on a stand-alone basis, in association with TOD or through shared use arrangements.

5. Identify available land and partnership opportunities along the corridors

Available land, parking supply and potential parking partnership opportunities will be evaluated along each of the segments. Through the comprehensive consultation process the availability, readiness, and opportunity potential will be screened and evaluated for potential acquisition or negotiations. The identification of parking supply opportunities also actively seeks those preferred opportunities where parking can be delivered in the context of TOD.

6. Address specific parking opportunities as the work programme proceeds

As the work programme proceeds, commuter parking opportunities will arise that will require further investigation and analysis on a site specific opportunity basis. The opportunities may come from a variety of sources including municipal or Regional consideration of planning applications.

The opportunity to provide commuter parking, in association with the development of the Cornell terminal, has been identified as one opportunity for further investigation. As well, at its meeting of May 10, 2007, the Steering Committee recommended the pursuit of potential joint commuter parking arrangements with stakeholders within the greater Langstaff area to support the rapid transit growth and evolution within the Richmond Hill transit hub district.

7. Bring forward a comprehensive park and ride strategy and implementation plan for Council's consideration

Finally, the park and ride work programme will identify and recommend an appropriate park and ride strategy and implementation plan, including business models to take advantage of potential business and partnership opportunities for shared use facilities with private or public/quasi public sector stakeholders along the corridors. The work programme also encompasses recommendations for an appropriate governance model for Council's consideration.

Next Steps

Staff will report back in one year with a comprehensive park and ride strategy for Council's consideration. During the development of the strategy and plan, staff will provide quarterly reports to update Council on progress and identify any interim decisions or direction that may be required.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development and delivery of a comprehensive park and ride strategy will encompass the consideration of a range of potential business and partnership models, each of which may have financial implications to the Region. A business case will be prepared for each opportunity, including opportunities to acquire commuter parking land through purchase or other means, such as planning approvals. Where opportunities are identified as having development potential, a basic pro forma analysis will be undertaken to assist in the business case analysis. All opportunities will be brought forward for Council's consideration on a business case basis. Capital cost for the delivery of parking lots have not been incorporated into the capital funding program for Viva Phase 2 and 3.

Funding for the delivery of the park and ride strategy has been incorporated into the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation's (YRRTC) contingency work programme.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

As opportunities are identified, implementation may require municipal involvement for development approvals and the development of complementary parking policies to support the commuter parking strategy. Any risks and time constraints associated with achieving the parking strategy or required approvals will be factored into the business case analyses for Council's consideration.

7. CONCLUSION

A comprehensive park and ride strategy and implementation plan will be required to support the growth and health of the rapid transit network. Council is being requested to endorse the work programme to bring a full commuter park and ride strategy and implementation plan forward for Council's consideration in 2008.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.