

3

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL CHOICES STUDY UPDATE TOWN OF MARKHAM

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends:

- 1. Receipt of the presentation by Steve Collins, Manager, Engineering, Roads Branch, Transportation Services Department; and**
- 2. Adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated April 24, 2009, from the Commissioner of Transportation Services.**

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

2. PURPOSE

This report is to update Regional Council on the status of the Sustainable Travel Choices (STC) study, formerly referred to as Transit Supportive Roads Initiative, currently underway in the Town of Markham.

3. BACKGROUND

A key component of the overall transportation strategy for York Region is the development of a transit priority network in the urban municipalities. The transit priority network will provide an advantage to transit and high occupancy vehicles (HOV) over single occupancy vehicles. To date, the planning for this transit priority network has focused on changing conventional road widenings to add Transit/HOV lanes.

Included in the redevelopment of the arterial road corridors are cycling lanes, sidewalks, and streetscape features. These facilities would provide further choices and amenities to travellers within York Region when considering alternatives to the single occupancy vehicle.

Class Environmental Assessments were underway in Markham

York Region was undertaking a number of Municipal Class Environmental Assessments (EA) for improvements to certain roads in the Town of Markham as part of a larger transportation strategy to increase transit use, manage travel demand and promote alternative modes of travel. These projects include:

- Bayview Avenue, from John Street to Major Mackenzie Drive
- 16th Avenue, from Yonge Street to York/Durham Line
- Kennedy Road, from Steeles Avenue to 16th Avenue
- McCowan Road, from Steeles Avenue to 16th Avenue
- Leslie Street, from Steeles Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive

A location plan showing the above road sections is appended as *Attachment 1*.

Resident concerns and Town of Markham motions

As part of the public consultation on the Class EA's, residents and Markham Council have questioned the need for these projects and raised concerns for how widening the roadways for Transit/HOV will fit into the overall transportation strategy for the area.

Some of the concerns/comments of Markham residents include:

- Why do our communities need to grow?
- Why not convert an existing general purpose lane to Transit/HOV?
- Transit/HOV lanes should operate 24 hours/day 7 days/week
- Widen other roads
- We will not use Transit
- We do not want 6-lane freeways
- Road widening will diminish air quality
- Road widening will increase traffic noise
- Raised islands and median planters will create access restrictions
- Wider roads will make it difficult for pedestrians to cross safely at intersections

In response to these concerns, Markham Council, at their meeting on January 22, 2008, passed two motions (see *Attachments 2 and 3*), asking York Region to:

- Look at alternatives to road widening for Transit/HOV
- Include Yonge Street Subway, Highway 407 Transit way, etc. in transportation modelling
- Improve consultation efforts with residents, businesses and Markham Council

Class EA's were paused and a Town-wide consultation was initiated

To initiate the enhanced public consultation for the Sustainable Travel Choices study, York Region held the first of four community meetings in the Markham community on March 19, 2008.

This community meeting was considered very successful with over 100 residents attending. Generally, positive feedback was received regarding the Region's plan to enhance consultation and assess broader alternatives for transportation improvements prior to proceeding with the Class EA's.

As part of Community Meeting 1, York Region committed to convening an advisory committee that will meet on a regular basis throughout the Sustainable Travel Choices study as part of the work to respond to resident concerns and Markham Council motions. In addition, significant work in transportation modelling and analysis was committed to in order to assess alternatives to road widening for Transit/HOV.

Regional Council authorized staff to retain professional facilitation and transportation modelling and technical analysis services

Regional Council, at their meeting on June 19, 2008, authorized staff to retain professional facilitation and expert transportation modelling and technical analysis services.

The facilitation firm of Ogilvie Ogilvie Company (OOC) was retained to provide the professional facilitation services. The scope of this work includes:

- Establish an advisory committee made up of residents, businesses, government staff, regulators and others from across the Town of Markham
- Coordinate and facilitate advisory committee meetings, neighbourhood workshops, formal Public Consultation Centres and other outreach initiatives
- Develop and maintain a website, project documentation and compendium of the consultation record

The engineering firm of iTrans Consulting Inc. was retained to provide the expert transportation modelling and technical analysis services. The scope of this work includes:

- Develop and assess a broad range of alternatives on a corridor and a network basis
- Undertake detailed modelling of alternative solutions on a network basis
- Simulation of shortlisted alternatives to assess potential traffic patterns, traveller delay, community infiltration, etc.

Coordination with Transportation Master Plan Update and Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan

During the fall of 2008, significant planning milestones were reached in both the Region's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Update and the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

In November 2008, the Transportation Master Plan update draft recommendations were received by Regional Council and the study team began to present the same to local municipalities and key stakeholders. Regional staff and the Sustainable Travel Choices study team worked to integrate the Master Plan findings within the study team's modified scope of work.

Further, Metrolinx also released the Regional Transportation Plan at about the same time. This transportation plan will form the backbone of the transit and transportation system across the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton region. To have a fully integrated transportation system, it is imperative that any analysis and recommendations of the Sustainable Travel Choices study also align with the Regional Transportation Plan.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The Sustainable Travel Choices study workplan is broken down into eight phases

These phases of work are:

- Phase 1 – Establish study principles and guidelines
- Phase 2 – Baseline forecasts and analysis
- Phase 3 – Identify reasonable technical alternatives
- Phase 4 – Develop network alternatives
- Phase 5 – Screening of network alternatives
- Phase 6 – Detailed assessment of shortlisted alternatives
- Phase 7 – Identification of the preferred transportation network
- Phase 8 – Report and documenting the results

The consultation program is a key component of the Sustainable Travel Choices study

In January 2009, the Sustainable Travel Choices study team continued in earnest the planning and development of the detailed consultation plan. The consultation is founded on twelve constructive engagement features. These include:

- Stakeholder mapping to create a baseline “map” of stakeholder issues and requirements
- Stakeholder sensitivity analysis, including two rounds of focus groups
- Communications including citizen guides and critical points in the study
- Multi-stakeholder advisory group – Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices (FASTC)
- Newsletters to keep the general public informed
- Public information forums at strategic points in the process
- Neighbourhood sessions
- Facilitated/mediated process with an independent facilitator (Ogilvie Ogilvie Company)
- Stakeholder engagement website
- Webcasting
- Compendium of comments and responses
- Regular updates to Regional Council and Town of Markham Council

A Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices has been established to advise the Study Team

A key component of the consultation program is the establishment of a multi-stakeholder advisory group called the “Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices (FASTC)”. Members of the Forum will be comprised of a cross-section of the Markham community and include:

- Residents and businesses
- Regional and Town staff
- York Region Rapid Transit Corporation and YRT
- Ministry of Transportation, Metrolinx and GO Transit
- Natural environment and built heritage representative
- Chamber of Commerce and development industry representatives
- Social environment representatives including the Mayor’s youth task force and community services staff

In addition to the full members of the Forum, ratepayer groups, and others will be invited as corresponding members. In this capacity, they will receive all documentation that is developed by and issued to Forum members. This will allow them to monitor the project and provide their input at appropriate times in the study.

In March 2009, letters of invitation were sent out to the proposed Forum members and the first meeting was scheduled for April 1, 2009.

The first Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices meeting was postponed to allow for additional consultation with Town of Markham Council and staff

To better accommodate participant's schedules, a decision was made to postpone the first Forum meeting pending further consultation with Town of Markham Council. In response, the Sustainable Travel Choices study team delivered a presentation to the Town of Markham's Development Services Committee on April 14, 2009, which was well received.

The discussion at that meeting resulted in suggested modifications and refinements to the consultation program. The study team was asked by Markham's Development Services members to consider the following:

- That Regional Councillor Gordon Landon and Regional Councillor Jim Jones be invited to become Forum members.
- That additional resident members (supplementing the previously identified five residents from across Markham) be invited to become Forum members.
- That Ward/Local Councillors have an opportunity to participate in the study through the neighbourhood session meetings.

With these refinements under consideration, the Sustainable Travel Choices study team is working to revise the workplan and schedule. It is intended for the first meeting of the Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices to be rescheduled for early June 2009.

Anticipated schedule for the Sustainable Travel Choices study

The overall project schedule has been reassessed and adjusted by the study team. It is expected the study will take approximately twelve to fourteen months to complete following the first Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices meeting. During this period, it is anticipated there will be three key milestones at which the study team will report to Regional Council, Town of Markham Council and host public forums. The dates for these milestones will be refined during the study; however, it is expected they will be held in the fourth quarter of 2009, late spring 2010 and summer 2010.

At the conclusion of the Sustainable Travel Choices study, the impact of the recommendations on the original Class EA's in the Town of Markham will be assessed and the resulting proposed modifications to the project workplans will be reported to Regional Council.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Regional Council approved the value of the assignment with Ogilvie Ogilvie Company for professional facilitation services with a total upset limit of approximately \$350,000. The value of the assignment with iTrans for expert transportation modelling and analysis services has a total upset limit of approximately \$450,000.

Funding for this work is available within the approved 2009 Roads Capital Budget.

The total capital budget estimate for all the road widening projects is approximately \$210M to be delivered over a period of more than ten years.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Sustainable Travel Choices study in Markham will have a positive impact on the local municipality. The intent of this initiative is to be more collaborative with residents, businesses and other stakeholders and to demonstrate a firm commitment to respond to the questions and concerns of the local municipality.

In addition, staff from both the City of Vaughan and Town of Richmond Hill have been invited to become members of Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices. This will ensure that staff from these municipalities will be fully engaged in the Sustainable Travel Choices study in the Town of Markham.

7. CONCLUSION

Within the Town of Markham, the Region has five Class EA's underway for transportation improvements along the arterial road corridors of Bayview Avenue, 16th Avenue, Kennedy Road, McCowan Road and Leslie Street.

As part of the Class EA process on each of these projects, significant concerns were voiced by residents and Markham Council. In response to these questions/concerns, staff initiated a series of community meetings to fully engage the residents and demonstrate a commitment to addressing their concerns. This collaboration has resulted in a commitment to undertake additional transportation modelling and technical analysis and establish a Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

In early 2009, the Sustainable Travel Choices study was started and invitations were sent to a broad range of stakeholders to participate on the Forum to Advise on Sustainable Travel Choices. To respond to requests for additional information from the Town of Markham and further the consultation efforts, the first Forum meeting was postponed. This consultation has generated refinements to the workplan and Forum membership.

It is expected the study will take twelve to fourteen months to complete following the first Forum meeting. On this basis, it is expected the study will conclude in late 2010 at which time the findings will be presented to Regional Council for consideration.

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

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

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

Sustainable Travel Choices Study Update

Presentation to
Transportation and Works Committee
(Reference Agenda Item D3)

Stephen Collins
May 6, 2009

Presentation Outline

- ❑ Background
- ❑ Sustainable Travel Choices Study
- ❑ Consultation Program
- ❑ Schedule

Background

Environmental Assessments were underway for Transit Supportive Roads in Markham:

McCowan Road – Steeles Avenue to 16th Avenue

Kennedy Road – Steeles Avenue to 16th Avenue

Leslie Street – Steeles Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive

Bayview Avenue – John Street to Major Mackenzie Drive

16th Avenue – Yonge Street to York/Durham Line



Background

Responding to resident concerns Markham Council resolutions passed unanimously January 22, 2008, asking York Region to:

- ❑ Look at alternatives to road widening for Transit/HOV
- ❑ Assess alternatives in a broader context
- ❑ Include Yonge Street Subway, Hwy 407 Transit way, etc. in transportation modelling
- ❑ Improve consultation efforts with residents, businesses and Markham Council

York Region Council received motions and referred them to staff

Background

- ❑ Staff reported to York Region T&W Committee on June 11, 2008
- ❑ Scope of work to included:

Facilitation Services

- Establish advisory committee made up of residents, businesses, governments, regulators, etc. from across Markham
- Coordinate and facilitate advisory committed meetings, neighbourhood workshops and formal PCC's
- Develop and maintain website, project documentation and consultation record

Transportation Planning/Modelling Services

- Assess a broad range of alternatives
- Detailed modelling of alternative solutions on a network basis
- Simulation of potential traffic patterns to assess delay, infiltration, etc.

The Study

Phase 1 - Establish study principles and givens

Phase 2 – Baseline forecasts and analysis

Phase 3 – Identify reasonable technical alternatives

Phase 4 – Develop network alternatives

Phase 5 – Screening of network alternatives

Phase 6 – Detailed assessment of shortlisted alternatives

Phase 7 – Identification of the preferred transportation network

Phase 8 – Report and documenting the results

Consultation Program

The Constructive Engagement Features

We ENGAGE People in Meaningful Consultations



NO-FAULT PROCESS

In many ways, the challenge of the potential controversy will be to acknowledge the diverse opinions, recommend and justify a particular course of action, and ensure that no one can object to the process. They may object to the conclusion (and some inevitably will be opposed regardless of proposed compromises and mitigations), but the process has to be such that any objective reviewer would see that the sponsor/proponent took all the reasonable steps possible to be open, inclusive, fair, informed and transparent.

[MORE]

Leave a comment

Built around 12 tools and techniques

- ▶ Stakeholder Mapping -create a baseline map
- ▶ Stakeholder Sensitivity Analysis - conduct 2 rounds of Focus Groups
- ▶ Citizen Guides/Coles Notes at critical points in the process
- ▶ Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group-FASTC
- ▶ Periodic Newsletters to keep the general public informed between Public Information Forums.

Consultation Program

12 tools and techniques continued...

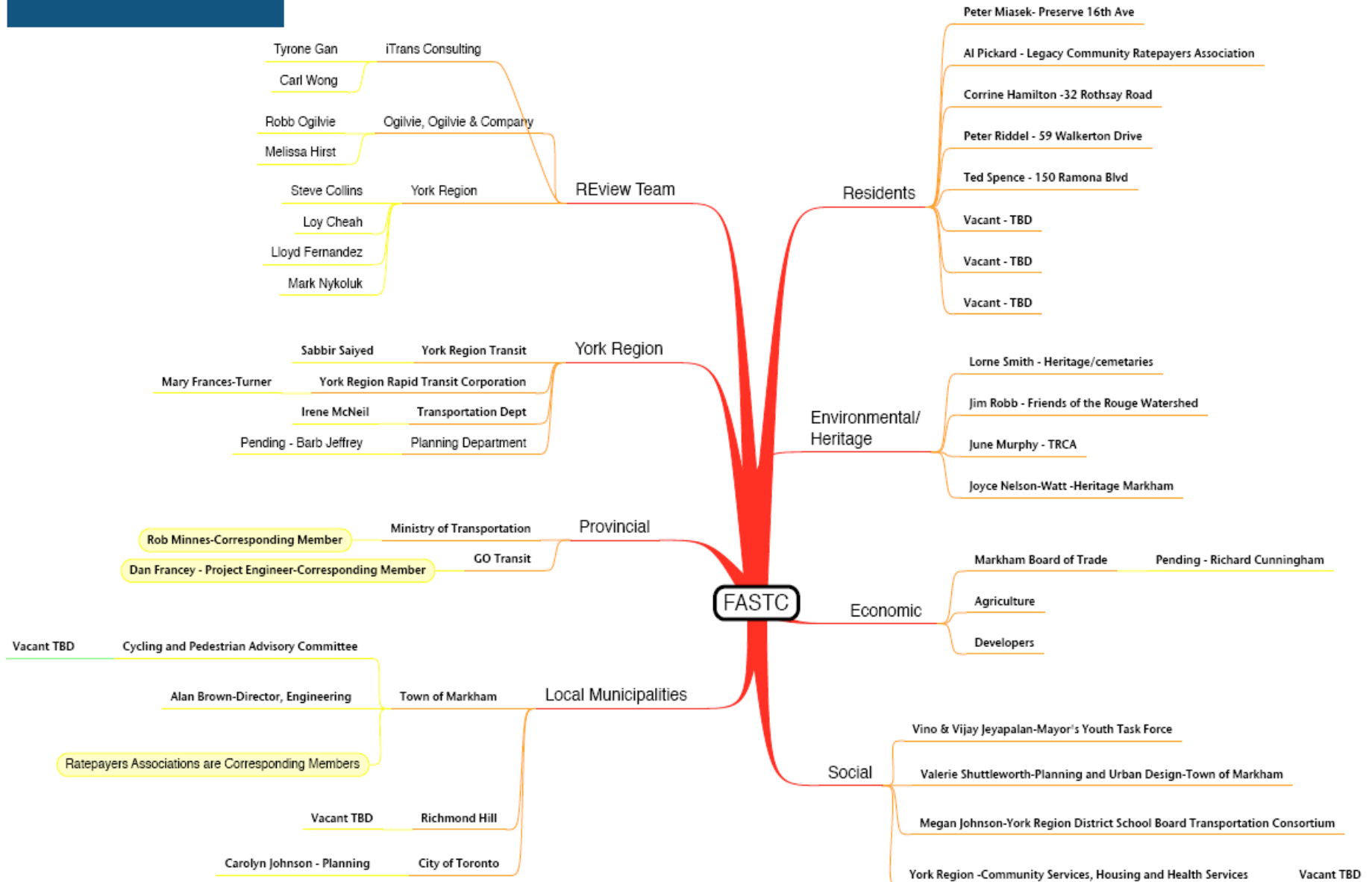
Managing the “Marketplace of Ideas”

ANY

A fundamental democratic principle is the belief that all people are equal in the search for truth. Public interest in a democracy is what citizens agree it is and the expression of all points of view in the marketplace of ideas is vital to the process. While managing this marketplace is no easy task, it is the groundwork of effective public policy dialogue.

- ▶ **Public Information Forums at strategic points in the process**
- ▶ **Neighbourhood Sessions to get down to the grassroots**
- ▶ **Facilitated/mediated process - i.e. The Independent Public Facilitator Function**
- ▶ **Stakeholder Engagement Website**
- ▶ **Webcasting**
- ▶ **Compendium of Comments and Responses**
- ▶ **Regular Briefings**

FASTC Members



Responding to Community Needs

- ❑ Each corridor will be modelled and alternatives assessed on the unique needs, existing context and future vision for the corridor
- ❑ The FASTC is intended to represent a full cross-section of the community
- ❑ Local municipalities are represented by key staff
- ❑ Residents members to date have been selected based on their active participation in Class EA's and expressed interest
- ❑ Neighbourhood sessions can be increased or decreased to meet the needs of the community

Consultation Program Refinements

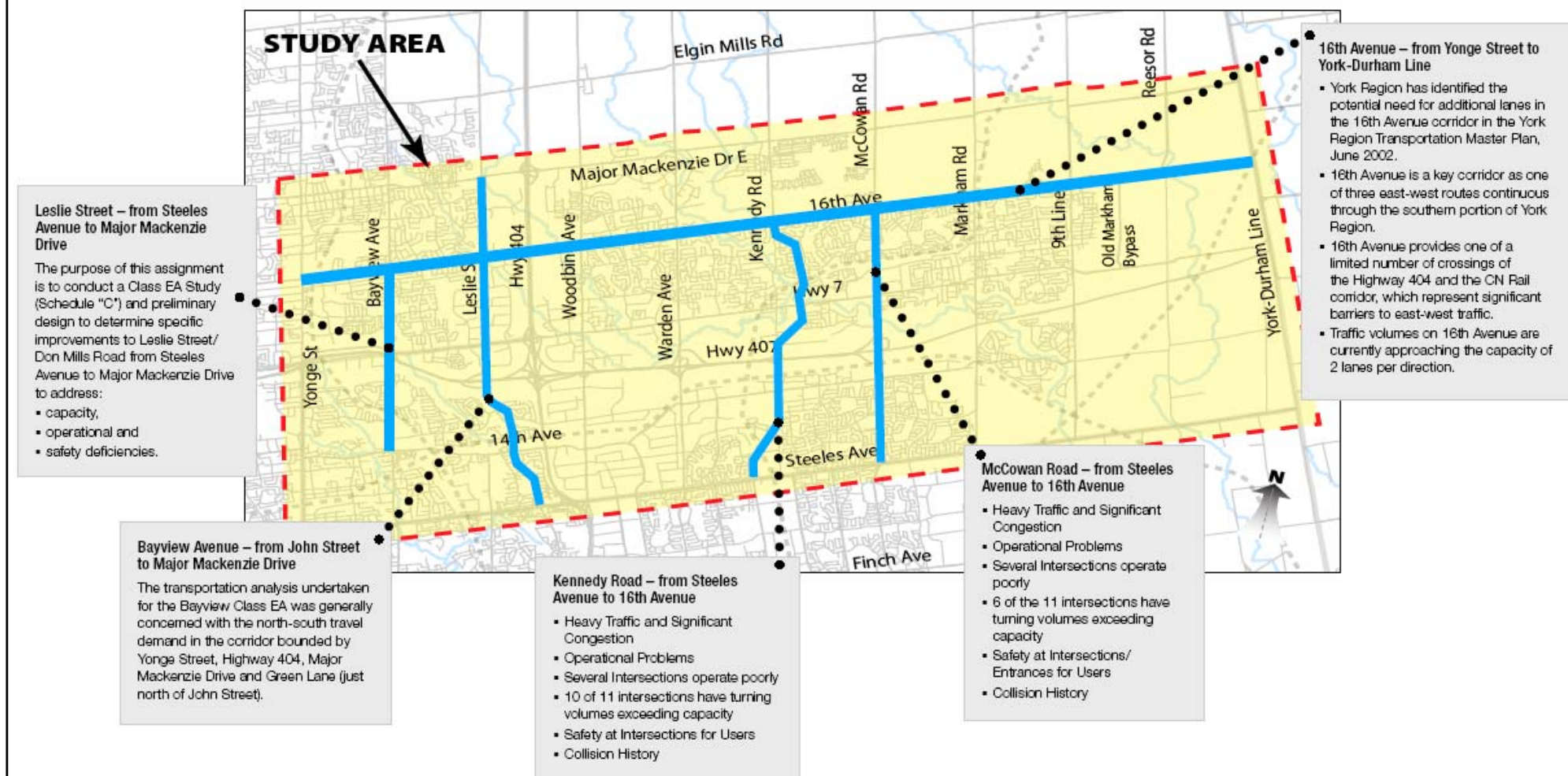
- ❑ The STC study team delivered a presentation to Markham's Development Services Committee on April 14
- ❑ The study team was asked to consider the following:
 - ❑ Regional Councillors Gordon Landon and Jim Jones be Forum members
 - ❑ Markham appoint additional resident members to the Forum
 - ❑ Ward/Local Councillors actively participate in a prominent way at neighbourhood meetings

Schedule

Phase 0 Startup	Phase 1 Study Principles	Phase 2 Baseline Forecasts & Analysis	Phase 3 Reasonable Technical Alternatives	Phase 4 Network Alternatives	Phase 5 Screening of Network Alternatives	Phase 6 Assessment of Network Alternatives	Phase 7 Identification of Preferred Network	Phase 8 Report
May/June 2009		July 2009	Aug/Sept 2009	Oct/Nov 2009	Dec/Jan 2010	Feb/Apr 2010	May/July 2010	Aug 2010
Study initiation and organization	Establish trust and credibility, and "openness"	Understand transportation needs and challenges	Identify reasonable technical alternatives	Develop initial long list of reasonable network alts	Screen the initial long list of network alternatives	Review evaluation of short-listed network alternatives	Confirm evaluation of short-listed network	Review Draft Report
	Establish charter with stakeholders including work	Develop revised "transportation vision"	Confirm process to develop reasonable network alts	Confirm criteria for screening of network alternatives	Based on the screening, identify short list of network alts	Report to Regional Council and Markham Council	Based on the evaluation, identify preferred network alt	Report to Regional Council and Markham Council
	Agree on Study "Givens" and principles			Report to Regional Council and Markham Council	Confirm criteria for detailed assessment of network alts	Public Forum	Confirm the preferred network alternative	Public Forum
	Develop draft "transportation vision"			Public Forum			Identify staging strategy for preferred network alternative	

Summary

- ❑ The STC Study will take approximately 12 to 14 months
- ❑ Significant technical modelling and analyses will be undertaken
- ❑ Innovative approaches to public consultation and engagement will be utilized
- ❑ STC study will align with ongoing TMP Update and Metrolinx RTP
- ❑ Corridor Class EA's will be assessed after the STC study is complete and will proceed as appropriate
- ❑ It is recommended this report be received for information



LOCATION PLAN

Sustainable Travel Choices
Limits of Class Environmental Assessments
Town of Markham



ROADS BRANCH - CAPITAL DELIVERY



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM

EXCERPT CONTAINING ITEM #0007 OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEE (January 22, 08)

(1) REGION OF YORK ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - BAYVIEW AVENUE (5.7)

Moved by Regional Councillor T. Wong

Seconded by Councillor E. Shapero

Whereas the Town of Markham recognizes that climate change is a serious matter, and the municipality must reduce carbon emissions to ensure our community is resilient in the face of these challenges;

And whereas the three Public Information Meetings held by the Regional Municipality of York regarding the widening of Bayview Avenue, met with considerable resident concerns related to the limited scope of the environmental assessment and lack of options examined;

And whereas in 2007, the Town of Markham endorsed the Markham Erosion Restoration Implementation Plan, with six priority erosion sites located adjacent to Bayview Avenue within East Don Tributary;

Therefore be it resolved that the Town of Markham request York Region to examine viable and distinct alternatives to the widening of Bayview Avenue in a broader environmental assessment process;

And that the environmental assessment be expanded to include alternatives such as more effective use of existing lanes, light rail and improved higher order transit service;

And that York Region be requested as part of the process to recalibrate the modeling done to date incorporating new data based on the extension of the Yonge Street Subway north into York Region.

CARRIED

(Recorded vote unanimous) (13:0)



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MARKHAM

EXCERPT CONTAINING ITEM #0007 OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEE (January 22, 08)

(2) REGION OF YORK ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT - 16TH AVENUE, KENNEDY ROAD, MCCOWAN ROAD, YONGE STREET AND LESLIE STREET (5.7)

Moved by Councillor J. Virgilio

Seconded by Councillor C. Moretti

Whereas the Town of Markham recognizes that climate change is a serious matter, and the municipality must reduce carbon emissions to ensure our community is resilient in the face of these challenges;

And whereas in 2007, the Town of Markham endorsed the Markham Erosion Restoration Implementation Plan;

Therefore be it resolved that the Town of Markham request York Region to examine viable and distinct alternatives to the widening of 16th Avenue, Kennedy Road, McCowan Road, Yonge Street and Leslie Street in a broader environmental assessment process;

And that the environmental assessment be expanded to include alternatives such as more effective use of existing lanes, light rail and improved higher order transit service;

And that York Region be requested as part of the process to recalibrate the modeling done to date incorporating new data based on the extension of the Yonge Street Subway north into York Region.

CARRIED

(Recorded vote unanimous) (13:0)