1
GO TRANSIT TEN-YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAM

(Regional Council at its meeting on June 24, 2004 amended the foregoing Clause to include the following as an addendum to section 4.2 of the report relating to Proposed GO Capital Projects in York Region:

13. The Keswick parking lot.)

The Transportation and Works Committee recommends that:

1. The presentation by Paul May, Director, Infrastructure Planning be received; and

2. The recommendations contained in the following report, June 4, 2004, from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be adopted, subject to replacing Recommendations 1 and 4 with the following:

> **"1. York Region concur with the GO Transit ten-year capital plan in principle to allow the update of the Development Charges Bylaw to proceed, with the provision that services beyond the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), the proposed GO Bus rapid transit system and the GTA Farecard remain outside the scope of the capital program supported by York Region."**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. York Region concur with the GO Transit ten-year capital plan in principle to allow the update of the Development Charges Bylaw to proceed.

2. GO Transit be requested to include the following additional capital works as an addendum to their ten-year capital program subject to the endorsement of the Region with respect to the capital cost for each project:
   - Track work to allow the extension of the Richmond Hill rail line in order to establish a new station and parking lot at Bloomington Road.
   - The establishment of a new Concord station on the Bradford line.
   - Funding towards the pedestrian connection between the Langstaff rail and bus stations.
   - Track work and signal improvements on the Bradford, Richmond Hill and Stouffville lines to ensure early implementation of two-way all-day rail service between Toronto and York Region.

3. GO Transit be requested to provide further details on the capital program to identify the rail and bus service improvements that will be provided in York Region in the ten-year program.

4. Services beyond the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), the proposed GO Bus rapid transit system and the GTA Farecard remain outside the scope of the capital program supported by York Region.

5. Staff meet with GO Transit staff during the summer to clarify the financial implications of the 10 year program on the Region and report further to Council in the fall regarding changes to the development charges bylaw.

6. The Province be requested to amend the current development charge legislation to permit the use of future or enhanced service levels in the calculation of costs eligible for recovery from development charges for transit services.

7. A copy of this report be sent by the Regional Clerk to GO Transit, the Clerks of each of the local municipalities, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Transportation, the Toronto Transit Commission and the Clerks of City of Toronto, City of Hamilton, the Regions of Halton, Peel, Durham and the County of Simcoe.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of issues staff has identified regarding GO Transit's proposed ten-year capital plan that impact the Region. This report will also outline those items of the GO Transit network which staff feel should be considered for inclusion in their current capital program.

3. BACKGROUND

The Regions of York, Durham, Halton and Peel, the City of Hamilton and the City of Toronto have been responsible for funding a component of GO Transit services since January 1998. In 2001, the Regions of York, Durham, Halton and Peel enacted development charge by-laws for GO Transit capital in order to recover a portion of costs associated with the $1 billion ten-year growth-related plan. In January 2002, the Province assumed 100% responsibility for GO Transit operating costs. The above noted municipalities were made responsible for funding one third of the growth capital program. Based on a negotiated cost sharing formula, York Region's share of the growth-related capital costs for the ten-year period totalled approximately $47.6 million with $19.6 million being eligible for recovery from development charges, and the balance being funded from tax levy.

On April 16, 2004, the GO Transit Board approved its 2004 Ten-Year Capital Plan, with a total cost of $2.2 billion. A summary presentation on GO's current capital program was made to Regional Council on April 22, 2004 by Mr. Gary McNeil, Managing Director of GO Transit. As GO Transit development charge by-laws are to expire by December 2004, staff from the GO Transit funding regions have commenced an update to the development charge background study in order to enact revised by-laws prior to December 2004. The 2004 Ten-Year Capital Plan will form the basis for the calculation of the development charge.

Recent legislation from the Province (Bill 2) passed in December 2003 allows the City of Toronto, City of Hamilton and Regions to enter into agreements with GO for further system enhancements and to authorize the municipalities to collect D/Cs for those growth related projects to which each municipality has agreed to participate. Although a package of interrelated capital improvements that are to be built throughout the Greater Toronto Area has been proposed by GO, under Bill 2 individual municipalities may opt out of particular GO initiatives. Consequently, GO has organized its program into two categories – System wide common projects, and Corridor projects (called CSIF or Corridor Specific Infrastructure Funding). A summary of the approved ten-year program is provided in *Attachment 1*. It is noted in this table that costs for the proposed GTA wide Farecard and the Bay East Teamway (a new marshalling yard in the Union Station area) are to be funded entirely by senior governments. In addition, service improvements beyond the GTA (ie. Extension to Barrie) will not be included in the regional assessments. It should be noted that there is at present no commitment by York or the other municipalities of the GTA to fund the GO Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) proposal – a dedicated transitway which extends from Oakville to eastern Toronto generally in the Highway 407 corridor.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Background Estimates of Capital Needs

The participating municipalities and the Province have commissioned C.N. Watson and Associates in conjunction with its staff and other consultants to develop ridership estimates and prepare a background report to assess the benefit of the proposed capital program to each Region, Toronto and Hamilton in order to update the Regional Development Charge calculation. A first draft of the projections (dated April 15, 2004) has been prepared by the consultant team and circulated to the municipalities for comments.

The study has yet to be finalized, but the statistics it will be based on, fairly represents anticipated development growth in York Region to the end of 2014. This study will further analyse the growth in new GO system ridership based upon their development projections. The estimation of future ridership to and from each of the new and improved service corridors will also be based on extensive surveys carried out by GO at each of their rail stations and on the 2001 Transportation Tomorrow Survey. This analysis will be carried out on the basis of station catchment areas which roughly correspond to the Toronto, Hamilton and regional boundaries and will depend as well on the nature of new service to and from each station that is expected by 2014. Staff will continue to work with GO Transit to ensure that ridership and service priorities are fairly represented.

4.2 Proposed GO Capital Projects in York Region

The following list and location map (see *Attachment 2)* identifies the proposed GO Transit ten-year capital projects within York Region which benefit York Region:

1. Bradford rail line – rail-rail grade separation at Snider. This is the crossing of the east/west CN freight line north of Steeles Avenue which restricts operation of additional north/south rail service.
2. Bradford rail line – track improvements for double tracking at various locations.
3. Bradford rail line – expanded layover facility north of York Region.
4. Bradford rail line – new East Gwillimbury station on Green Lane.
5. Stouffville rail line – rail-rail grade separation at Hagerman. Similar to the Bradford line, this rail crossing north of Steeles in the Kennedy Road area will allow additional north/south rail service without interfering with east/west freight.
6. Stouffville rail line – track improvements for double tracking at various locations.
7. Stouffville rail line – expanded layover facility.
8. Stouffville rail line – new north Stouffville station.
9. Stouffville station parking lot expansion.
10. Mount Joy station parking lot expansion north of the Markham village area on the Stouffville line.
11. Richmond Hill rail line – layover facility – a new layover facility has been proposed in the Bloomington Road area to store a train overnight thus reducing train crossings of the CNR freight line at Steeles and allowing the first train into service to improve on time performance.
12. Richmond Hill station parking lot expansion.

- Additional rail equipment to be allocated throughout the GTA.
- Additional bus equipment to be allocated throughout the GTA.
- Union station – platform improvements for additional train service and additional passengers that will assist all rail lines.
- A Bus Rapid Transit Spine Line extending from Oakville to Pickering on a circumferential alignment around Toronto.
- A GTA Farecard – a “smart card” program for stored value transit cards.

4.3 Recommendations for York Region Services

The implementation of rail/rail grade separations for the existing two GO owned rail lines servicing York Region brings with it an expectation of increased levels of service on all three rail lines in York Region. The two GO Transit owned lines proposed for rail/rail grade separations will allow reduced crossings of the east/west (York subdivision) freight line. Under the current agreement with GO additional train crossings could then be added to the remaining Richmond Hill service. However, the GO Transit ten-year capital program does not specifically identify the number of additional train runs that will be provided in these corridors. This is an important piece of information when justifying the GO Transit development charges within York Region. Similarly, proposed new GO bus services in York Region should be specifically identified.

The York Region Transportation Master Plan (TMP) identified the importance of GO Transit improvements to better serve inter-regional travel from York Region. The Region is a major contributor and beneficiary of the services provided by GO, and will continue to work with GO to further improve the integration of both sets of services. There are however some infrastructure improvements which have been identified in the York Region TMP that have not yet been included in the GO capital program. Among the proposed future transit project identified, but not currently included in the GO capital program are:

13. All three rail lines – additional train service is required on all three rail lines to serve additional demand within the peak periods and to increase to all-day service.
14. Bradford rail line – a new station at Concord is required to allow for integration with the Highway 7 Transitway and the future GO Highway 407 Bus Rapid Transit Spine Line.
15. Richmond Hill rail line – an extension to Bloomington along with a new station and parking lot is required to divert some traffic from Highway 404 and relieve congestion demand at the existing station in Richmond Hill which, as a terminal station on the line, attracts cars from a wide catchment area.
16. Richmond Hill rail line – a new pedestrian connection to be cost shared with York Region is required between the Langstaff rail and bus stations.

There are included in the present program a number of additional items proposed by GO that are not supported by the Regions

- Bus Rapid Transit – The proposed GO BRT Spine Line should remain outside of the capital program supported by York Region.
- GTA Farecard – York Region, along with all the other transit properties, will also be participating in the GTA Farecard program and as such each system should have to absorb its own costs for implementation. Therefore, the GO Transit costs should remain outside of the capital program supported by York Region.
- Extensions beyond the GTA – It must be ensured that all costs associated with extending GO services beyond the GTA and Hamilton are not within the portion of the capital program allocated to York Region.

4.4 Change to DC By-law

Development charges bylaws are designed to ensure that an existing base level of service is maintained and not eroded by new development pressures. The problem of applying this definition to transit in the “905 area” is that the existing base transit structure is inadequate to build to the level necessary to accomplish the service necessary for the mature communities of the future. This will require an accelerated level of capital investment, not just one that maintains the status quo. It is recommended that the Province be requested to amend the development charge legislation to allow for the recovery of costs required to provide an enhanced level of transit service.

4.5 Vision 2026

The role of the GO rail and their bus system is viewed as a key element in the Greater Toronto Area transit network both within the Region and connecting to neighbouring regions. It will be critical to the development of our Regional Centres and the effectiveness of York Region Transit to ensure that both GO and both our local bus and Regional rapid transit systems are developed in a complimentary and integrated fashion. The major items detailed in Section 4.3 above are all part of York Region’s Transportation Master Plan.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the 2001 Ten-Year Capital Plan totalling $1 billion, the current development charge by-law imposes a $267 charge for each new single family dwelling unit constructed. This charge only recovers $19.6 million of the Region’s $47.6 million share of the capital costs. The 2004 Capital Plan (including Bus Rapid Transit, GTA Farecard and extensions beyond the GTA) totals $2.2 billion. A revised formula to apportion these costs to the various municipalities and the component of these costs eligible for recovery from development charges have not been determined at this time, but will be reviewed and reported on in the fall. The additional items requested to be added as an addendum to their plan are proposed subject to the endorsement of the Region with respect to the cost for each item.

The plan, with minor additions, reflects the Region’s vision for enhanced GO Transit rail and bus services. It is important to note that any changes to the capital plan must be incorporated into the DC By-law in order to be eligible to recover the costs through development charges. It is anticipated that a public meeting will be held in October 2004 in support of a revised GO Transit development charge by-law outlining the cost implications of the capital plan, with enactment of the by-law in November 2004.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

GO Transit provides an important transportation service in York Region, which has a significant land use support impact on all local municipalities. Although it no longer directly affects local municipal operations, a number of local transit services are presently tied into GO services, and the enhancement of GO service frequencies will allow effective integration of even more local services.

7. CONCLUSION

The capital program analysis presented to date to the regional municipalities in the GO Transit service area is generally satisfactory from a York Region standpoint. GO Transit should however be asked to refine their analysis in order to include several modifications to the ten-year capital program that will support the York Region Transportation Master Plan. Some additional detailed information is still required in order to assess the benefits and future costs specific to York Region. York Region staff will continue to work with GO staff to identify the additional detailed information and the financial impact of proposed changes to their D/C Bylaw.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing are included with this report and are also on file in the Regional Clerk's Office.)