

4

DON MILLS ROAD AND LESLIE STREET LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT UPDATE BUDGET REALLOCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

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

- 1. Receipt of the presentation by Dale Albers, Chief Communications Officer, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation; and**
- 2. Adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report dated April 30, 2009, from the Vice President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services and the Commissioner of Transportation Services.**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorse the outline presented in this report for a robust public and stakeholder engagement programme for this study.
2. Council approve the reallocation of \$665,000 from the preliminary engineering budget for the Operations, Maintenance and Storage Facility to the Leslie LRT Environmental Project Report budget from within the 2009 Rapid Transit Capital Budget, with \$585,000 and \$80,000 being specifically identified for the Environmental Project Report and Communications, respectively.
3. Council approve the funding of the \$665,000 budget requirement through the Capital General reserve to undertake this work.
4. The Regional Chair and Regional Clerk be authorized to execute the agreement, subject to the approval of Legal Services as to form and content.
5. The Regional Clerk forward a copy of this report to the Clerks of the Town of Markham, Town of Richmond Hill, City of Toronto and to Metrolinx.

2. PURPOSE

This report updates Committee and Council on the status of the planning for LRT on Don Mills Road and Leslie Street from Steeles Avenue to Highway 7 and provides an outline of the planned public and stakeholder engagement program.

3. BACKGROUND

Staff reported to Transportation and Works Committee on February 4, 2009 regarding procurement of consulting services for the LRT planning and transit project assessment study. An expanded discussion of the background information is provided in that report.

Metrolinx approved the Regional Transportation Plan in November 2008 including the Don Mills LRT

The project is identified in the 15 year plan of the Metrolinx RTP.

SCHEDULE 1: 15-YEAR PLAN FOR THE REGIONAL RAPID TRANSIT AND HIGHWAY NETWORK



The City of Toronto has commenced planning for the Don Mills LRT from the Bloor-Danforth Subway to Steeles Avenue

The planning and approvals for the LRT corridor from Steeles Avenue to Highway 7 will proceed separately, with coordination with Toronto's study.



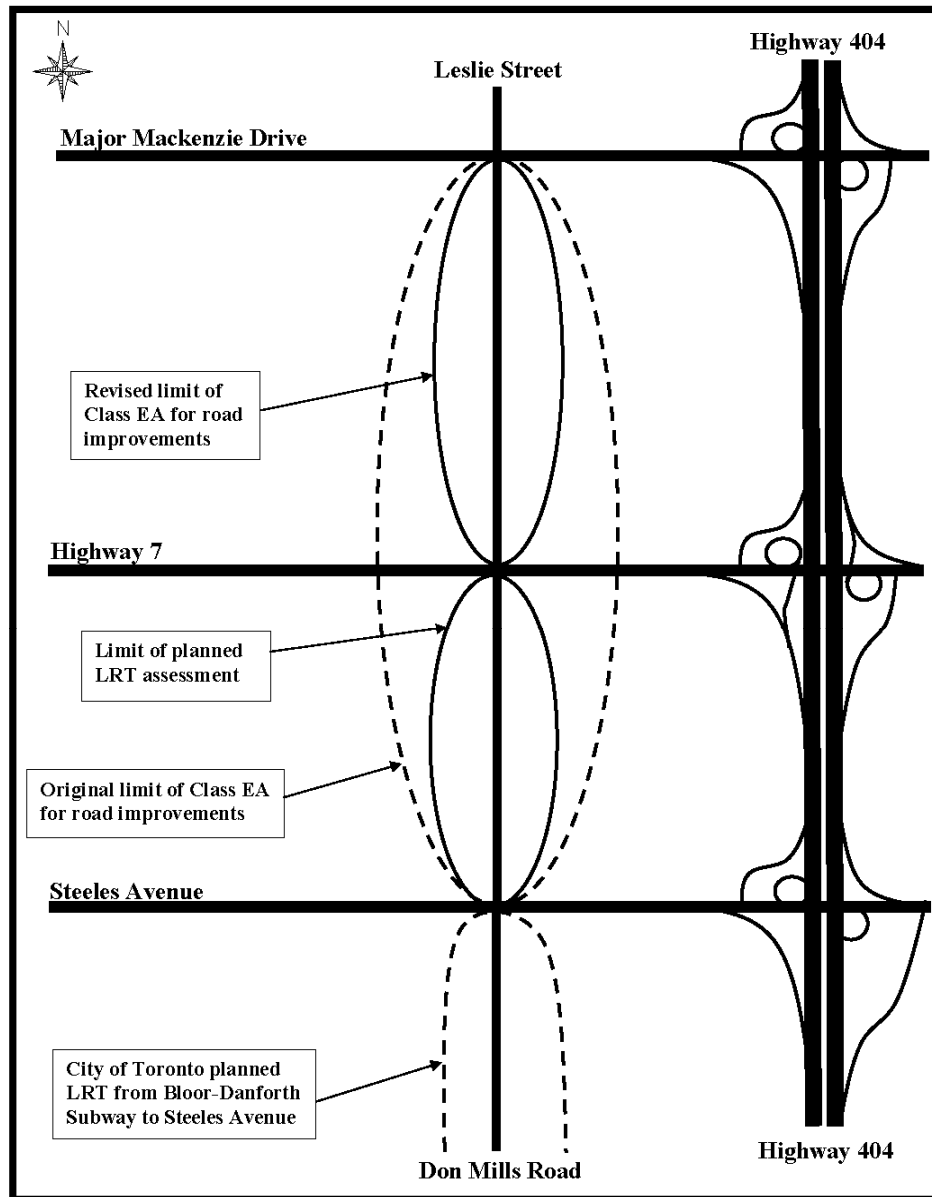
The Don Mills Road and Leslie Street LRT will be planned under the new Transit Project Assessment process. The Transit Project Assessment process south of Highway 7 will be coordinated with the Class EA for Leslie Street north of Highway 7.



The initial Class EA on Leslie now envisions a road component north of Highway 7 and an LRT component south of Highway 7

Staff reported to Transportation and Works Committee on February 4, 2009 recommending that the class EA be completed for the segment of Leslie Street north of Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive and that planning and approvals for LRT south of

Highway 7 be pursued separately through the transit project assessment process. Recommendations from that report were adopted by Council on February 19, 2009 and staff is proceeding with the planning and EA studies.



A considerable amount of work was completed as part of the class EA before the project was put on hold, including topographic field survey, geotechnical studies, natural sciences investigation, archaeological assessment etc. The work already completed will

be utilized to complete the class EA for the segment north of Highway 7 and to complete the LRT transit project assessment south of Highway 7.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Transit project planning and assessment - phasing and milestone schedule

The study will proceed in two phases. The first phase will include the detailed planning and functional design of the transit project prior to triggering the EA process. Phase one will include development of alternatives and selection of the preferred configuration for the LRT project, in consultation with stakeholders and the public, including the following project elements:

- Number and location of stations.
- Highway 7 terminal facility needs and integration with adjacent development.
- Integration with other transit services to facilitate efficient and comfortable transfer between the Don Mills Road/Leslie Street LRT and the Highway 7 Rapidway, YRT local services, MTO's planned Highway 407 Transitway and east-west transit service on Steeles Avenue.
- Cross-sectional elements including landscaping, pedestrian features and bike lanes.
- Traffic lane configuration at intersections.
- Requirements for special track work (such as crossover tracks).
- LRT system requests including electrical substations.
- Requirements for passenger pick-up and drop-off facilities.

Phase 2 of the study will include the Transit Project Assessment. The effects of the preferred transit project on all aspects of the built and natural environment will be assessed and mitigation identified. Once the Transit Project Assessment process has been triggered, the Environmental Project Report must be complete within 120 days, followed by a 30 day public review period and a 35 day decision period for the Minister of the Environment to consider issues of Provincial interest.

The Transit Project Assessment is scheduled to be completed by late spring 2010. Key milestone dates include:

- PCC #1 – June 2009
- PCC #2 – October 2009
- Commencement of the Transit Project Assessment process – October 2009
- PCC #3 – December 2009
- Filing of the Environmental Project Report for public review – February 2010
- Deadline for MOE decision – April/May 2010

Consultation with stakeholders and consensus building will be key to success

As with all EA's, consultation with stakeholders and the public is key to project success. The project team is committed to a comprehensive consultation plan, with each step in the process building on stakeholder and public input and consensus from the previous. The consultation plan will include the following elements:

Round 1 (May and June 2009)

Municipal workshop (May 7, 2009)

Local Council presentation (May 12 or 26, 2009)

Public consultation centre # 1 (June 10, 2009)

The objectives of this round of consultation include the following:

- Introduce the project in the context of the overall planned transit network;
- Describe the process for corridor planning both north and south of Highway 7;
- Seek initial input on corridor constraints / opportunities, potential station locations and overall need for terminal facilities at Highway 7 and Steeles Avenue;
- Seek initial input on LRT cross section design elements;
- Seek input on the consultation plan and opportunities to get involved; and
- Identify next steps.

Round 2 (August to October, 2009)

Municipal and technical agency workshop

Local Council presentation

Public consultation centre # 2

The objectives of this round of consultation include the following:

- Seek input on the detailed development of the transit project including:
 - o Running way design elements.
 - o Evaluation of alternative station locations and recommended stations.
 - o Evaluation of terminal facility alternatives at Highway 7.
 - o Evaluation of facility requirements at Steeles Ave.
 - o Streetscape design elements / enhanced public realm.
 - o Technical issues (crossing of Hwy 407, CN, Hydro and watercourse crossing issues).
 - o Preliminary property requirements.
- Review the remainder of the consultation plan and opportunities to get involved; and
- Identify next steps

Round 3 (November to December 2009)

Municipal and technical agency workshop

Local Council presentation

Public consultation centre # 3

The objectives of this round of consultation include the following:

- Present the details of the preferred transit project;
- Seek input on the detailed assessment of the transit project including:
 - Effects on the natural environment (aquatic and terrestrial, surface / ground water, geotechnical, etc.).
 - Effects on the socio-economic environment (property impacts, development integration opportunities, noise, vibration, air quality, contaminated sites, etc.).
 - Effects on the cultural environment (built heritage, archaeology);
 - Transportation issues (transit ridership forecasts, traffic simulation at intersections).
 - Project costs / implementation strategy: and
- Identify next steps

The consultation plan will be flexible to accommodate the needs of stakeholders and ensure that issues are resolved successfully. This may include additional workshops to address site specific issues such as the facility needs and configuration at the Highway 7 terminal. This may also include additional consultation with directly affected stakeholders to address specific planning and technical issues.

Examples may include meeting with individual landowners to address issues such as project integration with planned development, meeting with utility companies and other agencies to address specific technical issues including meeting with Toronto Region Conservation Authority to discuss issues around watercourse crossings, and meeting with the Ministry of Transportation Ontario and 407ETR to discuss project interface with the planned 407 Transitway and highway interchange operational issues.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The LRT study from Steeles Avenue to Highway 7, was awarded to URS Canada Inc., for \$582,356, through a Council adopted recommendation to Report No. 2, Clause 8, of the Transportation and Works Committee on February 19, 2009. An additional budget for communications and public consultation centre materials in the amount of \$80,000 has been anticipated.

The 2009 Capital budget can accommodate the expenditure through a reallocation of costs from other projects; however, while the project has been identified in the first 15 years of Metrolinx' "Big Move" plan, no funding announcement for this project has been made.

Staff recommend that \$665,000 of the Operations, Maintenance and Storage Facility (OMSF) capital budget for 2009 be reallocated to the Leslie LRT Environmental Project Report to cover both the URS work and other costs associated with communications and public consultation. The reallocation source is the preliminary engineering budget for the OMSF, which has been revised downward from \$6.873 million to \$5.067 million.

It is recommended that the \$665,000 be funded from the Region's general capital reserve and that staff continue to work with Metrolinx to recover such expenditures through a MoveOntario 2020 initiative.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The LRT study will be closely coordinated with local planning and economic development activities in the Don Mills and Leslie Street corridor. Markham and Richmond Hill staff will be involved throughout the study to ensure that the project meets their needs and the needs of their business and residential communities. Presentations will be made to local councils at key milestones in the study, prior to each round of public consultation.

7. CONCLUSION

This report provides a description of the project activities relating to the planning for the Don Mills Road and Leslie Street LRT. As well, the report includes a staff recommendation to reallocate \$665,000 from the Operations, Maintenance and Storage Facility (OMSF) to the Leslie LRT EPR project within the 2009 Capital Budget and funding the expenditures through the General Capital reserve, with the expectation that they will be recovered from Provincial funding. Regular updates will be provided to Committee and Council as the project progresses.

For additional information, please contact Mary-Frances Turner, Vice-President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation at (905) 886-6767 ext. 2226 or Steve Mota, Program Manager – Infrastructure Planning, Planning and Development Services Department at (905) 830-4444 ext. 5056.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.