

To: York Region Rapid Transit Corporation Board of Directors
From: Mary-Frances Turner, President
Subject: Metrolinx – Yonge Subway Benefits Case

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. This report be received for information.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- inform the Board that Metrolinx released the Executive Summary of the Yonge North Subway Benefits Case Analysis (BCA) with a covering letter
- highlight the benefits specifically noted in the Executive Summary; and
- outline next steps.

Background

November 28, 2008, Metrolinx Board approved the Regional Transportation Plan entitled The Big Move

- Included a subway extension from Finch Station to Highway 7 as a Top 15 priority.
- Board required a BCA to be completed for all priority projects.

July 13, 2009, Metrolinx Board received the Yonge North Subway BCA

- Collaborative effort with the City of Toronto, York Region and TTC.
- Presented to the Board by Metrolinx staff as an interim, high-level project appraisal.

August 7, 2009, Metrolinx released the Executive Summary of the BCA on its website with a covering letter (see Appendix A)

- Executive Summary notes the following key findings:
 - the subway options have a far greater positive impact on the environment, economy, land development and community than the BRT
 - the economic impacts of the subway options are considerable – creating 21,800 person-years of employment

- both subway options provide better service and reliability than the BRT. The BRT is not as reliable as the subway and would likely experience substantial overcrowding in peak hours
- BRT is not considered a long term solution
- BRT is likely limited by technology, and would not have sufficient capacity for the long-term needs of the corridor
- The covering letter notes that:
 - the interim appraisal of the project raised some key network related considerations.
 - Metrolinx, in close collaboration with the City of Toronto, TTC and York Region, will undertake additional analysis to more comprehensively understand these matters and how they impact the network and project scope. The analysis will include:
 - possible adjustments in project scope, timing or phasing
 - consideration of the extent to which improved service levels on the parallel GO Richmond Hill rail corridor affect demand on Yonge Subway corridor
 - cost impacts resulting from the subway yards strategy, Yonge-Bloor subway station improvements and a future Downtown Relief Line

August 7-10, 2009, YRRTC issued communications to the public and elected officials

- With Metrolinx's approval, YRRTC issued communications to inform the public and stakeholders of the key findings noted in the Executive Summary and where they can access it online. The communications included:
 - social media (blog, twitter, transit chatrooms, etc)
 - communiqué to MPs and MPPs within York Region
 - www.vivanext.com news page and side bar
 - calls to key journalists
 - letter to York Region Council, Commissioners and Senior Staff

Metrolinx staff to report on the resolution of key project issues in late 2009

- Working with stakeholders, Metrolinx is to carry out the further analysis described above and report back to the Metrolinx Board on the resolution of the key project issues in late 2009.

Analysis

Additional analysis of network-related matters to be completed

Metrolinx to lead additional analysis

- It is unclear how the additional network analysis referred to in the covering letter will be undertaken.
- While one similar study is already near completion by the TTC, another regarding GO Transit has yet to get underway and may take up to two years to complete.
- YRRTC staff will continue to work closely with Metrolinx as they determine a course of action to complete these additional studies.

Conclusion

- We are in the process of establishing how Metrolinx will undertake the additional network analysis in collaboration with York Region and other stakeholders.

For more information on this report, please contact, Dale Albers, Chief Communications Officer, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation at 905-886-6767, Ext. 1020.

Mary-Frances Turner
President

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