

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 **WARD(S):** ALL

TITLE: METROLINX INITIATIVES UPDATE – SPRING 2023

FROM:

Vince Musacchio, Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To provide a status update on the latest Metrolinx activities in Vaughan, including improvements to GO stations, GO Expansion, future planning initiatives and the Yonge North Subway Extension Project (YNSE).

Report Highlights

- The YNSE project is moving forward and has been separated into three contracts to meet the objectives of the project. The first contract for upgrades required at Finch Station has been awarded and construction has commenced.
- The construction for the Rutherford GO station and Rutherford Road grade separation project will be closing out by end of Q2 2023.
- Maple GO station improvements are anticipated to be completed by Q4 2025.
- Work continues on the prioritization of the Frequent Rapid Transit Network, including the launch of a regional priority bus program.
- The 2041 Regional Transportation Plan, completed in 2018, will be refreshed in the near future.
- Station Master Plans for Maple and Rutherford GO stations are underway and will guide future improvements at these stations.
- Staff are working with Metrolinx and York Region to include improvements to Highway 7 as part of the study for the future Queen Street – Highway 7 BRT.
- Staff are protecting for potential GO Stations on the proposed Caledon-Vaughan GO line.
- The Block 27 Block Plan and Collector Roads Environmental Assessment (EA) are underway.

Recommendation

1. THAT Council receive this report for information.

Background

Significant progress continues to be made on Metrolinx initiatives within Vaughan

Metrolinx is currently engaged in numerous planning, design and construction projects in the City. Furthermore, a number of City-led projects, studies and/or submitted development-related applications are closely linked with Metrolinx projects, including the Block 27 Block Plan and Collector Road Environmental Assessment which will be discussed in this report as it relates to the proposed Kirby GO Station.

With the volume of Metrolinx work in the City, a number of key departments have been responsible for facilitating and protecting the City's interests in these projects. The Metrolinx projects as well as other relevant City-initiated projects and development-related applications, and the corresponding City department managing these projects, are noted below.

Metrolinx Project	City Managing Department
Yonge North Subway Extension	Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management
Rutherford GO Station Improvements and Rutherford Road Grade Separation	Infrastructure Delivery
Maple GO Station Improvements	Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management
2041 Regional Transportation Plan	Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management
Station Master Plans for Maple and Rutherford GO	Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management
Queen Street – Highway 7 BRT	Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management
Proposed Caledon-Vaughan GO Service Business Case	Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management
Related Projects, Studies and Applications	City Managing Department
Proposed Kirby GO Station	
Block 27 Collector Roads EA	Development Engineering
Block 27 Block Plan	Policy Planning and Special Programs
Proposed Caledon-Vaughan GO Service	
Block 60E Block Plan	Policy Planning and Special Programs
Bartley Smith Greenway trail underpass south of Langstaff Road	Parks Infrastructure Planning and Development

Previous Reports/Authority

December 12, 2022, Committee of the Whole (2) (Item 6, Report No. 3):
[Metrolinx Initiatives Update – Fall 2022](#)

April 5, 2022, Committee of the Whole (1) (Item 6, Report No. 16):
[Metrolinx Initiatives Update – Spring 2022](#)

February 8, 2022, Committee of the Whole (2) (Item 7):
[Yonge North Subway Extension – Route Refinement Update](#)

November 9, 2021, Committee of the Whole (2) (Item 7):

[Metrolinx Initiatives Update Fall 2021](#)

April 7, 2021, Committee of the Whole (1) (Item 12, Report No. 14):

[Metrolinx Initiatives Update Spring 2021](#)

November 3, 2020, Committee of the Whole (1) (Item 4, Report No. 51):

[Metrolinx Initiatives Update Fall 2020](#)

May 20, 2020, Committee of the Whole (2) (Item 14, Report No. 20)

[Metrolinx Activities Update – Spring 2020](#)

November 5, 2019, Committee of the Whole (1) (Item 7, Report No. 34)

[Metrolinx Activities Update – Fall 2019](#)

May 7, 2019, Committee of the Whole (Item 12, Report No. 17)

[Metrolinx Activities Update](#)

April 11, 2018, Committee of the Whole (Item 9, Report No. 14)

[Metrolinx Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Express Rail Initiatives Update](#)

November 13, 2017, Committee of the Whole (Working Session) (Item 2, Report No. 41)

[Metrolinx Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan City-Wide](#)

May 16, 2017, Committee of the Whole (Working Session) (Item 1, Report No. 19)

[Metrolinx Regional Express Rail Update City Wide](#)

Analysis and Options

Metrolinx is advancing work on the Yonge North Subway Extension in collaboration with staff

The Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE) project extends approximately 8 kilometers (6 km underground and 2 km at-grade) north from Finch Station to the Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway Urban Growth Centre at Highway 7, with 5 confirmed stations at Steeles Ave, Clark Ave, Royal Orchard Blvd, Bridge (between Highway 7 & Highway 407) and High Tech Rd. One additional station at Cummer Ave may be constructed if funding is available. The project also includes a train storage facility currently proposed to be located north of High Tech station.

Metrolinx has completed analysis on how to organize the design and construction contracts to best deliver YNSE project. Based on this analysis, the YNSE project has been split into three (3) separate contracts, each with different timelines and procurement strategies. Varying levels of input and engagement are required from staff during the procurement processes, with the majority of engagement required during the design of the stations which is expected to occur over the next few years.

Contract 1 – Finch Station Early Works

These upgrades will create the foundation for major construction and focus on portions of the station that will connect the existing TTC Line 1 service to the subway extension in the City of Toronto.

Contract 2 - Advance Tunnels (AT)

This contract is being delivered using a design-build approach, which means that the specifications for the project are set by Metrolinx, but the designs to meet these specifications can differ between bidders. The winning bidder will construct the tunnels for the future subway. Staff have commented on several drafts of the Project Specific Output Specifications (PSOS) which were accompanied by Reference Concept Designs (RCD), in order to ensure that the City's requirements were reflected in the requirements.

Metrolinx continues to meet with all stakeholders to ensure comments have been addressed and closed out with the intention of issuing the Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposal in 2023 and awarding the project in 2024 following with construction starting in 2025, based on current timelines.

Contract 3 - Stations, Rails and Systems (SRS)

The last contract is to build the subway stations themselves, as well as install the subway rails and systems required to support operations. The contract is being delivered through a Progressive Design-Build (PDB) approach, in which Metrolinx works closely with a proponent through the actual detailed design of the stations, rails and systems to ensure objectives are reached, rather than relying on detailed specifications as in a Design-Build approach. This approach will require staff to review proposed stations through a proposed Modified Site Plan Review process at key design milestones. The Modified Site Plan Review process is continuing to be negotiated between Metrolinx and the affected municipalities.

In addition, Metrolinx continues to engage with various stakeholders to finalize the elements for each station. Each station location is unique and will require different strategies to implement required elements within the design.

As well, field investigations are continuing and property requirements are being determined based on the elements for each station, while a real estate protocol is also under negotiation. Major utilities relocation/replacement discussions are ongoing, with the goal to include these works as part of the scope of works in order to minimize future impacts to residents, business and new development. The City may be required to enter into a Metrolinx cost-sharing agreement for utility replacement work that is outside of the YNSE scope of work but beneficial to the municipalities.

Staff are working with Metrolinx, in coordination with the other stakeholder municipalities, to present to Council in the future on the status of the YNSE project.

Construction at Rutherford GO station and the Rutherford Road grade separation will be closing out by end of Q2 2023

The overall project to improve Rutherford GO station, including a new station building, platform, parking garage, as well as the grade separation of Rutherford Road, has reached substantial completion by end of 2022. Deficiencies identified by City and Metrolinx staff were being addressed and the project is anticipated to be closed by end of Q2 2023.

Maple GO station improvements are anticipated to be completed by Q4 2025

Construction work to improve Maple GO station is underway. Major elements include:

- Expansion of Eagle Rock Way to accommodate buses and a new stair and elevator tower building;
- A new west side platform and rehabilitation of the existing east platform; along with commissioning of the pedestrian tunnels connecting both platforms;
- Double tracking from Rutherford GO to McNaughton;
- Watermain replacement/relocation on Simcoe Street & Major Mackenzie Drive and associated surface restoration;
- Acoustical wall replacement with new landscape restoration; and
- A new pedestrian and cycling bridge over Major Mackenzie Drive and new multi-use paths connecting to the existing sidewalk.

Metrolinx has completed an annual review of the Frequent Rapid Transit Network, will undertake a Priority Bus Study, and will be refreshing the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan

At the Municipal Technical Advisory Committee meeting held on March 29, Metrolinx staff presented draft results for the prioritization of the Frequent Rapid Transit Network (FRTN), and shared upcoming work including a Priority Bus Study and a refresh of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The goal of the FRTN prioritization framework is to develop an integrated network that supports regional growth and advances unfunded projects to a planning-ready state. The framework was approved by Metrolinx Board in February 2020. Unfunded transit projects were scored and grouped into high, medium and refine & monitor groups. Through the annual review of the FRTN that began in April 2022, new criteria has been added that considers:

- MTO GGH Plan – reflecting expanded transit mandate area to outer-GGH
- Capital Costs - reflecting updated unit costs
- Equity – considering low-income residents, visible minority, and Indigenous peoples
- COVID Impacts – capturing a future stabilization to 1.5 days of remote work per week in offices

Through the review, six (6) projects advanced to the high priority group, which include Major Mackenzie Priority Bus between Jane Street and Leslie Street and Jane South BRT south of Steeles Avenue.

Metrolinx has launched a Regional Priority Bus Implementation Study to assess the current state of transit priority measures implemented and planned by municipalities across the region and make recommendations for a regional coordinated implementation strategy. It will be undertaken in the first half of this year and Metrolinx is seeking inputs from municipal stakeholders. After collecting all the data from municipalities, a study workshop will be held in June to present initial study findings and seek input on the development of a regional strategy.

The 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was a 25-year transit vision for the region that was approved by the Metrolinx Board in March 2018. Metrolinx is now proposing a refresh of the in 2023 to:

- Reflect current planning realities in key focus areas;
- Take stock of RTP progress;
- Set priorities for the next 5 years; and

- Bring the RTP into conformity and mandate changes since 2018.

Station Master Plan (SMP) consultations to guide future improvements at Vaughan’s existing GO stations have concluded for Maple GO station and is underway for Rutherford GO station

Staff participated in two (2) workshops held by Metrolinx in Fall 2022 and provided input into the three (3) preliminary site plan options presented for Maple GO station. Metrolinx has taken the input into consideration and developing a final report for the Maple GO SMP, which is anticipated to be shared with staff in early April.

The SMP consultation for Rutherford GO station began in March this year and Metrolinx identified three preliminary site plan options. Staff have reviewed the options and identified key concerns, challenges, and expectations for each option. Taking into considerations these comments, Metrolinx and its consultant team will refine and narrow the options down to two (2) preliminary/hybrid site plan options and to be taken forward for further development. The refined options will be presented to staff in a second workshop anticipated to be held in mid/late-May 2023.

Staff are working with Metrolinx to plan for a proposed widening of Highway 7 and to confirm the short list of planning/design concepts to be carried forward for the Queen Street – Highway 7 BRT

Staff have been participating in workshops held by Metrolinx to confirm the shortlist of planning /design concepts to be taken forward for each segment of the corridor and the addition of general purpose traffic lanes has been requested by the City to be incorporated into the corridor design. Project working group meetings were held in March and April of this year and 10% design is anticipated to begin in June 2023.

Two potential GO Train Stations are identified along the future Caledon-Vaughan GO Line) in Block 60 East

Two potential GO Train Stations are identified along the future Caledon-Vaughan GO Line (formerly Bolton GO Line) in Block 60 East, as shown on Map 10 of the York Region Official Plan (2022). One station is located in the vicinity of Rutherford Road and the Canadian Pacific rail line and a second station located at Major Mackenzie Drive and the Canadian Pacific rail line. These stations are also identified in the 2023 Vaughan Transportation Plan, York Region’s 2022 Transportation Master Plan (Map 3), Vaughan Official Plan (2010) (Schedule 10) and the Metrolinx Bolton Commuter Rail Service Feasibility Study. The 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), as approved

by the Metrolinx Board of Directors on March 8, 2018, identifies the Bolton Commuter Rail Service as a project for consideration beyond the 2041 horizon.

Until such time that these potential GO Stations are confirmed through technical studies and approved by Metrolinx, staff support the protection of lands surrounding these potential GO Stations for future implementation. As a result, staff are actively engaged with the participating landowners group through the Block 60E Block Plan and subsequent development application processes, to protect for potential station areas through the use of planning tools such as Holding Provisions (“H” symbol).

The Block Plan application and Collector Street Environmental Assessment (EA) in the Block 27 Secondary Plan area are currently underway

The EA for the Collector Street Network and Block Plan application in the Block 27 Secondary Plan area will support the establishment of the proposed future Kirby GO Station.

Participating Landowners within Block 27, collectively known as the Block 27 Landowners Group, Inc., have submitted a Block Plan application for the Block 27 Secondary Plan Area. Staff anticipate a revised Block Plan submission in response to comments received on the initial application. Concurrent to the Block Plan application process, the City and Participating Landowners are collaborating as co-proponents on the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Block 27 Collector Street Network which advances the street network established in the North Vaughan New Communities Transportation Master Plan (NVNCTMP). The EA is targeted for completion in 2023 and will complete the remaining portions of the (MCEA) process. The EA will establish the recommended alignments and cross-sections of the collector street network. A Public Information Session took place on November 16, 2022 regarding the EA study. It is anticipated a Public Meeting will be held for the Block Plan application at a later time.

Financial Impact

None.

Operational Impact

Staff from Infrastructure Delivery, Development Engineering, and Policy Planning and Special Programs were consulted and contributed to this report.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

By virtue of establishing an improved regional transit system, all the Metrolinx initiatives

currently underway will provide new, sustainable and safe transportation options for residents, visitors and businesses within Vaughan.

Conclusion

Metrolinx is investing significant resources to advance transit infrastructure within the Vaughan. While this work continues, it is important that the City's interests are effectively presented to Metrolinx by staff so that they can be incorporated into the ongoing planning and delivery processes.

When completed, these new transit services will provide convenient and sustainable region-wide transportation options which meet the goals of the City's Transportation Plan. To ensure that the City's on-going need for sustainable and safe transportation choices are met to the fullest extent, staff will continue to work with local and regional partners including neighboring municipalities, York Region and Metrolinx on these important initiatives.

For more information, please contact Selma Hubjer, Director of Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management, ext. 8674.

Attachments

None.

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