

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Tuesday, November 12, 2024

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: METROLINX INITIATIVES UPDATE – Q4 2024

FROM:

Vince Musacchio, Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To provide a status update of recent Metrolinx activities in Vaughan including Metrolinx's GO Expansion initiatives and the Yonge North Subway Extension Project.

Report Highlights

- Progress on the Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE) continues, with utility relocation and design investigation ongoing within the Transit Corridor Lands; the opening of a Community Office on High Tech Road; and finalization of an Agreement in Principle (AIP) between MTO and York Region.
- Maple GO station improvements are anticipated to be completed by Q4 2025.
- Due to a lack of project funding, Metrolinx is suspending further work on the Queen Street and Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit planning process.
- Staff continue to protect for potential GO Station sites on the proposed Caledon-Vaughan GO line.
- The Block 27 Block Plan and Collector Roads Environmental Assessment (EA) are nearing completion.

Recommendations

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. This report will provide updates on the Metrolinx projects noted below:

- Yonge North Subway Extension (Planning/Design/Construction)
- Maple GO Station Improvements (Construction)
- Queen Street – Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit (Planning)

In addition, there are several ongoing City studies and/or submitted development applications closely linked with Metrolinx projects, including the Block 60E Block Plan and the Block 27 Block Plan and Collector Road Environmental Assessment to support Block 27 Kirby GO Station , which will also be discussed in this report.

Previous Reports/Authority

[Item 3, Report No. 30, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on September 24, 2024](#)

[Item 4, Report No. 22 of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on June 25, 2024](#)

[Item 9, Report No. 5, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 21, 2024](#)

[Item 8, Report No. 23, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 16, 2023](#)

[Item 3, Report No. 46, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on December 13, 2022](#)

[Item 6, Report No.16, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on April 26, 2022](#)

[Item 7, Report No. 6, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 15, 2022](#)

[Item 7, Report No. 52, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 16, 2021](#)

[Item 12, Report No. 14, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on April 20, 2021](#)

[Item 4, Report No. 51, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 17, 2020](#)

[Item 14, Report No. 20, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 27, 2020](#)

[Item 7, Report No. 34, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 19, 2019](#)

[Item 12, Report No. 17, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 14, 2019](#)

[Item 9, Report No. 14, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on April 11, 2018](#)

[Item 2, Report No. 41, of the Committee of the Whole \(Working Session\), which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on November 21, 2017](#)

[Item 1, Report No. 19, of the Committee of the Whole \(Working Session\), which was considered at the Council \(Closed Session\) meeting of May 16, 2017, was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 16, 2017](#)

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 Avenue, Clark Avenue, Royal Orchard Boulevard, Bridge (between Highway 7 & Highway 407) and High Tech Road. The proposed station at Cummer Avenue was not approved due to the availability of funding. The project also includes a train storage facility currently proposed to be located north of High Tech station.

As noted in previous reports to Council, the YNSE project has been split into three (3) separate contracts, each with different timelines and procurement strategies.

Contract 1 – Finch Station Early Works – Completed in December 2023

Contract 2 – Advance Tunnels (AT) – RFP released December 2023. Construction activities and potential impacts on Yonge Street expected to commence in 2025.

As part of staff's ongoing coordination with Metrolinx, the city watermain replacement and upgrade has been approved for inclusion at the Clark Station location to reduce the approval risk of new development due to the availability of water capacity.

Contract 3 – Stations, Rails and Systems (SRS)

Metrolinx has tentatively finalized the elements for each station such as location and number of entrances, bus terminal location and size, streetscaping, etc., based on the engagement with various stakeholders. Staff continue to engage with Metrolinx's proposed station design to refine these elements to ensure they meet the goals of the City and the success of the YNSE projects.

Utilities

Utility relocations, field investigations, construction notifications, property requirements are continuing in advance of the tunneling with anticipated completion date of December 2024 within the Transit Corridor Lands. The City's utilities relocations / replacement discussions are ongoing for the SRS contract, with some sections having been included as part of the AT contract to minimize future impacts to residents, business and new development.

Agreements and updates to Council

Subsequent to the Resource Agreement reached between Metrolinx and the City in Q4 2023, staff continue to negotiate a Main Agreement with Metrolinx which will define the roles and responsibilities of the City and Metrolinx for the YNSE project. Council authority to enter into this agreement will be required at a later date.

Staff are working with Metrolinx, in coordination with the other stakeholder municipalities, to present a Metrolinx YNSE project status update to Council which we are anticipating in Q4-2024 to Q2-2025.

YNSE Community Office

In May 2024 the Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE) Community Office opened its office to the public, and is located at 295 High Tech Road, Unit 4 in Richmond Hill. Tours are available and include two immersive sound experiences that give community members a chance to hear what's coming to communities along the subway alignment. Office hours are Tuesday between 12:30pm – 4:30pm, Wednesday between 12:30pm – 4:30pm and Thursday between 10:00am – 2:00 pm. The Community Engagement Team also participated in various City of Vaughan events to set up information booths to share YNSE project information.

YNSE Agreement in Principle (AIP)

York Region and the Province have finalized the AIP including a capital contribution of \$1.12B from York Region and the local municipalities. The finalized AIP includes negotiated outcomes covering high-level scope, capital funding contribution, ownership and access provisions, operations and maintenance principles, collaboration, engagement and communications, realty and dispute resolution. For further details see September, 12, 2024, YRRTC Board of Directors Agenda, [Yonge North Subway Extension \(YNSE\) – Finalized Agreements Update](#).

Progress on Maple GO station improvements continues. Construction is scheduled for completion by Q4 2025.

Construction work to improve Maple GO station is underway. Construction is largely complete on the expansion of Eagle Rock Way and the acoustical wall replacement. Elements still under construction include:

- 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; and
- A new pedestrian and cycling bridge over Major Mackenzie Drive and new multi-use paths connecting to the existing sidewalk.

Metrolinx is finalizing the preliminary design business case for the Queen Street and Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit project. This work is being leveraged by the City to initiate an Environmental Assessment to widen Highway 7 between Islington Avenue and Kipling Avenue.

The Queen Street-Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit (QS7 BRT) project is a proposed rapid transit line in the cities of Brampton and Vaughan. The project's study area covers a 24-kilometre corridor along Queen Street and Highway 7, which would create a crucial east-to-west transit spine connecting the northwest and northcentral sections of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

As a review agency and directly affected municipality with vested interest in shaping its future mobility and managing its growth, the City worked with Metrolinx to confirm the short list of planning and design concepts for Highway 7 between Wigwoss Drive to Kipling Avenue.

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 throughout 2024.

Metrolinx has communicated to the municipalities involved that the QS7 BRT project is not planned to proceed beyond the current scope of work. The efforts undertaken thus far are crucial as they lay the foundational groundwork necessary to support BRT within the designated study corridor. However, due to the current lack of funding for this project, it is deemed premature to advance the work towards identifying a preferred alternative and achieving a 30% design completion.

Staff will continue to collaborate with Metrolinx and are awaiting formal confirmation regarding the conclusion of the study. In parallel, staff continue to prepare a request for proposal (RFP) for the Environmental Assessment study supporting the widening of Highway 7 between Islington Avenue and Kipling Avenue.

Potential GO Train Stations along the future Caledon-Vaughan GO Line continue to be investigated. The future Rutherford station has been protected for through the Block 60 E Block Plan.

On June 4, 2024 an approval report was submitted to the Committee of the Whole for the Block 60E block plan that identified the protection for the Rutherford station as identified in the Bolton Commuter Rail Service Feasibility Study and future Caledon-Vaughan GO Line, through the use of a Holding Provision (“H” symbol) to identify the station location (see previous reports/authority section).

The future Woodbridge station on the proposed Caledon-Vaughan GO Line has been protected for through an Official Plan Amendment.

On May 16, 2023, Council approved Interim Control By-law 060-2023 in the vicinity of the Kipling Avenue Corridor Secondary Plan and directed staff to undertake a land use study to assess the potential of a GO station along the Caledon-Vaughan GO Line, on Kipling Avenue in Woodbridge.

As per Council direction, Policy Planning and Special Programs staff undertook the Woodbridge GO Station Land Use Study, which assessed the feasibility of a potential GO Station within the study area along the proposed Caledon-Vaughan GO Line. The study determined that a GO Station is feasible within the study area and selected a preferred potential station location. The project included a detailed background review, GO Station technical analysis, Indigenous community engagement, landowner engagement, public engagement, development of the Study, and the introduction of an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) to protect for the potential station location. The study commenced in January 2024, and the final recommendation report and OPA were presented to Committee of the Whole (2) on September 17, 2024 (see previous reports/authority section).

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 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. The Block Plan will serve to implement the policies of the Secondary Plan and establish the basis for subsequent development applications, including the area surrounding the proposed Kirby GO Station, which will be subject to a subsequent City-led Study as required by the Block 27 Secondary Plan. This area is intended to be developed as a transit-oriented community, featuring a range of land uses and transit-supportive densities. Staff proceeded to Committee of the Whole ([Public Meeting](#)) on May 7, 2024, to present the Block Plan for public comment and anticipate a revised submission of the Block Plan from the applicant.

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 Q4 2024 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.

Financial Impact

N/A

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

N/A

Conclusion

Ongoing work on numerous Metrolinx projects continues to benefit travelers within the City. Staff continue to monitor each of these projects, collaborating and advocating with Metrolinx where their work can be leveraged to meet the City's transportation objectives.

Improved transit services are necessary to provide convenient and sustainable region-wide transportation options, achieving the vision of the City's Transportation Plan. Staff continue to see value in working with local and regional partners to maximize the benefits of major transit projects for the City's residents, businesses and visitors.

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

Attachments

N/A

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