

Committee of the Whole (1) Report

DATE: Tuesday, June 1, 2021

WARD(S): 1 & 4

TITLE: YORK REGION'S REQUEST TO CONSIDER NEW MAJOR TRANSIT STATION AREAS (MTSA) ALONG JANE STREET AND EXPAND THE RUTHERFORD GO STATION MTSA
FILE 27.3

FROM:

Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To address York Region Council's request to consider Major Transit Station Areas (MTSAs) along the Jane Street corridor and amendments to the Rutherford GO Station MTSA. Policy Planning and Environmental Sustainability prepared recommendations for consideration by the April 7, 2021 Committee of the Whole. As a follow-up to the comments received from the Committee of the Whole, Policy Planning and Environmental Sustainability staff recommend the boundaries for the MTSAs along the Jane Street corridor be considered to be preliminary until there is a funding commitment for the Jane Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and with respect to the Rutherford GO MTSA, consider a limited expansion of the MTSA boundary including a lower minimum density.

Report Highlights

- York Region Council's decision on MTSAs included two recommendations that requires input from Vaughan as follows:
 - Consider new MTSAs along the future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Jane Street corridor; and
 - Consider amendments to the Rutherford GO Station MTSA
- In response to York Region's Council direction, Vaughan Policy Planning and Environmental Sustainability (PPES) staff prepared draft MTSA boundaries for consideration by the Committee of the Whole on April 7, 2021
- Members of the Committee of the Whole made comments regarding the draft MTSA boundaries and Council referred the report to a future Committee of the Whole meeting to allow for further consultation
- In response to the Committee of the Whole comments and in consultation with York Region planning staff, PPES staff have prepared alternatives for consideration as follows:
 - The future BRT stations along the Jane Street corridor be considered for preliminary MTSAs and not seek Provincial approval of these MTSAs until appropriate funding has been allocated for the design and construction of the BRT
 - To consider a minor expansion for the Rutherford GO MTSA to the southeast corner of Rutherford Road and Keele Street and seek Provincial approval for an alternative minimum density of 100 persons and jobs per hectare

Recommendations

1. That Council advise York Region Council that in response to the York Region Council recommendation of September 24, 2020 regarding the Jane Street corridor MTSAs, that the future bus rapid transit stations along the Jane Street corridor be considered for preliminary MTSAs until appropriate funding has been allocated for the design and construction of the Jane Street bus rapid transit corridor.
2. That Council advises York Region Council that regarding the Rutherford GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA), that it supports a minor expansion of the MTSA up to the southeast corner of Rutherford Road and Keele Street and a revised lower minimum density of approximately 100 persons and jobs per hectare that recognizes the limited development potential for the MTSA area and the traffic congestion anticipated with the expansion of the Rutherford GO parking lot to accommodate 2,300 vehicles.

3. That the City Clerk be directed to forward a copy of this report to York Region.

Background

The Committee of the Whole (the 'Committee') on April 7, 2021 considered a report (Item 6 , Report No. 8 – File 27.3) regarding York Region's request to consider new MTSAs along Jane Street and to expand the Rutherford GO Station MTSA. The report included recommendations to address York Region Council's request to consider MTSAs along the Jane Street Corridor and the expansion of the Rutherford GO Station MTSA.

The Committee on April 7, 2021 made comments regarding the proposed Jane Street corridor MTSAs due to the lack of funding commitment for the future BRT route and the extent of the proposed expansion for the Rutherford GO MTSA. The April 20, 2021 Council adopted a recommendation that the matter be deferred to a future Committee of the Whole meeting to allow further consultation with staff and Members of Council. Following the discussions at the Committee meeting and in consultation with York Region planning staff, alternative recommendations have been prepared for the consideration by the Committee.

Previous Reports/Authority

The following is a link to the previous reports considered by Vaughan Committee of the Whole regarding MTSAs.

[Item 8, 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](#)

Analysis and Options

Consider the MTSAs along Jane Street as preliminary until funding is approved for the Jane Street BRT

York Region Council on September 24, 2020 adopted the following recommendation for the Jane Street MTSAs:

“Regional staff delineate boundaries and set density targets for the future MTSA stations along Jane Street in Vaughan and report back to Council for endorsement.”

PPES and York Region Planning staff did not previously put forward MTSAs along the Jane Street corridor because this corridor was not identified within the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Horseshoe 2020 (Growth Plan) as a provincial priority transit

corridor. Furthermore, there is uncertainty with the six proposed BRT station locations and funding commitment for the BRT.

As noted, the PPES Department prepared a report in response to York Region Council's motion regarding the preliminary MTSA's for the Jane Street, that was considered by the Committee of the Whole on April 7, 2021. At that meeting, members of the Committee made comments respecting the number of MTSA's on Jane Street and the Jane Street MTSA's being premature due to a lack of funding at this time.

In consideration of the comments from the Committee, PPES staff, in consultation with York Region planning staff, are recommending preliminary MTSA's be identified as an alternative to formal Jane Street MTSA. The MTSA's (number, location, and boundaries) would be formalized once funding commitments have been made on the design and construction of the BRT. The preliminary MTSA boundaries would be introduced within the upcoming Vaughan Official Plan update.

The current Vaughan Official Plan 2010 (VOP 2010) land use designations along the Jane Street corridor support intensification including permissions for medium and high-rise development. The inclusion of MTSA boundaries will not have an effect on this position.

With respect to comments made regarding the number of stations along the Jane Street corridor, the preliminary concept for the Jane Street BRT as illustrated by York Region Transit (VivaNext) includes 6 BRT stations near the following intersections:

- Pennsylvania Avenue
- Langstaff Road
- Rutherford Road
- Springside Road
- Norwood Avenue
- Major Mackenzie Drive

As required by the Province, along a major transit corridor, MTSA's are to be established at every transit station stop. The City and York Region do not have the ability to exclude an MTSA boundary for certain transit stations. Concerns regarding the number and locations of future BRT transit station stops would be addressed by York Region Transit (VivaNext) at the design stage of the Jane Street BRT corridor. The MTSA process is a supplementary requirement, following the decision on a BRT station location.

Proposed minor expansion of the Rutherford GO MTSA to the southeast corner of Rutherford Road and Keele Street, including a revised minimum density

York Region Council on September 24, 2020 adopted the following recommendation for the Rutherford GO Station MTSA:

“That MTSA 57 (Rutherford GO station) be referred to the City of Vaughan for additional consideration of the boundaries and density and requested a report back to the Region in Q1 2021.”

PPES staff outlined in the April 7, 2021 report that the minimum density target of 150 persons and jobs per hectare (PJH) for the Rutherford GO Station MTSA (Rutherford MTSA) area would not likely be achieved. Two options were provided in the April 7, 2021 for consideration by the Committee to respond to the York Region Council motion:

Option 1: York Region can request the Province to support a lower minimum density for the Rutherford GO MTSA.

Option 2: Consider expanding the MTSA beyond the 800 metre walking distance and include additional lands that are currently designated for intensification within VOP 2010.

PPES staff recommended Option 2, and proposed a boundary extension that included all four corners at Rutherford Road and Keele Street.

Members of the Committee made comments regarding the extent of the proposed boundary expansion and that the boundary included lands adjacent to existing established residential communities. The Committee suggested PPES staff review an alternative MTSA boundary that does not include the lands at the west and north corners of Rutherford Road and Keele Street.

PPES staff acknowledge that extending the boundaries to all four corners is beyond the objective of an 800 metre walking distance. PPES staff, in consultation with York Region Planning staff, recommend and support a third Option which combines Options 1 and 2 which includes:

- a minor Rutherford GO MTSA boundary extension to include only the lands on the southeast corner of Rutherford Road and Keele Street as shown on Attachment 1
- requesting a lower minimum density of 100 persons and jobs per hectare for the Rutherford GO MTSA

The Province has recently constructed a new parking structure on the Rutherford GO Station land that expands the GO parking capacity to 2,300 vehicles. The area is considered a high traffic area and the Rutherford GO Station site is a well-used transit station. PPES staff support recommending an alternative minimum density for the MTSA based on the existing VOP 2010 development permissions and the proposed population for the Draft Plan of Subdivision File19T-20V008 being 790 persons representing a density of 84 persons per hectare (this a correction from the April 7, 2021 report).

If a stable residential area is included within a MTSA, the Vaughan Official Plan 2010 Designation will not change in the future to allow for more density

The Committee on April 7, 2021 also made comments regarding the inclusion of existing developed lands, specifically detached and semi-detached lots on the east side of the GO rail line (Royal Appian Crescent and Agostino Crescent) being included within an Rutherford GO MTSA boundary.

The establishment of all MTSA boundaries in the City followed a consisted approach. If residential lands were developed for apartments or townhouses, these lands were considered intensified uses and included within the MTSA boundary, where appropriate. However, it is not intended that any change or further intensification of these existing developed properties will occur.

Existing detached and semi-detached lots were not usually included within the MTSA boundary unless they were designated for higher density. In some circumstances detached and semi-detached lots were included within an MTSA boundary, typically to establish a logical boundary line or if the detached/semi-detached lots were mixed within an area containing townhouses.

If existing detached and semi-detached lots are within a stable area and included within a MTSA boundary, there is no intent to amend the future land-use designation for these lands to permit intensification or a change in land-use.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from this report. The MTSA policies applicable to Vaughan will be implemented through the Official Plan Review.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

York Region has requested a response from Vaughan on the Jane Street and Rutherford MTSA's as discussed in this report. York Region planning staff have been consulted and support the recommendations in this report.

Conclusion

York Region Council requested the City of Vaughan's input into the establishment of MTSAs along the Jane Street BRT corridor and to consider the expansion of the Rutherford GO MTSA. The Council on April 20, 2021 deferred a report to a future Committee of the Whole meeting to conder comments made by the Committee regarding the number and location of MTSAs on Jane Street and the boundary of the Rutherford MTSA.

Vaughan PPES staff have considered the comments of the Committee of the Whole and consulted with York Region planning staff and provided recommendations to respond to the Committee's comments. Specifically, staff recommend that the Jane Street corridor future BRT locations be considered preliminary MTSAs until there is a funding commitment for the Jane Street BRT. PPES staff also recommend a minor expanded boundary for the Rutherford GO Station MTSA and includes an alternative minimum density for Council's consideration.

For more information, please contact: Fausto Filipetto, Manager of Long-Range Planning at Fausto.Filipetto@vaughan.ca or at 905-832-8585, extension 8699.

Attachments

1. Draft Rutherford GO MTSA

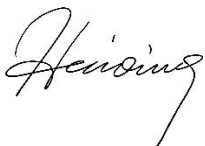
Prepared by

David Marcucci, Senior Planner, Extension 8410

Fausto Filipetto, Manager of Long-Range Planning, Extension 8699

Christina Bruce, Director Policy Planning & Environmental Sustainability, Extension 8231

Approved by



Haiqing Xu, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management

Reviewed by



Jim Harnum, City Manager