

## Committee of the Whole (2) Report

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**DATE:** Tuesday, November 9, 2021

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE:** METROLINX INITIATIVES UPDATE FALL 2021

**FROM:**

Vince Musacchio, Acting Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development

**ACTION:** FOR INFORMATION

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### **Purpose**

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

### **Report Highlights**

- Rutherford Road Grade Separation and GO Station expansion work is well underway and on schedule
- Construction of Maple GO station improvements are scheduled to begin in early 2022
- The Concord GO Centre Mobility Hub Study and Transportation Master Plan are underway to establish the policy framework
- Participating Landowners within Block 27 have initiated the Block Plan Application process
- In July 2021 Metrolinx confirmed Clark Station as the fourth stop on the Yonge North Subway Extension
- The Province announced two transit-oriented communities for the YNSE at Bridge and High Tech stations
- Metrolinx has initiated an update to the Transit Project Assessment Process Report for the Yonge Subway Extension Project
- Several key differences between the Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan update and the City's and/or York Region's Transportation Master Plans were noted in a staff communication to Council

## **Recommendations**

1. That Council receive this report for information.

## **Background**

### **Construction of the west side of the GO rail bridge over Rutherford Road will continue through to the end of year**

Since the last update in April 2021, most of the excavation for the road underpass has been completed. Caisson drilling and waterproofing the road underpass were also completed.

Construction work at Rutherford GO station continues and they include key new infrastructure such as new parking structure with direct connections to a new station building (anticipated to be opened late October 2021), additional second track and new platform with canopies connecting to the pedestrian tunnel, 100 additional bicycle parking, new railway bridge over Rutherford Road, bike lanes and pedestrian bridge over Rutherford Road, and upgraded bus loop.

Other ongoing works such as the construction of the west side of rail bridge and the installation of the new storm system for Rutherford Road underpass will continue through to the end of 2021.

### **Construction of Maple GO station improvements are scheduled to begin in early 2022**

Metrolinx is finalizing their procurement process for the Maple GO station improvements. The improvements include key City-owned infrastructure, which Metrolinx will be building on the City's behalf, namely:

- Extension of Eagle Rock Way with enhanced landscaping and new public transit bus stops
- A new active transportation bridge over Major Mackenzie Drive

The roles and responsibilities for the construction, maintenance and operations of this new City-owned infrastructure are defined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which has been finalized between the City and Metrolinx. The MOU also includes a cost-sharing agreement for the City-owned infrastructure.

### **The Concord GO Centre Mobility Hub Study and Transportation Master Plan are currently underway to establish the policy framework to build a complete community around a potential future GO Station in area of Highway 7 and Bowes Road**

In October 2020, Vaughan Council supported a proposed Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) for lands generally located on the north side of Highway 7 from Keele Street to the Barrie GO Rail Line. In March 2021, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved the MZO which generally permits high-rise mixed land uses, with heights ranging from 16 to 40 storeys, in and around the study area.

**Participating Landowners within Block 27, where a proposed future Kirby GO stations is located, have initiated the Block Plan Application process**

Participating Landowners within Block 27 (collectively known as the Block 27 Landowners Group, Inc.) have submitted a revised Block Plan/Master Environment and Servicing Plan (MESP) Terms of Reference for the New Community Area - Block 27 Secondary Plan Area. The revised Terms of Reference has been prepared in advance of the submission of an anticipated Block Plan application. A revised Terms of Reference establishing the scope of work to be undertaken as part of the Environmental Assessment(s) (EAs) for the Collector Street Network within Block 27 has been submitted. The EAs for the Collector Street Network will inform the Block Plan and build on Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the MCEA process as completed through the North Vaughan New Communities Transportation Master Plan (NVNCTMP).

**Metrolinx is advancing work on the Yonge North Subway Extension project based on the new reference alignment**

Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE) Project is a cross-jurisdictional transit priority project included in the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that will support growth in York Region and City of Toronto.

Metrolinx has provided preliminary costing information which confirms that the full scope of the original six-station Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP)-approved YNSE project cannot fit within the \$5.6B cost envelope.

**Metrolinx commenced the stage two, Preliminary Design Business Case and will continue through to Fall 2021**

A new "reference alignment" has been identified by Metrolinx for the project to proceed into the next stage of preliminary engineering. This new "reference alignment" has been identified within the [IBC Supplementary Analysis](#). This stage will be followed by a Preliminary Design Business Case, currently underway and a Full Business Case. Changes to the original TPAP includes an alignment that has shifted away from Yonge Street within the northern sections of the project. After tunneling under the East Don River and jogging west, the subway tunnel will head east at Royal Orchard Boulevard toward the CN right-of-way. The subway will run at-grade north of Holy Cross Cemetery through the Langstaff Gateway and within Richmond Hill Centre.

A Full Business Case will be completed during the procurement stage anticipated in 2022.

**In July 2021 Metrolinx announced that Clark Station was confirmed as fourth stop on Yonge North Subway Extension**

In July 2021 Metrolinx announced that the project's design allows for a fourth station to be built. It was identified that Clark station, at the intersection of Clark Avenue and Yonge Street, best compliments the other three confirmed stations at Steeles (below grade), Bridge (at grade under Highway 7 and Highway 407) and High Tech (at grade) at Richmond Hill Centre.

**In September 2021 the Province announced two transit-oriented communities for the YNSE at Bridge and High Tech stations**

Transit-oriented communities (TOC) are part of the Province's plan to build new, sustainable transit. Infrastructure Ontario (IO), on behalf of the Province, is currently working with York Region and local municipalities on the future plans to build transit and a TOC along the YNSE route. It is expected that TOC will boost Ontario's new subway transit plan for the GTA by placing more housing and jobs near or at transit stations along the new subway routes including the YNSE.

The High Tech and Bridge stations have been designated for TOC use. These sites will be developed by the Province in line with the objective of the TOC program. Under the Transit Oriented Communities Program, the Province will be partnering with developers to plan and deliver integrated developments with the YNSE project.

**Metrolinx has commenced an update to Transit Project Assessment Process (EA) Report for the Yonge North Subway Extension**

An update to the 2009 Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP), the Environmental Assessment process for transit projects, will be required to reflect the revised alignment along with other project modifications. Metrolinx has initiated the TPAP addendum process.

Public consultation, as required by the process, commenced with a Virtual Open House held on October 20, 2021. The YNSE Team provided a project update, discussed the upcoming addendum to the Environmental Assessment and how residents can participate, and shared details on Metrolinx's upcoming Community Office and Experiential SoundLab.

**Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan (GGHTP) Update**

Background provided [Staff Communication SC2, September 14, 2021 Committee of the Whole, Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan Update](#).

Several key differences between the GGHTP update and the City's and/or York Region's Transportation Master Plans were noted in the staff communication. These included:

- Bus rapid transit on Major Mackenzie Drive was not shown as a rapid transit line in the Plan - The GTA West Corridor Highway is included in the Plan.
- Proposed GO service to Bolton, travelling through Vaughan, is not shown in the GGHTP. Metrolinx has previously identified this rapid transit line as having a “medium” priority in their prioritization exercises. Staff continue to advocate for this critical transportation link in the overall transit system.
- The proposed GO rail service to Bolton was omitted in the GGHTP. Although identified as a “Beyond 2041” project in Metrolinx's 2041 Regional Transportation Plan, the GGHTP, which extends to 2051, does not propose implementing GO rail service along the CP MacTier Subdivision, otherwise known as the “Caledon-Vaughan” or “Bolton GO” rail corridor. The 2010 Vaughan Official Plan has conceptually identified five new GO stations along this corridor, located in the vicinities of Islington/Highway 407, Kipling/south of Langstaff, Highway 27/Rutherford, East of Barons/Major Mackenzie and East of Huntington/Nashville. Staff from both Vaughan and Caledon continue to advocate for the implementation of GO rail service in this corridor. Comments regarding this concern were made to MTO from both Vaughan as well as Caledon staff.

### **Previous Reports/Authority**

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**

#### **The Concord GO Centre Mobility Hub Study and Transportation Master Plan are rescoped to respond to Minister's Zoning Order**

Staff have rescoped both the Mobility Hub Study and Transportation Master Plan to respond to Minister's Zoning Order and account for the additional development now approved for the area. However, the goal and objectives remain the same – to establish a complete community around a potential future GO Station and improve the inputs to the Metrolinx Business Case. Staff are currently working toward public engagement beginning in Q1 2022.

#### **Clark Station as fourth stop on Yonge North Subway Extension will serve growing neighbourhoods along Yonge Street corridor and help reduce traffic congestion**

The latest analysis from Metrolinx shows that Clark station will put 8,100 people and 1,900 jobs within a 10-minute walk of the subway by 2041, which will feature transit hubs that will provide seamless connections to local and regional travel options.

Clark station will also help reduce traffic congestion by getting more people out of their vehicles and onto transit. Based on Metrolinx's analysis it is expected that 2,500 riders will use the subway at Clark station during the morning rush hour peak, with more than half of riders connecting to subway from a bus. One of the most important bus connections will be the future Viva Orange service providing convenient access to the Bathurst-Centre corridor and Promenade Centre area. Newly installed Clark Avenue cycle tracks will make it convenient to get to Clark station by bicycle as the new station will be located at Yonge Street. The 4.5 kilometers of cycle track extend from the Bartley Smith Greenway and Vaughan Super Trail entrance at Jason Street to Yonge Street.

#### **Future updates to Council on Greater Golden Horseshoe Transportation Plan (GGHTP) Update will be provided as additional information becomes available**

Staff continue to monitor all regional transportation plans, to identify areas of alignment between various levels of government, and to continue to protect the City's interests where they may be impacted.

## **Financial Impact**

There are no immediate financial impacts associated with this report.

## **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

The EAs for the Collector Street Network in Block 27 will inform the Block Plan and support the establishment of a future Kirby GO station in the new community areas. The Concord GO Centre Mobility Hub Study and Transportation Master Plan will establish a complete community around a potential future GO Station and improve the inputs to the Metrolinx Business Case. The additional Clark station along YNSE will also support growing neighbourhoods along Yonge Street corridor. All these works support higher-order transit and provide convenient and sustainable region-wide transportation options; thus, should remain a priority for the City. Staff will continue to work with York Region, York Region Transit and Metrolinx to ensure appropriate sustainable transportation options are reviewed for implementation in these areas.

## **Conclusion**

Metrolinx is investing a significant amount of transit infrastructure within the City. It is important that the City's interests are effectively presented to Metrolinx so that they can be incorporated into the ongoing planning and delivery processes.

Staff will continue to work with Metrolinx, York Region, MTO and transit agencies to protect and advocate for sustainable and safe transportation in the City.

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

## **Attachments**

N/A

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