

VAUGHAN METROPOLITAN CENTRE SUB-COMMITTEE – NOVEMBER 13, 2013**VMC BLACK CREEK RENEWAL PROJECT
CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY
STUDY UPDATE
WARD 4****Recommendation**

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, the Director of Development / Transportation Engineering, the Commissioner of Planning, and the Commissioner of Community Services recommend:

1. THAT this report and associated presentation be received for information purposes.

Contribution to Sustainability

The renewal of the existing Black Creek in the VMC will contribute to environmental sustainability through the restoration of the stream corridor and the introduction of flood protection for the surrounding area.

Economic Impact

There is no economic impact associated with this report.

Communications Plan

An enhanced stakeholder and public consultation program is currently underway. Additional details are provided below.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the VMC Sub-Committee with an overview of the proposed stakeholder engagement and facilitation approach associated with the VMC Black Creek Renewal Project.

Background - Analysis and Options

The Black Creek traverses the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre along the east of Jane Street between Highway 7 and Highway 407.

In early 2012, the City completed a Black Creek Optimization Study which identified the need to improve the existing stream channel conditions in order to achieve appropriate flood control and conveyance capacity within the VMC Plan.

Improving existing Black Creek channel conditions within the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan area is key to advancing development

Staff is working to advance development of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC). Resolving the flooding risk at the intersection of Jane Street and Highway 7 is important to moving VMC development forward. There is general agreement among stakeholders the flooding issues need to be addressed, however, there are many different ideas on how best to achieve flood control while at the same time not impeding future development opportunities. There is some urgency to resolving these issues to ensure the City is in a position to advance city-building in anticipation of the subway extension which is expected to be complete in 2015/2016.

Accordingly, in July 2012, the City initiated the VMC Black Creek Renewal Class EA Study, which builds on the findings and recommendations of the earlier Optimization Study. An initial stakeholder meeting was held in November 2012 to present preliminary Black Creek channel concepts. Based on the outcome of this meeting, and issues raised by the majority of the stakeholders directly impacted, it became clear that an expanded consultation process was necessary to develop a plan which would be acceptable to the stakeholders.

The Study Team has been expanded to effectively facilitate a preferred strategy and consensus among all stakeholders

In June 2013, the City expanded the study consulting team to include a facilitation team led by Swerhun Inc. in collaboration with Real Estate Search Corporation (RESC). Swerhun and RESC are working with the prime engineering consultant, The Municipal Infrastructure Group (TMIG), to help resolve stakeholder issues and to ultimately propose a path forward that will be supported by the stakeholders. It is expected this consultation phase of the project will be completed in early Q1-2014.

The Study Team will focus on the opportunities to create value for key stakeholders

The objective of this phase is to develop an implementable and mutually-beneficial solution for all stakeholders. This can lead to value accruing to governments, landowners and the community as a whole. This includes:

- Determining the value of the project to the City as it strives to distinguish itself from other cities transitioning from primarily suburban/industrial development to places of urban intensification;
- Determining the value of the project to the property owners;
- Determining the value of the project to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority as it strives to provide flood control and naturalization opportunities in Vaughan; and
- Addressing Provincial, Regional and City policy objectives.

While creating value for the City, there is also an opportunity to broaden the problem-solving context. Specifically:

- It's important to recognize the City has a long history of industrial and big box development, and that to create a thriving VMC and to realize a public return on the multi-billion dollar public subway investment, the City needs to add real estate value and create regional appeal;
- The size of the land impacted by flooding is unique in the VMC both in terms of its size and location, and as a result this is one important opportunity to look at ways to add value to the VMC; and
- The solution to the flooding problem may be an opportunity to create one of the distinctive features for the VMC that helps create the kind of value that has been generated through similar initiatives in other city centres.

The Study Team's approach to doing this work is collaborative – involving the City and stakeholders. It is expected results from this phase of the project will emerge incrementally over the next several months, with implementation to occur over many years.

Discussions with key stakeholders are underway

Swerhun and RESC have started their work, and over the next several weeks will be connecting with key stakeholders to understand their perspectives and priorities regarding the project. These stakeholders include City staff, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Region of York, Province of Ontario, community interest groups such as Sustainable Vaughan and local landowners.

4.3

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

The conclusions and recommendations of the Black Creek Renewal Class EA Study will facilitate development of the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. This report is therefore consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre is a Regional Growth Centre. Jane Street and Highway 7 fall within York Region's jurisdiction. The intersection of Highway 7 and Jane Street is susceptible from the Black Creek. Proposed sections of the Highway 7 Bus Rapid Transit system (at its intersection with Jane Street) are also susceptible to flooding based on existing channel conditions. Regional staff will be involved throughout the duration of the Study and will provide input and comment as required to ensure its successful completion.

Conclusion

In July 2012, the City initiated the VMC Black Creek Renewal Class EA Study, which builds on the findings and recommendations of the earlier Optimization Study.

A facilitated consultation process is currently underway with the stakeholders with the objective of developing an implementable and mutually-beneficial solution for the renewal of the Black Creek in the VMC.

Staff will continue to provide the VMC Sub-Committee with updates on the progress of the VMC Black Creek Renewal Project at key milestones.

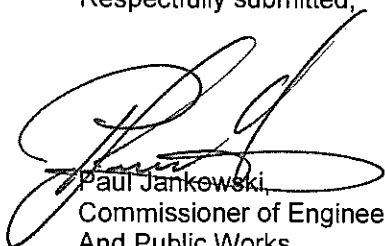
Attachments

None

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Respectfully submitted,



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