

## **CITY OF VAUGHAN**

### **EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2018**

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, as follows:

***By receiving communication C6, from Mr. Fred Winegust, Tangreen Circle, Thornhill, dated April 5, 2018.***

### **9 METROLINX DRAFT 2041 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND REGIONAL EXPRESS RAIL INITIATIVES UPDATE**

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Deputy City Manager, Public Works and Deputy City Manager, Planning and Growth Management, dated April 4, 2018, be approved; and
- 2) That the deputation by Mr. Fred Winegust, Tangreen Circle, Thornhill, be received.

#### **Purpose**

This report provides an overview of the Metrolinx's Draft Final 2041 Regional Transportation Plan and a high-level update on Regional Express Rail related initiatives in the City.

#### **Recommendations**

1. That Council request Metrolinx to:
  - a) Include the Kirby Road grade separation located west of Keele Street, in Metrolinx's upcoming Transit Project Assessment Process (TPAP) for the Kirby GO Station;
  - b) Work with City staff to develop the Kirby Station design and layout in order to support optimal station operations, sustainable mobility, safe access to and from the station, and the development of the required density around the station; and
  - c) Initiate a stakeholder engagement process that includes the Block 27 participating Landowners Group;
2. That Council reaffirm its opposition to an increase in freight rail traffic through the City of Vaughan;
3. That staff be directed to participate in any studies related to modifications of the freight rail network as identified in the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan; and
4. That a copy of this report be forwarded to York Region and Metrolinx.

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#### **Report Highlights**

- The Draft Final 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (2041 RTP), along with the discussion paper “Making it Happen” were adopted at the March 8, 2018 Metrolinx Board meeting. Metrolinx will now engage local municipalities and agencies to solicit their input on the implementation and funding strategy plan.
- The Metrolinx staff report on the GO Expansion Regional Express Rail New Stations Business Cases was presented to the Metrolinx Board on March 8, 2018 and recommended moving forward with 12 new stations, including the proposed Kirby GO station.
- The Draft Final 2041 RTP confirms the need and priority of transit fare integration. York Region Transit and the TTC are working towards finding solutions to address cross-border issues between York Region and Toronto.
- The Draft Final 2041 RTP includes community safety as a high priority in planning for the movement of goods on rail corridors.
- Station expansion work at the Maple GO station will include intersection improvements at Major Mackenzie Drive near Vaughan City Hall, as well as the construction of a replacement parking lot west of the City Hall building.
- Station expansion work including a grade separation at Rutherford Station has proceeded to the procurement phase and construction is anticipated to commence in Q3 of 2018.

#### **Background**

In 2008, Metrolinx launched “The Big Move”, a 25-year Regional Transportation Plan for the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA), which is mandated to be updated every 10 years. This update, known as the 2041 Regional Transportation Plan, was adopted by the Metrolinx Board of Directors at its meeting on March 8, 2018. The Regional Express Rail (RER) program is one of “The Big Move” rapid transit projects and is mandated by the province to be implemented by 2025. As part of RER, Barrie GO line service will be upgraded to operate all-day, two-ways and with increased frequency. The RER improvements include construction of a second track adjacent to the existing tracks on the Barrie corridor, infrastructure improvements at the Rutherford GO and Maple GO stations, and construction of the new Kirby GO station.

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#### **Previous Reports/Authority**

[Item 2, Report No. 41, of the Committee of the Whole \(Working Session\) on November 13, 2017 - Metrolinx Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan](#)

[Item 1, Report No. 19, of the Committee of the Whole \(Working Session\) on May 16, 2017 - Metrolinx Regional Express Rail Update](#)

#### **Analysis and Options**

An update on the Draft 2041 Regional Transportation Plan was provided to the City's Committee of the Whole on November 13, 2017. This was followed by a letter submitted to Metrolinx reaffirming the City's "evidence based" support of the construction of the Kirby GO Station in order to support the City of Vaughan's Official Plan as it relates to complete communities by aligning the transportation network with land use for Blocks 27 and 41, and the Highway 400 North Employment Lands.

**The Metrolinx Board of Directors adopted the Draft Final 2041 Regional Transportation Plan and presented the "Making it Happen" discussion paper on March 8, 2018**

In December 2017, the Metrolinx Board of Directors approved a "Making it Happen" discussion paper to accompany the draft final 2041 Regional Transportation Plan (2041 RTP). While the draft final 2041 RTP identifies what needs to be done on a regional transportation basis, the discussion paper focuses on how to implement the Plan. The discussion paper includes alternate approaches to collaboration and decision making; innovative and best practice methods for prioritization; and options for funding of projects, programs and policies.

On January 19, 2018, an interactive half-day workshop was held by Metrolinx to seek input from local municipal partners on the proposed themes of the discussion paper.

**Metrolinx's staff report recommended the 12 new stations identified at the June 2016 Board meeting remain in the RER expansion program**

In a staff report released by Metrolinx on February 26, 2018 regarding the *GO Expansion RER New Stations Business Cases*, which was subsequently approved by Metrolinx Board on March 8, 2018, the Chief Planning and Development Officer of Metrolinx recommended that all 12 new stations identified at the June 2016 Board meeting remain in the RER expansion program. The RER expansion program includes the proposed Kirby GO station, while the proposed Concord GO station was not

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identified in the RER program. Metrolinx's staff report also recommended that Metrolinx staff continue to work with municipal officials to ensure that up-to-date policy and planning information continues to be incorporated in the next stages of planning. The RER program, including the new GO stations, will advance to an open market procurement process, which is anticipated in late 2018.

#### **Staff will continue planning for a future Concord GO station**

Both the Regional and City Official Plans and Transportation Master Plans identify the potential for a GO Rail station at Highway 7 in Concord. The City's approved Concord GO Centre Secondary Plan specifically establishes a planning framework to support a potential station. It identifies the possibility to leverage potential connections of this station to the Viva Bus Rapid Transit System on Highway 7, and to the future Highway 407 Transitway. The Concord GO station remains a priority project for the City and staff will continue to support the planning and development of the secondary plan area.

#### **The proposed Kirby GO Station continues to be included in the RER program**

Since the initial approval of 12 new stations in the RER program, key policy, infrastructure and operational details have been reviewed and advanced which have had a positive impact on the station benefits. Three advancements which were included in the updated modeling of the RER network are identified below:

1. Express Service: the use of express service, which will be more efficient compared to all-stop service, where some trains by-pass stations which have lower ridership in order to minimize delays for passengers already onboard trains.
2. Level Boarding: this will reduce run-in and dwell time at stations by at least 30 seconds, as opposed to low platforms which causes delay from stepping up/down the train. In addition, this will reduce the impact on upstream riders, taking the incremental trip time impact from 2 minutes down to about 1.5 minutes.
3. Fare Integration: It is anticipated that the new stations operate with an integrated fare system in place. The benefits of fare integration are estimated to be worth 12 times as much as the cost to implement.

Based on the Metrolinx's Board recommendation of June 28, 2016 to include Kirby GO Station as part of the RER program, the station design commenced and modifications have been made throughout 2017. The station design is still on-going and is being completed in consultation with City staff and key stakeholders. Since the initial business case (IBC), the station design, as shown in [Metrolinx's technical report posted on March 8, 2018](#), has been modified to:

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- Accommodate 1,000 surface parking spaces
- Consider the City's work for the Kirby Transit Hub Sub-Study that illustrated closer integration of high density mixed use development and additional community amenities
- Consider a grade separation of Kirby Road below the rail corridor as requested by the City
- Avoid impacts to Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW) in the vicinity of the station, identified by the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

The [technical report prepared by Metrolinx's staff posted on March 8, 2018](#) includes Metrolinx's evaluation of the constructability of the Kirby GO station and its impacts on GO operations. It concluded that:

- Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSWs) and associated setback requirements around the station site preclude placement of station facilities west of the rail corridor and increase the complexity of the design and engineering of the station.
- A Kirby Road grade separation is not required for station operation, but has been considered as part of the Environmental Assessment of the station area. Future construction will need to be coordinated with station work.
- The Transportation Impact Assessment for the planned development is based on road configuration that is not compatible with PSW restrictions. Road access from Keele Street and Kirby Road constructed to facilitate the station may impose design changes on Kirby sub-study area.
- Traffic studies indicate a need to provide access to Kirby Road as well as Keele Street from the station site, but future grade separation will constrain the potential intersection location. Ultimate configuration of access to Kirby station will influence overall design.
- Signal masts are located approximately 25m north and approximately 155m south of Kirby Road.
- Track turnouts to the second main train are approximately 35m south of Kirby Road and the turnout to the storage track is approximately 330m south of Kirby Road. There is a horizontal curve in proximity to the proposed platform, just south of the station.

The recommendations from the City's study results of the Kirby Transit Hub Sub-study and the North Vaughan and New Communities Transportation Master Plan (NVNCTMP) are contrary to some of the conclusions listed above, specifically the first two items. In some cases, more detailed environmental and technical analyses would be required. It

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is recommended that the City continue to advocate for the inclusion of the Kirby Road grade separation as part of Metrolinx's Station TPAP process. This would finalize a station layout that would support optimal station operations, sustainable mobility, safe access to and from the station, and would develop the required density through appropriate built form and scale around the station. Engaging key stakeholders such as the Block 27 participating Landowners Group is recommended.

#### **The Draft Final 2041 RTP continues to value the need and priority of integrated fares for the GTHA**

In September 2017, the Metrolinx Board discussed the topic of GTHA Fare Integration, which included the results of a GTHA Fare Structure Preliminary Business Case. The Preliminary Business Case identified short-term actions to initiate fare integration which include discounts on double fares between GO and TTC, and 905 transit agencies and TTC, and the intention to consult with the public and key stakeholders (including municipal elected officials) on how to move forward. Metrolinx has highlighted fare integration as one of the priority actions required in the draft final 2041 RTP.

Updates to the draft final 2041 RTP describe the progress to date on moving forward with the short-term actions outlined in the Preliminary Business Case. These include removing barriers to fare integration such as different fare policies between transit agencies. The draft final 2041 RTP continues to value the need and priority of integrated fares for the GTHA, noting that: "The expansion of regional rapid transit in the GTHA makes fare integration a pressing issue, especially with the vision of a Frequent Rapid Transit Network that crosses multiple boundaries."

Furthermore, York Region Transit is currently engaged with the TTC to identify possible solutions to address the specific cross-border issues between York Region and Toronto.

#### **The Draft Final 2041 RTP was revised to include community safety as a high priority in planning for goods movements on the rail corridor**

In November 2017, Council received a communication on the status of a new conceptual freight rail corridor proposed within Peel Region, which could potentially result in an increase in freight rail traffic through Vaughan. Council resolved and requested that Metrolinx, as part of the 2041 RTP, confirm "... that the conceptual new freight corridor depicted as part of the "In Delivery" Regional and Rail Rapid Transit Network will not increase freight rail traffic through the City of Vaughan."

In December 2017, York Region released its final report titled "Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region" (Attachment 1), and a copy of the report was forwarded to the Federal Government on January 15, 2017 by York Region.

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In the report, it was recommended that:

- The Province acknowledges that the rerouting of freight rail traffic through York Region is strongly opposed to by the Councils of The Regional Municipality of York, the Cities of Markham and Vaughan, and the Town of Richmond Hill.
- The Province considers other rail and non-rail options which do not increase the movement of dangerous goods through York Region.
- The Province direct Metrolinx to undertake consultation with The Regional Municipality of York, the Cities of Markham and Vaughan and the Town of Richmond Hill before proceeding with additional detailed studies relating to the proposed rerouting of a freight rail.

In response to the Council resolution and release of York Region's report, Metrolinx has revised the priority action in the draft final 2041 RTP, "Promote Integrated Planning for Rail Corridors", by adding this additional consideration: "Ensure that community safety is given high priority in planning for goods movement on rail corridors." Future conversations with Metrolinx should highlight the City's opposition to increased freight rail traffic in light of this additional consideration in the draft final 2041 RTP.

At this point, staff will continue to pursue Metrolinx for further engagement on the new conceptual freight corridor proposed within Peel Region. Staff will provide updates to Council when new information becomes available.

#### **The Rutherford Station Expansion Work, as part of the Regional Express Rail service improvement, is well underway**

The Rutherford station building rehabilitation, track and a new multi-level parking structure, along with the grade separation at Rutherford Road and GO railway, will be delivered through Alternative Finance and Procurement (AFP) model, which is Infrastructure Ontario's public-private partnership model. Infrastructure Ontario's procurement process for AFP projects is comprised of the following stages:

- Request for Proposal (RFP) Preparation (starts at RFQ release)
- Open/In-Market Period (approximate duration – 4-5 months)
- Evaluation Period Activities (approximate duration – 3 months)
- Closing Period Activities (approximate duration – 2 months)

Following the Closing Period Activities, which is marked by commercial and financial close, construction work will begin.

The evaluation period began in January 2018 with commercial and financial close

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anticipated in September 2018. Construction is anticipated to start in Fall 2018, starting with the relocation of 570 parking spaces to a temporary parking lot at 635 Westburne Drive. Construction of a detour road to the south of existing Rutherford Road is to follow in early 2019.

#### **The Maple GO station expansion will be bundled with the GO rail bridge expansion over Major Mackenzie Drive and the intersection improvements at City Hall**

The Metrolinx Project Team has been working with City staff to coordinate and collaborate when possible to minimize the disruption to the surrounding area and construction costs. As a result, the following elements of work have been bundled together and a coordinated approach to moving forward has been identified:

- Maple GO station modification
- Maple GO station parking expansion
- GO rail bridge expansion over Major Mackenzie Drive
- Design of a future pedestrian bridge east of the GO rail bridge
- Construction of the substructure of the future pedestrian bridge
- Intersection improvements at City Hall
- Construction of the replacement parking lot at City Hall

The sequence of work will begin with the intersection improvements at the City Hall driveway followed by the construction of replacement parking due to Metrolinx's need to occupy a part of the City Hall east parking lot as a construction staging area. Metrolinx will enter into an agreement with the City to complete the City Hall works on behalf of the City. Once finalized, a separate report to Council will be brought forward on the details of the agreement.

Based on the current timelines, work is anticipated to begin in Q3 – Q4 of 2018. Once the intersection improvements and replacement parking have been completed, the bridge expansion and station work will follow, with an anticipated start date in Q2 of 2019.

#### **Financial Impact**

Staff are currently coordinating, reviewing and implementing the RER program elements. Moving forward with the 2041 RTP, it is expected that staff will continue to implement the RER program, while also needing to provide feedback and work collaboratively with Metrolinx to realize the new projects identified in Vaughan.

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#### **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

The 2041 RTP will transform transit in the GTHA. Upon the completion of the RER program, along with improved local transit services feeding into the Barrie GO rail line, commuters will benefit from more frequent and convenient GO train service that will allow commuters to travel across the greater region.

Completion of the priority actions noted in the 2041 RTP will result in managed growth on roadways, improved transit and cycling connections and travel times, and a more environmentally sustainable transportation system. In addition, more options will be available for travelers traveling both within and outside of Vaughan.

#### **Conclusion**

The Draft Final 2041 RTP and discussion paper “Making it Happen” were adopted by the Metrolinx Board of Directors on March 8, 2018. Staff involvement will continue as the implementation plan for the 2041 RTP is prepared, and on a long-term basis as Metrolinx implements the strategies and priority actions of the plan.

As part of the implementation of the RER program, City staff will continue to work with Metrolinx, the Region and key stakeholders to ensure the success of the Maple and Rutherford station improvements, the new Kirby GO station, and the planning of the Concord GO Centre.

**For more information**, please contact: Selma Hubjer, Manager, Transportation Planning

#### **Attachment**

1. Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region

#### **Prepared by**

Winnie Lai, Transportation Project Manager, ext. 8192

(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)