



Staff Report for Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date of Meeting: July 3, 2018

Report Number: SRPRS.18.153

Department: Planning and Regulatory Services
Division: Development Engineering & Transportation

Subject: **SRPRS.18.153 - Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation Funding Update**

Purpose:

To update Council on the status of York Region's application to Transport Canada for the Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation project under the National Trade Corridors Fund.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That staff report SRPRS.18.153 Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation Funding Update be received by Council;
- b) That Council reiterate that the Elgin Mills Grade Separation is a top priority for Regional Road project in the Town of Richmond Hill;
- c) That Council approval the transfer of \$200,000 from the Capital Project Account 902 2018531024310 Elgin Mills Grade Separation Preliminary Engineering Study to York Region to advance the Environmental Assessment study for the grade separation at Elgin Mills Road, east of Yonge Street;
- d) That staff be directed to engage and work in partnership with York Region to seek and explore alternate funding sources and opportunities to advance the timing of the Elgin Mills Road grade separation; and
- e) That the Town Clerk forward a copy of staff report SRPRS.18.153 Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation Funding Update to York Region.

Contact Person:

Hubert Ng, Senior Transportation Planner, (905) 747-6501 and/or
Richard Hui, Manager of Transportation, (905) 771-5478 and/or
Dan Terzievski, Director, Development and Engineering and Transportation, (905) 747-6358.

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Report Approval:

Submitted by: Kelvin Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services

Approved by: Neil Garbe, Chief Administrative Officer

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), Town Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and Chief Administrative Officer. Details of the reports approval are attached.

Background:

Elgin Mills Road grade separation continues to be the top priority grade separation project for the Town

The Town's 2016 Railway Crossing Grade Separation Prioritization Study concluded that the Elgin Mills Road grade Separation at the CN Rail Corridor east of Yonge Street is the highest priority of seven potential grade separation locations identified in Richmond Hill. The Town has successfully advocated for the Elgin Mills Road grade separation to be included in York Region's 2018 10-Year Roads and Transit Capital Construction Program and Development Charge Background Study. The Elgin Mills Road grade separation is currently identified as a project commencing in 2027 in the Region's 2018 10-Year Roads and Transit Capital Construction Program. However, the funding allocated in this year only provides a portion of the estimated project amount.

In order to seek funding support and potentially accelerate the timing of the implementation of the Elgin Mills grade separation as well as two other grade separation projects, York Region submitted an application to Transport Canada's National Trade Corridors Fund (NTCF) Program on November 6, 2017 for these three projects. . Attachment 1 is the Regional Council report adopting the recommended project submissions.

For the Elgin Mills Road grade separation, the Region's report stated that,

“with the continued increase of traffic on Elgin Mills Road, a key east – west corridor, it is anticipated the long delays imposed by freight rail will continue to create significant issues that may ultimately impact bus rapid transit services on Yonge Street. Both CN and Metrolinx have indicated there are no current plans to fund a grade separation of this at-grade crossing, as the Richmond Hill GO rail is not part of the current Regional Express Rail program. Funding from the NTCF for grade separation of the road/rail crossing would provide an opportunity to improve freight rail movement and reduce traffic delays on Elgin Mills Road.”

The total project cost for the Elgin Mills Road grade separation from the planning and Environmental Assessment Study stage to construction was estimated to be approximately \$74.3 million. York Region requested \$34.3 million from the NTCF

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Program and the remaining \$40 million would be funded by the Region with cost recoveries sought from CN Rail in accordance with Canadian Transport Agency cost sharing guidelines. Some financial recoveries would also be sought from the Town of Richmond Hill for the construction of sidewalks and illumination required for the project in accordance with the Municipal Act of Ontario.

York Region was not successful in receiving funding from the NTCF Program

Transport Canada notified York Region on April 9, 2018 that - out of a total of 350 project proposals - none of the three York Region projects were approved for funding under the NTCF Program. Attachment 2 is a Memorandum dated May 3, 2018 from York Region staff providing Regional Committee of the Whole with an update on the funding application.

Regional staff indicated that they will continue to reach out to Transport Canada to better understand the selection process, learn more information about the projects selected, and obtain insight to guide in future submissions. The Region will also continue to monitor future opportunities for project funding.

Town contribution recommended to advance Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation Environmental Assessment Study

Given that York Region was unsuccessful for Transport Canada's NTCF Program, there is a continuing need for Town staff to work with York Region staff to advance the timing of the Elgin Mills grade separation project.

The Town currently has an approved capital budget in the amount of \$200,000 earmarked to conduct a preliminary engineering feasibility study for the Elgin Mills Road grade separation. To assist the Region in accelerating the timing and initiation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) study for the grade separation, Town staff recommend contributing this \$200,000 from the capital project (Elgin Mills Grade Separation Preliminary Engineering Study) to the Region and work with Regional staff to advance Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation as a priority project.

Alternate Funding Opportunities and Sources

Town staff will also engage and work in partnership with York Region staff to continue to seek alternate funding sources to secure the remaining funding needed to advance the design and construction of the Elgin Mills Road grade separation.

Town staff will also explore these opportunities through the 2019 Update to the Town's Transportation Master Plan.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

Town staff recommend contributing the \$200,000 from Capital Project Account 902 2018531024310 - Elgin Mills Grade Separation Preliminary Engineering Study to York

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Region in order to further advance the Environmental Assessment study for the grade separation project on Elgin Mills Road east of Yonge Street.

Future funding opportunities will be sought in collaboration with York Region staff.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

The advancement of the Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation aligns with several of the Town's Strategic Plan goals. It aligns with the goal of Stronger Connections in Richmond Hill through planning for more robust road connections between communities. It also aligns with the goal of Better Choice in Richmond Hill by providing transportation choices for residents to travel in a more efficient manner when infrastructure is kept up with development. The goal of Wise Management of Resources is also aligned since infrastructure improvements help to manage traffic congestion while reducing travel delays and poor air quality for residents.

Conclusion:

The Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation remains the top priority grade separation project for the Town of Richmond Hill. Although York Region did not receive approval for funding the grade separation project under Transport Canada's National Trade Corridor Fund program, Town staff will continue to work with York Region staff to seek other funding sources and opportunities to advance the timing to implement the project. At this time, to assist in accelerating the Environmental Assessment study for the Elgin Mills Road grade separation, staff recommend making a contribution to the Region from the Town's capital project earmarked for the preliminary engineering study for this grade separation.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call contact person listed in this document.

- **Attachment 1:** Project Submissions to Transport Canada for Funding Under the National Trade Corridors Fund – York Region Council meeting, September 21, 2017
- **Attachment 2:** York Region Memorandum – Transport Canada's National Trade Corridors Fund Update, May 3, 2018

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRPRS.18.153 Elgin Mills Road Grade Separation Funding.docx
Attachments:	- SRPRS.18.153 - Attachment 1.pdf - SRPRS.18.153 - Attachment 2.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 26, 2018

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Dan Terzievski - Jun 25, 2018 - 4:04 PM

Kelvin Kwan - Jun 26, 2018 - 6:57 AM

David Dexter - Jun 26, 2018 - 7:54 AM

Neil Garbe - Jun 26, 2018 - 2:17 PM