



Staff Report for Council

Date of Meeting: October 24, 2016

Report Number: SRPRS.16.182

Department: Planning and Regulatory Services

Division: Development Engineering Division

Subject: Response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper for the next Regional Transportation Plan

Purpose:

To update Council and provide input on the Discussion Paper issued by Metrolinx in regard to the update of the 2008 Regional Transportation Master Plan.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That Council receives SRPRS.16.182 and it's attachments for information;
- b) That Council endorse the comments and recommendations in the October 6, 2016 York Region report to the Transportation Committee of the Whole, entitled "York Region's Response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper for the next Regional Transportation Plan";
- c) That the Clerk circulate this report to Metrolinx;
- d) That Metrolinx be advised that the Yonge North Subway Extension is a top priority for the Town of Richmond Hill and should be identified as a priority project in the update to Regional Transportation Plan (RTP); and
- e) That staff be directed to continue to engage with Metrolinx and York Region throughout the remainder of the RTP Update process.

Contact Persons:

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Ana Bassios – Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services – Ext. 2417

Submitted by:

"Signed Version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

Ana Bassios

Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services

Approved by:

"Signed Version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

Neil Garbe
Chief Administrative Officer

Background:

Metrolinx's Regional Transportation Plan

Metrolinx is a public agency which was formed by the Province in 2006 with the mandate to develop and implement an integrated and coordinated transportation system across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

As a first step toward this mandate, Metrolinx completed a comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in 2008, better known as the “Big Move”. The Plan was developed in conformance with the policies of Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and Green Belt Plan.

This 25 year \$50 Billion Plan has been the basis for prioritizing provincial transit investments and initiatives over the last 10 years.

Update to the Regional Transportation Plan

Under the Metrolinx Act, Metrolinx is required to undertake a complete review and update of the RTP every 10 years. Metrolinx commenced this review earlier this year, with the objectives to:

- Review and update the plan while building on the existing RTP;
- Review and update the existing vision, goals, and objectives of the RTP; and
- Review and update the planning and policies to align with the most current Provincial Plans and ongoing Provincial Plan reviews; and
- Update phasing, timing, and implementation of projects while leveraging committed transit investments.

It is our understanding that the RTP review will proceed in three phases, with a goal to have a final updated Regional Transportation Plan completed and adopted by 2017.

Phase 1: Prepare a Discussion Paper which will outline the revised Vision, Goals and Objectives that will lay the foundation for this RTP update.

Phase 2: RTP research, analysis, strategies, plans and studies will be updated or undertaken based on the revised goals and objectives set out in the Discussion Paper, with the goal of developing an updated Transportation Network.

Phase 3: Release a draft updated RTP for review and consultation and adopt the final updated RTP.

An Implementation Plan is expected to follow in 2018 or 2019.

Input from Public Agencies

Metrolinx has engaged Town of Richmond Hill staff as part of an ongoing Municipal Technical Advisory Committee for the Regional Transportation Plan review since June 2016, and are nearing the completion of Phase 1. As such, Metrolinx released a draft

Discussion Paper in August 2016 and are seeking input from public agencies, including Town of Richmond Hill staff. The Discussion Paper is attached for reference (Appendix A). Metrolinx is seeking comments from public agencies by November 30, 2016.

A Co-ordinated Response through York Region

As the public authority responsible for the implementation and operation of Regional Transportation and Transit across 9 local municipalities, York Region has taken the lead on coordinating local municipal input with respect to the RTP update.

Specifically in relation to the Metrolinx Discussion Paper, Town staff has provided written comments to the Region and have been involved in several meetings with Regional staff and other local municipal staff regarding a consolidated response.

The Town's key comments and issues have been incorporated in the October 6, 2016 Regional Council report entitled York Region's Response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper for the Next Regional Transportation Plan. These include, but not limited to:

- The need to have the Yonge North Subway Extension identified as a top priority in the RTP Update;
- The need to continue to give consideration to improvements on the Richmond Hill GO line that are currently not included in the current Regional Express Rail plan;
- The need to continue to consider the Yonge/16th KDA as a candidate for a GO station and/or Mobility Hub;
- The need to consult with local municipalities throughout the RTP review, including the initial screening stages of projects;
- The need to have an objective project prioritization process which takes into account the local context, plans, and needs and fairly balances the need to provide infrastructure in existing higher density areas with the need to reduce automobile dependency in priority areas such as the Highway 404/Highway 7 employment "mega-zone" and the Richmond Hill Centre;
- Opportunities to explore joint parking facilities; and
- Clarity and opportunities with respect to funding of local and Regional initiatives identified in the RTP.

This report has been endorsed by Regional Council and has been formally circulated to Metrolinx as input to the RTP Discussion Paper and the overall RTP Update process. The report is included as Appendix B for reference.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

At this time, there are no financial, staffing, or other implications involved with the Regional Transportation Plan Update.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

Input to into Metrolinx's review and update of the RTP fulfills Goals 1, 2, and 3 as it will help to provide stronger connections within Richmond Hill and the surrounding Region by providing better transportation choices for our residents, which will result in the development of a more dynamic and vibrant urban community.

Conclusion:

Metrolinx has been engaging local municipalities, including the Town of Richmond Hill, as part their review and update of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Through the issuance of the Discussion Paper for the next Regional Transportation Plan, they have given local municipalities the first opportunity to provide formal comments to the process.

York Region has taken the lead on providing a coordinated response to this paper, which captures comments provided by all 9 local municipalities, including the Town of Richmond Hill. This response has been forwarded to Metrolinx for consideration, and includes the key Town issues and comments outlined in this report.

Staff recommend that this staff report also be forwarded in response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper in order to further reiterate the Town's comments and position with respect to the RTP update, and in particular the importance of identifying the Yonge North Subway extension as a top priority project in the updated RTP.

Staff will continue to be engaged in Metrolinx's review and update of the RTP through the Municipal Technical Advisory Committee, and intend to continue to provide coordinated comments and input through the Regional Municipality of York, and provide updates to Council, as required.

Attachments:

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

- Appendix A, Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan Discussion Paper
- Appendix B, York Region's Response to Metrolinx's Discussion Paper for the Next Regional Transportation Plan

Discussion Paper

for the Next Regional Transportation Plan

GREATER TORONTO AND
HAMILTON AREA



AUGUST 2016



Executive Summary

A review of the GTHA's first Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), *The Big Move*, is underway. The review of the RTP provides an opportunity to take stock of and build on the foundation of *Big Move* projects. It supports us working together as a region toward the completion of an updated RTP in 2017.

The RTP guides the work being done to transform the way people and goods move in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. Its Vision, Goals and Objectives provide a blueprint to support decision-making by municipalities, agencies, and the provincial government. Developed and implemented jointly with a diverse range of partners and stakeholders, the RTP sets out how the transportation system contributes to a high quality-of-life, thriving, sustainable and protected environment and a strong, prosperous and competitive economy, now and into the future.

This discussion paper presents an opportunity for the public, and all partners and stakeholders in planning, building and implementing the region's transportation system, to reflect on how well it is working today in the context of the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, and on its performance in the future.

BUILDING MOMENTUM

Since 2008, great progress has been made, with 94% of *The Big Move* actions and policies completed/continuous or in progress. Together with Metrolinx, provincial ministries, municipalities, transit agencies, and stakeholders have implemented a wide range of *Big Move* transportation improvements. These efforts are transforming, and will continue to transform, mobility in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. Some examples include:

The GO Regional Express Rail program is being implemented across the region, bringing two-way all-day rapid transit service to the region.

The region's first Light Rail Transit line is under construction along the Eglinton Avenue corridor.

Bus Rapid Transit is operating and continuing to be expanded in **York Region** and **Mississauga**.

UP Express has reached its one-year service milestone, connecting riders between Union Station and Lester B. Pearson International Airport.

The Toronto-York-Spadina Subway Extension is under construction – the first subway line to extend outside the City of Toronto.

Strategies to improve goods movement have been introduced across the region.

Ontario's #CycleON strategy is supporting municipalities in expanding cycling infrastructure and programs.

Hamilton and **Toronto** have introduced **bike-sharing programs**.

Municipalities have integrated **mobility hubs** into **official plans** and **transportation master plans**.

Transit agencies and **municipalities** are improving **specialized transit coordination** and delivery to facilitate **cross-boundary travel**.

The **Triplinx** regional transportation app and the **PRESTO** smart card are making getting around the region easier.

THE REGION'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM: KEY FACTS¹



566
km of rapid transit
in the GTHA



64
GO train stations



2
million PRESTO
customers

Includes GO Service Area and Ottawa.



668
million transit
trips taken in
the GTHA
annually



69.5
million GO transit
annual boardings
(2015)



300,000+
daily Union Station
transit users



553
km of provincial
highways
within the GTHA

Includes 407 ETR (107km)



5
municipal
expressways

Don Valley Parkway, Gardiner Expressway,
Allen Road, Red Hill Valley Parkway,
Lincoln M. Alexander Parkway



3.46
million cars owned
in the GTHA



33
carpool
lots in the
GTHA



3
international
airports

Lester B. Pearson International Airport,
John C. Munro Hamilton International
Airport, Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport



13.6
million daily trips
made by GTHA
residents



1
ferry
terminal

Toronto



2
freight intermodal
terminals

Brampton, Vaughan



3
major ports

Toronto, Hamilton, Oshawa

KEEPING THE MOMENTUM GOING

Keeping this momentum going, leveraging current investments and continuing to work as a region by incorporating new and projected growth into our planning can drive the transportation system to keep up with and manage growth in a sustainable way. Progress is being made and every level of government has recognized the need to make significant investments in the region's transportation system. The provincial 2014 *Moving Ontario Forward* plan is an unparalleled provincial commitment to invest \$31.5B over ten years for transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure projects across the province including approximately \$16B for priority rapid transit projects in the GTHA. Public awareness of the mobility challenge and the need for timely solutions is being voiced across the region, creating the momentum that will help shape the updated

RTP. Civic, business, academic and neighbourhood organizations have weighed in, contributing to a vibrant dialogue about the future of one of the world's most liveable urban regions.

Since the release of *The Big Move*, the planning context has continued to shift. This discussion paper reflects on past changes and how we can incorporate them into current and future efforts. Climate change and new mobility, for example, are altering the way we plan, build and operate transportation. There are new technologies, such as real-time trip planning and ride-sharing applications that need to be built into planning for mobility in the region. The region is moving out of a "catch-up" era and focusing on collaborative planning to better optimize investments, reflecting the perspective and growing experience of this region to create a regional transportation system that works into the future.

WORKING TOGETHER

The scope and timing of the Regional Transportation Plan review addresses the requirements of *The Metrolinx Act, 2006* and **aligns with the Province of Ontario's review of *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe***, which continues to call for compact development that makes the best use of land in the region, and an effective and integrated transportation system to keep people and goods moving sustainably.

The two plans work together to direct the region's population and employment growth to align with the transportation system. The updated RTP will work in concert with the efforts of the Province to manage growth and address climate change to 2041, another ten years beyond *The Big Move's* original long-range planning horizon.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE DISCUSSION PAPER?

We are re-igniting a conversation about a shared vision for the region's transportation system that looks at where we have been, what we need to do and the way to get there.

Throughout the paper we ask you to take a look at transportation planning in a regional context and to start thinking about the links between land use and transportation. Opportunities for transit, managing congestion, supporting active transportation, creating safer more complete streets and moving freight are some examples of topics that need your input to shape how our communities grow and how we will move around the region in the future.

This review of the RTP recognizes the need for on-going investment in transportation infrastructure to support growth and to update the RTP from the foundation provided by *The Big Move*. The emphasis on increasing transit mode share remains, to be accomplished through solutions that complement rapid transit investments, and address diverse market needs. This discussion paper proposes updating the original *Big Move* vision, goals and objectives, as well as exploring:

- Opportunities to leverage the committed transit investments;
- Opportunities to connect and align the transportation system in the region; and
- Opportunities for exploring and incorporating new mobility.

The updated RTP will be developed from a new baseline and incorporate emerging best practices and transportation innovations, aligned with current provincial plans, policies and guidelines.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU



This discussion paper is meant to spark a conversation across the region. At the end of the paper you will find the section called “**What Do You Think?**” intended to guide consideration of the Regional Transportation Plan's review, and we want to hear from you. The regional plan draws on the expertise of individuals

and groups across the region. We need and welcome your feedback, experiences and participation in the process of updating the Regional Transportation Plan. This will help us collectively as we continue to improve connections in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton region over the next 25 years.