

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) APRIL 30, 2002

**HIGHWAY 7 POLICY REVIEW
PHASE I BACKGROUND REPORTS
THE HIGHWAY 7 LAND USE FUTURES STUDY
THE JANE/7 EMPLOYMENT AREA REDEVELOPMENT STUDY**

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning recommends:

THAT the presentation by The Planning Partnership on “The Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study” and “The Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study” and their respective Phase I reports, BE RECEIVED;

THAT the criteria identified by The Planning Partnership for selecting candidate Demonstration Plan sites in the Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study, BE ENDORSED: and,

THAT the Phase 1 reports BE FORWARDED to the Region of York as input into the related Regional initiatives.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarize the status of the Highway 7 Policy Review, and to identify the next steps in the project. A presentation outlining the content of both Phase I reports will be provided by the City’s Consultants.

Background

On October 15, 2001, Council approved retaining “The Planning Partnership” to conduct the Regional Road (Highway 7) Policy Review, consisting of two parts:

- 1) The Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study
- 2) The Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study

In accordance with the Terms of Reference, the first phase reports for each component of the study are now complete (Attachment 1 and 2).

The purpose of the Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study is to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of planning and development opportunities along the entire length of Highway 7 in Vaughan. The May 14, 2001, Terms of Reference indicated that the study is required as a result of the continuing “...transition of ‘Highway 7’ from its former function as a Provincial Highway to a fully urbanized ‘main street’ serving the south part of the City of Vaughan.” The Phase I Report identifies the current character and function of Highway 7, and reviews the constraints and opportunities that would apply to any potential land use changes.

The purpose of the Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study is to prepare an “Action Plan” that will identify and address the current impediments to redevelopment and provide the basis for further City initiatives. Like the Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study, the Jane/7 Phase I Report also reviews the current character and function of the area and begins to outline the nature of the obstacles that at this time, limit redevelopment opportunities. From the Action Plan, “Demonstration Plans” are to be prepared based on actual sites that have redevelopment potential. To help select the appropriate sites for Demonstration Plans, the consultant will be presenting a draft set of site selection criteria for Council’s consideration.

Phase II of the Study involves meetings in the community to help form a long term “Vision” for the corridor. The “Vision” will provide the basis for new planning policies and other initiatives to steer the transition of the Highway 7 corridor. Phase II of the Jane/7 Study includes meetings with landowners that have expressed interest in the Study; some are also interested in participating in the Demonstration Plan exercise.

Region of York Initiatives

At the time of preparing the Terms of Reference, the key York Region initiative related to the Highway 7 Policy Review was its Environmental Assessment for the Highway 7 Corridor Transitway. A transitway in the Highway 7 corridor would be an invaluable asset serving the significant transportation needs of all of Vaughan’s existing and growing urban areas. The City’s study will provide the policy framework for responding to the transitway, by identifying where development and redevelopment opportunities are most appropriately located. It will support policies to manage the growth that will come to the corridor, and identify appropriate land uses that permit a transitway to function effectively. York Region staff are members on the City’s technical advisory committee to help ensure effective communication between these two studies.

York Region has initiated or completed other related projects that may influence the future of the Highway 7 corridor:

- York Region Transportation Master Plan
- Private Sector Proposals to Plan, Design, Finance and Build a Rapid Transit Network in York Region
- Review of Centres, Corridors and Intensification Opportunities
- Regional Streetscape Policy
- Draft Housing Supply Strategy

The Highway 7 Policy Review provides the opportunity for the City of Vaughan to provide input into these important York Region initiatives. A representative from the Region has been invited to attend this meeting should Council have any questions or comments respecting these initiatives.

Conclusion

Phase I of the Highway 7 Policy Review is now complete, and the two reports are being brought forward for Council’s information and consideration prior to conducting Phase II meetings in the community and with landowners.

Attachments

1. Highway 7 Land Use Futures Study (Councilors only)
2. Jane/7 Employment Area Redevelopment Study (Councilors Only)

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Respectfully submitted,

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