

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – FEBRUARY 4, 2008

ENHANCING PUBLIC TRANSIT OPTIONS IN WEST VAUGHAN

Recommendation

Councillor Tony Carella recommends adoption of the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (GTTA, or “Metrolinx”) was created by the Government of Ontario to develop and implement transportation plans for the metropolitan region, encompassing the City of Toronto, the Regional Municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel and York, and the City of Hamilton; and

WHEREAS the Metrolinx board and staff are committed to:

- (1) serving as an advocate for customers, continually focusing on how to improve the system for transportation users;*
- (2) engaging in open, transparent, two-way dialogue, always seeking ideas and input from a broad spectrum of people;*
- (3) taking action, to demonstrate real progress;*
- (4) inclusiveness, ensuring that all voices are heard; and*
- (5) promoting understanding that transportation involves choices, and individuals have a responsibility to make informed decisions; and*

WHEREAS, the west side of Vaughan (that is, those portions west of Pine Valley Drive, from Steeles Avenue to the northern limit of the city, or approximately 40% of the area of Vaughan), will in the coming years witness substantial development, both residential (in the Kleinburg-Nashville area) and, industrial/commercial (in the Vaughan Business Enterprise Zone, slated to employ upwards of 60,000 people when fully built); and

WHEREAS, the concentration of residents and workers in this area in such numbers will put considerable strain on existing and planned local, regional and provincial roadways; and

WHEREAS, the sustainability of such development will be directly proportional to the availability and use of public transit modalities in whatever form they take; and

WHEREAS, the western part of Vaughan is presently bisected by a CP railway corridor of some one hundred feet in width, sufficiently ample to allow the construction of additional rail lines along the corridor;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Vaughan requests Metrolinx give priority consideration to the development of a two-way GO commuter rail service along the underused portion of the local CP right of way, to provide a link from downtown Toronto, through west Vaughan, to Bolton (in the Town of Caledon) and beyond, with consideration given to the establishment of GO stops at three historic locations----at Woodbridge Station (vicinity of the Woodbridge Fair Grounds), at Elders Mills Station (Rutherford Road, west of Highway 27), and at Kleinburg Station (at Nashville Road).

Economic Impact

Nil

Purpose

To ensure the provision of publicly-owned and operated commuter rail service through a part of the City of Vaughan which, once developed, will be both a major employment and residential area.

Background - Analysis and Options

The CP line---which runs through the west portion of Vaughan from Steeles Avenue near Pine Valley Drive to where it crosses the Albion-Vaughan Road, near Cold Creek---is the historic rail route from Toronto to northern Ontario and the west of Canada, and has always been a busy line for that reason. As it passes through Woodbridge, however, it is a much under-used transportation resource, with ample space in its cross-section for a least two more rail lines, enough to permit two-way commuter traffic between Toronto and Bolton and points beyond.

Besides passing through the well-settled residential areas of Woodbridge proper, and future residential lands west of Kleinburg, the line transects what promises to be the premier industrial zone in the GTA----the Vaughan Business Enterprise Zone, bound by Highways 27, 50, and 407, and soon to be transected by an extension of Highway 427, making its connection to Pearson International Airport a matter of minutes. It is estimated that the zone will eventually employ an estimated 60,000 thousand workers, who will benefit from a two-way public transit link. (As “two-way” suggests, it can reasonably expected that this line, once completed, will serve commuters heading to work *in* Toronto in the morning, as well as workers coming *from* Toronto at the same time to the Vaughan Business Enterprise Zone, and vice versa.)

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have been allocated and approved.

Conclusion

It is appropriate that Council respond to Metrolinx's request for comments on the future direction of transportation infrastructure in the Greater Toronto Area.

Attachments

Nil

Report prepared by:

Councillor Tony Carella

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Tony Carella