

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - MAY 14, 2007

RESOLUTION RESPECTING THE ROUTE FOR THE EXTENSION OF HIGHWAY 427

Recommendation:

Councillor Tony Carella recommends that Council adopt the following resolution, and that the City Clerk be directed to forward the resolution, once adopted, to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, the Minister of Transportation, the Honourable Gregory Sorbara, MPP, the Regions of York and Peel, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, and all affected landowners within the block bounded by Highways 50, 7, 27, and Langstaff Road:

WHEREAS the extension of Highway 427 to the vicinity of the CP intermodal yard meets the intent expressed in the provincial planning document, Places to Grow, namely that intermodal yards be accessible by 400-series highways; and

WHEREAS the determination of the appropriate route for such an extension is to be made by way of an environmental assessment under the authority of the Minister of the Environment, which study is now under way; and

WHEREAS any extension of Highway 427 will be entirely within the Vaughan Enterprise Zone, being generally those employment lands within the City of Vaughan lying north of Highway 7 between Highways 27 and 50, up to and beyond the CP intermodal yard; and

WHEREAS the Vaughan Enterprise Zone---being accessible by Highways 427, 407, 50, 27, and 7, and in close proximity to Pearson International Airport---is arguably the premier developable employment zone in the Greater Toronto Area; and

WHEREAS although preferred alignments within the study area have been identified, a single preferred route for the extension is not expected to be identified before the end of 2007; nor a final route until 2009, at the earliest; and

WHEREAS the determination of the route of an extended Highway 427 is critical to the timely availability of employment lands in the City of Vaughan; and

WHEREAS certain employment lands located in the block bounded by Highways 50, 7, and 27, and Langstaff Road (that is, the southernmost block within the environmental study area) remain within that portion of the block in which development is currently prohibited, while other lands within the same block not subject to such restrictions are being developed at an increasingly rapid pace; and

WHEREAS the environmental assessment process now under way cannot guarantee the availability of any additional employment lands in this area prior to 2009---the expected, though not assured date of the final determination of the entire route of the extension;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Council of the City of Vaughan requests that:

The area currently under environmental study be reduced, so that the southern boundary of the study area shall be Langstaff Road; and

The route of that portion of the proposed Highway 427 between Highway 7 and Langstaff Road be an extension of the current alignment of Highway 427 as it is immediately south of its present terminus at Highway 7; and/or, in the alternative,

The easterly and westerly boundaries of the study area in the block bounded by Highways 50, 7, 27 and Langstaff Road be reduced to the outer limits of the three identified alignments, with little or no additional buffering; and

The lands within the block bounded by Highways 50, 7, 27 and Langstaff Road that are currently subject to restrictions be released for appropriate development as provided under the Planning Act.

Economic Impact:

Nil

Purpose:

To ensure the timely availability of employment lands in the City of Vaughan

Communication Plan:

The resolution directs the Clerk to inform all interested parties.

Background - Analysis and Options:

The opportunity represented by the Vaughan Enterprise Zone, for increasing employment within the City of Vaughan, is being jeopardized by a long-delayed and overly-inclusive study of route options.

Regional Implications:

The Region of York has an interest in the development of employment opportunities within its jurisdiction.

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:

Time is of the essence if employment growth is to keep pace with population growth in Vaughan. Amending the area under environmental study is the most expeditious means of ensuring the availability of developable employment lands in a timely fashion.

Attachments:

None

Report prepared by:

Councillor Tony Carella

Respectfully submitted

Tony Carella
Councillor - Ward 2