

Attachment 4

Gridlock, Rapid Transit and You

Introduction and Context

Markham's two-day transportation and transit meetings provided an opportunity for audience and web participants to submit their questions and comments on both long term transit solutions and the Metrolinx plan. Full audio video proceedings of the meetings, and responses to some of these questions, can be watched at www.markham.ca

The two-day public events explored how emerging social trends, new technologies and urban pressures are driving the future of transportation and transit in the Greater Toronto Area. We had over 300 people attend in person or watch the sessions via web cast.

The event provided a unique opportunity to hear compelling and thought-provoking views from international urban planning futurists including Joe Berridge, Richard Gilbert, Neal Irwin, and Peter Newman. There was also an opportunity to learn about the City of Vancouver's integrated transit system from Lon LaClaire and about Ontario's 25-year transportation plan from Metrolinx Chair Rob Maclsaac.

The second event provided an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to provide input into the draft Metrolinx Plan. We also heard detailed presentations from Leslie Woo and John Howe from Metrolinx on how the Plan will impact Markham and how the Province plans to finance the Plan. We also heard from Regional Councillor's Gord Landon and Jim Jones as to their perspectives on the draft Plan and its impact on Markham.

At the end of the second session we asked the audience and web participants a number of questions regarding their current use of transit and what it would take them to get out of their car and use transit. We also asked some questions directly related to the Metrolinx plan specifically:

Does the Metrolinx Plan address the needs of the GTA and Hamilton? The majority of the respondents, 66% said that the Plan somewhat addresses the needs of the GTA & Hamilton. 12% of respondents said it completely addresses the needs, 5% said not at all and 17% said they did not know.

Does the Metrolinx Plan address the needs of Markham? The majority of the respondents, 59% said that the Plan somewhat addresses the needs of Markham. 11% of respondents said it completely addresses the needs, 17% said not at all and 13% said they did not know.

Considering Markham's needs is the Metrolinx timeline about right or too long? 28% of the respondents said the timeline was about right with an overwhelming 73% saying that it was too long of a timeframe. The full set of audience questions and responses is attached at the end of this section.

Audience and Web Participants' Questions and Comments through the Two-Day Summit

A Transit Vision – November 2, 2008

- One way to reduce future transportation needs is to reduce population growth. Why do more people see growth as an asset? Why not restrict growth until the infrastructure has caught up to current needs?

- It would be great if public transit could provide Internet access, news and weather information.
- Work from home/telecommuting is an option that needs to be supported by more organizations. A number of large companies in Markham do support this. What efforts are being made to encourage more employers to offer this flexibility to their employees?
- Would it not make sense to focus on transit within the city limits before we try to correct the whole of southern Ontario?
- The evening began by addressing funding, having a certain, predictable and dependable source of income for not only the initial cost, but maintenance through the years. Government funding will only go so far, and from the presentation only accounted for a sliver of the overall price. It all comes down to money. Metrolinx is a very ambitious plan.
- Can we use hydro right of ways for rapid transit?
- I would like to know if Metrolinx has approved funding for any current proposed plans?
- If so what is the schedule for preliminary design to testing and commissioning to operation?
- How you are planning to get funding for other proposed plans?
- Don't own a car- I rely completely on transit.
- When will TTC subway system be extended to beyond Finch into Thornhill, Markham and Richmond Hill? What is the time frame for building the subway? How many stations? What will be their locations? Is the plan for subway extension available to view?
- The new Carlton Rd Calming "maze" does not improve the safety of cyclists. The posting of "bike lane" signs are not indicative of any true provision for safe cycling.
- My suggestion is to 'reprint" the Carlton Rd section and others of "maze" configuration to reflect an actual bike lane. This should be painted in yellow or some other colour. Drivers will be more apt to stay away from cyclists if this was implemented.
- The answer to traffic problem is to extend the Yonge St subway to Richmond Hill for now and continued in future.
- with the commissioning of new transit vehicles, why are the new vehicles foreign built? Does Canada not have the capability to meet this production need?
- Why don't the developers fund some of the infrastructure costs? They are the ones responsible for growth and they profit from it!
- Where are the bike paths?
- Would putting LRT down the 404 as far as the Sheppard Subway be a better route than Don Mills Rd from Hwy 7 down Don Mills Rd to Sheppard Ave as LRT down Don Mills Rd would cut communities in half producing another barrier similar to 404. i.e. 2 major transportation barriers very close together- does that make sense? No. What better way to encourage people to leave their cars behind and take public transit when they are stuck in traffic on the 404, watching state of the art LRT cars speeding past with smart commuters on board.
- Thank you! Great work for all those who are involved. Very informative!
- How is the P3 partnership (407 Transit/public ownership) going to work for financing the Metrolinx plan? In the right-of-way the 407 investments – where the Province lost its say and control?.
- With the different transport groups-VIVA, TTC, GO, York Region Transit all having vested group interests, how successful do you think your plan will be in integrating fares?
- Prefer public control.
- What plan is in place (or under consideration) to improve local Markham Transit routes to better support and service existing and new residential communities and link residents to new/future rapid transit routes? (ex. within the old Town of Markham and Unionville areas) Why is the 407 rapid transit corridor not a top priority (1st 5-10 yrs)?
- More transit and don't widen roads for HOV, I would prefer dedicated lanes in the middle of the roads, see St. Clair in Toronto.
- Needs: Ample parking @ all terminals, frequent services will ensure more users.
- No-center road systems, this idea creates problems affects businesses.

- All-services must be accessible for persons with disabilities and seniors.
- Pleased to see that Ontario is looking towards highly developed, European, transit systems for ideas and guidance.
- There needs to be a shift from focus on private to public. This includes public transportation & building commuters around this paradigm. The final solution will be a combination of transit, HOV, widening roads, bike lanes etc, but the focus needs to be on reliable, frequent cost efficient transit options.
- Would it not make sense to focus on transit within the city limits before we try to correct the whole of southern Ontario?
- In Vancouver what are the future plans of expansion of skytrain moving east/Southeast from the King George Station?
- Do you see the future of transit improving enough to support our community 24 hours a day so that shift workers and flex time workers also benefit?
- Does the weather in Vancouver plays a key role in the success of their transit system?
- Do you believe that the success of public transit requires buy-in/education of today's youth?
- While I appreciate that tactics and implementation will be discussed tomorrow night - what typically represents a good balance in terms of resources dedicated to implementing the strategy/vision versus resources dedicated to immediate problems/opportunities?

A Transit Plan – November 3, 2008

- We cannot compare Toronto with Perth, Australia where it never snows. We better compare Toronto with Goteborg, Stockholm in Sweden which has a similar climate. In Canada is good to have high speed train but our more concern should be a number of people who commute & also shelter or train station where people can wait for train in -25 degrees or -30 degrees.
- The future arrival & destination of all transit is based on economic areas in which those who travel require frequent connectivity. All avenues need to be studied, the future of human travel will be small pods, probably 1 person electrical units which can travel on every terrain & possibly leading to flight as well. Every environment requires an assessment review & implementation. All economics require it & every level of government must be involved.
- Richard Gilbert thoughts fail. Pods? Trolley buses? Automated taxis? It's theory that's scope is still utilizing the same old concept. If planner Robert Moses were to design New York today, would it look the same? How about a highspeed line tapping into the rail terminal (hub) that disperses light rail communities. What about that pattern? Could the proportion have an impact on transit geometry? (Future cities).
- Build the complete public transit system soon with bus/train/fast train/automated rail. A complement system is what we need with public to start using the system.
- You build the system, ridership will increase day by day
- The transfer between routes is one of the biggest deterrents transit has to struggle with in competing with the auto. Many transfers have design problems creating unattractive travel options, such as some of the "disconnects" between GO and VIVA. How will this be dealt with and overcome?
- Where do policies surrounding the cost of car ownership coming in with a transport plan? Toronto has car ownership costs low compared to Europe for example. What can be done to push families to be one not two car operations?
- To facilitate traffic flow-what is the role of roundabouts?
- If we do not implement the type of things recommended in Metrolinx & the GTA grows as expected, what happens in 25 yrs and what is the average commute time under that scenario?
- To integrate existing transit systems in different cities, how will the fare system be updated?

- Transit needs to be easy to use. My travel to work takes at least double the time by car versus public transit and 2-3 fares. Has anyone looked at blending the fares in the GTA?
- What does panel think of road widening as a congestion solution?
- How do you plan to accommodate folks in locked in locations like inner Unionville- 15 minute walk @ -30 degrees to a bus stop, if pods are not going to be in the near future, what can we expect in the next 5 years?
- TOD- Does Markham have a plan for town wide transit oriented development? It is difficult for me to "get out of my car" because there is no other reliable alternative right now to get around. It is not a mentality but a lack of alternative options!
- Carbon offset: 8,467 lbs of CO₂
- Is there a future for toll highways? What has been the experience with Hwy 407? Do Toll roads pay for themselves over time?
- High speed rail is so common in Europe. How have they been able to justify them from a financial perspective? What's the business case?
- Toyota has incorporated in its long term strategy the production of a vehicle that will run on electric power and be able to traverse Canada with no gas or oil being used. If this new paradigm is to be achieved, where does the funding come from?
- Metrolinx plan is great but how soon can we finance it?
- Certain areas of Greater Toronto Area have grown naturally as a corridor like Don Mills north of Sheppard. How much were these areas considered in Metrolinx draft plan?
- York region believes that expanding our roads is the answer to grid lock. Help!! We also need bicycle friendly lanes on Carleton and Village Parkway. We need strong politicians to lead us out of this mess!
- What provisions are being made for grade separation- rail-rail, rail -street?
- What provisions are being made for electrification of individual railway cars rather than locomotives? Rail can produce electric power as does streetcars and subway cars now. What extra rail tracks are needed?
- There is often a co-relation between transit and housing prices. Do you think that any future investment in transit will raise the local housing prices, limiting the lower income sector from access to transit?