



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: March 3, 2026

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**SUBJECT:** City of Markham's Response to Infrastructure Ontario's Transit-Oriented Communities Program

**PREPARED BY:** John Yeh, RPP, MCIP, Senior Manager Policy and Research, Zoning and Special Projects, ext.7922

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That the March 3, 2026, report titled, "City of Markham's Response to Infrastructure Ontario's Transit-Oriented Communities Program", be received;
2. That this report be forwarded to the Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure and Infrastructure Ontario;
3. That Infrastructure Ontario allow Transit-Oriented Community proposals to be made available to the public by the City of Markham upon completion of a pre-application consultation meeting to support transparency with the public;
4. That Infrastructure Ontario allow the City of Markham to conduct public consultation to obtain input and comments on Transit-Oriented Community proposal submissions; and further,
5. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

This report provides an overview of the Province's Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) Program led by Infrastructure Ontario and how the City of Markham is engaged in the Program. The TOC program is part of the Province's plan to build new, sustainable transit by placing more housing and jobs near or at transit stations along the Ontario Line, Yonge North Subway Extension, Scarborough Subway Extension, and Eglinton Crosstown West Extension, and GO Transit and Light Rail Transit projects. This report seeks endorsement of a proposed approach to work collaboratively with Infrastructure Ontario that is transparent with the public, while achieving the goals in the City's Official Plan as a framework for sustainable growth and infrastructure, and supporting Ontario's goal of placing more housing and jobs near transit stations.

**BACKGROUND:**

The intent of the TOC program is to build vibrant, mixed-use communities that will bring more jobs, retail, public amenities and entertainment within a short distance of transit stations. TOCs are planned to be located along the Province's four subway projects (Yonge North Subway Extension, Ontario Line, Scarborough Extension, and Eglinton Crosstown West Extension), and GO Transit and Light Rail Transit projects. With TOCs, the Province seeks to achieve the following:

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- Increase transit ridership and reduce traffic congestion
  - Increase housing supply (including affordable housing) and jobs
  - Stimulate the economy through major projects
  - Bring retail and community amenities close to transit stations
  - Offset the cost of station construction

Through Infrastructure Ontario, the land use planning details of TOCs are determined on a site-by-site basis around transit stations and are subject to negotiations and input from the local municipality. The TOC program has two basic streams, a collect and compete model, where lands are assembled, zoned and then sold on the market to find a development partner, and the direct partnership model, where Infrastructure Ontario works with a willing development partner that has already assembled land to secure benefits to the province and municipality in exchange for zoning certainty provided, typically, in the form of a Minister's Zoning Order.

**The following outlines the current general process Infrastructure Ontario uses to engage municipalities to implement a land use planning framework for TOCs**

The process bypasses Planning Act requirements for a complete application submission and Public Meeting process, which would normally be conducted for an Official Plan Amendment and/or Zoning By-law Amendment.

- Pre-application consultation between the municipality and Infrastructure Ontario (public disclosure of the TOC proposal would not be permitted)
- Infrastructure Ontario submits the TOC proposal to the municipality, and releases project announcement on Infrastructure Ontario website
- The municipality reviews and comments on the TOC proposal
- Infrastructure Ontario would lead the public consultation
- Infrastructure Ontario would submit a revised TOC proposal that could respond to comments from the municipality and public
- The Province would determine the zoning approval path (Provincial or Municipal application and consultation process)
- Additional refinements, as needed, to the TOC proposal submission
- Infrastructure Ontario would submit the final TOC proposal submission for the municipality's zoning approval
- Minister's Zoning Order decision issued

To engage in the TOC process, municipalities are required to enter into non-disclosure agreements with Infrastructure Ontario that stipulate several terms for the municipalities to follow. Furthermore, there is often a significant lag between the pre-application consultation meeting and public disclosure of the TOC site and drawings where the municipality is often engaged in regular meetings with the province to comment on the proposal outside the public view.

**OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

Infrastructure Ontario's interest with TOCs at locations along major transit lines and corridors intersects with the City of Markham's plans to focus development along its regional centres and corridors. Markham's Official Plan identifies its Regional Centres, which include Markham Centre and Langstaff Gateway, and Regional Corridors. Key Development Areas along Yonge Street and

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Highway 7 rapid transit corridors will also be key locations for infill and intensification. An example of this is the Milliken Centre Secondary Plan, which was approved by Council in June 2024. Infrastructure Ontario conducted a consultation for the [Milliken GO Station TOC](#) that proposes 5,500 new residential units and support about 250 jobs in new retail spaces.

**Markham proposes an approach for TOCs to improve transparency with the public**

The current TOC process does not permit the City of Markham to disclose details to the public and comment publicly on a TOC proposal. Disclosure to the public by Infrastructure Ontario can only occur following a formal submission of the TOC proposal to the City and when Infrastructure Ontario completes their public consultation process. The example of Milliken GO Station TOC is cited above. This is a concern as Staff and Council are not permitted to comment publicly to ensure the process is transparent, especially if there are existing or in-process City plans and initiatives impacted by the TOC proposal. To improve public transparency, the following are recommendations for future TOCs proposals by Infrastructure Ontario:

- That Infrastructure Ontario allow TOC proposals to be made available to the public by the City of Markham upon completion of a pre-application consultation meeting to support transparency with the public;
- That Infrastructure Ontario allow the City of Markham to conduct public consultation to obtain input and comments on TOC proposal submissions; and further

These proposed recommendations aim to achieve a publicly transparent and collaborative approach with Infrastructure Ontario that also meets the goals and objectives of the City's Official Plan as a framework to focus development along the City's regional centres (Markham Centre, Langstaff Gateway) and corridors (Yonge Street, Highway 7, etc) and contribute to sustainable growth.

Should Markham Council not endorse the recommended approach, the alternative is to continue the existing approach outlined in the Background section of this report.

It is possible that Infrastructure Ontario will not endorse the recommended approach. If Council endorses the approach above and Infrastructure Ontario does not consent, Staff will require direction from Council on whether it should continue to engage in line with Infrastructure Ontario's preferred approach, or withdraw from participation.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not applicable

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:**

Not applicable

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

This report aligns with the strategic focus of Growth Management, Transportation/Transit, and Municipal Services.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Planning and Urban Design, Engineering, Legal Services

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

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