



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: October 15, 2019

SUBJECT: York Region Roads Capital Acceleration Plan (City-wide)

PREPARED BY: Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation, ext. 4838

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report entitled “York Region Roads Capital Acceleration Plan (City-wide)” be received; and
2. That York Region be requested to re-prioritize the proposed roads capital acceleration projects in Markham by delaying the Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing North of Major Mackenzie Drive project while accelerating the widening of 16th Avenue further east of Warden Avenue; and further
3. That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

This report requests York Region to re-prioritize its proposed roads capital acceleration projects in Markham and presents the rationale behind the request.

BACKGROUND:

York Region Council approved a roads capital acceleration plan in 2018 that funds road capital projects beyond its 10-year Roads Capital Construction Program within the next 10 years (see Attachment “A”).

Proposed accelerated projects in Markham include:

- Warden Avenue – Major Mackenzie Drive to 19th Avenue
- Kennedy Road – Major Mackenzie Drive to north of Elgin Mills Road
- 16th Avenue – Woodbine Avenue to Warden Avenue
- Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing North of 16th Avenue
- Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing North of Major Mackenzie Drive

The estimated total construction cost estimate of the above five projects to the Region is approximately \$155M (see Attachment “B”). The two Highway 404 Mid-Block crossings will also require financial contribution from the local municipalities in accordance to the Region’s mid-block cost-sharing policy.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Proposed acceleration projects is to support major development areas

In general, road improvement projects are carried out to accommodate growth in traffic demand or to build up a transit priority and/or high occupancy vehicle (HOV) network. Typically, they involve roads that are close to new development areas or in existing

commuter corridors where the accumulation of traffic from different growth areas exceeds available capacity.

Currently, two major development areas in Markham are the re-development of York Downs Golf Course on the north side of 16th Avenue and the Future Urban Area north of Major Mackenzie Drive.

Warden Avenue and Kennedy Road improvements service the Future Urban Area

The proposed accelerated improvements of Warden Avenue (Major Mackenzie Drive to 19th Avenue) and Kennedy Road (Major Mackenzie Drive to north of Elgin Mills Road) will support the development of the Future Urban Area. The City is also preparing to initiate an environmental assessment for improvements to Elgin Mills Road east of Victoria Square that will also support development of the Future Urban Area.

16th Avenue and Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing North of 16th Avenue projects alleviate east-west traffic demand

The proposed accelerated improvement of 16th Avenue (Woodbine Avenue to Warden Avenue) and accelerated construction of the Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing North of 16th Avenue will support the York Downs re-development to some degree. The York Downs re-development extends from Warden Avenue to Kennedy Road on the north side of 16th Avenue. Increased traffic demand from York Downs is anticipated on 16th Avenue from Kennedy Road to Highway 404.

In addition, growth in east Markham along the 16th Avenue corridor will also generate additional trips. As is the case of the mid-block crossing north of Highway 7, Highway 404 mid-block crossings effectively distribute traffic across the Provincial expressway, which is a barrier to east-west movement. However, congestion on 16th Avenue east of Warden Avenue continues to be a pressing issue as growth continues in east Markham. Since York Region is already proposing to accelerate the widening of 16th Avenue to Warden Avenue, staff is recommending that a further easterly widening of 16th Avenue beyond Warden Avenue to at least Kennedy Road be accelerated.

Available York Region capital budget will be a challenge

Of a lower priority is the Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing North of Major Mackenzie Drive project. Delaying this project will free up capital budget that could be re-directed to extending the 16th Avenue project past Warden Avenue.

Since the Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing project cost is shared three ways between York Region, City of Richmond Hill and City of Markham, delaying the Mid-Block Crossing North of Major Mackenzie Drive will only free up about \$10M for York Region while extending the widening of 16th Avenue to Kennedy Road will cost about \$24M.

With available capital budget being a significant challenge, staff is conducting discussions with York Region to explore this project re-prioritization opportunity and to finalize the proposed Roads Capital Acceleration Plan projects in Markham.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is no direct financial implications to the City as a result of this report. The outcome of the recommendations of this report is the transfer of York Region roads capital budget from one project to another. If the Highway 404 Mid-Block Crossing North of Major Mackenzie Drive project is delayed, the City would benefit by not having to contribute the City's share of the project until a later date.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Accelerating road improvement projects in Markham will support the City in achieving its growth targets in the Official Plan and to encourage alternative modes of transportation by providing transit priority and HOV lanes. Therefore, the recommendations align with the City's Strategic Plan goal of "Safe & Sustainable Community".

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Brian Lee, P.Eng.
Director, Engineering

Arvin Prasad, MPA, RPP, MCIP
Commissioner, Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment "A" – 2019 York Region 10-Year Roads Capital Construction Program and Proposed Acceleration Projects

Attachment "B" – York Region's Proposed Roads Capital Acceleration Projects in Markham (April 2019)