



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Arvin Prasad, Commissioner, Development Services

Prepared by: Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation, Ext. 4838

Date: October 13, 2020

Re: Steeles Avenue East Widening Update – Markham Road to Ninth Line (Ward 7)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the memorandum titled “Steeles Avenue East Widening Update – Markham Road to Ninth Line (Ward 7)” be received; and,
2. That the City of Toronto be requested to complete the widening of Steeles Avenue East between Tapscott Road and Ninth Line Road by 2024; and
3. That The Regional Municipality of York be requested to provide Markham Council with an update on the Steeles Avenue jurisdictional issue; and
4. That this Council resolution be forwarded to the City of Toronto and The Regional Municipality of York; and further,
5. That Staff be directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

BACKGROUND:

Steeles Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the City of Toronto. This memorandum provides an update on the status of the Steeles Avenue - east of Markham Road to Ninth Line widening project. The last update to Council was provided on February 25, 2019.

The widening of Steeles Avenue East from east of Markham Road to Ninth Line was planned as part of the Donald Cousens Parkway to Morningside Avenue Link Environmental Assessment (EA), connecting Highway 48 north of Major Mackenzie Drive to the 407ETR and to an extension of Morningside Avenue in the City of Toronto. As part of that individual environmental assessment approval from the Province, York Region and the City of Toronto are required to resolve the current jurisdictional issues for Steeles Avenue and to agree on roles and responsibilities in implementing this project. Principles for an agreement between York Region and the City of Toronto were endorsed in 2014 by both Councils, and a

draft agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities for each municipality for capital and operating parameters was developed in 2017.

In addition to the section of Steeles Avenue East widening, the EA also includes a widening of Ninth Line/Donald Cousens Parkway from Steeles Avenue to Box Grove Bypass and an extension of Morningside Avenue to Steeles Avenue from its current terminus at McNicoll Avenue. See Attachment 'A'.

The City of Toronto has been conducting the detailed design of the Steeles Avenue East widening since 2018 with an original construction start date of 2021.

DISCUSSION:

Steeles Avenue East Widening Project is Delayed

With regard to the Steeles Avenue East widening project, additional requirements related to stormwater management and watercourse crossings have been encountered by Toronto in the detailed design assignment. These additions have budget, schedule and City of Toronto Council approval implications. The amount of delay to the project caused by these additions are unknown at this time but is expected to be more than one year.

For the other major components of the Donald Cousens Parkway Extension project:

1. York Region is conducting the detailed design of the widening of Ninth Line/Donald Cousens Parkway from Steeles Avenue to Box Grove Bypass. The construction of this widening is programmed in York Region's 10-Year Roads and Transit Capital Construction Plan to start in 2022. This construction timing is planned to coincide with the original timing of the Steeles Avenue East widening.
2. The City of Toronto had previously indicated that the extension of Morningside Avenue will be implemented through their development approval process. Development is now occurring on the land parcel at the southeast corner of Steeles Avenue and Tapscott Road. The section of Morningside Avenue extension from Steeles Avenue to Passmore Avenue is being constructed with that development and is anticipated to be completed in 2021. The remaining section of Morningside Avenue extension from Passmore Avenue to McNicoll Avenue will then remain to be constructed by future land development on the adjacent lands.

Shared Responsibility of Steeles Avenue Still Pending Negotiations between York Region and City of Toronto

As noted above, the widening of Steeles Avenue East is subject to an agreement between York Region and the City of Toronto that will specify the roles and responsibilities of each municipality in terms of capital and operating parameters. This condition of approval for the EA included a five-year deadline, starting from the January 2013 approval of the EA, for the two municipalities to arrive at an agreement.

Principles for an agreement were set out and agreed to in 2014 by both parties, and a detailed agreement was developed in 2017 but not executed. See Attachment 'B'.

As an agreement has not been achieved, York Region has been obtaining one-year extensions from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to the above deadline since 2018.

As there has not been any further updates from York Region on this issue since 2018, staff recommends that York Region be requested to provide an update on the status of discussions with the City of Toronto on the shared responsibility of Steeles Avenue so that Council may have a more complete understanding of the status of the Steeles Avenue east widening project.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Remaining unconstructed components of the Donald Cousens Parkway to Morningside Avenue Link
- B. 2018 York Region Update on the Toronto/York Steeles Avenue Agreement