



**NOTICE OF MOTION:** **REIMAGINE THE STOUFFVILLE GO TRANSIT CORRIDOR LINE**

**MOVED BY:** **REGIONAL COUNCILLOR JIM JONES**

**SECONDED BY:** **REGIONAL COUNCILLOR JOE LI**

**WHEREAS** there is a need to reimagine the Stouffville GO Transit Corridor Line into a subway style service and land use plan as well as to create the high-speed 407 Crosstown Transitway Corridor, coordinated at a supra-regional level with all affected municipalities within the 416 and 905 area code, spearheading a major transformation of the Stouffville GO Transit line to unlock economic opportunity and job generation, increase ridership and optimize investments in transit, create complete, walkable communities, provide for a range of housing choices and affordability levels and create unique destinations surrounding each Transit Oriented Development (TOD) station areas (refer to Appendices: for background material and detail); and

**WHEREAS** a comprehensive plan could produce a more efficient and effective two-way all-day corridor of destinations surrounding GO Transit Stations coupled with 24-hour land uses that focuses on the public realm and community amenities to create a vibrant and liveable economic corridor that is not premised on the current commuter model between the 905 and downtown Toronto areas; and

**WHEREAS** all GO Commuter Transit Line, including the Stouffville Line is currently an underperforming, low ridership lines that needs revitalization into vibrant complete destinations TODs with high animation activity, high ridership, multiple amenities, jobs, retail establishments, and concentration of facilities; and,

**WHEREAS** Planning GO TOD stations at the corridor level allows for the coordination of land use and transportation, which can provide fast, direct, and cost-effective access to more destinations for more people. It also allows for the concentration of higher-density, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development within walking distance of frequent transit stops and stations, in tandem with measures to discourage unnecessary driving. This supports sustainable transportation choices and other community goals, resulting in lower levels of vehicle use, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, improved air quality, and healthier lifestyles; and

**WHEREAS** a joint committee lead by the Province, Toronto/Markham/Stouffville and York Region are well positioned to work together and implement this comprehensive work and bring all levels of government, agencies and stakeholders together in a joint initiative to reimagine the Stouffville GO Transit Corridor and its surrounding lands cross municipal boundaries and agency/government jurisdictions; and

**WHEREAS** Toronto/Markham/Stouffville Growth Strategy describes the goals, strategies, and actions agreed to by the municipal partnership to pursue sustainable growth and development to 2051 and beyond. It is based on containing growth inside the urban containment boundary, and focusing this growth in Toronto, Markham and Stouffville's Urban Growth Centres and other areas well-served by frequent transit service. It aims to support sustainable transportation choices with an emphasis on Toronto/Markham/Stouffville land use patterns that promote walking, cycling, and transit; and

**WHEREAS** a new transportation plan for Toronto/Markham will set out the goals for a transportation strategy to keep people and our economy moving, strengthen our communities, and protect the environment. It will set out the goals for Toronto/Markham's integrated transportation system and outlines the importance of coordinating land use and transportation to be proactive in using transit to serve and shape land use. MTO (Metrolinx) are called to lead the planning and development of a new GTHA Regional Rail Integrated Transportation Strategy, with a planning horizon of 2051, in coordination with Toronto and Markham's 2051 and beyond Transportation Strategy; and

**WHEREAS** Corridor-level planning can attract more economic development opportunities and substantial investment. Developers and businesses are often attracted to corridors with planned transit oriented development, as they see the potential for a larger customer base and improved accessibility. This can lead to more significant economic growth and job opportunities along the entire corridor; and

**WHEREAS** Community Connectivity and Planning at the corridor level encourages the creation of pedestrian-friendly pathways, bike lanes, and other non-motorized transportation options that connect various stations and surrounding areas. Promotes active transportation and enhances overall livability of the community; and

**WHEREAS** Planning and urban design can, at the corridor level, facilitate the establishment of consistent design and development standards across the entire corridor. It can lead to a more cohesive, aesthetic and functional environment, avoiding abrupt transitions between different station areas; and

**WHEREAS** Corridor-level planning allows for more effective public engagement. Communities can provide input on the overall vision and priorities for the entire corridor, fostering a sense of ownership and involvement in the planning process. Regular Corridor Committee meetings will help to reduce nimbyism; and

**WHEREAS** By planning at the corridor level, environmental impacts and considerations can be assessed and mitigated on a broader scale. This might include evaluating the overall ecological footprint, preserving and increasing green spaces, and implementing sustainable practices that benefit the entire corridor.

### **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the Ontario Government Be Requested** to form an inter-governmental, inter-municipal, stakeholder and agency steering committee and working group and undertake a comprehensive study, followed by development of a plan that will unlock the land use, economic and transit opportunity of the Stouffville GO Transit Corridor Line and its surrounding lands; and
- 2. That the Political Steering Committee and the Government Technical Working Group** be supported by various experts, including urban planners, urban design architects, engineers, economists, environmental specialists, and community stakeholders. Collaboration between government agencies, transit authorities, and private entities would be essential to successfully realize the transformation of the Stouffville GO transit Corridor line and the evolution of Transit-Oriented Developments; and
- 3. That the Following Matters be Considered as Part of the Study and Plan** (refer to Appendices for details):
  - a. Provide land use, typologies and communities that optimizes the frequent rail transit investment where communities are seamlessly linked by high frequency public LRT.
  - b. Provide Complete Destination Transit-Oriented Development that is seamlessly linked with 24-hour uses that create two-way all-day traffic between Toronto's Union Station and Stouffville's Lincolnville Station

- c. Evaluate and implement autonomous vehicles in a geo-fenced environment and micro-mobility connections to support first-mile/last-mile solutions at transit rail station areas
- d. Create a multi-modal corridor of transit supported neighbourhoods (like a string of pearls along the corridor)
- e. Create complete communities and hierarchy of destinations, employment centres and amenities within the sub-centres that generate and attract two-way all-day traffic
- f. Examine opportunities for renewables and district energy generation, solar and geo-thermal solutions within the corridor
- g. Provide a Range of Housing Choices and Affordability
- h. Balance City-Wide and Regional Goals with the Existing Communities and Its Context
- i. Ensure Job Space and Diversity through a Comprehensive Job Creation Strategy
- j. Evaluate opportunities to support indoor urban vertical farming at each TOD transit rail station area
- k. Explore the creation of true digital twins of the affected municipalities that utilize the internet of things to monitor utilities and the transportation grid in real time and improve analysis, projection and development review

**4. In Addition to the Above, that the Following Key Steps Should be Considered to Guide the Study:**

- a. Define the Scope and Objectives
- b. Assess existing Infrastructure and Demand
- c. Identify Potential Transit Oriented Development Communities Stations
- d. Conduct Stouffville GO Transit Corridor Feasibility Study
- e. Develop Transit Oriented Communities Concepts
- f. Analyze Cost and Funding Options
- g. Public Engagement and Consultation
- h. Develop an Implementation Plan
- i. Monitor and Evaluate
- j. Plan major GTA Sports, Entertainment and Convention Facilities at the Unionville GO/407 Transitway Hub

**5. That the Following Programmes and Pilots be Considered to Guide the Project to Reimagine the Stouffville GO Transit line as a Comprehensive Transit Corridor with integrated urban development and sustainable features. To achieve this vision, a variety of studies and planning efforts will be necessary:**

- A. Conduct a Technical and Financial Feasibility Study** to assess the technical, financial, and operational viability of the proposed upgrades and additions to the transit line, including but not limited to:
- i. Transportation Demand Analysis:** Analyze the current and projected transportation demand along the corridor, considering population growth, employment distribution and other demographic factors.
  - ii. Infrastructure and Engineering Studies:** Conduct engineering studies to determine the feasibility of the rail track, whether to tunnel, elevate, or grade separations, and other infrastructure upgrades along the corridor.
  - iii. Environmental Impact Assessment:** Evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the transit line upgrades, new stations, and increased urban development, and develop strategies for mitigating negative effects.

- iv. Train Technology and Automation Train Control Implementation Study:** Explore the technical requirements, costs and benefits of implementing driverless LRT technology, automatic train control, and autonomous vehicles in the transit station areas geofenced campus.
- v. Waste-to-Energy Infrastructure Study:** Assess the possibility of central waste-to-energy facilities at each transit station areas to manage waste sustainably and produce energy. Evaluate technology options, environmental impacts, and regulatory considerations.
- vi. Financial and Funding Strategy:** Develop a funding strategy that considers public and private funding sources, potential revenue streams from commercial development, and long-term financial sustainability.
- vii. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Investigate the potential for public-private partnerships to help finance, develop, and operate the new transit corridor and station areas; and
- viii. Implementation Plan:** Develop a phased implementation plan that outlines the timeline, milestones, and responsibilities for each stage of the transit corridor transformation.

**B. Engage A World-Class Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Consultant Team to masterplan the entire Stouffville GO corridor and every TOD Station, including but not limited to:**

- i. Station Area Master Plans:** Develop master plans for each of the proposed transit station areas. These plans should include mixed-use development concepts, urban design guidelines, land use strategies, and strategies for creating complete destination stations. Consider factors like job distribution, housing density, entertainment facilities, creating great public realm, green spaces, and building on top of the station.
- ii. Land Use and Zoning Studies:** Collaborate with local municipalities to update zoning regulations and land use policies that encourage mixed-use development and prevent single-family housing and townhouses.
- iii. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy:** Establish design guidelines to ensure aesthetic coherence, functionality, and sustainability in the development of stations and surrounding areas. These guidelines would encompass building heights, aesthetics, green spaces, and public amenities.
- iv. Indoor Urban Vertical Farming Feasibility:** Assess the feasibility of integrating urban vertical farming facilities at each station, considering factors such as space, technology, and economic viability.
- v. Use 3D Modelling Software:** Create a 3D printed model and a digital twin of each transit station area.
- vi. Economic and Job Analysis:** Assess the potential for job creation along the transit corridor. Identify sectors that could thrive in proximity to transit stations, such as technology hubs, commercial centres, and research institutions. This study must consider how to attract businesses to establish their presence at each station.
- vii. Housing Market Analysis:** Understand the housing market dynamics in the Greater Toronto Area, including housing affordability issues. Explore different housing typologies, such as mid-rise and high-rise condos, to accommodate the projected population growth and demand for housing. Examine strategies to ensure housing affordability while maintaining the desired urban density.
- viii. Modular Prefabrication Condominium Construction Feasibility:** Study the feasibility of using modular prefabricated construction methods for the creation of mid-rise and buildings at each transit station area.
- ix. Legal and Regulatory Framework:** Review existing legal and regulatory frameworks and identify any necessary changes to support the proposed transformation of the transit line and TOD station areas.

- x. Conduct a visual preference survey and study:** Solicit feedback in urban planning, architecture, and design to gather public opinions about the visual qualities of different environments, landscapes, buildings, and urban elements; and
- xi. Community Engagement, Stakeholder Involvement and Visual Preference Survey:** Conduct public engagement sessions to involve residents in the planning process. Utilize visual preference surveys to gather input on design elements, community preferences, and potential concerns. This can help address potential “NIMBY” (Not in My Backyard) reactions and ensure community buy-in.
- xii. Heritage Districts:** So, while there isn’t a specific policy on single-storey buildings near rail transit stations or in heritage districts, the policies is to encourage denser developments in these areas to accommodate more residents and preserve the character of heritage districts.
- xiii. Strategically Plan Major Destinations** along the Stouffville GO Corridor in an integrated rail transit network.
- xiv. Seek guidance from the Premier, Ministers of Sport and Economic Development and the Canadian Sports Institute of Ontario (CSIO),** on how the Sports, Entertainment & Convention Centre is part of the economic strategy for the integrated GTA rail transit network.
- xv. Hold a Design Contest** and unveil the concept of the Sports, Entertainment & Convention Destination at a kickoff Luncheon.

**C. Establish a Stouffville GO TOD Corridor Committee to ensure integrated Transit Corridor TOD Planning is maintained:**

- i. This is essential for creating efficient, safe, and sustainable transportation systems that serve the needs of the communities.
- ii. This committee should consider a multidisciplinary approach that considers various factors including transportation, land use, urban design, economic development, job creation, and community engagement. Tri-Government Complete Destination TOD Corridor Political Steering Committee; and
- iii. Conduct regular transparent committee meetings both in person and hybrid.

**Conclusion:** Conducting a masterplan study for the Stouffville GO Transit corridor is crucial to meet the growing transportation needs of the 1.5 million people it serves. By learning from successful transit systems, optimizing capacity, and exploring cost-effective solutions, we can enhance the efficiency, capacity, and overall performance of the corridor. This study will provide valuable insights and recommendations for future infrastructure upgrades, operational improvements, and station design modifications.

## **6. That This Resolution be Provided to the Following:**

- The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
- Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
- Hon. Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions, and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Hon. Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
- Hon. Francois-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science, and Industry
- Hon. Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities
- Hon. Mary Ng, Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development
- Hon. Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change
- Hon. Pablo Rodriguez, Minister of Transport and Quebec Lieutenant
- Hon. Soraya Martinez Ferrada, Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec
- Hon. Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Physical Activity
- Hon. Kamal Khera, Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities
- Hon. Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern ON
- Hon. Rechie Valdez, Minister of Small Business
- Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
- Hon. Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Hon. Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure
- Hon. Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation
- Hon. Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
- Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance
- Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Hon. Todd Smith, Minister of Energy
- Hon. Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport
- Phil Verster, President and Chief Executive Officer, Metrolinx
- Donald Wright, Chair of the Board of Directors, Metrolinx
- Michael Lindsay, President and Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure Ontario
- Marit Stiles, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Ontario
- John Fraser, Interim Leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario
- Brian Bentz, President and CEO, Alectra Utilities
- Brian MacPherson, Executive Director, 2030 Commonwealth Games
- Debbie Low, President & CEO, Canadian Sports Institute of Ontario
- York Region Councillors
- Mayor and Councillors, Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Whitchurch Stouffville
- Mayor and Councillors, City of Toronto
- CEOs and Commissioners of Planning, York Region, Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan
- City Clerks – Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Durham, Brampton, Mississauga, Toronto
- Local York Region MPPs and MPs
- A Better GTA – An Alliance of GTA Resident and Ratepayers Groups in the GTA
- Media - CBC, CTV, City News, Toronto Star, Globe & Mail, York Region.com