



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: May 14, 2018

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**SUBJECT:** Municipal Road Transfer - Elgin Mills Road Transfer and Donald Cousens Parkway Extension Transportation Planning Study (Wards 2, 5 and 6)

**PREPARED BY:** Loy Cheah, Acting Director, Engineering, ext. 4838  
Joseph Palmisano, Manager, Transportation, ext. 6200

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the May 14, 2018 Report entitled “Municipal Road Transfer – Elgin Mills Road and Donald Cousens Parkway Extension Transportation Planning Study” be received; and,
- 2) That York Region be requested to assume Elgin Mills Road between Victoria Square Boulevard and York-Durham Line in the City of Markham into the York Region road system; and,
- 3) That Staff be authorized to engage York Region to jointly evaluate and address related environmental and financial matters necessary for the transfer of Elgin Mills Road into the York Region road system as per the Regional Road Assumption Policy Update (June 2014); and,
- 4) That Staff be authorized to engage York Region to conduct a joint Donald Cousens Parkway Extension transportation planning study in 2019 to re-assess the Regional function of Donald Cousens Parkway Extension and 19th Avenue; and,
- 5) That, upon completion of the Elgin Mills Road evaluation and the Donald Cousens Parkway transportation study, staff be directed to report back, on findings and recommendations; and further,
- 6) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Not Applicable.

**PURPOSE:**

This report seeks:

1. Council approval to request York Region to assume Elgin Mills Road between Victoria Square Boulevard and York-Durham Line into the Regional road system, and
2. Council authorization to partner with York Region to conduct a study of Donald Cousens Parkway Extension and define the segments of 19th Avenue that should be considered for assumption into the Regional road system.

**BACKGROUND:**

The travel pattern in North Markham are influenced by ongoing and planned developments in the City of Markham and by area-wide growth within York Region and the Greater Toronto Area. The 404 North Secondary Plan and the Future Urban Area (“FUA”) are two strategic growth areas in North Markham (see Attachment ‘A’) that will contribute to changes in travel pattern in the area.

More importantly, the road functions of Elgin Mills Road and 19th Avenue are expected to evolve with the changing travel pattern. The City currently has jurisdictions of Elgin Mills Road from east of Victoria Square Boulevard to York-Durham Line, and 19th Avenue from Highway 404 to York-Durham Line. Both roads will likely be carrying increased proportions of Regional traffic as a result of continuing growth and developments in Markham and surrounding municipalities. In a staff report in 2008, Council had requested the Region to assume 19th Avenue from Highway 404 to Woodbine Avenue in anticipation of a future Highway 404 interchange at 19th Avenue. The Region has not acted on that request.

**Regional Road Assumption Policy**

City Staff have initiated preliminary discussions with York Region Staff regarding the long-term functions of Elgin Mills Road and 19th Avenue and to better understand the Region’s visions and plans for these roads. The Region may consider sections of Elgin Mills Road and 19th Avenue to be a part of the Regional road system. According to the Regional Road Assumption Policy’s (see Attachment ‘B’) *Regionally Significant Transportation Network Criteria*, the road must meet one of the following function:

- Perform a cross-boundary, inter-regional or inter-municipal function;
- Provide a logical connection in the Regional Road network and will fill a gap where one currently exists;
- Provide a direct link to the Provincial highway system; or
- Support an existing or planned rapid transit route or connection to a major transit hub.

For the Region to assume the roads, other criteria and conditions must also be addressed relating to existing corridor condition and environmental criteria (e.g. contamination of right-of-way, structural condition, operational issues, etc.), and financial and operational criteria (e.g. immediate maintenance needs, lifecycle costs and financial reserves, system support impacts, etc.).

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

Both Elgin Mills Road and 19th Avenue would meet the Region’s *Regionally Significant Transportation Network Criteria* (as both will satisfy at least one of the criteria).

**Table 1: Transportation Network Criteria Assessment**

No.	Transportation Network Criteria	Elgin Mills Road	19th Avenue	Comment
1	Perform a cross-boundary, inter-regional or inter-municipal function;	✓	✓	Inter-municipal traffic between Markham, Whitchurch-Stouffville, and Richmond Hill.
2	Provide a logical connection in the Regional Road network and will fill a gap where one currently exists;	✓	✓	Connects to existing north-south Regional roads i.e. Warden Avenue, Kennedy Road and McCowan Road.
3	Provide a direct link to the Provincial highway system;	✓	✓	Connects between Highway 404 and Highway 48.
4	Support an existing or planned rapid transit route or connection to a major transit hub	✗	✗	No known rapid transit route planned.

**Elgin Mills Road**

Elgin Mills Road east of Woodbine Avenue currently carries two general purpose lanes. Even though Elgin Mills Road east of Victoria Square Boulevard is outside of the current urban area of Markham, it carries in excess of 800 vehicles in the peak hour at the busiest section. This traffic originates mostly from Whitchurch-Stouffville and Durham Region and therefore carries mostly inter-municipal traffic.

The 2016 York Region Transportation Master Plan has identified the need for widening Elgin Mills Road to four lanes (from Woodbine Avenue to the proposed Donald Cousens Parkway Extension) to accommodate the FUA developments and general growth in background travel demand. Although Elgin Mills Road east of Victoria Square Boulevard is under the City's jurisdiction, it is evident that York Region considers this link to be "Regionally significant" as it has been included as one of its projects in the York Region Development Charges By-law.

The planning of the FUA has reached a point where secondary plans and draft plans of subdivision are being developed. Therefore, details on what to plan and protect for the right-of-way of Elgin Mills Road need to be determined as soon as possible in order not to delay the development of the FUA. The transfer of jurisdiction of Elgin Mills Road from the City to the Region will provide certainty and direction for the development of the FUA.

For the Region to assume Elgin Mills Road, City staff will work with York Region to evaluate and address the matters as defined in the Regional Road Assumption Policy. Therefore, staff be authorized to engage York Region to jointly evaluate and address

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related environmental and financial matters necessary for the transfer of Elgin Mills Road into the York Region road system.

### **Donald Cousens Parkway Extension and 19th Avenue**

The Donald Cousens Parkway Extension as a transportation corridor has not been analyzed and defined to a level of detail that could facilitate the planning for 19th Avenue. The key question that must be addressed is whether the Donald Cousens Parkway Extension is a new transportation corridor requiring an entirely new right-of-way from the existing road grid system, or whether the existing road grid can be improved to provide the role and function of the Donald Cousens Parkway Extension without a new corridor.

The function of 19th Avenue within the City of Markham and York Region road network is very much tied to the plan for the Donald Cousens Parkway Extension and a future interchange with Highway 404. The extent to which 19th Avenue, and possibly part of Elgin Mills Road, is the Donald Cousens Parkway Extension has yet to be defined, and thus, the role and function of the entire length of 19th Avenue as a possible Regional road needs to be examined. This uncertainty affects City planning for both 19th Avenue and Elgin Mills Road.

Based on the early discussions with York Region staff on this issue, there is consensus that a joint transportation planning study is necessary to assess the ability of the existing road grid network to absorb the function of the proposed Donald Cousens Parkway Extension and the function of 19th Avenue as a Regional road. Therefore, it is recommended that staff engage York Region to conduct such a study.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

There may be financial implications for the City as a result of the assessment of the condition of Elgin Mills Road in preparation for transfer of jurisdiction to York Region. The financial impact will be determined subsequent to that assessment.

The cost of the transportation planning study for the North Markham area is projected to be in the range of \$500,000. A more refined cost estimate will be developed from the study terms of reference that is to be developed in consultation with York Region staff as will the City's share of the study cost, if any. A budget request will be made for the City's share of the study cost, if any, as part of the annual budget approval process.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

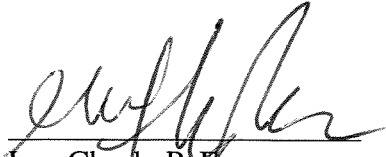
### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The recommendations of this report align with the strategic focus for a Safe and Sustainable Community through on-going management of the City's transportation network and Stewardship of Money and Resources through the cost savings associated with not having Elgin Mills Road as an asset.

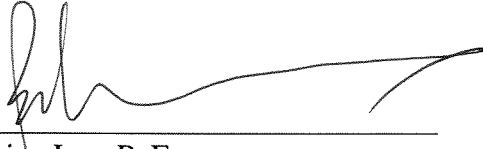
**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Operations and Planning Departments have reviewed this report.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**



Loy Cheah, P. Eng.  
Acting Director, Engineering

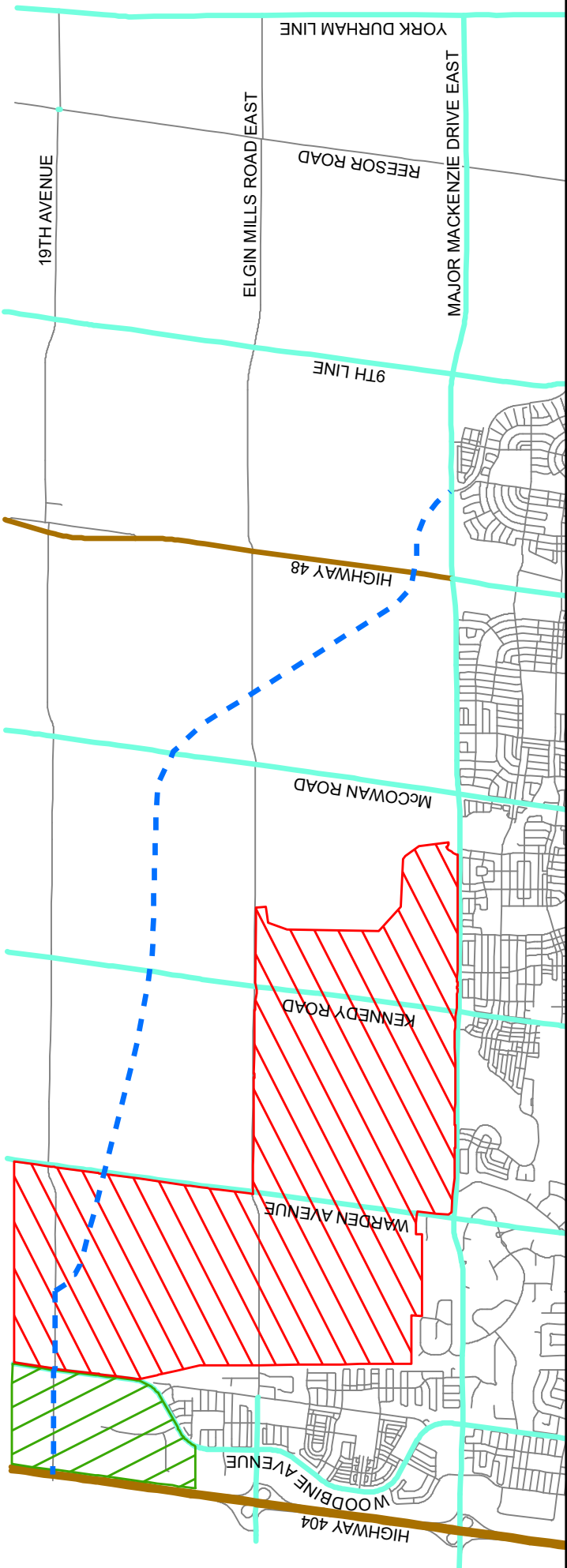


Brian Lee, P. Eng.  
Acting Commissioner, Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**






Attachment A: North Markham Growth Areas

Attachment B: York Region Road Assumption Policy



# North Markham Growth Areas



-  Future Urban Area Boundary
-  404 North Secondary Plan Boundary
-  Donald Cousens Parkway Extension
-  Region of York Arterial Road
-  Provincial Highway

DATE: 01/05/2018  
Attachment 'A'

Drawn By: RT  
Checked By: JP

<b>Regional Road Assumption Policy</b>	<b>Edocs No.: 145599</b> <b>Original Approval Date: June 23, 2005</b> <b>Policy Last Updated: June 26, 2014</b>
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**POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Regional Road Assumption policy will be used when considering the transfer of jurisdiction of a road either from a Local Municipality to the Region or from the Region to a Local Municipality.

**PURPOSE:**

This policy establishes the criteria and issues that are to be considered when determining whether the jurisdiction of a road will be transferred from a Local Municipality to the Region or from the Region to a Local Municipality.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Local Municipality:** Municipalities located within the Regional Municipality of York, including the Town of Aurora, Town of East Gwillimbury, Town of Georgina, Township of King, City of Markham, Town of Newmarket, Town of Richmond Hill, City of Vaughan and Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

**Regional Road:** A road which is under the jurisdiction of The Regional Municipality of York.

**DESCRIPTION:**

**1.0 Considerations for the Interjurisdictional Transfer of a Road**

The following criteria and issues shall be considered when assessing the proposed transfer of jurisdiction over a road:

1.1 Regionally Significant Transportation Network Criteria

To form part of the Regional Road system, the road must support the Region’s transportation plans and objectives as defined by (but not limited to) the Transportation Master Plan, Regional Official Plan and Vision 2051.

Additionally, to form part of the Regional Road system, the road must meet one of the following function:

- perform a cross-boundary, inter-regional or inter-municipal function;
- provide a logical connection in the Regional Road network and will fill a gap where one currently exists;
- provide a direct link to the Provincial highway system; or
- support an existing or planned rapid transit route or connection to a major transit hub.

### 1.2 Existing Corridor and Environmental Conditions and Issues

It is necessary to assess the existing condition of the road and any issues related to the road, including:

- the environmental condition of the road (such as a Phase 1 environmental site assessment);
- whether there are any issues with:
  - drainage;
  - traffic noise; or
  - access;
- the condition of:
  - the pavement;
  - any streetscape and trees; and
  - any structures, culverts and retaining walls associated with the road; and
- whether there are any outstanding legal issues.

Any significant existing corridor and environmental conditions or issues may require additional analysis or assessment by the Region or the local municipality before a recommendation is made concerning whether to transfer jurisdiction of the road.

### 1.3 Financial and Operational Costs

Consideration shall also be given to the following financial and operational matters:

- anticipated long-term operating and capital costs of the road (asset management/life cycle costs);
- short-term maintenance costs taking into consideration the condition of the road;
- impact on road operational plans and facilities; and
- development charges and asset replacement reserves to be transferred by the local municipality.



**2.0 Responsibilities**

1. If the interjurisdictional transfer of a road is being considered, the Region and the Local Municipality shall refer to the issues and criteria set out in this Policy to evaluate the appropriateness of the transfer.
2. The Region and the Local Municipality shall consult with each other and provide any information that may be useful to evaluate the condition of the road, including all available information regarding surface and sub-surface infrastructure, engineering drawings, reports and digital files.
3. The Region and the Local Municipality shall each prepare a report to their respective Councils concerning the proposed change in the jurisdiction of the road.
4. The municipality having jurisdiction of the road prior to the proposed transfer shall notify adjacent land owners of the proposed change in jurisdiction.
5. Any agreed to Development Charge (DC) reserves and asset replacement reserves specific to the road shall be transferred to the municipality having jurisdiction of the road.

**CONTACT:**

Transportation and Community Planning Department

**APPROVAL INFORMATION**

**CAO Approval Date: N/A**

**Committee: Committee of the Whole      Clause: 23      Report No.: 11**

**Council Approval: Minute No. 91      Page: 52      Date: June 26, 2014**