



**Memo to
Development Services Committee**

To: Development Services Committee

Copy to: Andy Taylor, CAO
Jim Baird, Commissioner, Development Services Commission
Alan Brown, Director of Engineering

Subject: IBI Group Feasibility Study on Rerouting of Freight Rail Traffic in the Greater Toronto Rail Network

Date: March 1, 2016

From: Brian Lee, Deputy Director, Engineering x4838

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BL', located to the right of the 'From:' line.

Recommendations

Staff recommend:

1. That Metrolinx be advised that rerouting of freight rail traffic through the City of Markham is not supported by Markham Council;
2. And that Metrolinx be requested to consult directly with the City of Markham on the IBI Group Feasibility Study before any further detailed studies are carried out;
3. And that staff report back to the Development Services Committee as any further information becomes available; and
4. And that Region of York, the Cities of Cambridge, Mississauga, Toronto and Vaughan, the Towns of Milton and Richmond Hill, Metrolinx, CN Rail and CP Rail, be so advised;
5. And that staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Background

In August 2015, a report entitled "Feasibility Study and Business Case of Constructing the Missing link" (the "Feasibility Study") was completed by the IBI Group. The Feasibility Study was jointly commissioned by the Cities of Cambridge, Mississauga, Toronto and the Town of Milton. The purpose of the Feasibility Study is to investigate what is required to separate freight rail traffic from passenger rail services on the Milton GO Line and Kitchener GO Line.

The Feasibility Study by the IBI Group concluded that this separation of freight and passenger movement is possible if the freight traffic is re-routed to alternative freight rail

corridors, and a new rail connection in the City of Mississauga is built (the "Missing Link").

On January 21, 2016, York Region Council received a report and presentation from Regional staff on this subject and adopted the following recommendations:

1. Council formally request Metrolinx to undertake consultation with York Region, the Cities of Markham and Vaughan, and the Town of Richmond Hill before proceeding with additional detailed studies relating to the rerouting of a freight rail proposal.
2. The Regional Clerk circulates a copy of this report to the Clerks of the Cities of Cambridge, Markham, Mississauga, Toronto, Vaughan, the Towns of Richmond Hill and Milton, and Metrolinx.

Discussion

A. Reasons for the Feasibility Study

Currently, part of the Milton GO Line and the Kitchener GO Line use the CP Rail corridor and CN Rail corridor respectively. The mix of freight and passenger movement within the same rail corridor may pose a technical challenge and may be costly for Metrolinx to implement the Regional Express Rail. The IBI Group Feasibility Study was not commissioned by Metrolinx, and it is our understanding that Metrolinx has not taken any position on it.

B. Conclusion of the Feasibility Study

The Feasibility Study, by IBI Group, concluded that there is a business case to reroute the freight rail traffic from the CP Rail corridor through mid Toronto and Mississauga (see Map 1) to the CN Rail corridor in the southern part of York Region and northern part of Mississauga (see Map 2). The Feasibility Study also recommended the construction of the Missing Link which is a new rail corridor to connect the CN Rail Line at Bramalea with the CP Rail Line through route near the Milton-Mississauga border. This would then separate most of the freight traffic in the western part of the Greater Toronto Area from the Milton GO Line and the Kitchener GO Line. The Executive Summary of the IBI Group Feasibility Study is in Attachment 1. At this time, staff have not received any formal comments from Metrolinx regarding this study.

C. Rerouting Freight Traffic to the CN Rail corridor would impact Markham

The impact of rerouting freight traffic would add additional freight rail traffic on the CN York Subdivision which generally runs east-west between 14th Avenue and the Hydro One corridor between Highway 404 and Markham Road, and near

John Street west of Highway 404, see Map 3. Within the City of Markham, there is one at-grade road/rail crossing located at 14th Avenue just west of Warden Avenue. The increase in rail traffic would increase nuisance to residents and business because of noise, dust and vibration. There would also be an increasing amount of dangerous goods that will be carried through the City and southern part of York Region, increasing possible safety concerns.

Markham Council should go on record with Metrolinx and other stakeholders as not supporting any rerouting of freight rail traffic through the City of Markham.

Executive Summary

Attached is a report on the feasibility of adding the "Missing Link" to the Greater Toronto rail network. The Missing Link is a new rail corridor linking the CN bypass line at Bramalea with the CP through route near the Milton-Mississauga border. The purpose of the Missing Link is to separate major through rail freight flows from passenger services on the GO Transit Milton and Kitchener lines. Just constructing the Missing Link does not fulfil all the requirements for rerouting of through freight flows; this requires upgrading of several other lines and providing new connections between CP and CN.

Constructing the Missing Link and the other rail improvements has three major benefits:

- It eliminates the impacts of the widening of the Milton and Kitchener GO Transit routes. These will be considerable and will be felt in the centres of Mississauga and Brampton. In fact the impacts of widening may be so serious that the objective may not be achieved for many years. Constructing a major project of this nature in active rail corridors will incur significant risks and dangers that can be avoided through the construction of the Missing Link.
- By removing heavy through freight flows, electrification of these two lines can be achieved. Without the separation of through freight and regional passenger service, electrification may not be acceptable.
- By freeing up the inner parts of the Milton and Kitchener lines, it will permit additional two-way service on the outer ends of these lines including new services to Cambridge and two-way all day service to Kitchener.

The conclusion from this initial feasibility analysis is that the Missing Link can be constructed without major impacts on the urban fabric. A cost analysis indicates that, within the margin of error of a planning level study, adding the Missing Link would incur approximately the same cost as the present plan to add trackage and widen the Milton and Kitchener lines to implement the Regional Express Rail (RER) concept on these lines.

The Missing Link proposal has several other benefits:

- It will remove heavy through freight traffic from central areas in Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton and Georgetown with their nuisance impacts.
- It will make feasible several new GO Transit services which are included in the Big Move transportation plan for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) including new services to Bolton, Agincourt and north Pickering and a Midtown Toronto service on the existing CP North Toronto line.
- It makes feasible a shortening and acceleration of the Richmond Hill GO Transit service.
- By separating major freight and passenger flows and therefore limiting impacts of passenger services on freight it will contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Continental Gateway strategy of the Federal, Ontario and Quebec governments by facilitating through freight traffic to and from the US border.
- By separating heavy freight traffic from regional passenger services it offers the possibility for a future high speed rail to enter the centre of the GTHA.

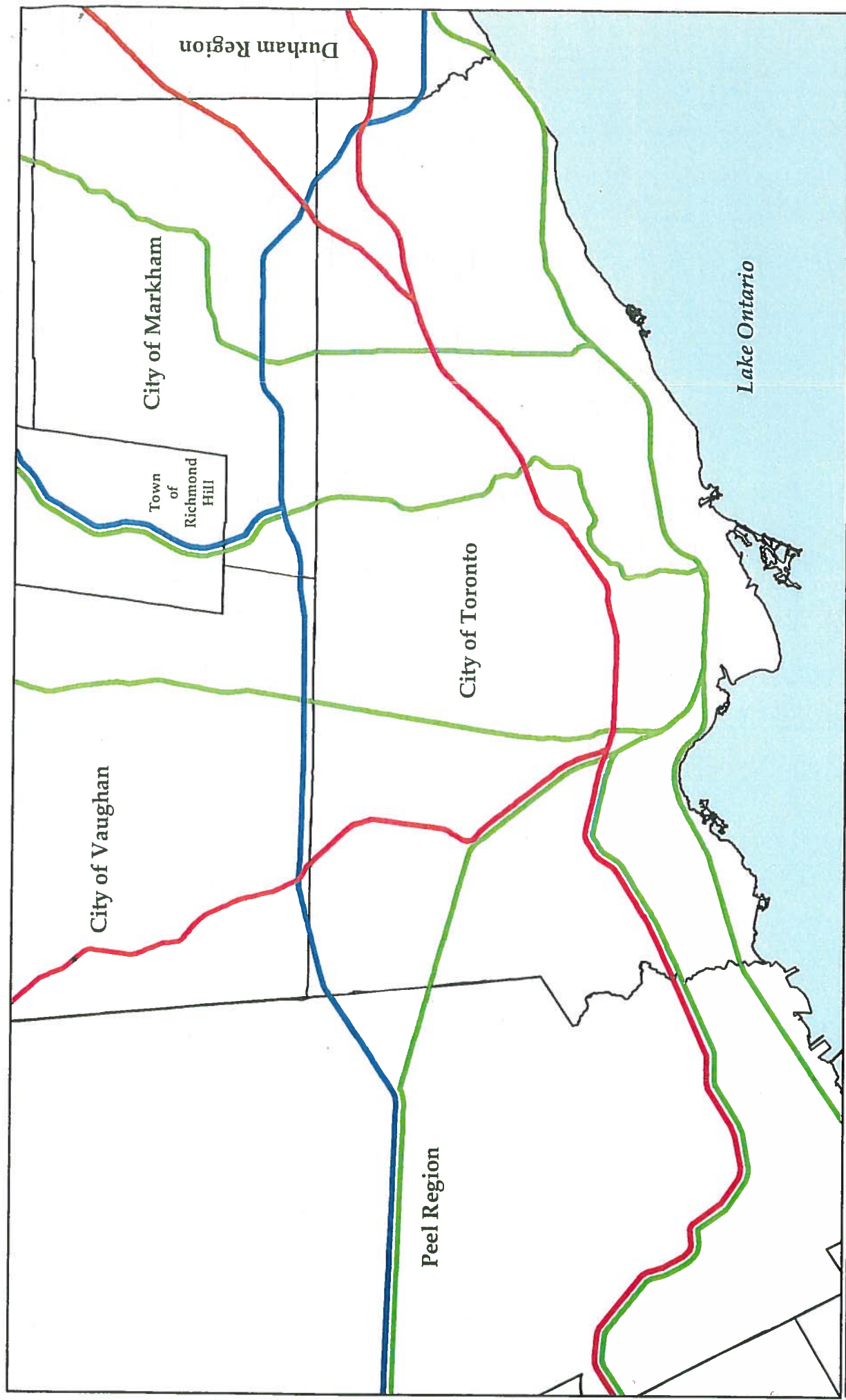
Therefore it is our conclusion that the Missing Link should be investigated in more detail with Metrolinx, CN, CP and senior levels of government.

This strategy can best be achieved with the cooperation of the major freight railways.

As the study team sees it, the next steps in the process are:

- Engage Metrolinx in discussion of the feasibility and desirability of this project.
- Develop a process that will include Metrolinx, CN, CP and the concerned municipalities to develop the optimum solution.
- Apply to the Government of Canada for funding of additional studies and for funding of the project itself.

This study was sponsored by the City of Mississauga, City of Toronto, Town of Milton and City of Cambridge.

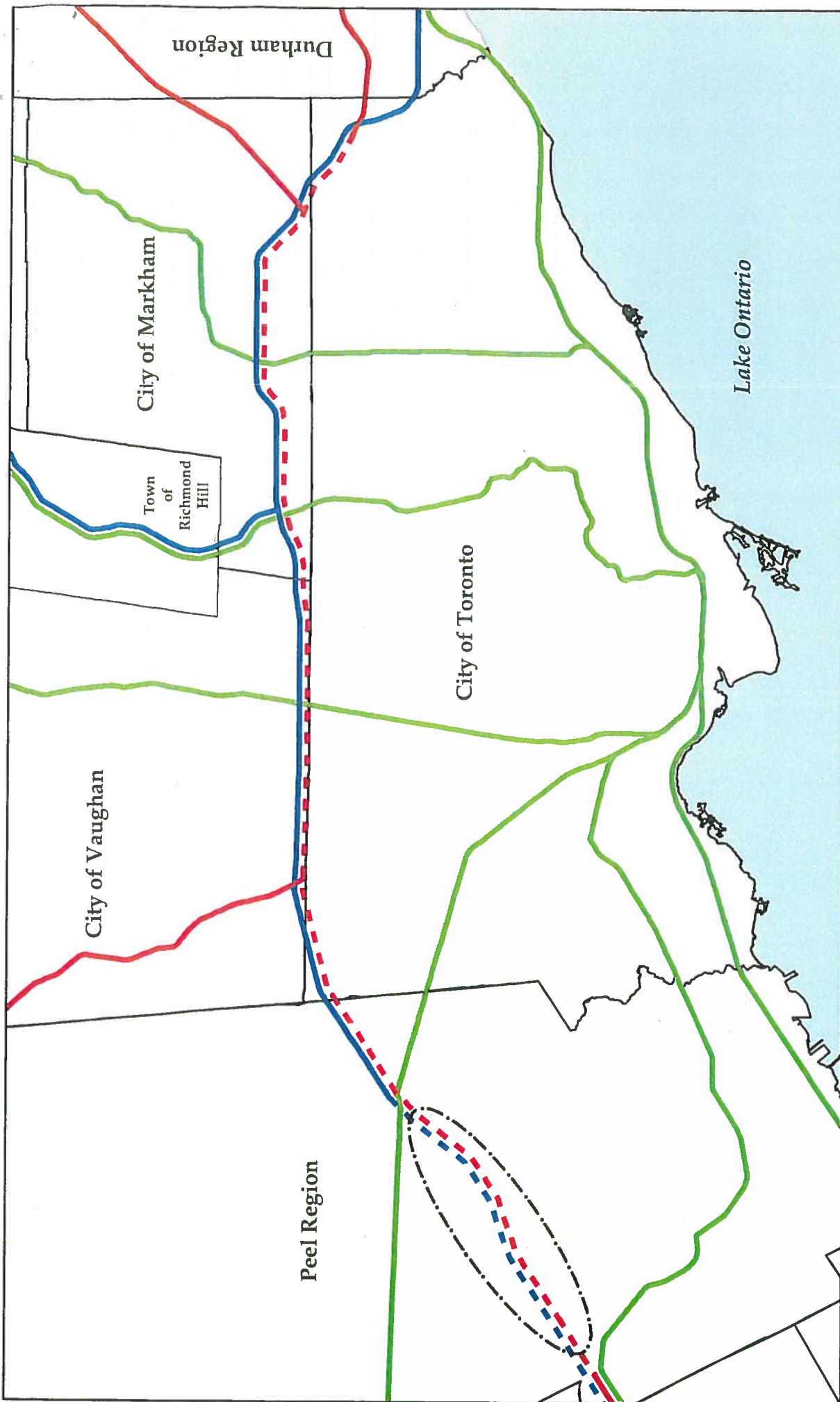


Map 1

Current Freight & GO Rail Services

Legend

- CP Corridors
- CN Corridors
- Metrolinx Go Transit Service



Map 2

Rerouted Freight & GO Rail Services

Legend

- CP Corridors
- Proposed CP Corridor
- CN Corridors
- Proposed CN Corridor
- Metrolinx GO Transit Service
- New Freight Rail

