



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: February 12, 2013

SUBJECT: **INFORMATION REPORT**
Markham Centre Mobility Hub Study and Secondary Plan
Up-date

PREPARED BY: Richard Kendall, Manager of Development, Central District
Extension 6588

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the Information Report titled “Markham Centre Mobility Hub Study and Secondary Plan Up-date” be received;
- 2) That staff report back to Council in March, 2013 with the revised Terms of Reference for the Markham Centre Mobility Hub Study, including timing, budget and process;
- 3) That the revised Terms of Reference include a comprehensive stakeholder and community consultation programme, which could include a design charrette component;
- 4) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not applicable

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to up-date Committee and Council on work underway by staff and consultants relating to the visioning and planning for an up-dated Markham Centre Mobility Hub Study, and Secondary Plan up-date. Revised terms of reference are being prepared in response to comments by Metrolinx on the Mobility Hub Study, and to address the Markham Council resolution dated January 30, 2013 to advance a visioning exercise and planning process with additional public input and participation.

BACKGROUND:

On January 29 and 30th, 2013, Council considered a series of resolutions related to the proposed Markham Sports, Entertainment and Cultural Centre within Markham Centre. Part of the resolution adopted at that meeting identified a need for a comprehensive vision to shape and guide development within the vicinity of the future Markham Centre Mobility Hub, generally comprising the lands east of Trib 4, south to Highway 407, east to Kennedy Road and north to the Rouge River valley system (Figure 1). Council directed staff to report on the City-lead visioning and planning process associated with an up-dated Markham Centre Secondary Plan including public participation.

The Markham Centre Vision dates to the early 1990s

The vision for Markham Centre originated in the early 1990s culminating in the City's adoption of the Markham Centre Secondary Plan (OPA 21) in 1994, and its approval by the Ontario Municipal Board in 1997.

The goal of the Secondary Plan is to provide a policy framework and direction for detailed land use planning for a vibrant, intensive, mixed use City Centre. It is intended that Markham Centre will have a distinctive character as the urban core of Markham, becoming its central focus, unifying its many communities. Markham Centre is also expected to be a major activity centre which is transit supportive, integrating a high standard of urban design with existing natural features to create a unique destination. The 1994 Secondary Plan is a flexible framework document and relies on detailed precinct plans (area masterplanning) to be completed prior to development approvals.

Evolving Policy Context Related to Markham Centre

Subsequent to the adoption of the Secondary Plan a number of significant policy directives have been implemented by the Province and Region which influence and reinforce Markham Centre's intended role as a transit supportive, intensive, mixed use City Centre. These include the Province's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, York Region's new Official Plan, and the Metrolinx Big Move Document, which identifies the Unionville GO station and environs within Markham Centre as a Metrolinx Anchor Mobility Hub.

The Markham Council endorsed Growth Management Strategy, which forms the basis of the draft new Official Plan, also places a major emphasis on intensification and transit oriented development in Markham Centre.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**Markham Centre Secondary Plan and Mobility Hub Study**

Given the evolving policy context since the adoption of the Secondary Plan nearly 20 years ago, an up-date of the Markham Centre Secondary Plan is necessary and has been initiated.

The amendments to the Secondary Plan will reflect the policy framework emerging from the City's new draft Official Plan and will incorporate the results of technical studies such as the Markham Centre Transportation analysis. A key component of updating the Secondary Plan is addressing the land use and infrastructure context in the vicinity of the mobility hub at Unionville GO Station. To this end, the City and Metrolinx have initiated a Mobility Hub Study to set the parameters for how this area will ultimately develop and transform to a higher order, hub integrating major transit services.

Council in October, 2011 endorsed a staff report to retain a consultant (Arup) to undertake the Markham Centre Mobility Hub Station Study. This study contained a number of component elements to deal with the station study, including architectural and

urban design components, and provision for additional transit agency analysis. This study has not formally commenced as the terms of reference are being up-dated to reflect and incorporate comments and requirements of Metrolinx. Staff are in the process of finalizing the terms of reference with Arup and Adamson Associates and will be reporting to Council shortly on the revised terms, timing, budget and process moving forward. Subject to receiving revised comments from Metrolinx, it is anticipated that staff will report back to Committee in March.

The draft terms of reference for the Mobility Hub Study consist of the following main objectives:

1. Prepare a Precinct Plan and Mobility Hub Master Plan for the Markham Centre Mobility Hub area, including urban design analysis and a detailed GO Station Area Plan.
2. Confirm and supplement, as needed, the substantial existing work currently underway or completed for Markham Centre, including work undertaken by the Remington Group on their Retail Precinct Plan and Overall Master Plan Update (initiated in 2010 by Calthorpe), the Markham Centre/Markham Live Site Optimization Study (completed in 2011 by Adamson), and the Markham Centre Transportation Study.
3. Undertake a detailed land use analysis, resulting in the preparation of a consolidated Precinct Plan that reflects all of the existing development approvals for the Markham Centre Mobility Hub area, as well as identify unique land use opportunities.
4. Initiation of functional design work.

While Markham's planning vision for intensification and development of Markham Centre has been articulated in various planning documents, the study needs to evaluate this vision in the context of Metrolinx's mobility hub guidelines. The study anticipates a process of extensive stakeholder and public consultation. Components of this consultation will include open houses/community information meetings, formal public meetings and presentations to the Markham Centre Advisory, Markham Centre/Unionville Sub-committee, Development Services Committee and Markham Council at appropriate milestones in the study schedule.

Within this context there is an opportunity to further engage stakeholders and the community in an exercise to up-date or affirm the community's planning and urban design vision for Markham Centre. A design charrette could form a component of this community and stakeholder consultation exercise. The results of this process will also serve to inform future amendments to the Secondary Plan.

As noted, staff are in the process of finalizing the terms of reference for the Mobility Hub Study and will be reporting to Council shortly on timing, budget and process, including opportunities for public participation. Based on the January 30th, Council resolution, staff have requested the Architectural sub-consultant (Adamson Associates) to include an up-dated proposal for additional public input and participation in the visioning exercise, including pricing for an design charrette.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The Mobility Hub Study has previously been authorized by Council and revised terms of reference, including study components, and pricing, will form part of the future report to Council.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable at this time.

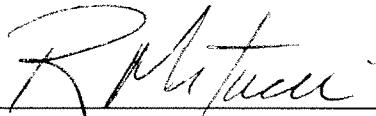
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The study process aligns with the City's strategic priorities of Growth Management and Transportation/Transit.

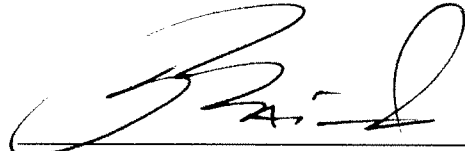
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Planning and Urban Design and Engineering Departments.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Rino Mostacci, R.R.P., M.C.I.P.
Director of Planning and Urban Design



James Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Figure 1: Air Photo – Study Area



DATE: 01/02/2013

FIGURE No. 1

Checked By: RK

Drawn By: RT