



Evolution of Rapid Transit Plans in the GTA



For: Town of Markham
Presentation by: Neal Irwin, Chairman Emeritus
March 9, 2010

Purpose and Outline of Presentation

Purpose:

- To provide a perspective on rapid transit planning in the GTA in terms of what has worked, major challenges, and what is likely to work in the future

Outline:

- Key messages from past transportation and land use plans relevant to current situation
- Principles of rapid transit network planning
- Highlight of rapid transit in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
- Success factors going forward



Many Plans Have Shaped the Current Network

Greater Golden Horseshoe Plans

- GO-ALRT Program – Mid 1980's
- GTA Urban Structure Concepts Study – 1990
- Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan – 2009

York Region and Markham Plans

- York Region Transportation Master Plan – 2002 and 2009
- Markham Transportation Strategic Plan – 1994, 2002 and 2010



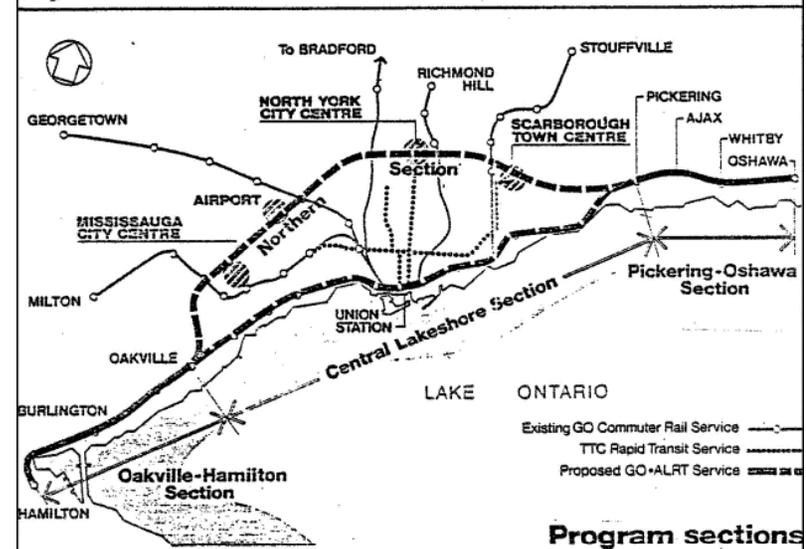
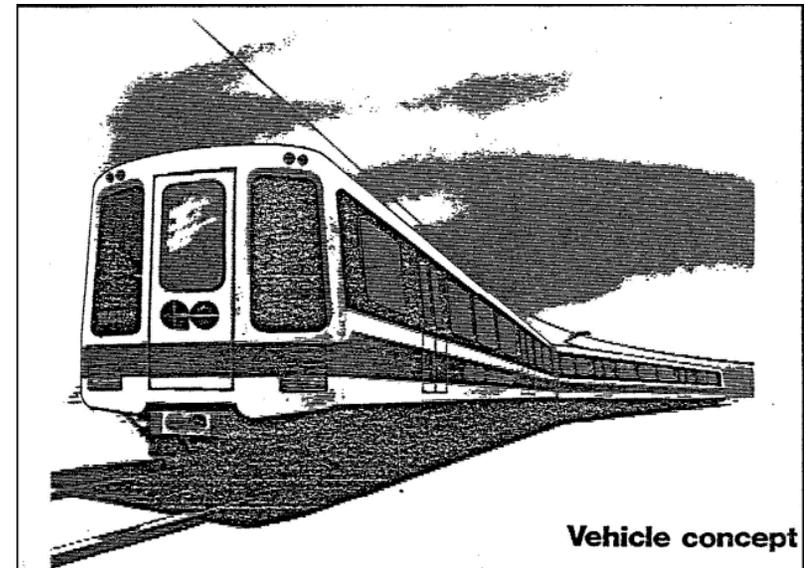
GO ALRT Program

What Was It?

- Government of Ontario Advanced Light Rail Transit Program (ALRT), 1982
- Comprised of two major east-west lines, including a northerly route arcing between Oakville and Pickering
- Projected cost was \$2.6 billion in 1980 dollars

Key Messages

- Cancelled in mid 1980's in part due to coordination and funding issues and changing political priorities
- Starting point was a selected technology and alignment rather than transportation needs and network / land use / policy alternatives



GTA Urban Structure Concepts Study

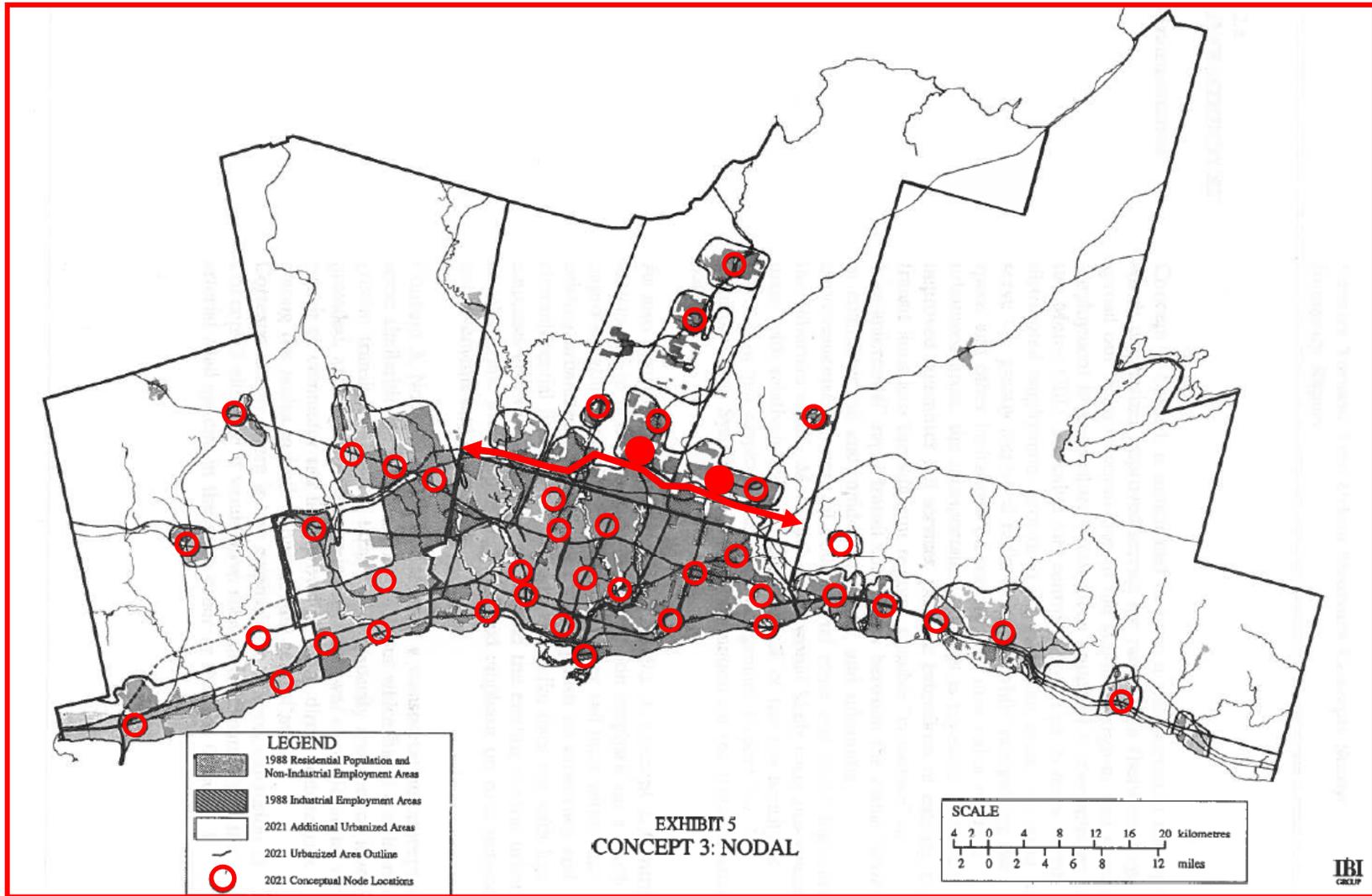
What Was It?

- Multi-disciplinary study of development patterns, transportation, hard services, social services
- Prepared for the Greater Toronto Coordinating Committee in 1990
- Evaluated three regional development options: **spread, central, nodal**, selected **nodal** as the preferred option with RT emphasis in the proposed transportation network
- Set in place the structure upon which most current plans are based

Key Messages

- Based on wholistic view of entire GTA, regional development, transportation and servicing alternatives
- Fleshed out in 1991 – 1992 by municipal and provincial working groups
- Basic concept lives on in Provincial Growth Plan, Municipal OP's and Metrolinx RTP

GTA Urban Structure Concepts Study



Lessons From Past Plans

- Positive elements
 - Increasing integration of transportation and land use
 - Emphasis on “regional” transportation and higher order transit
 - Developing a seamless hierarchy of transit/transportation modes
 - Comprehensive approach and provincial-municipal buy-in
- Challenges
 - Lack of committed, reliable funding
 - Disconnects at some stages between municipal, provincial and federal plans and priorities
 - Urban development was still auto-oriented (i.e. single use low density development)
 - Resulting difficulties in providing a broader choice of truly competitive travel options

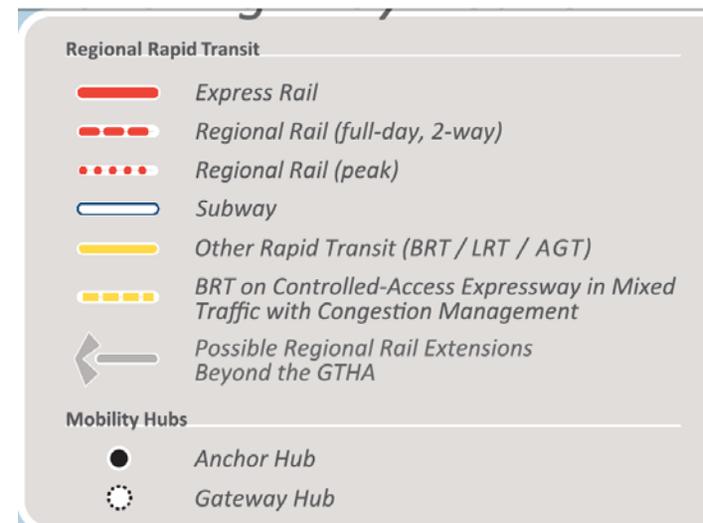
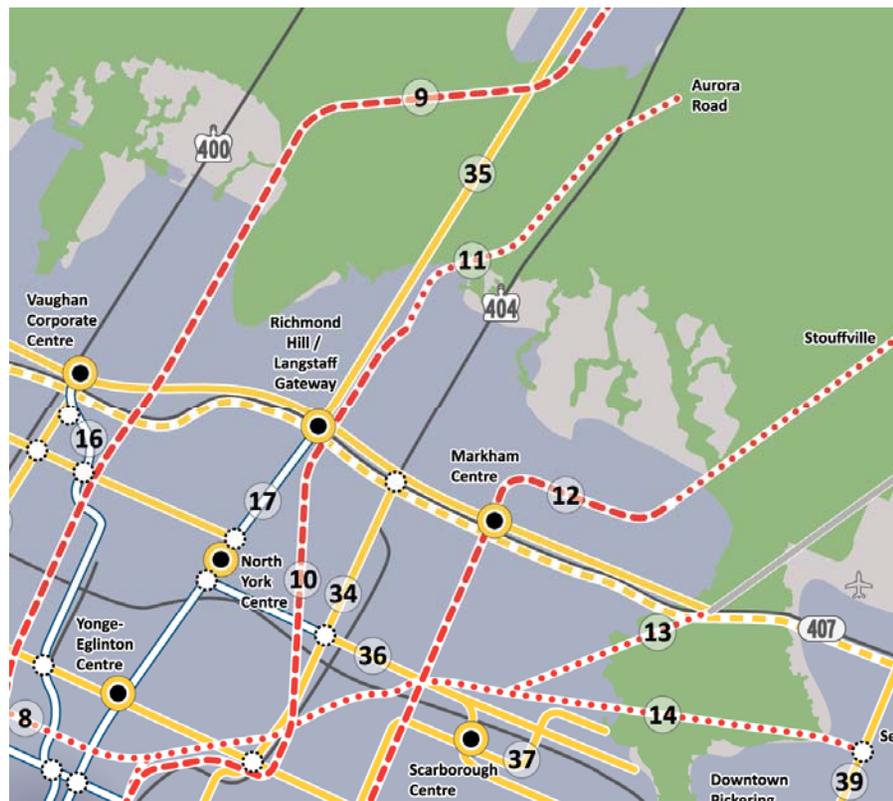
Principles of Network Rapid Transit Network Planning

- Provide logical network coverage and connections
- Serve and help shape existing and future hubs and corridors
- Build on existing and anticipated transit oriented developments such as Markham Centre and Langstaff
- Serve major hubs with more than one rapid transit line linking to all other major hubs
- Achieve appropriate balance between speed and access
- Integrate RT seamlessly with other transit/transportation modes and with supporting policies
- Provide flexibility for phased expansion to higher capacity as ridership grows
- Protect RT corridors even if they are long term
- Involve all levels of government, key stakeholders and the public
- Strive for committed, reliable funding



Highlights of Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan

- Builds on previous work by all levels of government
- Identifies a long term plan for the transportation system with a strong focus on rapid transit: express rail, regional rail, subway, LRT, BRT



Metrolinx Plan – What's Different From Before?

- Provides seamless transit/transportation network integrated with development plans for entire GGH
- Key role for higher order transit (of all types) to serve and help shape compact, mixed use hubs and corridors
- Land use plans are already shaping development around transportation network
- Strong commitment by the Province to the Plan
- Strong buy-in by local and regional municipalities
- Significant funding committed and money is flowing (\$11.5 billion has been set aside for top 15 projects)
- Plan is not just about big infrastructure, but includes supporting policies and initiatives for travel demand management, active transportation, goods movement, and mobility hub planning

Maximizing Opportunities for Success

- Expedite RT planning and implementation to encourage TOD, ridership growth
- Continue to apply RT network planning principles
- Ensure local municipal plans support Regional Plan objectives
- Direct employment growth to Regional Centres and Corridors
- Build compact, mixed use and walkable Regional centres
- Enshrine transit-supportive policies through local planning tools (e.g. parking by-laws)
- Continue to explore and use alternative funding and project delivery approaches
- Intense municipal competition for funding under the Metrolinx RTP suggests need to act now in accordance with the plan