
NOTES OF MUNICIPAL ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #4

PROJECT: GTA West Corridor Environmental Assessment
MEETING NO.: Municipal Advisory Group Meeting #4
FILE NO.: 06-3184
DATE: November 3, 2009 **TIME:** 1:30 p.m.
PLACE: Caledon West Ballroom, Holiday Inn Select Brampton, Brampton, ON

PRESENT:

Municipalities

Tom AppaRao	Region of Peel
Nick Tunnacliffe	Region of Peel
Damian Albanese	Region of Peel
Sabbir Saiyed	Region of Peel
Chris Duyvestyn	City of Brampton
Henrik Zbogor	City of Brampton
Kant Chawla	Town of Caledon
Qamar Khan	City of Mississauga
Andrew Pearce	City of Vaughan
Wayne McEachern	City of Vaughan
Andrew Head	Halton Region
Shelley Partridge	Halton Region
Tara Buonpensiero	Town of Halton Hills
Stephanie Jarvis	Town of Milton
Sally Stull	Town of Erin
Geoffrey Keyworth	Region of Waterloo
Rajan Philips	City of Guelph
Chris White	Township of Guelph/Eramosa
Stephen Kitchen	Township of King
Gord Ough	County of Wellington
Gary Cousins	County of Wellington

MTO

Jin Wang	MTO Provincial and Environmental Planning
Frank Pravitz	MTO Provincial and Environmental Planning
Pat Griepsma	MTO Provincial and Environmental Planning
Trevor Greenman	MTO Urban Planning

Consultant Joint Venture

(CJV)

Neil Ahmed	MRC
Jack Thompson	MRC
Karin Wall	AECOM
Steve Jacobs	URS
Tim Soroichinsky	URS
Catherine Christiani	Ecoplans Limited

PURPOSE: The purpose of Municipal Advisory Group (MAG) Meeting #4 is to gain feedback on the generated alternatives and the assessment process used.

ITEM PROCEEDINGS: ACTION BY:

1.0 Welcome and Introductions

1.1 N. Ahmed and J. Wang welcomed attendees to the meeting. The project team, presenters and attendees introduced themselves. The meeting purpose was reviewed.

2.0 Project Team Presentation

2.1 K. Wall reviewed the meeting agenda and presented a study update, an overview of the study background, reviewed recent and upcoming consultation events and the three-stage process for generating and evaluating alternatives.

N. Ahmed then presented the individual mode alternatives, the modal alternative groups, and the activities to take place after Public Information Centre (PIC) #3. It was noted that the Draft Modal Discussion Papers and the Group Assessment Tables will be made available at the upcoming Public Information Centres (PICs).

2.2 The following questions and comments were raised during the presentation:

2.2.1 The project team was asked to clarify how roads and highways were considered during the Stage 1 and Stage 2 process of evaluating alternatives. N. Ahmed indicated that each individual modal alternative (TDM/TSM, Transit, Marine, Air, Rail, Intermodal, and Roads & Highways) was evaluated separately and specialist discussion papers were prepared. When it was established that no single mode was capable of fully addressing the preliminary study area's transportation problems and opportunities, the modes were grouped using a building blocks approach. Those groups that would have the lowest impact were looked at first, followed by those with more impacts:

- Group 1 – Optimize Existing Network
- Group 2 – Group 1 + New/Improved Non-Road Infrastructure
- Group 3 – Group 1 + Group 2 + Widen/Improve Roads
- Group 4 – Group 1 + Group 2 + Elements of Group 3 + New Transportation Corridors

Each of the groups were subjected to a high level assessment of Environmental, Economic, Community and Transportation factors. The high level assessment resulted in Groups 1 and 2 offering notable improvements but being unable to significantly address the full range of transportation problems and opportunities in the preliminary study area. Groups 3 and/or 4 (which include Group 1 and 2 improvements) have been found to be better suited to address the problems and opportunities and will be carried forward for further evaluation and presentation at PIC #4.

ITEM PROCEEDINGS:

ACTION BY:

3.0 Discussion

3.1 The following questions / comments were raised:

3.1.1 A question was asked regarding whether the MTO planned improvements in the base case include those projects that are EA approved and those that are currently not. MTO clarified that the base case assumed the most optimistic conditions and thus included all EA approved and unapproved planned improvements.

3.1.2 A comment was made with respect to the modelling assumptions used in the base case. The model has assumed that the Metrolinx Big Move, GO 2020 Service Plan, MTO approved and unapproved planned improvements and other municipal projects will be in place whereas much of the required funding and approvals have not yet been acquired. MTO explained that the model used the most optimistic conditions. After PIC #3 a sensitivity analysis will be conducted to adjust results.

3.1.3 The project team members were asked about the current Highway 401 EA between Hespeler Road and the west Halton Region boundary. The 401 EA has indicated to date that the ultimate lane requirements for the project are 10 lanes, while the GTA West model has assumed 10 lanes as a minimum. The project team indicated that the Draft Problems and Opportunities Report identifies 8 lanes as the current deficiency. By 2031, and when taking into account lane balancing, 10 lanes is the minimum requirement for that section of Highway 401.

3.1.4 A comment was made with respect to municipalities needing Group 3/4 type improvements now. The project team members were then asked when they expect the recommended alternative to be implemented, and if a Group 3 alternative is recommended, if MTO would help subsidize the costs if the facility is a widened municipal / regional road.

The project team indicated that it is difficult to predict when the recommended strategy would be in place since the outcome of the study is still unknown. Widening recommendations would need to undergo Class Environmental Assessment (EA) approval and new corridors would need to undergo route planning and Individual EA approval. These activities could take 4-5 years to complete upon completion of this Stage 1 study, and the preliminary design and detail design of a new corridor would typically last at least 5 years. Implementation of projects of this size is always subject to adequate funding. With regards to subsidizing costs, that issue is outside of the scope of the current study. Details on how the recommended strategy will be implemented will be decided upon completion of Stage 1 of the EA.

3.1.5 The project team was asked by the City of Vaughan to explain why Kirby Road was chosen as a road widening alternative. The road is not an adequate alternative as it has unpaved sections and isn't designed for regional traffic flow and the existing road ends at the Humber River. The Vaughan Transportation Master Plan identifies King-Vaughan Road for widening.

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ACTION BY:

The project team explained that Kirby Road was identified as a road widening alternative because it provided a potential linkage required to accommodate the anticipated future capacity needs north of Major Mackenzie Dr. The project team recognizes that some of the Group 3 widening options would require additional property and that they represent a significant challenge; however, these impacts must be understood and compared to the impacts associated with new transportation corridors in order to make recommendations for a final transportation development strategy.

3.1.6 The City of Vaughan provided the project team with an extract of Council Meeting Minutes from September 21, 2009 which mentions the GTA West Corridor.

3.1.7 A question was asked regarding whether the project team had analyzed the feasibility of widening through established communities. The project team clarified that a high-level analysis of the impact of Groups 1-4 on community and cultural features has been completed and impacts had been noted as likely.

3.1.8 The project team was asked to explain why municipal widenings were examined when the project is meant to address interregional transportation problems. The project team indicated that inter-regional sections of municipal road widenings were identified in order to ensure that all possible inter-regional options were given due consideration. The high-level assessment conducted does indicate significant impacts for municipal road widenings.

3.1.9 The following comments were made by the Region of Peel:

- Groups 1 and 2 should not be immediately disregarded.
- The assessment of Groups 3 and 4 needs to be improved.
- References to the 407ETR transitway are missing.
- Cost and land availability will be key issues as the study progresses.

The comments were noted. MTO clarified that Groups 1 and 2 aren't disregarded; rather they are built into Groups 3 and 4.

3.1.10 A comment was raised that the future transit mode split assumptions for the Region of Halton are too high. When these assumptions aren't realized, roads will be further pressured. The project team should be aware of implications if these assumptions aren't accomplished.

Project Team

3.1.11 The project team was asked if tolling/road pricing were considered. The project team clarified that tolling/road pricing on existing highways is outside of the scope of both this and the NGTA projects as it would require a significant policy change. The current Ontario government direction is not to implement tolls/road pricing on existing highways. Metrolinx is currently investigating an investment strategy to fund the \$50 billion dollar RTP. Tolling/road pricing may be considered as part of that.

3.1.12 A question was asked regarding whether the Halton-Peel BATS study was assumed to be an arterial road in the study's modelling. The project team confirmed that it was.

ITEM	PROCEEDINGS:	ACTION BY:
3.1.13	A comment was raised regarding the green swaths used to depict the possible linkages of a new transportation corridor. The project team was urged to more clearly demonstrate that the green swaths are not the boundaries of a future study area, but that they are just a way of visualizing linkages.	Project Team
3.1.14	The project team should do a better job of stressing what is included in each group alternative.	Project Team
3.1.15	The project team was urged to supply MAG members with more materials in advance of the meeting, particularly the meeting presentation. The more information the MAG can have ahead of time, the more productive the overall discussion can be. It was also suggested that the project team engage the MAG in reviewing draft PIC displays/materials as they are a good source for providing comments and anticipating public reaction.	Project Team
3.1.16	It was suggested that the project team compare current vs. future (2031) transit capacities and service levels.	Project Team
3.1.17	The project team was asked if the proposed widenings of Highway 401 will accommodate a busway or transitway. MTO explained that HOV lanes are always considered in highway widenings. They also indicated that a new transportation corridor would better accommodate a new transitway than Highway 401.	
3.1.18	The project team was asked if they had researched the effect that tolling/road pricing could have on truck movement. The project team acknowledged that they had not looked into this and would consider effect.	Project Team
3.1.19	It was suggested to the project team that due to the vast amount of material to be presented at the PICs that the team have staff members hold “tours” of the display materials. The project team acknowledged that the tour idea would be considered. The boards will be organized similar to the last PIC in clusters, and each cluster will be staffed by appropriate specialists.	Project Team
3.1.20	<p>The project team was asked if they will be presenting to local councils/committees prior to the PICs. MTO advised that the project team have committed to presenting at each regional council/committee prior to any PICs and outlined the presentation dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Halton Region Planning and Public Works Committee; November 12th• Wellington County Council; November 23th• York Region Planning and Economic Development Committee; December 2nd• Peel Region General Committee; December 3rd <p>The project team will try to accommodate further presentation requests from local councils. The Town of Caledon has requested a presentation which will be held for Town Council on November 17th.</p>	
3.1.21	A comment was made that the project team should be careful in assuming that	

ITEM PROCEEDINGS:

ACTION BY:

- all proposed local road improvements will be in place for Groups 3-2 and 3-3, particularly since MTO's success is then dependent upon other jurisdictions delivering on infrastructure promises. These group alternatives are being treated as reasonable alternatives without taking into account who will have to do what in terms of EA proponenty, funding, etc. The implementation of improvements, and who is responsible for what, needs to be better explained at the PICs. Project Team
- 3.1.22 The project team were urged to accelerate their decision making process. The sooner the transportation development strategy is presented, the sooner municipalities can protect for the improvements in their official plans. Project Team
- 4.0 What's Next**
- 4.1 N. Ahmed thanked attendees for their participation. Any further comments or questions on the presentation material were encouraged to be submitted to the Project Team. MAG Members

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

The forgoing represents the writer's understanding of the major items of discussion and the decisions reached and/or future actions required. If the above does not accurately represent the understanding of all parties attending, please notify the undersigned immediately upon receiving these minutes (905-823-4988).

Minutes Prepared by:
Ecoplans Limited



Catherine Christiani

cc: Attendees
Project Team Members
Municipal Advisory Group Contact List