



427 TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY

CITY OF VAUGHAN
REGION OF YORK

INDIVIDUAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
W.O. 05-20012

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE 1 SUMMARY REPORT

APRIL 25, 2007



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has retained McCormick Rankin Corporation (MRC) and Ecoplans Limited to undertake an Environmental Assessment (EA) Study for the 427 Transportation Corridor, in support of the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* as released in July 2006. The EA addresses existing and short-term transportation problems related to the current Highway 427 terminus, truck traffic to and from the CPR Vaughan Intermodal Facility, and interregional traffic on Highways 7, 27 and 50. The primary objective is to address transportation issues in the area south of the Greenbelt and to facilitate planning and development. The study area lies within the City of Vaughan, in the Region of York.

The EA is being undertaken as an Individual Environmental Assessment under the *Ontario Environmental Assessment Act* (OEAA). It is being conducted in accordance with the planning process documented in *The 427 Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference* (ToR), which was approved by the Minister of the Environment in November 2005. This document provides a framework to guide the preparation of the EA.

The EA is considering every phase of the planning process including:

- The Need for the Undertaking;
- Alternatives to the Undertaking (fundamentally different ways of addressing the problem);
- Alternative Methods (route alternatives);
- Preferred Alternative/Preliminary Design; and
- Preparation of an Environmental Assessment Report.

Upon completion of the EA, an Environmental Assessment Report (EA Report) will be prepared to document all of the EA phases. This report will be submitted to the Minister of the Environment for an approval decision. The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) will coordinate a formal public and agency review for the EA Report and will consider all comments when making a decision whether to approve, conditionally approve, or not to approve the undertaking.

2.0 PURPOSE

The EA process requires the MTO to consult with interested parties, agencies and members of the public during the study. The public consultation program is designed to involve stakeholders early in the study, to identify concerns and to provide opportunities for input regarding the proposed alternatives. Consultation methods include meetings, telephone and email correspondence, direct mail, public notices, project material on the study's website, and Public Information Centres (PICs). PICs are informal open house style sessions where representatives of MTO and the Consultant Team are available to answer questions and discuss the study one on one with attendees.

It is intended that three rounds of PICs will be held as part of this study:

1. a first round to provide information to the public as to the transportation problems, the study area conditions, the evaluation of alternatives to the undertaking and initial route alternatives;
2. the second round will present the evaluation of route alternatives and the recommended alternative; and
3. the third round will present the preliminary design for the recommended alternative and proposed mitigation measures.

3.0 LOCATION, DATE, TIME

The first PIC was held as follows:

Public Information Centre 1	
Date:	Wednesday, April 25, 2007
Place:	Le Jardin Special Event Centre Venetian Room 8440 Highway 27 Vaughan, Ontario
Time:	4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Prior to the PIC, a Regulatory Agencies Advisory Group (RAAG) preview session was held from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. for external agencies.

MOE - Central Region and TRCA were the only agencies that attended the RAAG Meeting. TRCA requested additional information and rationale for why route alternatives were not being considered west of Highway 50.

4.0 NOTIFICATION

The Ontario Government PIC notice was advertised as follows:

- L'Express – Tuesday, April 10, 2007 (French notice)
- Toronto Star – Wednesday, April 11, 2007 (English notice)
- Brampton Guardian – Wednesday, April 11, 2007 (English notice)
- Vaughan Citizen – Thursday, April 12, 2007 (English notice)
- Caledon Enterprise – Saturday, April 14, 2007 (English notice)

Notification letters were distributed by direct mail to external agencies, municipalities, interest groups, and other relevant bodies on April 5, 2007. Government agencies were also notified on April 5, 2007 by direct mail of the RAAG preview session.

Notifications were also posted online on the study's website at www.427corridor.com. In addition, letters and emails were sent to members of the public and interest groups on the Project Team Mailing List. All notifications and letters included the project website address.

5.0 STAFF ATTENDANCE

The following Ministry and Consultant staff were in attendance at the PIC:

April 25, 2007	
Name	Organisation
Dean Kemper	MTO, Project Manager
Susan Sieradzki	MTO, Environmental Planner
Heather Templeton	MTO, Engineer-in-Training
Will Mackenzie	MTO, Media Coordinator
Fayyaz Siddiqui	MTO, Traffic
Chris Harker	MTO, Property Agent
Bernie Trippel	MTO, Property Agent
Jennifer Hughson	MTO, Property Agent
Michael Chiu	MRC, Consultant Project Manager
Adam Butterfield	MRC, Consultant Project Engineer
Hank Wang	MRC, Consultant Project Engineer
Jack Thompson	MRC, Consultant Traffic Engineer
Daphne Lee	MRC, Consultant Junior Traffic Engineer
Mike Bricks	Ecoplans Limited, Consultant EA Coordinator
Margaret Pak	Ecoplans Limited, Consultant Junior EA Coordinator

6.0 MATERIAL DISPLAYED

Display panels were placed around the room providing information about the purpose of the PIC, the environmental assessment process, background and description of the purpose of the study, existing conditions, and preliminary alternatives as follows:

1. Welcome (text)
2. Background (text)
3. Study Content (text and graphic)
4. EA Process (flow chart)
5. Study Process and Schedule (graphic)
6. Study Purpose (text and graphic)
7. Interrelated Studies (text)
8. Analysis Area Context (key map)
9. Analysis Area (key map)
10. Existing Conditions (text)
11. Existing Conditions – Natural Environment (plan)

12. Existing/Future Conditions – Social Environment/Land Use (key plan)
13. Existing Transportation Conditions (text and graphic)
14. CPR Vaughan Intermodal Facility (text and graphic)
15. 2006 Existing CPR Intermodal Access (text, graphic and key plan)
16. Proposed Area Growth and Development (table and graphic)
17. 2021 Corridor Travel Demands (table and graphic)
18. Transportation Corridor Needs Statement (text and table)
19. Alternatives to the Undertaking (text)
20. Rationale for Considering a Transitway (text)
21. Generation of Alternatives to the Undertaking (text)
22. Evaluation of Alternatives to the Undertaking (text and table)
23. Preferred Alternative to the Undertaking (text)
24. Alternative Methods (Alternative Routes) (text)
25. Analysis of Alternative Routes (text)
26. Evaluation of Alternative Routes (text)
27. Corridor Opportunities (text and graphic)
28. Terminus Location Alternatives (text and graphic)
29. Identification of Reasonable Terminus Location Alternatives (table and graphic)
30. Identification of Reasonable Terminus Location Alternatives (continued) (text and graphic)
31. Terminus Location Alternatives Not Carried Forward (text)
32. Terminus Location Alternatives Carried Forward (text and graphic)
33. Generation of Route Alignment Alternatives (text)
34. Preliminary Route Alignment Alternatives (plan)
35. Guiding Principles for Route Generation (text)
36. Next Steps (text)
37. Please Complete a Comment Sheet (text)
38. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (text)

Following the PIC, the material presented was added to the study website, and will remain available on the project website during the course of the EA study.

7.0 FORMAT

Individuals attending the PIC were asked to sign the register. They were informed of the availability of comment sheets and encouraged to complete them. Staff members were available to answer questions and provide information on the study. Individuals who expressed specific concerns or comments were directed to the appropriate staff member for an explanation of how their concerns or comments were being addressed. If individuals wished to take comment sheets home, they were requested to provide their responses to

the address outlined on the comment sheet by May 9, 2007. Alternatively, comments could be submitted via direct mail, email, via the project website or fax.

8.0 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

Approximately 140 people attended (132 people signed the registration sheets) the PIC. Only 3 people attended the RAAG preview session. A majority of the attendees were property developers who own land within the study area. Politicians and municipal staff from adjacent municipalities and within the study area also attended. Generally, comments were positive with people wanting to know when and where Highway 427 would be built, why the highway is not going farther north and why the EA process takes so long.

The following table provides a summary of the number of comments submitted. Table 1 also includes the number of comments submitted via mail, fax and email.

TABLE 1. PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE COMMENTS						
	PIC	Mail	Fax	Email	Telephone	Total
Comment Submitted	23	2	2	5	0	32

Table 2 provides a summary of all the comments, issues, and concerns that were expressed by individuals who attended the PIC and/or were informed of the project and relayed their comments. Also included in this table is the response provided to each comment.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Comments Expressed	# of Comments	How the Comment Was Addressed
1. Requested to be placed on the mailing list.	6	Added to mailing list.
2. Agreed with a 427 terminus at Mayfield Road	5	A terminus at Mayfield Road is one of the terminus alternatives that is being examined as part of this study.
3. Concerned about highway crossing through King Township.	3	The north study limits are located at the south end of the Greenbelt, and therefore an expansion north into King Township is not being considered as part of this study.

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4. Concerned that alignments presented have significant impacts on the amount of land that they can develop.	3	The alternative alignments have been generated to minimize, to the extent possible, the impacts to sensitive features in the study area. These alignments will be further refined as the study progresses. Furthermore, the preferred alignment will be selected based on a number of criteria, including impacts to the natural and cultural environments and existing and future land uses. However, a new transportation corridor will inherently affect some property. Should property be required for a new transportation corridor, the Ministry of Transportation will compensate the property owner based on the appraised market value of the property.
5. Send a copy of the PIC display panels.	3	Display material provided.
6. Well laid out, organized.	2	Thank you for your comments.
7. Do not sacrifice the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Greenbelt lands for the convenience of others.	2	As the north study limits are located at the south end of the Greenbelt, an expansion north towards the Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt is not being considered as part of this study.
8. Traffic numbers regarding Population and Employment Forecasts are lower than the information released by York Region.	2	The Project Team was provided with land use data from York Region in late February 2007 that reflected a 30% intensification scenario. The Project Team was informed by York Region that these land use forecasts could be used for the 2021 travel demand analysis. The MTO Project Team was also informed that York Region was continuing to finalize the 40% intensification land use forecasts which would be available for the 2031 travel demand analysis to be undertaken following PIC1.
9. The accuracy of the Future Conditions – Social Environment/Land Use board is incorrect.	2	The Project Team will modify the future land use map.
10. Route alternative does not include crossing the northeast corner of the CPR Intermodal Facility just east of and adjacent to the hydro corridor.	2	The Project Team will consider such an alignment.
11. Acoustic impacts should be considered.	2	Noise analysis will be undertaken to assess the potential noise impacts in accordance with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) / Ministry of the Environment (MOE) Noise Protocol.
12. All the best in your endeavours.	1	Thank you, the 427 Corridor Project Team greatly appreciates your comments.
13. Do not negatively impact the local roads.	1	Comment noted. The 427 extension will be designed to minimize impacts to local roads.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Comments Expressed	# of Comments	How the Comment Was Addressed
14. This 400-series highway should end at a Provincial highway such as Highway 9.	1	As specified in the <i>427 Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference (ToR)</i> , the purpose of the 427 Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment Study is to address short-term transportation problems related to the current Highway 427 terminus, truck traffic accessibility to and from the CPR Vaughan Intermodal Facility, and their impact on the inter-regional traffic in the Peel-York boundary area. As the north study limits are located at the south end of the Greenbelt, an expansion north towards Highway 9 is not being considered as part of this study.
15. Major Mackenzie Drive should have an on/off ramp from Highway 427.	1	A terminus at Major Mackenzie Drive will be examined as part of this study. An interchange will be provided if the preferred terminus location is at Major Mackenzie Drive or further north.
16. Major Mackenzie Drive needs to be improved at Highway 27.	1	Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 27 are municipal roads that are outside the scope of the current study. Both roads are identified to be improved by York Region. It should also be noted that York Region is commencing the Western Vaughan EA study, and will examine improvements in this area.
17. Provide information related to the widening of Airport Road.	1	Airport Road is under the jurisdiction of the Region of Peel. We have forwarded your comments to the Region of Peel.
18. Concerned with the residential development projections for Kleinburg-Nashville community.	1	Development projections in the Kleinburg-Nashville area are set by the Region of York and the City of Vaughan, and are outside the scope of the 427 Transportation Corridor EA study. The land use and population forecasts used in the 427 Transportation Corridor EA study have been developed through extensive consultation with the local municipalities to meet the objectives of the "Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe".
19. The road should remain a public road. Do not sell it like the 407.	1	There are currently no plans to sell it or operate it as a toll facility.
20. Concerned over the impacts to human health.	1	The study will include the examination of noise levels, air quality and safety. These factors are indicators of potential effects to human health.
21. To download material from the website is expensive. Need to access information in all modes that do not just refer people to the website.	1	With respect to your comments on the display materials, the project website is one medium that allows convenient access to the study material for the majority of people. Only limited hard copy material is brought to the PICs in the interest of reducing paper usage. However, hard copy material was given to those requesting it and is always available on request.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Comments Expressed	# of Comments	How the Comment Was Addressed
22. Concerns over the traffic and reducing quality of life to the Bolton community.	1	Social impacts to local communities, such as Bolton, will be examined as part of this study.
23. Extend Highway 427 north to Highway 9.	1	As specified in the <i>427 Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference (ToR)</i> , the purpose of the 427 Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment Study is to address short-term transportation problems related to the current Highway 427 terminus, truck traffic accessibility to and from the CPR Vaughan Intermodal Facility, and their impact on the inter-regional traffic in the Peel-York boundary area. As the north study limits are located at the south end of the Greenbelt, an expansion north towards Highway 9 is not being considered as part of this study. As the north study limits are located at the south end of the Greenbelt, an expansion north towards Highway 9 is not being considered as part of this study.
24. Provide an east/west corridor using Major Mackenzie Drive.	1	Improvements to Major Mackenzie Drive are outside the scope of the current 427 Transportation Corridor study. However, Major Mackenzie Drive is identified to be improved by York Region. It should also be noted that York Region is commencing the Western Vaughan EA study, which will include this area in its examination.
25. Extend Mayfield Road east into York Region.	1	This option will be considered as part of the Region of Peel's upcoming Highway 50/Highway 427 Extension Area Transportation Master Plan.
26. Congestion of traffic 2007 is already unbearable on Highway 50.	1	Traffic impacts to local communities, such as Bolton, will be examined as part of this study.
27. Concerns over the water flow of the existing creek.	1	Impacts to watercourse, fisheries, drainage and stormwater management will be considered as part of the study, as will mitigation measures.
28. Asked if CPR will be required to clean sediment out of their ponds.	1	The Project Team is unclear about your concern and would like to discuss it with you. Please clarify your question and email us at project-team@427corridor.com .
29. Asked if there would be consideration to realign the creek west, parallel to Huntington Road if the preferred alignment impacts the natural creek flow.	1	From a natural environmental perspective, it is our objective to avoid or minimize impacts to natural creek flow and to fish and fish habitat.
30. Asked whether the creeks support fish.	1	Fish presence has been confirmed in the East and West Robinson Creeks at sampling locations and downstream of Major Mackenzie Drive. Fish presence in the upper reaches will be confirmed once a route is selected.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Comments Expressed	# of Comments	How the Comment Was Addressed
31. Realignment of Major Mackenzie Drive would significantly ease the over capacity usage of Rutherford Road and Nashville Road.	1	Improvements to Major Mackenzie Drive are outside the scope of the current 427 Transportation Corridor study. However, Major Mackenzie Drive is identified to be improved by York Region. It should also be noted that York Region is commencing the Western Vaughan EA study, which will include this area in its examination.
32. Agree with the removal of Nashville Road as a possible 427 terminus.	1	Comment noted.
33. Extension of Highway 427 north should be west of Huntington Road between the hydro corridor and Highway 50.	1	An alignment in between Highway 50 and Huntington Road is not considered feasible as it would adversely impact the CPR Vaughan Intermodal Facility and could predetermine a future connection with a possible GTA-West Transportation Corridor
34. Opening of aggregate quarries on 124 and Redickville.	1	There are no aggregate quarries in the vicinity of the 427 Transportation Corridor.
35. Disappointed that MTO is not thinking outside the box nor looking at truly strategic alternatives.	1	Comment noted.
36. The 427 Corridor should be brought to Rutherford Road for now.	1	Comment noted.
37. The building of homes on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive should not occur until the extension of the 427 meets Major Mackenzie Drive.	1	Comment noted.
38. Development in the City of Vaughan has been frozen for some time.	1	The City of Vaughan is waiting for the 427 Transportation Corridor Study to be completed so that a preferred alignment can be identified prior to allowing development to proceed.
39. Prefer the most westerly alignment.	1	We appreciate your support for the most westerly alignment. All alignments will be examined as part of this study.
40. Buffer area surrounding the preferred alignments is excessive.	1	The buffer area should not be considered a MTO right-of-way. The buffer area was intended to provide a reasonable amount of flexibility to refine the alternatives as more detailed engineering work is undertaken. This area will vary due to a number of natural and physical constraints located within the study area. The routes are in the preliminary stages and should be viewed as conceptual only.
41. Connection needed to Highway 400 for the high volume of the CPR Intermodal Facility and the 427.	1	Comment noted.

TABLE 2. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES		
Comments Expressed	# of Comments	How the Comment Was Addressed
42. None of the alignments present a reasonable terminus for the 427.	1	Comment noted.
43. Mayfield Road is an unsuitable terminus.	1	A terminus at Mayfield Road is one of the alternatives that will be examined as part of this study.
44. Please clarify where the Kleinburg Boundary and Urban Boundary originated from.	1	The urban boundary and the Kleinburg boundary were taken from map 5 of the Region of York's Official Plan (which shows urban areas and towns and villages). The Project Team feels that these are appropriate boundaries as it is consistent with the Region of York's Official Plan.
45. Urban Area Boundary should be renamed to Settlement Area.	1	The urban boundary and the Kleinburg boundary were taken from map 5 of the Region of York's Official Plan (which shows urban areas and towns and villages). The Project Team feels that these are appropriate boundaries as it is consistent with the Region of York's Official Plan.
46. Vertical geometry of the route does not appear to have been considered.	1	Comment noted.
47. Concerned over not being able to develop lands along Major Mackenzie Drive.	1	Regarding the Major Mackenzie Drive Environmental Assessment, we will be forwarding your comments to the appropriate staff member at the Region of York.
48. 427 Corridor is a micro study that has no "big picture".	1	The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is working to provide for the efficient movement of people and goods within the context of the Province's <i>Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe</i> (GGH) as released in July 2006. The 427 Transportation Corridor supports the vision identified in the <i>Growth Plan</i> .
49. There is no bypass to the GTA.	1	The 427 Transportation Corridor is only one strategy identified to manage development and growth within the City of Vaughan and the GTA.
50. 427 Transportation Corridor is a micro study and not looking at the "big picture."	1	The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is working to provide the efficient movement of people and goods within the in the context of the Province's <i>Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe</i> as released in July 2006. The 427 Transportation Corridor supports the vision identified in the <i>Growth Plan</i> . As well, the study is one strategy identified to manage development and growth within the City of Vaughan and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).
51. Separate traffic from local and highway.	1	Comment noted.

On the reverse side of the comment sheet was an Evaluation of Route Alternatives survey in which the public was asked to provide their opinion on the relative importance of the evaluation factors to be used in the evaluation of route alternatives: social-economic environment, cultural environment, natural environment and technical considerations. Table 3 summarizes the results of the survey of the environmental factors the public felt were of

importance to them. Fifteen people completed the survey, however, some people felt that only a few factors were of importance to them and did not complete the entire survey.

TABLE 3. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC SURVEY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROUTE ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION FACTORS				
	High Importance	Moderate Importance	Low Importance	
Social-Economic Environment	9	3	2	High importance placed on Social-Economic Environment
Cultural Environment	5	4	5	Importance split between high and low on Cultural Environment
Natural Environment	8	6	1	High importance placed on Natural Environment
Technical Considerations	5	6	2	Moderate importance placed on Natural Environment