

# Meeting Minutes

Project Name:	GTA West Transportation Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment Study, Stage 2	Meeting:	GTAG Meeting #1
Assignment No.	2013-E-008	Date:	October 29, 2014
		Time:	12:30 pm – 3:30 pm
Location:	Holiday Inn Mississauga Toronto West (100 Britannia Road East, Mississauga), Heartland Ballroom		
Independent Facilitator:	Glenn Pothier	GLPi	
Project Team Attendees:	Natalie Rouskov	MTO	
	Chris Barber	MTO	
	Sarah Merriam	MTO	
	Neil Ahmed	MMM	
	Sandy Nairn	MMM	
	Patrick Puccini	URS	
	Britta Patkowski	URS	
GTAG Attendees:	Removed in accordance with the <i>Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>		
Legend:	Q: Question		
	R: Response		
	C: Comment		

## **1. Opening Remarks and Introductions**

G. Pothier, the Independent Facilitator, called the meeting to order, welcomed and thanked all participants for attending, and encouraged the stakeholders to take the opportunity to participate fully in the meeting. G. Pothier highlighted three objectives of the meeting:

- Affirm the role of the GTAG and its relationship to the project.
- Provide an overview of the study and work completed to date.
- Seek feedback on potential route alternatives and potential interchange locations.

N. Rouskov thanked members for attending. She emphasized the role of the GTAG as a sounding board for the project team to get early preview input of interim outcomes prior to the more formal consultation as scheduled.

## **2. About the Greenbelt Transportation Advisory Group (GTAG)**

G. Pothier provided an overview of the purpose of the GTAG, and the roles and responsibilities of the members. He emphasized that the GTAG will play an advisory role. It was noted that as a general membership rule, members are to keep information confidential, when requested, as some project information is previewed at the GTAG and will not be publically released until later a date. However, in the interest of transparency and openness, members of the general public are permitted to attend GTAG meetings as observers. There will also be no designated spokesperson for the GTAG.

G. Pother noted that the purpose of the GTAG is not to discuss whether a transportation corridor should be built, as this decision was made during Stage 1 of the study. The GTAG is a forum for discussing how a transportation corridor can be placed in the Greenbelt area that respects Greenbelt sensitivities and policies. It was noted that outside of the GTAG meetings, members can express opinions as they please, however in order to have constructive meetings, members should respect the intent of the GTAG – to share collective ideas that will assist with wise and informed decision-making.

With respect to meeting location, consensus could not be reached on whether the meeting venue should rotate throughout the study area or whether one venue should be designated as the meeting venue for the duration of the study. The project team will select a different location for GTAG Meeting #2, and will consider proximity to transit and the Greenbelt, and teleconference capabilities. This issue can be discussed again at Meeting #2. Opportunities to carpool to the meetings will be noted in the next meeting invitation. Interested individuals will be asked to contact B. Patkowski and she will share the contact information of interested individuals with others expressing interest.

## **3. Study Overview and Status Update and 4. Greenbelt Design Guideline**

S. Nairn provided an overview of the recommendations from Stage 1 of the study and the focus of Stage 2 of the study, the project schedule, design considerations in the Greenbelt, how the project team is using the *Guideline for Planning and Design of the GTA West Corridor Through the Greenbelt*, the concept of a Community Value Plan within the Greenbelt, the Stage 2 planning process, and what the new corridor will look like.

## **5. Overview of the Development and Screening of the Long List of Route Alternatives and Potential Interchange Locations**

S. Nairn provided an overview of how potential interchange locations were developed and screened, and what goods movement priority features are being considered. N. Ahmed provided an overview of how route alternatives were developed and screened, described the long list of route alternatives, provided an overview of the key reasons why route alternatives were screened out in the west, central and east sections of the study area, and described the short list of route alternatives.

Q: The screening and evaluation criteria discuss Class 1-3 soils. The Town of Caledon has Class 4 soils which are important to the wineries and vineyards. The project team should consider Class 1-4 soils.

Q: Does the 170m right-of-way allow for potential widening in the future? What is included in the 170m?

R: The transportation corridor is generally envisioned to be 170m wide to accommodate a 110m highway right-of-way and a 60 m transitway. The 170m right-of-way will accommodate features

such as landscaping, grading, etc. The 110m highway right-of-way will allow future widening into the median area, so additional land will not need to be secured in the future to accommodate widening, if required.

Q: Can you constrain the right-of-way in sensitive areas?

R: Consistent with the Greenbelt Design Guidelines, the project team will consider using a reduced width for the transportation corridor to minimize impacts to features within the Greenbelt.

Q: Does the GTA West transitway replace the 407 transitway?

R: No. The transitway that is part of the GTA West transportation corridor will be a new system implemented by the ministry.

Q: Is the GTA West transportation corridor protecting for a Hydro One corridor?

R: The Ministry of Transportation and Hydro One are each pursuing separate but coordinated Environmental Assessment studies. The GTA West Study is at a later stage of the process, having already developed an EA Terms of Reference which was approved in 2008, and having completed the need and justification phase of the EA (Stage 1) in 2012. In contrast, Hydro One will be starting their EA process with the preparation of a Terms of Reference. The GTA West Study and the Hydro One Study are separate because each has specific needs, issues, processes, consultation requirements and schedules. We will continue to seek opportunities to coordinate with Hydro One throughout this study, but ultimately it is envisioned that the GTA West study will only seek to protect property required for the construction of the transportation corridor, including the proposed transitway.

Q: The Highway 427 extension hasn't been approved yet. How do you anticipate that process and this GTA West study process working together?

R: The extension of Highway 427 to Major Mackenzie Drive has been approved. The GTA West Project Team is exploring alternatives to connect Highway 427 from Major Mackenzie Drive to the GTA West transportation corridor. Alternatives are being shown at Public Information Centre #1. This connection will be included as part of the GTA West Study.

C: Farms are businesses. They should have their own category in the evaluation process.

C: Grain elevators need easy and reliable access to markets, and therefore support interchanges within the Greenbelt areas.

Q: What is the CAG and what other consultation events have occurred thus far?

R: The consultation program features multiple outreach tools and points of contact, including Public Information Centres (3 rounds – the first of which is scheduled for later this year), Community Workshops (4 rounds – the first of which occurred in July/August 2014), as well as meetings with First Nation and Métis Councils/Communities, the Municipal Advisory Group (the second meeting is scheduled for next week), the Regulatory Agency Advisory Group (the second meeting is scheduled for next week), the Municipal Executive Advisory Group (the first meeting was held in September 2014), the Greenbelt Transportation Advisory Group, and the Community Advisory Group (the first meeting was held last night). The Community Advisory Group comprises members of the public who have an active interest in the project, whereas the Greenbelt Transportation Advisory Group comprises stakeholders with a specific interest in impacts and issues relating to agriculture, bridges,

geometric design, stormwater management, community sensitive design, and road ecology and wildlife in the Greenbelt planning area. Stakeholders can also contact the project team via the project website ([www.gta-west.com](http://www.gta-west.com)), the project Twitter site (@GTAWestStudy), and the project toll-free telephone line (1-877-522-6916).

- C: Existing conditions and constraints should be shown on the long list and short list route alternative mapping so that stakeholders can see what is impacted.

### **6. Feedback on the Preliminary Short List of Route Alternatives Within the Greenbelt**

G. Pothier led a P.O.W.E.R. exercise for the preliminary short list of route alternatives for the west, central and east sections of the study area. For each section, attendees were asked to comment on the P – Positives, O – Objections, W – What Else Do You Want To Share?, E – Enhancements, R – Remedies of the preliminary short list of route alternatives.

#### *West Section (Highway 401/407 ETR Interchange to Mississauga Road)*

- The routes farther to the south appear to impact less Greenbelt area than northerly routes (comment applies to all sections).
- Alternative 1C appears to veer away from natural features near the Highway 401/407 ETR interchange, however farther north it runs close to a watercourse.
- Alternatives 1C and 1E respect natural features.
- There is a portion of Alternative 1C that is on top of Sixteen Mile Creek. This portion should be realigned to the east.
- The TransCanada pipeline is located in the vicinity of Alternatives 2C and 2D. These route alternatives should parallel the pipeline to minimize impacts.
- Only one short list route alternative has an interchange at Mississauga Road. The short list should show more interchanges at Mississauga Road.
  - *Subsequent to the meeting, the project team confirmed that all of the short list route alternatives have an interchange at Mississauga Road.*
- The project team should show details of the Highway 401/407 ETR/GTA West interchange at Public Information Centre #1.

Q: Is there an alternative which resembles the Halton Peel Boundary Area Transportation Study (HPBATS) recommended alternative?

R: The HPBATS recommended road network included a Halton-Peel Freeway from the Highway 401/407 ETR interchange west of Ninth Line to Mayfield Road. Some of the potential GTA West route alternatives reflect the essence of the HPBATS recommended road network.

#### *Central Section (Mississauga Road to Highway 50)*

- The routes farther to the south appear to impact less Greenbelt area than northerly routes (comment applies to all sections).
- Support for interchanges in the Town of Caledon because they will help to get long distance traffic off of local roads. This increases public safety.
- Oppose Alternative 10B. It has large residential and community impacts. 400 series highways do not mix with residential land uses. This alternative will limit residential growth and the tax base.

- Commercial land uses, like farms, need access to interchanges to get to the market. Those commercial land uses are located within the Greenbelt. Support for interchanges within the Greenbelt.
- Preference for Alternative 6B.

#### *East Section (Highway 50 to Highway 400)*

- Support for the southerly route alternatives through the Greenbelt area.
- Question the need for an interchange at Highway 27 and Pine Valley Drive as there is little growth in this area.
- Question the need for the GTA West transportation corridor between Highway 400 and Highway 427. The corridor will expose the Greenbelt area to commercial and industrial development pressures. Policy will not protect these lands as the next government may change the policies.
- Oppose interchanges within the Greenbelt. Interchanges attract commercial and industrial growth, which will further impact the Greenbelt area.
- When exploring the connection to Highway 400, please consider how a future easterly extension may be accommodated.
  - *The project team noted that there is limited opportunity to extend the GTA West transportation corridor further to the east because of extensive development along the Yonge Street corridor.*
- The project team should consider designing watercrossings to convey regional flood levels. Benefits will also include wildlife passage, fish passage, and maintaining natural channel functions in the creeks.
- The project team should consider alternatives to salt application and the impacts of salt to water quality. Conservation Halton has a 40 year data set which shows chloride levels rising. Some areas have salt concentrations of approximately 20 mg/L, which should be compared to an ocean which has a salt concentration of approximately 30 mg/L. Studies have found blue crabs in the Humber tributary, which are salt water species. Salt management is important.

#### **7. Upcoming Public Information Centre: Anticipating Public and Stakeholder Reaction**

G. Pothier noted that the project team is aiming to hold a Public Information Centre later this year and asked attendees to provide insight on the following issues - with a view to assisting the project team to best address the concerns and information needs of the public:

1. How will stakeholders react to the short list of route alternatives and interchange locations presented at Public Information Centre #1?
  2. Are there “hot spots” or “hot topics” you foresee?
  3. What strategies/responses can we provide to address the “hot spots” or “hot topics”?
- Remove Alternative 10B due to the extensive residential impacts.
  - Show existing conditions and constraints on the long list and short list route alternative mapping so that stakeholders can see what is impacted.
  - Make interchanges creative so they don't just promote industrial growth. The area needs commuter parking lots.
  - Present interchange designs with a Google Earth experience.
  - Highlight the need for the transportation corridor and show where the growth is going to happen.
  - Have a map showing the future land use and development areas.

- Identify which roads are regional roads, as they are going to be top priority for locating interchanges.
- Have a land use map.
- Stakeholders view highway construction as a bad thing. Promote the transitway and that this transportation corridor is more than just a highway.
- Put the information in the hands of people with handouts or on the project website.
- Schedule the Public Information Sessions so that they do not conflict with holidays.
- Ensure that there is a Public Information Centre at the Brampton Fairgrounds and in Georgetown.
- Have a map showing the Metrolinx' Regional Transportation Plan.

### **8. Next Steps and 9. Open Forum**

N. Ahmed provided an overview of next steps in the study and G. Pothier invited final questions and comments.

Q: What is Highway 413?

R: The GTA West Project Team is aware that some stakeholders are referring to the GTA West transportation corridor as Highway 413. The GTA West transportation corridor does not have an official name yet.

C: It is refreshing that the ministry is listening to people and is following an in depth planning process in a respectful fashion.

Q: The Ministry of the Environment is now the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. Will this new emphasis change the direction of this project?

R: The project team is consulting with the MOECC. We have had meetings, and the original scope of work from the Terms of Reference includes investigating air quality. MOECC has not alerted the project team of new requirements.

C: A symptom of climate change is intense short duration rainfall. Creek crossings should be designed larger to mitigate impacts. Another symptom is warming of creeks, so thermal mitigation should be considered.

C: Discourage interchanges in the Greenbelt. Place interchanges in the Vaughan and Brampton city centres.

Q: What is the cost of the GTA West transportation corridor?

R: In Stage 1 of the Study, it was estimated to be approximately \$5 billion. This will be updated as part of Stage 2 once we have identified a preferred alternative.

C: Use local aggregates if possible.

R: The project team is not at the level of detail yet where we need to determine where aggregates should be sourced from. This will be determined in later stages of the study.

Q: How do we contact the project team?

R: Project website: [www.gta-west.com](http://www.gta-west.com), project team e-mail address: [project\\_team@gta-west.com](mailto:project_team@gta-west.com),  
toll-free telephone line: 1-877-522-6916.

#### **10. Closing Remarks**

G. Pothier and N. Rouskov provided closing remarks, and thanked all participants for taking the time to provide their input.

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Submitted by: B. Patkowski, URS

Distribution: Attendees, Regrets

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