

## MEMORANDUM

To: Committee of the Whole

From: Paul Jankowski  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

Date: January 3, 2019

Re: Toronto Region Board of Trade Proposed Infrastructure Options to  
Improve Goods Movement in Canada's Innovation Corridor

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This memorandum provides an update on the Toronto Region Board of Trade (TRBoT) communication entitled "Proposed Infrastructure Options to Improve Goods Movement in Canada's Innovation Corridor" that was released as part of their annual summit in November 2018 (Attachment 1).

### **The Toronto Region Board of Trade has identified congestion in the Toronto-Waterloo corridor as the number one challenge to the effective movement of goods**

Since 2017, the TRBoT has published a series of five policy papers to address the state of goods movement in the Toronto-Waterloo Innovation Corridor. The policy papers recommend that government agencies address congestion bottlenecks along the corridor, which includes Canada's border hubs and large urban areas, in order to build a fluid, national freight network.

### **The Toronto Region Board of Trade has prioritized ten initiatives in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area intended to improve goods movement**

The recently-released TRBoT communication sought input on the prioritization of ten initiatives in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area through consultations with leading stakeholders across the goods movement industry. The ten initiatives are identified as large, high-impact projects that would significantly improve goods movement in the Toronto-Waterloo corridor and will be highlighted in TRBoT's sixth Policy Paper, expected to be released in January 2019. The projects are summarized in Attachment 1 and include:

1. Milton Logistics Hub
2. Union Station West
3. Niagara-GTA Corridor
4. Bradford Bypass
5. Highway 7 Extension
6. Truck Parking Rollout
7. Smart Signals Rollout
8. Super Express
9. GTA West Corridor
10. New Rail Freight Corridor & Expansion of RER (Regional Express Rail)

### **Three of the Toronto Region Board of Trade initiatives are of interest to the Region**

Although there is no immediate impact to York Region, the TRBoT communication does highlight three projects that are of Regional interest and have been the subject of reports to Council. The communication is supportive of Council's positions on the Highway 400-404 Connecting Link (previously known as the Bradford Bypass) and the GTA West Corridor. The TRBoT communication, however, also advocates a new Freight Rail Corridor through southern York Region, while York Region Council and the Councils of the Cities of Vaughan and Markham and the Town of Richmond Hill have consistently opposed it.

### **The Highway 400-404 Connecting Link is identified in the Region's 2016 Transportation Master Plan and the Regional Official Plan**

The proposed Highway 400-404 Connecting Link, a 16-kilometre new highway, would connect Highways 400 and 404 through the Town of East Gwillimbury and the Township of King. The project is intended to provide needed east-west travel corridors to better balance goods movement on Highways 400 and 404 as well as improving access to northern portions of the Region.

This highway connection is not only supported by the Region, through the Transportation Master Plan and the Official Plan, but also locally, with recent resolutions to expedite implementation passed by the Township of King and the Town of East Gwillimbury. The Highway 400-404 Connecting Link is also identified in the 2017 Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

### **In 2016, Council requested that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation resume the Environmental Assessment for the GTA West Corridor**

The GTA West Corridor, a 50-kilometre new highway, would connect Highway 400 in the City of Vaughan to Highway 401 near the Town of Milton. The GTA West Corridor would provide an additional east-west connection to facilitate goods movement between Highways 400, 410 and

401. The project is identified in the 2016 Transportation Master Plan and the Regional Official Plan.

Although work on this corridor was cancelled in early 2018, the Province recently announced that it will resume the Environmental Assessment for the GTA West Corridor.

### **Council has strongly opposed any options which may increase the volume of freight rail traffic travelling through the Region**

The TRBoT advocates for a new 15-kilometre freight rail link in Halton Region, which would enable CP freight trains to re-route from the southern portion of the City of Toronto to the existing CN rail corridor, located in the southern portion of the Region through the Cities of Vaughan and Markham and the Town of Richmond Hill.

Council resolutions opposing any projects that could increase freight rail traffic through the Region were circulated to Federal and Provincial agencies, based on 2016 Council reports.

### **Staff will continue to keep Council informed on future communications from the Toronto Region Board of Trade**

Staff will continue to work with the Province and external stakeholders, such as the Toronto Region Board of Trade, on the implementation of Regional transportation initiatives. Once released, staff will review the TRBoT's sixth Policy Paper and will advise Senior Management of any concerns related to potential increases in freight rail traffic, and reiterate those concerns through Regional comments on the Policy Paper.

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Paul Jankowski  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

Attachments (1)  
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