

April 24, 2025

FOR DECISION

Report of the President

## BRT Q1 2025 Priority Projects Activities Update

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### 1. Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. The Board of Directors receive this report for information.

### 2. Purpose

This report provides the Board with a progress update on the priority Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects for Q1-2025 and general next steps in progressing the BRT work program.

### 3. Key Points:

- Two initiatives undertaken to optimize future BRT delivery based on current industry best practices and lessons learned from previous BRT projects in York Region, and to inform funding advocacy efforts, are nearing completion:
  - *Capital, Operations and Maintenance Costs Review* of the current BRT network: identified the need for stations and boulevard design changes for the new BRT corridors; and
  - *Construction Contract Models Analysis*: identified a 'collaborative' model approach as most appropriate for delivery of the projects.
- The first Public Open House for the Jane Street BRT Environmental Assessment (TRPAP) and 30% Preliminary Design will be scheduled for late May 2025. The final date is pending confirmation, and further details will be advertised publicly once finalized.
- Various stages of BRT planning and design are progressing along the Highway 7 East BRT corridor in Markham, with procurement for preliminary engineering commencing for the main segment of the corridor.
- YRRTC continues to collaborate with the Region and the cities of Vaughan and Markham to advocate for funding for the construction of the Jane Street and Highway 7 East BRT projects.

- Housing Supply and Affordability Policy Framework reports and action plans were presented to the respective Councils on April 1, 2025 (City of Vaughan) and April 8, 2025 (City of Markham) and both frameworks were endorsed.

## 4. Background

### **The current BRT work program includes projects along two rapid transit corridors in various stages of planning, design and funding advocacy**

To meet funding requirements and increase the likelihood of receiving capital funding commitments from senior levels of government, Regional Council has invested in advancing priority BRT projects along Jane Street and Highway 7 East (**Appendix A**). Key components of the current BRT work program include:

1. Future BRT Delivery Optimization:
  - a) Capital, Operations and Maintenance Cost Review
  - b) Construction Contract Models Analysis
2. Advancing planning work for priority BRT projects along Jane Street and Highway 7 East corridors:
  - a) Jane Street BRT – Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive
  - b) Highway 7 East BRT – Birchmount Road in Markham Centre to York-Durham Line
3. Funding Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement to secure construction funding

## 5. Analysis

### **OPTIMIZING FUTURE BRT DELIVERY**

#### **The BRT Capital, Operations, and Maintenance Costs Review is aimed at ensuring investments in future BRT corridors return value for money based on lessons learned from previous BRT projects. Recommendations will be presented to the Board in Q2 2025**

The primary objective of the BRT Capital, Operations and Maintenance Costs Review capitalized on lessons learned from previous BRT projects. This may include reducing capital costs and ensuring the cost-effective operations and maintenance of the system, while not impacting the customer experience and service levels. This review aims to inform the future design of the corridors, ensuring they are both efficient and sustainable. The recommendations of the review will be presented to the Board in Q2-2025.

Through a series of workshops with York Region departments, several initial infrastructure design options were identified and are currently being considered by staff.

Capital cost estimates will be updated based on the results and recommendations of this review, as necessary, ensuring that the financial planning is reflective of the proposed changes.

**A detailed analysis of construction contract models, aimed at achieving critical objectives for the delivery of the Jane Street and Highway 7 East BRT projects, leveraging lessons learned from past BRT projects, has identified a 'collaborative' model approach as the most appropriate**

YRRTC, in collaboration with York Region departments, is nearing completion of a review of various construction contract models in use in the industry to identify the most appropriate contract model for the priority BRT projects.

Workshops were conducted with industry experts in both the public and private sectors to review different contract models. Several key regional objectives for project delivery success were identified through this process, including reducing/minimizing community impacts and achieving the best value for money.

Analysis of the objectives identified that a “collaborative” contract delivery model may be the most appropriate approach to meet the regional objectives. A “collaborative” contract delivery model allows for the owner, designer, and contractor to collaborate early in the design phase of the project delivery, fostering cooperation and shared goals, and helping to optimize project outcomes and reduce risks.

A report with recommendations will be presented to the Board in Q2-2025.

## **ADVANCING PRIORITY BRT PROJECTS:**

### **JANE STREET BRT – CITY OF VAUGHAN**

#### **The first Public Open House for the Jane Street Environmental Assessment (TRPAP) and 30% Preliminary Design will be held in May 2025**

The Jane Street BRT Environmental Assessment (TRPAP) and 30% Preliminary Design was awarded to HDR Corporation in October 2024. Data gathering (including traffic, property details and conditions of existing infrastructure in the corridor), and project analysis are underway and will help inform the first stage of the Environmental Assessment process.

Field investigations will continue through the spring for survey work, utility and geotechnical investigations. Work is mostly taking place in the boulevard; however isolated lane closures may be required.

YRRTC is working closely with York Region, York Region Transit (YRT) and the City of Vaughan to ensure all interests are appropriately addressed. Several workshops have been held with YRT and the City of

Vaughan to review the project schedule, project risks, and traffic and transit operations within the study area.

Community engagement, hosted by YRRTC and YRT, is also on-going with several pop-up booths at community locations near the Jane Street corridor to raise awareness and share information about the project. The first public Open House is scheduled for late May 2025. The final date is pending confirmation, and further details will be advertised publicly once finalized. Additional Open Houses are planned for the summer/fall to share design alternatives and analysis, with the final project Notice of Completion planned to be submitted Q1-2026.

## **HIGHWAY 7 EAST BRT – CITY OF MARKHAM**

**BRT planning and design is progressing along the Highway 7 East BRT corridor as follows:**

**Simcoe Promenade:** Birchmount Road to Andre De Grasse Street

- In January 2025, the YRRTC Board approved deferring construction of this segment of rapidway and the execution of related agreements until further construction opportunities are confirmed. YRRTC will continue to explore and assess opportunities to advance the construction of this segment of rapidway, ensuring that proceeding is feasible.

**Kennedy Road:** YMCA Boulevard to Highway 7

- Public Works has advanced the detailed design for Kennedy Road to 60%, with construction planned for 2027. YRRTC continues to provide technical reviews and comments as part of the Technical Advisory Committee, sharing lessons learned from delivery of the previous BRT program.

**Highway 7 East** (including Enterprise in Markham Centre): Andre De Grasse Street to York-Durham Line

- The completed Environmental Assessment (EA) Review and Gap Analysis for Highway 7 East confirmed that an amendment to the 2005 EA is not required, setting the stage to progress to preliminary design.
- YRRTC is collaborating with YRT and the City of Markham to confirm operational needs along the corridor, particularly in constrained areas and the easterly segments, while preparing for the procurement of the preliminary design.
- Community engagement aimed at sharing information, raising awareness, and building support for the project will commence in Q2-2025.

## 6. Financial Considerations

### CONSTRUCTION FUNDING ADVOCACY

Support from senior levels of government will be required to help advance an estimated \$1.7 billion in capital construction investment needed over the next 10 years to construct the Jane Street and Highway 7 East BRT projects. These funds are not currently included in the Region's 10-year Capital Plan, as they require funding commitments and are subject to the Region's Fiscal capacity considerations.

York Region and YRRTC are working with the province, through MTO, to advance the Canada Public Transit Fund (CPTF) funding application. Consolidated comments from Regional departments and the planning departments at the cities of Markham and Vaughan on the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH) Metro-Regional Agreement Expression of Interest were submitted to MTO in January 2025 and were expected to be advanced to the federal government following the Provincial election.

On March 21, 2025, before the dissolution of Parliament, the first funding commitments were made through the CPTF Metro-Region Agreement stream. These included:

- Over \$1.5 billion for TransLink Metro Vancouver Transit Projects, including transit expansion and infrastructure improvements; and
- Funding to extend the Hazel McCallion LRT Extension in Brampton (exact amount was not disclosed).

Staff will continue to liaise with the MTO to support the development of the best Business Case for each of the two priority BRT projects.

There is ongoing collaboration with the City of Vaughan and the City of Markham regarding housing policy frameworks for the integration of housing supply and affordability in support of the CPTF funding application. Planning staff from both municipalities presented Housing Supply and Affordability Policy Framework reports and action plans to their respective Councils and received endorsement on April 1, 2025 (City of Vaughan) and April 8, 2025 (City of Markham). YRRTC and the Region will continue to collaborate with both municipalities on the implementation of the endorsed housing supply and affordability action plans over the next number of months as well as integrating the municipal housing action plans into the Metro-Region Agreement funding submission.

Staff continue to monitor and consider the outcomes of recent provincial election and upcoming federal election to understand and anticipate what funding mechanisms will be available for these projects.

### CURRENT AND FUTURE REGIONAL FUNDING

\$34.2 million for the Jane Street and Highway 7 East BRT projects and related scopes of work described in this report are included in the approved YRRTC BRT 2025 10-year Capital Budget. Overall scopes of work are trending within budget.

The Kennedy Road BRT detailed design and construction is funded and included in Public Works 10-year Capital Budget.

As BRT funding is advanced by senior levels of government, the capacity of the Region to finance any required share of capital costs would need to be addressed in the Region's Capital planning process.

## 7. Collaborative Partnerships

Successful project progress and implementation of the Jane Street and Highway 7 East BRT projects requires continuous collaboration with our partners to ensure all input and feedback are appropriately addressed.

It is also critical to continue to work closely with the Region and the cities of Vaughan and Markham to create and present the most compelling transit and housing supply and affordability business cases for the projects to meet federal funding criteria.

YRRTC will continue to engage with the local municipalities, the Region, the Province, Metrolinx, and other partners to ensure the BRT work program is developed taking into consideration emerging plans and existing work programs.

## 8. Conclusion

Advancing the planning, preliminary design and related works for the Jane Street and Highway 7 East BRT will lead to shovel-ready projects, positioning the Region to be in a state of readiness to effectively secure construction funding from senior levels of government.

YRRTC remains committed to progressing the BRT work program to ensure timely achievement of this shovel-ready status through collaborative efforts with our partners and stakeholders.

Staff will continue to provide quarterly updates to the Board on the progress of this work program.

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For more information on this report, please contact Liza Sheppard, Vice President, Project Implementation at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71035. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by: **Paul Jankowski**  
President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation

April 15, 2025  
eDocs # 16671348  
Appendix A – Bus Rapid Transit Network Plan

## APPENDIX A - Rapid Transit Network Plan

