



Office of the Commissioner
Transportation Services

Memorandum

To: Committee of the Whole

From: Paul Jankowski
Commissioner of Transportation Services

Date: August 10, 2018

Re: **York Region Transit Expansion of 55 Orlando Avenue
Town of Richmond Hill**

This memorandum provides Council with information about York Region Transit's (YRT) plans to expand the Operations, Maintenance and Storage Facility located at 55 Orlando Avenue, in the Town of Richmond Hill. The expansion is to accommodate future transit service needs in the southeast portion of York Region that will align with the Council-endorsed YRT Facilities Strategy (Strategy).

In January 2006, Council endorsed the YRT Facilities Strategy that detailed bus storage and maintenance needs until 2031

The current YRT Facilities Strategy outlines bus requirements from 2013 until 2031 to support transit growth across the Region. The Strategy estimates the number of Region-owned bus garages that need to be constructed in order to store and maintain the bus fleet. To support projected bus fleet growth, it was originally identified that up to seven bus garages would be distributed geographically throughout the Region.

Since 2006, the Region has been successful in building bus garages in accordance with the original Strategy for the Southwest, North and Viva Divisions.

Since the implementation of the original Strategy, bus fleet requirements have been reduced by approximately 48 per cent due to a number of factors: implementing operating efficiencies, minimal increases in service hours, service delivery changes e.g. On-Demand service, technology advancements and lower forecasted population and transit ridership growth.

Building Region-owned bus garages aligns with the 2008 Council-endorsed Operations and Maintenance Contract Strategy, which identifies that Region-owned bus garages permits a competitive procurement process when hiring private contractors to deliver transit services.

YRT needs a facility by 2023 to accommodate the Southeast Division

YRT requires bus storage and a maintenance area large enough to accommodate 250 buses for the Southeast Division. The Southeast Division provides conventional transit services in the Towns of Richmond Hill and Whitchurch-Stouffville, and the City of Markham.

The current Southeast Division bus garage is located at 8050 Woodbine Avenue in the City of Markham and will reach its maximum bus storage and maintenance capacity by 2019. In addition, there are numerous constraints at this facility that impact bus maintenance and service reliability, including no on-site fuel storage or fuel management system, buses are stored outside resulting in increased idling time before going into service and buses do not have the appearance of being properly cleaned, decreased air system and HVAC reliability, and inability to store or maintain 60-foot articulated buses that are now operating on multiple Regional corridors.

This is the last bus garage not owned by the Region. The bus storage area is leased from the Ontario Realty Corporation and the garage is leased from a private owner, Belfield Investments. Both leases are held by YRT's Southeast Division Operating and Maintenance Contractor and expire in October 2023.

Staff has searched for suitable property since 2007

Since 2007, York Region Property Services and YRT staff has searched for suitable land to build a bus garage for the Southeast Division, with no success.

In addition, the cost of land has significantly increased over the term of the search, and now exceeds the funds available in the Region's Capital Budget to purchase land and build a new bus garage. The Council-approved 2018 Transportation Services 10 Year Capital Program includes \$24 million for the purchase of land and \$62 million for design and construction.

Staff evaluated expanding on the Operations, Maintenance and Storage Facility at 55 Orlando Avenue, maximizing land already owned by the Region

Staff completed a modeling exercise using a Network Analyst Tool and various statistics and data to determine preferred locations for a Southeast Division bus garage.

Parameters were applied such as: start and end point of bus routes, land-zoning, current and known municipal development, Regional and local official plans, and five to ten-year projected growth plans. The current bus garage at 55 Orlando Avenue is located in the preferred area.

Staff then completed a feasibility study to better understand expansion opportunities, capacity improvements and potential site constraints. The study considered items, such as expansion needs, budget and schedules, future planning and development considerations, land-use designations and zoning and development standards. Other considerations included required design features, changes to accommodate emerging technologies and future bus types and sizes.

Staff concluded that the expansion of 55 Orlando Avenue in the Town of Richmond Hill provides a viable opportunity to manage growth between 2019 and 2032.

Additionally, the overall design and construction cost would align with the budgeted amount included in the 2018 Capital Plan.

A phased build-out of the bus storage area at 55 Orlando Avenue was anticipated in the original design and construction of the facility

The original 2013 design of 55 Orlando Avenue included a phased build-out to accommodate an additional 60 buses. The updated proposed design would allow for an additional 153 buses, accommodating both current and future bus storage and maintenance needs for Viva and conventional service until 2032.

Staff is preparing the required documentation for submission to the Town of Richmond Hill for consideration. The design process would begin in 2019 and anticipate construction completion by the end of 2022. This timeline would ensure the bus garage is fully operational at the expiration of the current Southeast Division Operation and Maintenance contract, and the property leases for 8050 Woodbine Avenue.

Similar to 55 Orlando Avenue, staff is accessing the feasibility of expanding the existing bus garage at 8300 Keele Street in the City of Vaughan. The expansion would provide efficient bus storage and maintenance area to support additional bus fleet to 2032.

Both projects will need to be further considered as part of the 2019 Budget process.

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Services

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