

April 20, 2010

Mr. Denis Kelly  
Regional Clerk  
The Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, ON L3Y 6Z1

REGIONAL YORK  
CLERK'S OFFICE

FILE No. - 043

**RE: INFORMATION REPORT  
PROPOSED SURFACE PARKING LOT  
EXPANSION TO THE MOUNT JOY GO STATION  
1801 BUR OAK AVENUE (SD 10 110660) (10.0)**

Dear Mr. Kelly:

This will confirm that at a meeting held on April 13, 2010, Town of Markham Council adopted the following resolution:

- "1) That the report entitled "Information Report. Proposed surface parking lot expansion to the Mount Joy GO Station, 1801 Bur Oak Avenue", be received; and,
- 2) That this report be forwarded to Metrolinx along with a request to work together toward a long term vision for the Mount Joy GO Station and other Markham GO Stations; and,
- 3) That this report be forwarded to York Region for their information and the Region be requested to participate in discussions with Metrolinx; and,
- 4) That staff be authorized to prepare a conceptual plan that demonstrates alternative options for the Mount Joy GO station parking lot and bring it to a future Development Services Committee meeting; and further,
- 5) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution." (Item No. 2 of Report No. 19)

If you have any questions, please contact Teema Kanji, Senior Planner, at 905-477-7000 ext. 4480.

Sincerely yours,

Andrew Brouwer  
Deputy Town Clerk



Report to: Development Services Committee

Report Date: April 13, 2010

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**SUBJECT:** INFORMATION REPORT  
Proposed surface parking lot expansion to the Mount Joy GO Station  
1801 Bur Oak Avenue

File Number SD 10 110660

**PREPARED BY:** Teema Kanji, Senior Planner, ext. 4480  
Planning & Urban Design Department

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the report entitled "Information Report. Proposed surface parking lot expansion to the Mount Joy GO Station, 1801 Bur Oak Avenue", be received;
- 2) And that this report be forwarded to Metrolinx along with a request to work together toward a long term vision for the Mount Joy GO Station and other Markham GO Stations;
- 3) And that this report be forwarded to York Region for their information and the Region be requested to participate in discussions with Metrolinx;
- 4) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Metrolinx is proposing to expand the surface parking lot of the Mount Joy GO Station into the abutting property to the south and add an additional 499 parking spaces for a total of 1,320 spaces. This proposal is of concern to the Town.

There is a significant opportunity to intensify and improve the mix of development along Markham Road and around the Mount Joy GO Station. In 2005, Council approved an Urban Design Study for Markham Road and staff is in the process of finalizing an Official Plan Amendment for this area. Also, Markham Road is identified as a Major Corridor within the Town's intensification strategy. A key to creating a viable intensification area involves increasing building coverage and reducing areas devoted to parking and driveways. Therefore the Town would encourage structured parking to accommodate GO Transit riders and promote development opportunities consisting of high density uses and mixed use buildings.

The Town appreciates Metrolinx's commitment to improving the Mount Joy GO Station to accommodate its riders. Some degree of expansion of surface parking lots may be acceptable for the short term, but only as an interim use pending redevelopment and structured parking. Staff would like to continue to work with Metrolinx and York Region to develop a better understanding and a long term strategy for how Mount Joy GO Station and other GO Stations in Markham are to evolve over time. This is to ensure Metrolinx's plans are in line with the vision of the Town and the Region for these major transit station areas, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and also with Metrolinx's own stated policy objectives for transit nodes.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide Town comments on a proposed expansion to the Mount Joy GO Station parking lot.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Mount Joy GO Station is located at the south east corner of Bur Oak Avenue and Highway 48, municipally known as 1801 Bur Oak Avenue (Figure 1). Mount Joy GO Station is served by three bus routes (YRT Routes 18 and 4A and TTC routes 102D). There are limited bicycle racks on site. There are approximately 821 surface parking spaces currently on site. As discussed, Metrolinx is proposing to expand the parking facilities at the Mount Joy GO Station to meet the current parking demand of its riders.

**Proposal to expand west parking lot**

Metrolinx recently acquired a 5 acre (2 ha) parcel of land directly south of the GO Station at 9577 Highway 48 (Figure 2). These lands are currently owned by Metrolinx and leased to the Assinck Bros. manufacturing firm. Metrolinx is proposing to demolish the existing industrial building to expand the existing west parking lot to the south. Notwithstanding the letter submitted by Metrolinx which identified an expansion of 400 parking spaces, they have confirmed that in fact the parking lot would be expanded by 499 spaces for a total supply of 1,320 parking spaces (Figure 2). A Traffic Study is being prepared by RJ Burnside & Associates Limited for this site to assess the impact of the traffic generated by the proposed additional parking spaces on the area road network.

**Zoning and Official Plan**

The Official Plan designates the property acquired by Metrolinx as COMMERCIAL – Community Amenity Area. Staff is in the process of finalizing an Official Plan Amendment for Markham Road between 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Major Mackenzie Drive. The draft Official Plan Amendment identifies the subject lands as Community Amenity Area (Transition and Intensification) (Figure 2), which is to consist of more intense development in the form of multi-storey residential buildings with grade related retail, service and office uses.

The property is zoned Select Industrial and Limited Commercial (MIC) under By-law 88-76, as amended.

**Markham is a growth municipality**

Both the Provincial Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan identify Markham as a growth municipality. According to the new Regional Official Plan, Markham is forecast to grow by 151,000 residents and 96,000 jobs from 2006 to 2031. The Town's new Official Plan must conform with the Regional Official Plan, which must also conform to Provincial legislation and policy.

Markham is currently in the process of finalizing a Growth Management Strategy to address this forecast growth and as part of this work the Town is also updating its Markham Transportation Strategic Plan (MTSP). The MTSP takes into account the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan and the York Region Transportation Master Plan in establishing the Town's transportation vision for the future. Much of the Town's projected future growth to 2031 is to be in the form of intensification along transit nodes and corridors.

**OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:****Alternative forms of transportation must be encouraged**

Markham's growth is placing increased pressure on our transportation infrastructure. As part of 'Click with Markham's public consultation campaign in 2007, and through various community meetings, residents have expressed concerns with transportation issues (traffic congestion, crowded trains, need to expedite transit infrastructure, improved bicycle facilities, etc.).

One of the key challenges facing Markham as it continues to grow will be to reduce growth in auto use, emissions, congestion and transportation costs. While road network improvements are being planned by the Town and the Region, more emphasis is required on alternative forms of transportation, in particular transit, walking and cycling. The Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan of 2008/2009 promises much new transit infrastructure for Markham and the GTA, but the Plan remains to be fully funded by senior levels of government.

**Intensification enables various transportation modes to be feasible**

The current GO Rail travel pattern serves a dispersed residential land use pattern in the 905 regions and a concentrated employment area in downtown Toronto. GO Transit offers an alternative to the car for long distance trips, particularly to downtown Toronto.

The long term vision for Markham is to provide a greater variety of housing types and employment opportunities to encourage residents to work and live in Markham. This will reduce trip length and commuting time and enable various transportation modes to be feasible (walking, cycling, transit etc.). A greater mix of uses and intensification near GO Transit stations would also help to support service demand of GO Transit's proposed two-way service.

**Major transit stations have the potential to become mobility hubs**

Although the Mount Joy GO Station area has not been identified as an intermodal Mobility Hub in the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), it is an important component of the Region's transportation system and provides a key connection to higher order transit and is the focus of the height and density planned for the Markham Road intensification corridor.

The Metrolinx RTP recommends that in planning for areas around major transit stations and mobility hubs municipalities should establish policies relating a number of items (density targets, transit oriented development, parking etc.), some of which are highlighted below:

- *“set target modal splits for transit usage, single occupancy vehicle trips and active transportation for each mobility hub, and an anticipated schedule for their achievement;*
- *establish a surface parking reduction strategy in consultation with transit agencies, that is based on site-specific redevelopment opportunities and the existing or planned availability of alternative modes of access to the mobility hub, and that includes a scheduled transition from free surface parking to a limited supply of fairly priced, structured parking, and policies to set aside reserved parking for carpool and car-sharing vehicles;*
- *give priority to transit, pedestrian and bicycle access over all modes, and identify a zone around mobility hubs that provides priority measures for these modes on access roads;*
- *provide secure, conveniently located, weather protected bicycle storage facilities and integrate bike-sharing where available...” (Metrolinx, The Big Move, 2008)*

The Provincial Growth Plan also directs that major transit stations be designated in official plans to be planned to achieve greater height and densities.

#### **Markham Road is identified as an intensification area (Major Corridor)**

The Provincial Growth Plan and Regional Official Plan both emphasize intensification as a means of encouraging the development of urban centres and corridors at transit supportive densities. Intensification within the Town's current settlement area is a key component of the Town's Growth Management Strategy which focuses on containing as much growth as possible within the current settlement area. Markham Road is identified as a Major Corridor within the Town's intensification hierarchy.

#### **Urban Design Guidelines approved for Markham Road**

In 2005, Council approved an Urban Design Study for Markham Road between 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Major Mackenzie Drive. The study establishes a number of key design principles for Highway 48. Some of the design principles are highlighted below:

- Compact, mixed use district incorporating commercial and higher density residential uses
- High density residential uses potentially in mixed use buildings will be encouraged in the vicinity of the GO Rail Station
- Balance the needs of road users with local residents by providing a pedestrian friendly mixed use community
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation including walking, cycling and transit
- Encourage structured parking to accommodate GO transit users and provide development opportunities on current surface parking lots

- Parking will be a combination of surface, on-street and structured. Surface parking will not be the dominant feature
- Highway 48 will be defined by buildings located close to the street, with on-site parking located at the rear, internal to the site.

The intent is to balance the higher-order transportation function of Markham Road with the need for a pedestrian scale environment. Blank commercial facades and large parking lots fronting onto Markham Road are intended to be discouraged in favour of active uses and attractive facades.

#### **Opportunity to intensify and improve GO Transit sites**

There is a significant opportunity to intensify and improve the mix of development along Markham Road and around the Mount Joy GO Station. A key to creating a viable intensification area involves increasing building coverage and reducing areas devoted to parking and driveways. Therefore, consistent with Urban Design Guidelines approved for Markham Road, as discussed, the Town would encourage structured parking to accommodate GO Transit riders and promote development opportunities on current surface parking lots, to consist of high density uses and mixed use buildings.

The proposed parking lot expansion is not in keeping with the Town's vision nor is it consistent with the stated policy objectives of Metrolinx, the Province and the Region of York. Large surface parking lots will not achieve the desired transit oriented development for this important transit node.

#### **Metrolinx (Provincial Crown Agency) is willing to consult, but not enter into a site plan agreement with the Town**

Metrolinx is a Provincial Crown Agency and is not subject to the Ontario Municipal Act, the Planning Act or the Development Charges Act. Metrolinx has advised that although they are not required to obtain site plan approval, they will be submitting a formal site plan application and supporting studies for staff review. Metrolinx has indicated that they will consult with staff on site plan matters but will not be entering into a site plan agreement with the Town.

Staff will be bringing forward a report to Development Services Committee on the proposed Mount Joy GO Station before the summer recess.

#### **Items discussed with Metrolinx**

On March 25, 2010, staff met with representatives of Metrolinx and the following items were discussed:

- Staff outlined the Town's vision for intensification around GO Stations and the need to discourage car trips in general and to transit stations specifically.
- Staff inquired about the opportunity to Phase the construction of the parking lot based on demand and work with YRT to review and if necessary improve local transit service being provided to the Mount Joy GO Station. Metrolinx advised that they typically do not phase their parking lots.

- Metrolinx understands the Town's vision for these GO Transit areas and are willing to work with the Town over time to achieve this long term vision, but presently they need to increase the parking capacity at the Mount Joy GO Station.
- The site plan provides for a large kiss and ride facility in an effort to reduce the number of cars that park at the GO Station.
- Metrolinx is in the process of finalizing a Bicycle Storage Program for all GO Stations. Staff requested that additional bicycle storage be provided at this location.
- Site specific issues were discussed including access, grading, servicing, phasing, landscaping and screening, Markham Road EA and sustainability features of the parking lot.
- Metrolinx agreed to work with Town staff and submit a site plan application, traffic study, grading and servicing plan.
- Metrolinx agreed to present their proposed site plan to Committee.

The Town appreciates Metrolinx's commitment to improving the Mount Joy GO Station to accommodate its riders. Some degree of expansion of surface parking lots may be acceptable for the short term, but these parking areas need to evolve and redevelop over time. Staff would like to continue to work with Metrolinx and the Region of York to develop a better understanding and a long term strategy for how Mount Joy GO Station and other GO Stations in Markham are to evolve. This is to ensure Metrolinx's plans are in line with the vision of the Town and the Region for these major transit nodes, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and also with Metrolinx's own stated policy objectives for transit nodes.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)**

Not applicable at this time.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable at this time.

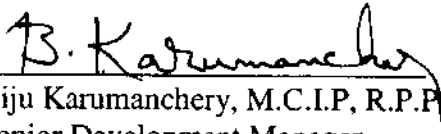
**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

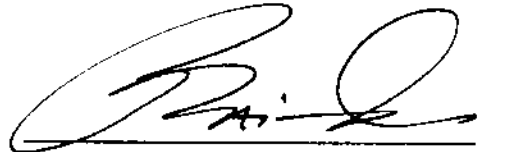
Markham staff comments on the proposed parking lot expansion at the Mount Joy GO Station align with Growth Management, Transportation and Environmental components of the 'Building Markham's Future Together' process.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The proposed site plan has been reviewed by the Engineering Department and the Sustainability Office and their comments have been incorporated in this report.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

  
Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Senior Development Manager

  
Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Commissioner, Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Figure 1 – Location Map

Figure 2 – Schedule from Draft Official Plan Amendment for Markham Road

Appendix A – Letter received from Metrolinx – Proposed Expansion to Mount Joy GO Station

**APPLICANT/AGENT:**

Metrolinx

c/o Alan Dick, Project Coordinator

20 Bay Street, Suite 600

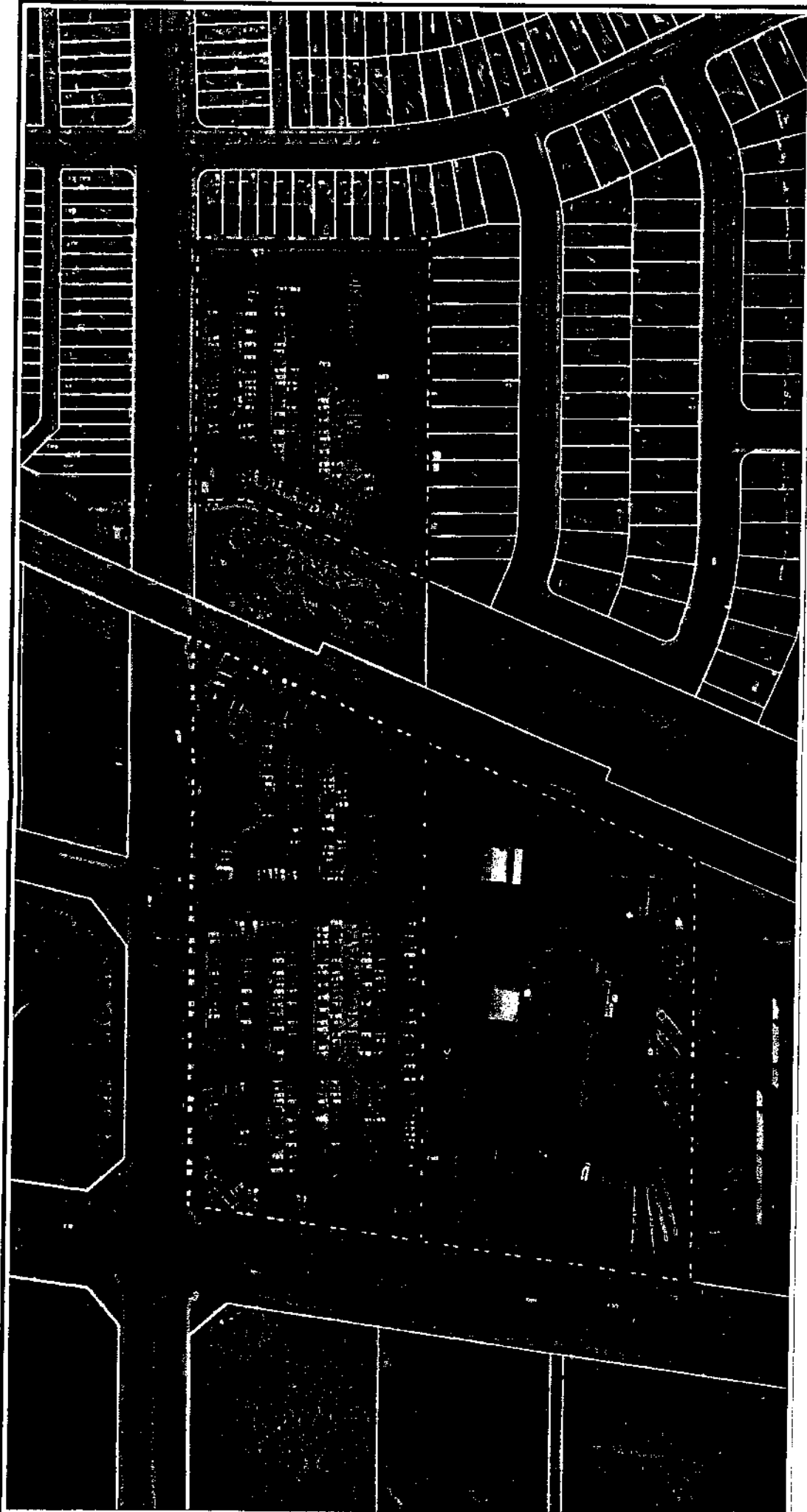
Toronto, ON

M5J 2W3

Tel: (416) 869-3600, ext. 5616

Fax: (416) 869-1563

**FILE PATH:** Amanda\File SU 02 111460 002\Documents\Recommandation Report



# AIR PHOTO 2009

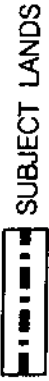
APPLICANT: MOUNT JOY GO STATION  
1801 BUR OAK AVENUE

63

FILE No: SD10110660(TK)



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION



SUBJECT LANDS








DATE: 03/17/10

DRAWN BY: DD CHECKED BY: TK SCALE: 1"

FIGURE No.1



**FIGURE No. 1.25**  
**SPECIFIC SITE AND AREA POLICIES**  
**TOWN OF MARKHAM OFFICIAL PLAN (Revised 1987) AS AMENDED**

-  Land Use Designation: COMMERCIAL
  -  Boundary of area subject to the policies in Section 4.3.12 (j) Community Amenity Area (Parade)
  -  Boundary of area subject to the policies in Section 4.3.12 (j) Community Amenity Area (Transition and Interlocality)
  -  Boundary of area subject to the policies in Section 4.3.12 (j) Community Amenity Area (Avenue)
  -  Boundary of area subject to the policies in Section 4.3.12 (j) Major Commercial Area (Transition and Future High Density Residential)
  -  Boundary of area subject to the policies in Section 4.3.12 (j) Major Commercial Area (Avenue)
  -  Boundary of area subject to the policies in Section 4.3.12 (j) Major Commercial Area (Commercial and Industrial)
- OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT No. XXX PLANNING DISTRICT No. 1

**SCHEDULE FROM DRAFT OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT FOR MARKHAM ROAD**

APPLICANT: MOUNT JOY GO STATION  
 1801 BUR OAK AVENUE

165

FILE No: SD10110660(TK)

DATE: 03/24/10



DWN BY: DD CHK BY: TK SCALE 1

**FIGURE No.2**



20 Bay Street • Suite 600  
 Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5J 2W3  
 20 rue Bay, bureau 600  
 Toronto (Ontario) Canada M5J 2W3

Phone: 416-869-3600 ext. 5616  
 Fax: 416-869-1563  
 Email: Alan.Dick@gotransit.com

January 25, 2010

Ms. Valerie Shuttleworth  
 Director, Planning and Urban Design  
 The Town of Markham  
 101 Town Centre Blvd.  
 Markham, Ontario  
 L3R 9W3



Dear Ms. Shuttleworth

**Subject: Project Notice**  
**Mount Joy GO Station – West Parking Lot Expansion**

Metrolinx is initiating a capital project to expand the parking facilities at the existing west lot of the Mount Joy GO Station to improve services to the surrounding communities. The proposed work will involve the development of approximately 400 parking spaces on the 5 acre parcel of land at 9577 Highway 48, Markham, which is directly south of the existing GO Station west parking lot. This land is presently owned by GO Transit and leased to the Assinck Bros. manufacturing firm. The development work of the new lot will include the demolition of the 2450 m2 Assinck Bros. industrial buildings, site remediation, asphalt paving, landscaping to complement the surrounding neighbourhood, new site services including storm water management, area lighting, pedestrian walkways, concrete curbs, signage and fencing. We are also proposing to add a new entrance / exit from Highway 48 to the new parking lot.

This is to advise you of this Metrolinx initiative and to determine whether there are any immediate concerns pertaining to the proposal under consideration. Attached is an overview of the proposed undertaking for your information.

We encourage you to advise Metrolinx of any concerns or information that you may have in connection with this project. Your prompt response will assist us in identifying key issues at the early stage in the design process. If you have no comments at this time, we would appreciate, nevertheless, an indication of your interest in remaining on the project mailing list. Please indicate your interest by completing the attached form and return, by March 1, 2010, a copy for our records.

As you are aware, Metrolinx, as a Provincial Crown Agency, is not subject to the Ontario *Municipal Act*, the *Planning Act* or the *Development Charges Act*. However, it is Metrolinx's policy that when service improvements and infrastructure are being developed, they are done in partnership with local municipalities. When developing plans for new or expanded facilities,

Metrolinx keeps the affected municipalities informed of the progress and cooperates with municipal staff to ensure facilities constructed meet municipal requirements to the greatest extent possible.

For the proposed west parking lot expansion at the Mount Joy GO Station, Metrolinx will not be seeking site plan approval and will not enter into a site plan agreement with the Town. However, as with Metrolinx projects performed in the past, we will work closely with Town staff to incorporate your comments where possible.

If you require further information about this project or related background information, please contact the undersigned. We look forward to an early response from your office. The firm of R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited has been retained by Metrolinx as the primary design consultant for this project.

Sincerely,



Alan Dick, P. Eng.  
Project Coordinator

Attachment

- cc: Mr. Dave Kesler, Project Manager, R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited
- Ms. Karen Lauder, Manager, Station Operations East
- Mr. Nick Spensieri, Manager, Parking Infrastructure
- Mr. Hubert Kloda, Senior Project Officer
- Ms. Trina Melatti, Communication Specialist, Infrastructure Projects

**MOUNT JOY GO STATION  
WEST PARKING LOT EXPANSION  
INFORMATION PACKAGE**

Attachment "A" - Project Overview

Attachment "B" - Key Plan

Attachment "C" - Expression of Interest Form

JANUARY 2010

## ATTACHMENT "A" - PROJECT OVERVIEW

### MOUNT JOY GO STATION, WEST PARKING LOT EXPANSION

#### 1.0 Project Name

Mount Joy GO Station – West Parking Lot Expansion.

#### 2.0 Project Purpose and Justification

The demand for parking at the Mount Joy GO Station is greater than the current supply of 807 spaces. GO Transit is planning on facilitating this parking expansion to meet the demand by constructing a new parking lot on the recently acquired land south of the GO Station at 9577 Highway 48, Markham.

#### 3.0 Proposed Work

The proposed expansion work includes asphalt paving, landscaping to complement the surrounding community, new site services including storm water management, area lighting, new pedestrian walkways, concrete curbs, signage and fencing.

#### 4.0 Class EA Process

##### *Class A Project:*

Work under this project is associated with the improvement of GO Transit's facility which impacts on day-to-day operations and conditions which would affect GO Transit's ability to maintain a given level of service. In accordance with GO Transit's Class EA Document, dated December 2003 (as amended August 2005), this project is categorized as a Group "A" undertaking and is therefore deemed approved.

#### 5.0 Site Map

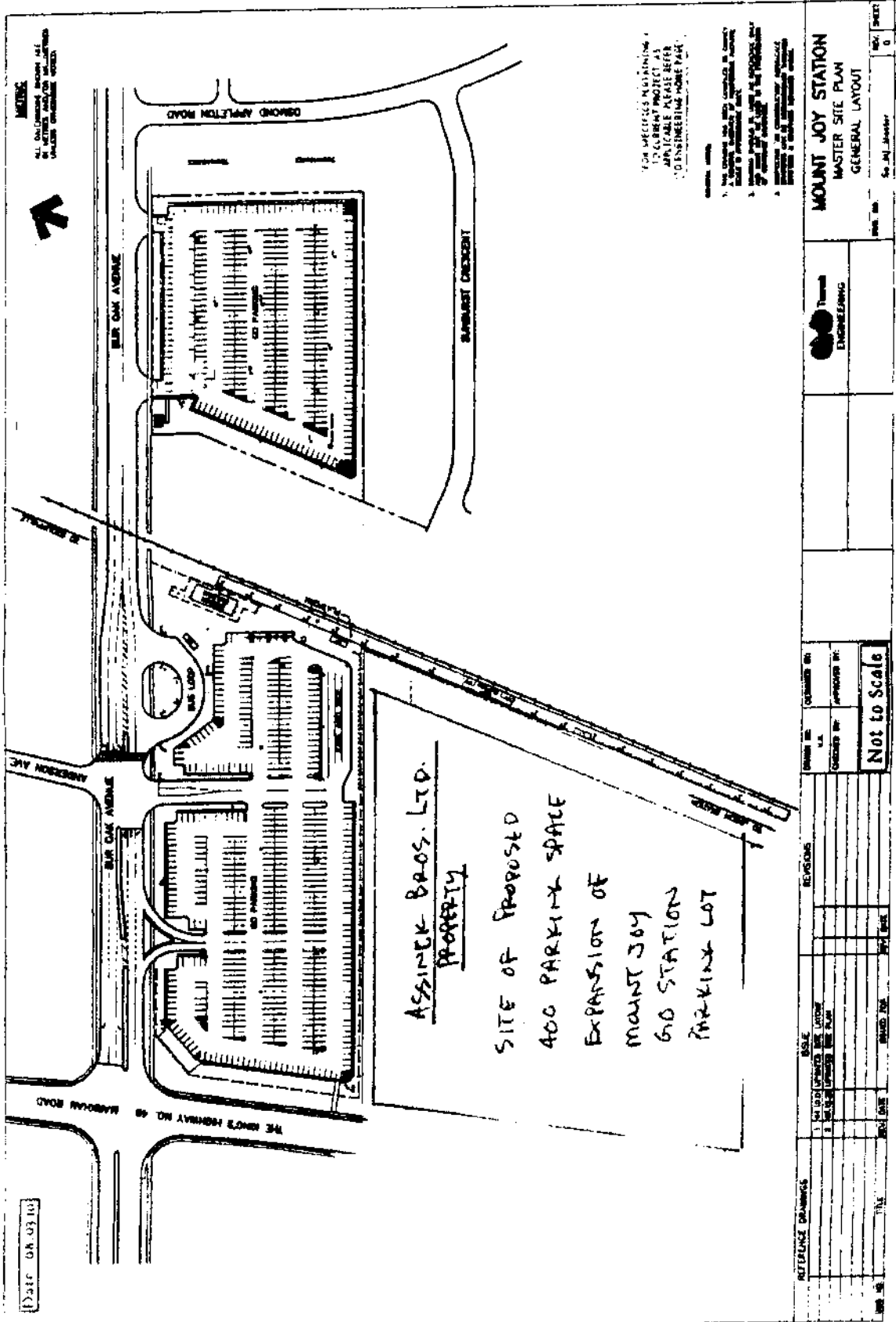
The attached plan shows the location of the proposed undertaking.

#### 6.0 Planned Schedule

Complete Detailed Design  
Tender  
Construction Period

May 14, 2010  
May 2010 – July 2010  
October 2010 – August 2011





**ATTACHMENT "C" - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST  
MOUNT JOY GO STATION, WEST PARKING LOT EXPANSION**

**PLEASE RETURN BY MARCH 1, 2010**

**Alan Dick , Project Coordinator  
GO Transit  
Suite 600 – 20 Bay Street  
Toronto ON M5J 2W3**

**Phone: 416-869-3600, Ext. 5616**

**Fax: 416-869-1563**

**E-mail: Alan.Dick@gotransit.com**

Please check the appropriate box:

- We wish to be kept informed and would like to remain on the project mailing list. We have comments to provide and they are attached.
- We wish to be kept informed and would like to remain on the project mailing list. At the present time, we have no significant concerns/comments to provide.
- We have no significant concerns regarding the above-noted study. Please remove our name from the project mailing list.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_