



October 11, 2017

**SENT BY EMAIL**

Christopher Raynor, Regional Clerk  
Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. Raynor,

**Re: Richmond Hill Resolution – Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region - (Staff Report SRPRS.17.174)**

Richmond Hill Town Council, at its meeting held on October 10, 2017, adopted the following resolution:

- a) That the Brief prepared by York Region entitled Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region, dated May 2017, with a cover memo, dated September 22, 2017, and attached as Appendix A to staff report SRPRS.17.174, be endorsed;
- b) That Council adopt the recommendations contained in the Brief as the Town's position with respect to the construction of the Missing Link proposal, and the rerouting of freight rail traffic through York Region;
- c) That the Town Clerk forward a copy of staff report SRPRS.17.174 to York Region, the City of Markham, and the City of Vaughan;
- d) That staff be directed to continue to work with York Region with respect to the re-routing of the CP rail corridor.

In accordance with Council's directive, please find attached a copy of the Council endorsed resolution, and a copy of Staff Report SRPRS.17.174 including the respective attachments, prepared by the Planning and Regulatory Services Department.

If you have any questions, please contact Dan Terzievski, Director, Development Engineering and Transportation at 905-747-6358, or Ahsun Lee, Transportation Engineer at 905-771-2515.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Huycke".

Stephen M.A. Huycke  
Director of Legislative Services/Town Clerk

c. City of Markham  
City of Vaughan

**Extract from Council Meeting  
C#33-17 held October 10, 2017  
Confirmatory By-law 95-17**

**4.0 Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region – (Staff Report SRPRS.17.174)**

Moved by: Councillor Chan  
Seconded by: Regional and Local Councillor Spatafora

- a) That the Brief prepared by York Region entitled Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region, dated May 2017, with a cover memo, dated September 22, 2017, and attached as Appendix A to staff report SRPRS.17.174, be endorsed;
- b) That Council adopt the recommendations contained in the Brief as the Town's position with respect to the construction of the Missing Link proposal, and the rerouting of freight rail traffic through York Region;
- c) That the Town Clerk forward a copy of staff report SRPRS.17.174 to York Region, the City of Markham, and the City of Vaughan;
- d) That staff be directed to continue to work with York Region with respect to the re-routing of the CP rail corridor.

Carried Unanimously



## Staff Report for Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: October 10, 2017

Report Number: SRPRS.17.174

Department: **Planning and Regulatory Services**  
Division: **Development Engineering and Transportation**

Subject: **Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region**

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### Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the proposal to re-route freight rail traffic through York Region and to seek Council's support of the recommendations set out in the Brief prepared by York Region.

### Recommendation(s):

- a) That Council endorse the Brief prepared by York Region entitled *Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region*, dated May 2017, with a cover memo, dated September 22, 2017, and attached as Appendix A to SRPRS.17.174;
- b) That Council adopt the recommendations contained in the Brief as the Town's position with respect to the construction of the Missing Link proposal, and the rerouting of freight rail traffic through York Region;
- c) That the Town Clerk forward a copy of SRPRS.17.174 to York Region, the City of Markham, and the City of Vaughan; and,
- d) That staff be directed to continue to work with York Region with respect to the re-routing of the CP rail corridor.

### Contact Person:

Dan Terziewski, Director, Development Engineering and Transportation: 905-747-6358  
and/or Ahsun Lee, Transportation Engineer: 905-771 2515

### Submitted by:

"Signed version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

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Kelvin Kwan  
Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services

**Approved by:**

"Signed version on file in the Office of the Clerk"

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Neil Garbe  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Background

IBI Group was commissioned by Cities of Cambridge, Mississauga, Toronto, and Town of Milton to undertake a study to examine options to separate freight rail traffic from passenger rail traffic so that Metrolinx can introduce all day, two-way, full service on the Milton GO Line and part of Kitchener GO Line. This would also help to reduce freight rail traffic through heavily populated parts of Mississauga and Toronto.

The study, entitled Feasibility Study and Business Case of Constructing the Missing Link (herein referred as Feasibility Study) was completed in August 2015.

As the preferred recommendation, the Feasibility Study proposes to construct a missing rail link in Brampton and re-route freight rail traffic from Mississauga and Toronto through the southern part of Regional Municipality of York (York Region) via the CN York Subdivision.

As shown in **Figure 1**, this CP freight rail traffic (shown with red lines) currently travels across the GTA through Mississauga and the central part of Toronto while the CN freight rail (blue lines) uses the York Subdivision which runs as an east-west corridor situated just north of Steeles Avenue, in the Cities of Markham and Vaughan. The construction of the “missing link” through Brampton would connect the CP line to the existing CN York Subdivision, allowing CP freight rail traffic to share this line, and divert their freight traffic from Toronto and Mississauga through southern York Region instead. This will result in a significant increase in the freight rail traffic passing through the City of Markham and the City of Vaughan.

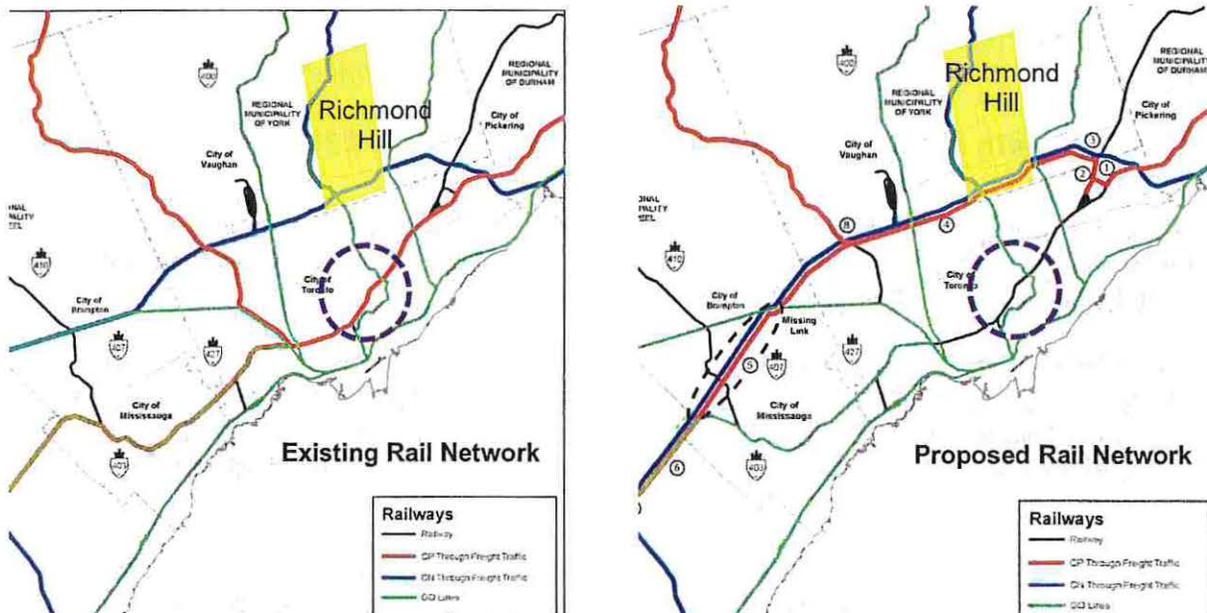


Figure 1 Existing and Proposed Greater Toronto Rail Network

## **Implementing the Missing Link Raises Questions on the Impact to the Town of Richmond Hill**

The York Subdivision corridor, which traverses east-west between Steeles Avenue and the Highway 407 through Vaughan and Markham, comes within 2.5 km of the Town of Richmond Hill limits and is approximately 3.5 km from the Richmond Hill Centre.

While, this proposal does not directly impact the Town of Richmond Hill from an operational or nuisance perspective, nor is it expected to increase freight rail traffic travelling directly through Richmond Hill, it will potentially increase the amount of hazardous freight that the pass within close proximity to the southern part of the Town and including the Town's major Growth Centre. The Feasibility Study failed to evaluate these potential environmental and safety impacts on the Community under the Missing Link proposal.

At the same time, the proposed construction of the missing link will remove freight rail traffic going through the central part of Toronto. The Feasibility Study has noted that this could potentially create an opportunity to address flooding issues along the Richmond Hill Line within the Don Valley (circled with a purple dash line in Figure 1) by re-routing the Richmond Hill GO Line to the CP rail corridor, thus removing one of the obstacles to providing Regional Express Rail along this Corridor up to Richmond Hill.

Although the Missing may not directly affect the Town of Richmond Hill from an operational or nuisance perspective, staff feels that it is important to verify that there will not be any adverse risks to the Town due to the proximity of this rail corridor to Richmond Hill. As such, the recommendations from the Feasibility Study, including the implementation of the Missing Link proposal, should not proceed without consulting the the Town of Richmond Hill and addressing any questions or concerns.

## **York Region, Markham, and Vaughan are Opposed to the Missing Link Proposal**

Despite changes and impacts with the recommended re-route in the Feasibility Study to the southern part of York Region, no consultation with affected municipalities including York Region was done as part of this Feasibility Study.

York Region staff brought forward a staff report and presentation on the Feasibility Study to Regional Council in January 2016, which recommended Council resolutions. The City of Markham and City of Vaughan Councils passed resolutions on March 1, 2016, and April 5, 2016, respectively, stating their opposition to the Missing Link proposal.

Subsequently, a second resolution was passed by Regional Council in April 2016, reiterating their concerns with Missing Link proposal. At the time, Regional Council directed York Region staff to work with staff at the City of Markham City of Vaughan, and the Town of Richmond Hill to prepare a Brief to be sent to the Federal and Provincial ministries as well as Metrolinx.

## **Richmond Hill Staff Have been Engaged with York Region and Support the Brief**

Richmond Hill staff has been engaged closely with York Region staff in preparing the Brief as per Regional Council's direction.

The Brief, dated May 2017 and entitled *Potential Increase of Freight Rail Traffic in York Region*, is attached to a corresponding memorandum from York Region staff dated September 22, 2017, both which are attached in Appendix A for reference. The Memo and the Brief were brought forward to Regional Committee of the Whole on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

A copy of the Brief has also been sent to Metrolinx, and Transport Canada, Ministry of Transportation.

The Brief reiterates a number of concerns and issues related to the Missing Link proposal, including the potential operational, environmental, nuisance, and safety impacts to York Region, the City of Vaughan, City of Markham, and the Town of Richmond Hill, and the need to consult and engage each of these Municipalities before moving forward with any such project.

The Brief also stresses the need to follow the approach set out by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

Town of Richmond Hill staff has reviewed the Brief and support the recommendations set out therein.

### **Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:**

There are no financial/staffing/other implications.

### **Relationship to the Strategic Plan:**

The recommendations of this report are consistent with the Strategic Plan's Goals of Wise Management of Resources in Richmond Hill by protecting interests of the communities that may be affected by the proposed re-routing of freight rail traffic through York Region.

### **Conclusion:**

The recommendations of the Feasibility Study undertaken in 2015 for the construction of a freight rail Missing Link will result in increased freight rail traffic in southern part of York Region, which may have safety impacts on the Town of Richmond Hill, as well as operational and nuisance impacts on the neighboring municipalities of Vaughan and Markham. In response, York Region staff has prepared a Brief to identify potential impacts of the Missing Link proposal to York Region and its southern municipalities reiterate their opposition this proposal in absence of consultation with the affected municipalities and a formal assessment process. Richmond Hill staff has been involved in the preparation of this Brief and supports recommendations contained therein. Staff also recommends that Richmond Hill Council endorse this report and its

recommendations and direct staff be to continue to work with York Region, the City of Markham, and the City of Vaughan to find resolution to this initiative.

**Attachments: Appendix Contents and Maps:**

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call contact person listed in this document.

Appendix A: A Memorandum from York Region, dated September 22, 2017, regarding Proposed Rerouting of Greater Toronto Rail Network