
REPORT TITLE: Northwest Greater Toronto Area Transmission Corridor Identification Study Update

FROM: Andrew Farr, Interim Commissioner of Public Works

RECOMMENDATION

That the comments outlined in the report of the Interim Commissioner of Public Works, titled “Northwest Greater Toronto Area Transmission Corridor Identification Study Update”, be endorsed;

And further, that a copy of the subject report be forwarded to the Ontario Ministry of Energy, Northern Development, and Mines; the Independent Electricity System Operator; the Ontario Ministry of Transportation; the City of Brampton, Town of Caledon, City of Mississauga, York Region, and Halton Region.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- On June 19, 2019, the Province of Ontario resumed the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) West Transportation Corridor Environmental Assessment (EA) Study, cancelled the Northwest GTA Corridor Identification Study, and initiated a new study called the Northwest GTA Transmission Corridor Study (Transmission Corridor Study).
 - The objective of the Transmission Corridor Study is to identify an appropriate corridor of land adjacent to the GTA West Transportation Corridor for use by future linear electrical transmission infrastructure.
 - Regional staff are supportive of the early identification and protection of this corridor to meet the Region’s future electricity demands, which are anticipated to grow as electrification for heating, transportation and conventional uses in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) increases and future growth.
 - The study area of the Transmission Corridor Study largely coincides with the Focused Analysis Area for the GTA West Transportation Corridor EA and Provincial staff have identified that the two studies will proceed in parallel to one another.
 - On March 23, 2020, the project team for the Transmission Corridor Study proposed a Narrowed Area of Interest and five guiding principles for corridor identification through the Province’s Environmental Registry.
 - Regional staff have reviewed and responded to the proposal in consultation with local municipal staff by the June 8, 2020 submission deadline and are recommending that Council endorse the staff comments enclosed in this report.
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

On June 19, 2019, the Province of Ontario announced that the Ministry of Transportation has resumed the GTA West Transportation Corridor EA Study, from the point at which it was suspended in 2015. In addition, the announcement noted that the Northwest GTA Corridor

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Identification Study had been cancelled, and that a new study called the Northwest GTA Transmission Corridor Identification Study (Transmission Corridor Study) had been initiated to identify an appropriate corridor of land adjacent to the GTA West Transportation Corridor for use by future linear transmission infrastructure, if and when the need arises.

The Transmission Corridor Study is being undertaken by the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development, and Mines and the Independent Electricity System Operator and the study area at that time largely coincided with the Ministry of Transportation's 2015 Focused Analysis Area for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Study EA. Provincial staff have confirmed that the two studies will proceed in parallel to one another and project milestones for both studies will be coordinated.

On March 23, 2020, the Transmission Corridor Study Team proposed a Narrowed Area of Interest for the study which largely coincided with the Ministry of Transportation's Draft 2019 Focused Analysis Area that was released in September 2019 for the GTA West Transportation Corridor Study. Five guiding principles for corridor identification were also proposed through the Province's Environmental Registry.

On April 22, 2020, staff from Province met with Regional and local municipal staff to introduce the project, proposed Narrowed Area of Interest, and proposed guiding principles. In order to conduct a thorough review of the proposal, and provide detailed and coordinated comments, Regional and local municipal staff requested more time to provide comments and subsequently the submission deadline was extended to June 8, 2020.

Regional staff reviewed the proposed Narrowed Area of Interest and the guiding principles for the Transmission Corridor Study in consultation with local municipal staff and submitted comments to the Province by the June 8th deadline.

Regional staff are supportive of the early identification and protection of this corridor to meet the Region's future electricity demands, which are anticipated to grow as electrification for heating, transportation and conventional uses in the GTHA increases, and as a result of future growth.

This report provides Regional Council with an overview of staff's comments, seeks endorsement of the comments, and provides an overview of the key impacts of this study to the Region of Peel.

2. Overview of the Province's Environmental Registry Proposal for the Transmission Corridor Study

The following provides an overview of the Province's proposed Narrowed Area of Interest and Guiding Principles for Corridor Identification.

a) Proposed Narrowed Area of Interest

In keeping with their commitment to progress the Transmission Corridor Study in parallel to the GTA West Transportation Corridor EA Study, the Province proposed a Narrowed Area of Interest which largely coincides with the Draft 2019 Focused Analysis Area that was released by the GTA West Project Team in September 2019 for public consultation.

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Appendix I depicts a map that overlays the Transmission Corridor Study's proposed Narrowed Area of Interest and the GTA West Transportation Corridor's Draft 2019 Focused Analysis Area and the key differences are as follows:

- The proposed Narrowed Area of Interest extends beyond the Draft 2019 Focused Analysis Area near the Highway 401/407 interchange area to connect to existing electrical infrastructure located in the Parkway Belt West Planning Area
- The proposed Narrowed Area of Interest does not include the lands connecting the GTA West Transportation Corridor to Highway 410 and Highway 427.

b) Proposed Guiding Principles for Corridor Identification

In addition to a Narrowed Area of Interest, the Transmission Corridor Study Team also proposed five guiding principles to support the identification of a corridor and have indicated that balance among the principles will be required in implementing the study:

1. Co-locate with other linear infrastructure
2. Plan for the most cost-effective outcome
3. Minimize impacts to natural heritage, agricultural and hydrological features consistent with provincial policies
4. Minimize impacts on built up areas
5. Provide flexibility for the future

3. Regional Staff Comments and Key Impacts to Peel Region

Regional staff have reviewed the proposal in consultation with local municipal staff and together are supportive of the early identification and protection of this corridor to meet the Region's future electricity demands, which are anticipated to grow as electrification for heating, transportation and conventional uses in the GTHA increases with future growth. However, given that the study area largely coincides with the GTA West Transportation Corridor EA, there are a number of similar land use planning and infrastructure implications to Peel.

It will be important that planning for the proposed corridor includes protection of agricultural lands, the natural heritage system and water resources along with consideration for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Potential impacts on the Region's existing and planned infrastructure assets must also be addressed. The table below provides a high level overview of some of the key comments and potential impacts in Peel by local municipality. Regional staff's complete submission can be found in Appendix II:

Municipality	Summary of Comments
Town of Caledon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Ministry of Transportation is currently considering alternative options for the Coleraine interchange depicted in the Technically Preferred Route for the GTA West Transportation Corridor. The Transmission Corridor Study team is encouraged to work with the Ministry of Transportation on the alignment of the two corridors in this area.• As a part of the Region's Official Plan Review, Regional staff are undertaking a Settlement Area Boundary Expansion (SABE) Study to determine appropriate locations for the additional residential and

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Municipality	Summary of Comments
	<p>employment lands in the Town of Caledon to accommodate growth to 2041, a number of which are impacted by the proposed Narrowed Area of Interest. As the Narrowed Area of Interest is generally co-located with the GTA West Focused Analysis Area, the Region has planned the SABE study and other development activity to recognize that this area is protected from development however it is recommended that the study team maintain (or decrease) the current extent of the Narrowed Area of Interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed Narrowed Area of Interest is near the Brampton-Caledon Flying Club and may impact the airport's existing and future operations. The airport is significant to the Town of Caledon's future plans for economic development and land use and the study team is encouraged to engage the airport throughout the study process to mitigate and reduce any potential impacts to their existing or future operations.
<p>City of Brampton</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Brampton is currently undertaking secondary planning for Heritage Heights (secondary plan areas 52 & 53) which is being planned to accommodate an urban, mixed use, and connected community. The study team is encouraged to work with Regional and local municipal staff to preserve as much developable land in this area as possible while ensuring compatibility with future land uses. • In northeast Brampton, the Highway 427 Industrial Area (Secondary Plan 47) is being planned to accommodate a significant amount of Peel's industrial employment land needs and impacts to developable lands should also be minimized in this area.
<p>City of Mississauga</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed Narrowed Area of Interest impacts the Ninth Line lands and the Lisgar GO Station Major Transit Station Area. The amount of land required for the transmission corridor in this area should be minimized in order to preserve the developability of the community and employment lands.

RISK CONSIDERATIONS

The early identification and protection of lands to meet the Region's future electricity demands is essential as electrification for heating, transportation and conventional uses in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area increases. While staff support the Transmission Corridor Study, there are significant impacts to a number of land use and development planning initiatives across the three municipalities in the Region of Peel.

CONCLUSION

Council endorsement of the comments enclosed in this report will formulate the Region's position on the study, provide staff guidance, and provide the framework for any future advocacy positions or Official Plan policies, if and when required.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I – Proposed Narrowed Area of Interest for the Transmission Corridor Study

Appendix II – Regional Staff's Comments on Transmission Corridor Study

For further information regarding this report, please contact Tina Detaramani, Manager, Sustainable Transportation & Strategic Initiatives, Ext. 4420, Tina.Detaramani@peelregion.ca.

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Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:

Department Commissioner, Division Director and Financial Support Unit.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



N. Polsinelli, Interim Chief Administrative Officer