

**DATE:** February 25, 2003

**TO:** Chairman and Members of the Planning and Development Committee

**FROM:** Thomas S. Mokrzycki, Commissioner of Planning and Building

**SUBJECT:** **Land Use Analysis - Ninth Line/Highway 407 Corridor**  
**MEETING DATE: March 17, 2003**

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**ORIGIN:** Planning and Building Department

**BACKGROUND:** This report is part of the ongoing program to update City Council on the significant planning initiatives in adjacent municipalities.

On January 22, 2003, Halton Region Council received a study titled "Land Use Analysis-Ninth Line/Highway 407 Corridor (December 2002)" prepared by Hemson Consulting Ltd. on behalf of a Steering Committee formed by the Region of Halton and the Town of Milton to identify appropriate land uses that will support the broad provincial, regional and local policies for the Ninth Line Corridor. The study is part of the Region's Official Plan Review program which commenced in 2001 and is anticipated to be completed by Spring 2004. While the initial focus was on the lands between Highway 407 and the Ninth Line, the Steering Committee expanded the study area to the "Ninth Line Corridor" defined as the lands between Ninth Line, the Peel-Halton boundary on the east and the hydro corridor on the west. The corridor extends between Highway 401 on the north and a point south of Burnhamthorpe Road West, on the south as shown on Exhibit 1. The area is approximately 760 ha (1,880 acres).

**COMMENTS:**

In May of 2002, Milton Town Council requested that both the Region of Halton and local staff develop a land use strategy for the Ninth Line/Hwy 407 Corridor. This request was in response to landowners in the corridor seeking changes to the Milton Official Plan to permit urban uses and Mississauga's purchase of nine properties in the corridor.

The report provides a history of the lands and identifies the current provincial, regional and local policies applicable to the area. It examines three potential land use options for the corridor, a discussion of how the lands might be serviced, an assessment of three options from a variety of perspectives and provides recommendations. It should be noted that the Region of Halton has retained Entra Consulting to undertake the Region's transportation corridor assignment. Also, the City of Mississauga, the Town of Milton and the Region of Halton are undertaking a Subwatershed Study for lands in Northwest Mississauga and the Ninth Line/407 Corridor lands including an update of the floodline mapping in this area. These reports may have some bearing on the final recommendations for these lands.

Prior to 1974, the lands were part of the Town of Oakville. With the formation of the Regions of Peel and Halton, the boundary of Halton was moved westward to Ninth Line, north of Dundas Street West and the northern part of Oakville became part of Milton. In 1978, the *Parkway Belt West Plan* was adopted. This Plan identified these lands and others as corridors to provide linear infrastructure (highways, railways and hydro corridors) and acting as greenbelt/urban separators. Over the years, the Province has allowed lands to be removed from the *Parkway Belt West Plan* and has been disposing of some of its land holdings within *Parkway Belt West Plan* areas. Local municipalities have the first right of refusal on these lands. Milton and Halton had no identified use for some of the parcels within the Ninth Line/407 Corridor and subsequently nine parcels totalling 80 ha (198 acres) were sold to Mississauga in the spring of 2002.

The lands purchased by the City of Mississauga are shown in Exhibit 2.

### **Land Use Scenarios**

Hemson Consulting Ltd. was directed to look at three land use scenarios:

1. retaining the current Parkway Belt West Plan designation while possibly accommodating the City of Mississauga's recreation proposals and/or to enhance environmental features;
2. developing available developable land for residential uses; and
3. developing available developable land for employment uses.

The study noted that notwithstanding which scenario was eventually chosen, there are certain land uses that will occur including:

#### Stormwater management (SWM) ponds

There is a SWM pond located along the eastern edge of Highway 407, south of Derry Road West which serves the existing residential development in the Lisgar District of Mississauga. Two additional SWM facilities are proposed, approximately 600 m (1,970 sq.ft.) south of Britannia Road West to handle run-off from Churchill Meadows and from the future widening of Ninth Line.

#### Oakville's employment lands (OPA 198)

The small portion of the corridor within Oakville is subject to OPA 198 which recommends removing a portion of the lands from the Parkway Belt West Plan designation and allowing employment development. The status and use of these lands within Oakville will be concluded through the secondary plan process.

### Transportation Corridor

The *Halton Region Official Plan* identifies a transit corridor running parallel to Highway 407 within a 30 m (100 ft.) right-of-way within the Ninth Line/407 Corridor. The Region of Halton is undertaking studies to determine transportation needs for the future, including parking lots and gateway for future GO-Transit inter-modal use to link areas within the Region of Halton and also for Mississauga and Brampton. Although none of the transportation plans are yet finalized, all scenarios assume the future use of the transit corridor paralleling Highway 407. Because the location of the commuter parking lots has yet to be determined, they are not specifically located within the land use scenarios. Therefore, it should be noted that some sites identified as being potential development sites may ultimately be identified as preferred locations for transportation supportive infrastructure and commuter parking.

Hemson Consulting Ltd. determined that the total developable land area is 172 ha (425 acres) excluding environmental areas, proposed SWM facilities and proposed transportation uses. 111 ha (274 acres) are located in Milton and 61 ha (151 acres) in Oakville. The Oakville lands are assumed to be employment in all three scenarios in accordance with OPA 198.

### **Scenario 1 - Status Quo**

Scenario 1 is based on a continuation of existing uses permitted by the *Parkway Belt West Plan*. This would protect the land for a transportation and utility corridor. It would allow the development of public uses but no further urban development. A variation on this option would be to enhance the environmental features as part of the public use and open space system.

### **Scenario 2 - Residential Uses**

Hemson projected that a maximum range of 1,400 - 2,200 housing units consisting of detached, semis and/or rows could be built on the developable lands depending whether or not the Mississauga lands were included. The study did not do a detailed parcel by parcel assessment. The numbers are estimates.

### **Scenario 3 - Employment Uses**

If all developable parcels were used for employment lands, a maximum of 3,600 jobs could be created. If the Mississauga parcels were used for recreation uses, the remaining developable land could yield about 2,300 jobs. Similar to the residential scenario, not every parcel was individually assessed for suitability for development so the numbers are a maximum. Also, Hemson noted that the projected yields are based on a quality business park development. This may not be possible due to the fragmented and scattered ownership of the lands which would reduce the attractiveness of the lands for this type of development.

The conversion of these lands to another use would not have a significant impact on either residential or employment land supply in Milton or Mississauga. Hemson used a series of qualitative criteria for assessing the three land use scenarios including: environmental, servicing, economic, financial, planning and community structure factors.

The study noted that it would be more cost effective to have water and waste water services, provided by Peel Region. It was projected to cost Halton Region \$20 million for to service these lands.

The financial analysis looked at the potential revenue generated from the development scenarios and the costs of servicing. Hemson concluded that the employment land scenario provides a small annual net fiscal benefit to both the Region of Halton and the Town of Milton.

The consultants concluded that it is in the best interests of the Region of Halton and the Town of Milton, in the medium term planning horizon, for the lands to remain as a transportation corridor which will include a future inter-regional transitway. This recommendation is based on the following:

- residential development provides little potential benefit to Halton or Milton while creating uncertainty with respect to future opportunities and flexibility in providing the transportation corridor and related infrastructure;
- residential development would create small communities isolated from the existing and planned urban service areas in Halton and Milton, resulting increased servicing costs and could result in cross-boundary issues if services have to be provided by Mississauga and/or Peel;
- the designation of additional residential lands in the Region of Halton is premature;
- although employment lands show some net benefit, financially, they would likely be displacing employment that would otherwise go elsewhere in Milton.

The study concludes that it would be preferable to first develop the additional transportation corridor uses and transportation support infrastructure. After this is in place, there may be opportunities for more dense nodal employment uses on remaining corridor lands. The study also concludes that Mississauga's proposed recreational uses, if in compliance with the policies of

the Region of Halton and the Town Milton, are more supportive of the purpose and function of the Parkway Belt than any alternative urban uses.

### **City of Mississauga Comments**

The Community Services Department has reviewed the study and has no objections to the findings. Community Services will be undertaking a recreation master plan for the lands acquired for parkland.

In comments dated February 3, 2003, Transportation and Works supported the protection of the 407 Transitway in the Ninth Line/Highway 407 corridor as part of a larger GTA inter-regional transit network as documented in the "GTSB Strategic Transportation Plan for the GTA".

In June 2002, First Professional Shopping Centres indicated their desire to develop their property which is identified as a "Future Commuter Rail Station" in the Meadowvale Business Park District Policies. The "Milton Corridor Station Location Study" has been initiated in conjunction with GO Transit, Ministry of Transportation, Region of Halton, Town of Milton and First Professional Shopping Centres to identify an alternative location for the station. The study area is bounded by Highway 407, Tenth Line, the future extension of Argentia Road and the C.P.R. Line. The study completion is scheduled for March 2003.

Section III, A. Item 1. (page 21) of the report refers to an existing stormwater management (SWM) pond east of Highway 407 south of Derry Road West that is serving the existing residential development in the Lisgar District. The City's records indicate that this SWM facility was constructed by CHIC as an outlet for Highway 407 post development discharge. The post development discharge outlet for the Lisgar district is the existing pond east of Ninth Line, north of Britannia Road West.

City of Mississauga records indicate that the Ninth Line/Highway 407 corridor from the CP Rail line southerly to Britannia Road West are naturally drained to the west by tributaries of the Sixteen Mile Creek and no outlets for this drainage have been provided on Ninth Line. Capacity for the post development runoff from the Ninth Line/Highway 407 corridor between Britannia Road West and Eglinton Avenue West has been provided in the SWM facilities constructed by Britannia North Holdings Limited, west of Ninth Line, south of Britannia Road West. The necessary storm sewers will have to be constructed within the corridor to drain the lands to these facilities. The Evaluation Section IV. D. (pages 34-36) should address these drainage issues. It is further noted that the two ponds south of Britannia Road West to handle the run-off from Churchill Meadows have been constructed.

The Transportation and Works Department has commissioned a sub-watershed study for the upper reaches of the Sixteen Mile Creek, encompassing lands comprised of the Ninth Line/ Highway 407 corridor and the Meadowvale Business Park District Plan, north of the CP Rail line. The study, when completed, will recommend the appropriate storm water management criteria for the development of this north-west portion of the City. Also, in conjunction with the Region of Halton, updated floodplain mapping will be undertaken for the Ninth Line/Highway 407 corridor southerly to the Highway 403 Parkway Belt corridor. Further detailed comments will be provided upon the completion of these initiatives.

### **Further Planning Considerations**

Notwithstanding the work that has been completed by Hemson Consulting Ltd., once the sub-watershed study and floodline mapping is complete, the location of the Go transit station is determined and Community Services has completed the recreation master plan for the lands, the City of Mississauga

should undertake to review the long term use of all the lands within the Ninth Line/Highway 407 corridor to ensure that any proposed land uses in the future are appropriate.

### **Community Meeting**

Halton Regional staff hosted a community meeting on February 6, 2003. The purpose of the meeting was to provide area residents an overview of the study findings and to receive comments on the study. The following issues were raised.

Why did the Ontario Realty Corporation sell the lands if the Province needed lands for transit? The lands sold were deemed surplus by the Province as they were outside the transit corridor. There were concerns raised about the location of the transit corridor. Some stated it should be west of Highway 407. There was concern there is not adequate land on the east side of Highway 407 especially in the area of the Union Gas Pumping Station. Others stated that Highway 407 is a natural urban boundary. Halton Region staff noted that the Province has not reached the detailed design stage for the transit corridor. In reference to questions regarding the funding for the transit, it was stated that the funding formula has not been completed. The issue of the transit corridor is outside the scope of this study. This study examined land use alternatives for the lands outside the transit corridor identified by MTO.

Questions were raised why the stormwater ponds for Mississauga were built in Milton, and the status of the flood plain lands. The floodline mapping is being done for the area. Questions were raised regarding the costs to Milton residents for Mississauga facilities being located in their town. In response to concerns expressed that parks may preclude transit from being developed, it was noted that the parks would be outside the area identified for transitway. Residents wanted assurance that Mississauga would notify them of their recreation plans for the area. Mississauga

staff stated there would be notification for proposed recreational uses. Representatives of the Town of Milton pointed out that if the City of Mississauga wants to add or change in any way, the uses permitted on those lands by the Town of Milton Official Plan and Zoning By-law, the City would be subject to the same amendment processes as any other land owner.

One spokesperson for Ninth Line residents in Milton felt that they had been in limbo long enough. The report had placed too much emphasis on the potential for inter-regional disputes given the level of cooperation that is now occurring between Mississauga and Milton. The spokesperson was of the opinion that these lands were no longer agricultural in nature, given the urban services such as SWM ponds and either existing or proposed recreational facilities for the area. This group felt that employment uses would be most appropriate and this would not set a precedent for creating isolated communities.

Regional staff noted they wanted comments by February 21, 2003 for inclusion in a report to be considered by Regional Council on March 18, 2003. However, Official Plan policies for the area will not developed until later in 2003 with Public Meetings to be held in 2004.

**CONCLUSION:**

The Land Use Analysis - Ninth Line/Highway 407 Corridor Study, and the comments received, will be taken into consideration when the Region of Halton prepares its Draft Official Plan as part of its Official Plan Review. Three other studies that will have to be taken into consideration are the "Subwatershed Study for lands in Northwest Mississauga and the Ninth Line/407 Corridor", the Region of Halton transit study titled "Making Connections Transit for Halton" and the "Milton Corridor Station Location Study". Clarification of the purpose of the stormwater ponds as noted by the Transportation and Works Department is also required. However, there are no negative

implications for Mississauga in the recommendations of the study. Protecting the transportation and transit corridor is in keeping with Provincial initiatives on Smart Growth and the City is not precluded from providing open space recreational amenities on the lands. City staff will continue to monitor the progress on the Halton Region Official Plan Review.

Notwithstanding Mississauga's current support for the status quo option, the City of Mississauga should undertake it's own land use study for the area when all the transportation, recreation, floodline and stormwater management related studies have been completed so that it will be in a position to comment appropriately on any future proposed land use changes.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That the Region of Halton and the Town of Milton be advised that the City of Mississauga has no objections to the recommendations contained within the study titled "Land Use Analysis - Ninth Line/Highway 407 Corridor" subject to providing the City of Mississauga an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Official Plan policies.
2. That the Planning and Building Department undertake a land use study for the Milton Ninth Line/Highway 407 lands, when the recreation needs for the City-owned lands have been determined, the "Milton Corridor Station Location Study" is complete and the sub-watershed study for the upper reaches of the Sixteen Mile Creek and related floodline mapping exercise is completed.

3. That the report titled "Land Use Analysis - Ninth Line/Highway 407 Corridor" dated February 25, 2003 from the Commissioner of Planning and Building be forwarded by the City Clerk to the Town of Milton, the Region of Halton, and the Region of Peel.

Original Signed By:  
Thomas S. Mokrzycki  
Commissioner of Planning and Building