

Our File/N/Réf. **REFERENCE ITEM 6, TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**
 Your File/V/Réf. **AGENDA OF 7 JUNE 2000**

DATE 31 March 2000

TO/DEST. Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP. APETIS Study Steering Committee

SUBJECT/OBJET **STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE AIRPORT
 PARKWAY EXTENDED TRAFFIC IMPACT STUDY (APETIS)**

RECOMMENDATIONS¹

1. That, in order to reduce north south auto travel demand on the Airport Parkway/Bronson Avenue corridor, the ROC/Regional Council pursue the following measures:

- a) (*) Implement a Region-wide Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program to reduce auto travel demand, with emphasis along the Airport Parkway/Bronson Avenue corridor;
- b) Establish as a goal that peak hour volumes on Bronson Avenue between the Canal and Carling be reduced to 90% of capacity (the Monitoring Report² confirms that this stretch of Bronson Avenue is now at capacity);
- c) Undertake no new road construction or road modifications in the Lester Rd./Airport Parkway/Bronson corridor for the duration of the light rail pilot project;
- d) (*) Investigate the cost of extending the light rail transit system to the Airport, to downtown, to Hull, and to the South Urban Community, with a view to comparing the overall benefits and costs (including environmental and health) of such a system with the expansion, or further congestion, of existing roadways;

¹ An * indicates that the recommendation is also included in the consultant's report, *Airport Parkway Extended Traffic Impact Study Final Report, Prepared by MAXGROUP Associates, September 1999*

² See Anex H (Monitoring Report: Traffic Volume Changes Resulting from the Implementation of Ramps to/from the North at Hunt Club Road and the Airport Parkway, July 1999) of the consultant's report. The Region was required by letter from the Ontario Minister of the Environment to undertake a monitoring program *to assess and confirm the effects of this project and to review the results of this monitoring prior to any other ramps or road work to the Airport Parkway* (December 1997).

e) (*) Request that the Airport Authority include a substantial investment in public transit in its Airport expansion plan and that it make the necessary provisions for timely implementation of transit part of its ongoing planning process; and

f) (*) As soon as possible, initiate the required environmental assessment that will accelerate the design and construction of a new inter-provincial truck bridge at the east end of the Region. The objective, in the context of APETIS, is to provide a north-south route for interprovincial truck traffic that does not require the use of either the Airport Parkway/Bronson corridor or King Edward Avenue.

2. That the Regional Official Plan's emphasis on liveable communities and mass transit be given priority over twinning of the Airport Parkway.

3. That the ROC not proceed to evaluate the implications of twinning the Airport Parkway until the light rail pilot project has been completed and evaluated.

4. That the Walkley Road off-ramp not be constructed.

5. That the ROC initiate a study on replacing the plan for an Alta Vista Parkway with an Alta Vista Public Transit Corridor. This Corridor could be used either for light rail or a bus transitway.

6. That, if Airport Parkway congestion continues to obstruct access to the Airport, gates be installed at the Hunt Club ramps to allow for their closure during peak hours.

7. (*) That the minimal and low-cost traffic calming remedial measures in Section 11 of the consultant's report be implemented as soon as possible.

8. That the ROC immediately reduce the speed limit on the Airport Parkway/Bronson Avenue corridor to 60 kph between the Dunbar Bridge and Sunnyside; and to 50 kph north of Sunnyside Avenue.

9. (*) That future ROC Capital Budgets be increased to ensure funding of traffic calming measures.

10. (*) That the ROC study the high-cost traffic calming remedial measures identified in Section 11 of the consultant's report, for possible implementation in the near future.

11. (*) That the ROC immediately (i) initiate discussion with the City of Ottawa to approach the Province of Ontario requesting power to regulate parking and (ii) investigate the potential of using their power under the Assessment Act to establish classes of property to regulate the provision of short and long-term parking.

12. That the ROC continue to lobby the province for access to a portion of fuel tax revenues to fund municipal public transit and for the authority to use red-light cameras and photo-radar, should it so choose.

13. (*) That the recommended intersections under the jurisdiction of the Region listed in Table 11 of the consultant's report be incorporated into a better funded Regional Safety Improvement Program (SIP)

for priority implementation, with increased funding for the SIP to be reflected in the ROC's year 2000 Capital Budget, and that any signal light modifications be reviewed in consultation with the ROC's Audible Pedestrian Signals Committee.

14. (*) That the ROC ask the City of Ottawa to implement modifications to those recommended intersections under the jurisdiction of the City of Ottawa.

15. (*) That the ROC implement a narrowing of the travelled portion of Carling Avenue between Booth Street and Bronson Avenue to provide an enhanced environment for pedestrians, bicycles and streetscaping.

16. That, in respect to the Bronson Avenue corridor, the ROC reject the emphasis on "motor-vehicle capacity" exhibited in the consultant's report and focus on returning Bronson to its function as an urban arterial providing access and mobility for all modes of transportation. For example, the ROC should investigate the use of HOV (high occupancy vehicle) lanes, off-peak-on-street parking and similar measures to accommodate balanced use.

17. That, in the short and medium term, the ROC give preference to inner city development to encourage building where there is existing transportation infrastructure. Further, that the ROC favour measures that will reduce the projected/expected traffic increases in the Airport Parkway/Bronson Ave. corridor. Additional growth should be accommodated by transit.

BACKGROUND

The definition of madness is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result

INTRODUCTION

The APETIS Terms of Reference provided for the project to be coordinated by a Steering Committee³ composed of representatives of community associations located in the study area, along with representatives from the ROC, City of Ottawa, NCC, Carleton University, and Ottawa Airport Authority. The Steering Committee met regularly over a period of 18 months; meetings were chaired by the representative for the Centretown Citizens' Community Association and the office of secretary was shared between the representatives of the Dow's Lake Residents' Association and the Glebe Community Association. The Steering Committee also benefited from the participation of interested citizens and Regional Councillors, as observers at meetings. Participation remained consistently high throughout.

The Committee's discussions resulted in a set of perspectives and recommendations, based on the study data, which are described herein.

³ See Appendix A for a list of members

Steering Committee members are appreciative of the diligent work carried out by the consultants, MAXGROUP Associates, and the comprehensive feedback provided by both the consultants and ROC staff throughout the study process. We believe that consideration of this report, taken together with the consultant's findings, provide a solid basis for Committee\Council discussion and decision.

This report was drafted by the Report Sub-Committee of the Steering Committee and approved by the Steering Committee. The report discusses the context in which the study was undertaken and identifies the Committee's assumptions, objectives and vision. It also provides the Committee's perspectives on the problems associated with the increased, and increasing, traffic volumes on Bronson Avenue resulting from recent modifications of the Airport Parkway\Bronson Avenue corridor. The intent of the report, and its recommendations, is to encourage significant action by the ROC in planning for the corridor's re-development in ways that not only will reverse its current, adverse, traffic-related effects on the central communities but indeed benefit both them and Ottawa-Carleton region, in general.

CONTEXT

While the APETIS Steering Committee has expressed its appreciation of the contribution the consultants made to the study, it is not entirely comfortable with their report. The Committee's most fundamental criticism is that the focus and orientation of the consultant's assumptions, conclusions and recommendations, remains almost exclusively the accommodation of automobile traffic. Privileging this mode of transportation, in this way, is contrary to Council's direction in the Regional Official Plan. The Official Plan philosophy underpinning Regional transportation policies assumes that travel demand will be accommodated to the greatest extent possible through healthy and environment-friendly travel alternatives, namely walking, cycling and public transit, and by decreasing dependence on the private automobile.

The adequacy of the pedestrian, cycling, public transit and roadway networks is essential to the realization of Council's objectives - to reduce the automobile share of travel and increase the share of travel by walking, cycling and transit. The order in which transportation infrastructure is developed will determine the travel choices people make. Build it and they will come.

Clear evidence of the consultant's bias is shown in their finding (page 36, last paragraph) which asserts that Bronson Avenue will be congested with or without a twinned Parkway as long as there is no alternative to the Bronson Avenue corridor as a Regional arterial. The analysis fails to address as an alternative, the aggressive pursuit of public transit solutions.

Their inclusion among the community workshop recommendations of the (in all but name) Champagne arterial (p. 37, third paragraph) offers another example. Citing this as a recommendation, grossly misrepresents what went on in that particular workshop and puts forward, as a serious proposal, a minor suggestion, raised tentatively, by just one participant and in passing.

Further evidence of the consultant's bias is their decision to use only peak hour data for the Monitoring Report analyses of the impact of the Hunt Club ramps. Peak hour data are most critical to understanding the needs of automobile travel; off-peak data are equally important to understanding and

assessing both the impact of traffic on the residents and businesses which make up a community and their overall travel needs.

A second, fundamental concern with the consultant's report is that the post-ramp data are not presented in a manner that allows for easy comparison of before and after conditions, making it difficult to assess the impact of the Hunt Club ramps on the Airport Parkway/Bronson corridor. The presentation of the data obscures the fact that the greatest increases in traffic were experienced by those (central area) communities where the initial volumes were already the highest. In fact, neighbourhoods north of the Canal have suffered significant decreases in its quality of life solely to enhance the convenience of automobile commuters.

Thirdly, the presentation of data in the consultant's report seems to be designed to justify the decision to construct the Hunt Club ramps. While the data appear to show some decline in cut-through traffic in communities south of the Rideau River (one of the principle arguments for constructing the ramps), they fail to draw attention to the fact that actual increases of up to 65% in traffic in the communities north of the canal greatly exceeded - in some cases were double - the volumes projected. (The erroneous projections had been used to bolster the arguments in support of the ramps.)

The Monitoring Report provides definitive evidence to support the downtown communities'(as represented on the Steering Committee) contention, as they have voiced it over the past three years; viz., that the impacts of the construction of the Hunt Club ramps would be unfairly and disproportionately borne by their neighbourhoods, neighbourhoods into which this traffic is being directed.

The Steering Committee's concerns regarding the consultant's selection, analysis and presentation of the data reflect the Committee's fear that these data and arguments will continue to be used to justify further road building/expansion projects. Such projects would include the proposed construction of the Walkley ramps and twinning the Airport Parkway and building a Bowesville Road connection to the Airport Parkway.

FRAMEWORK

Vision

A liveable community. A community where residents can experience the peaceful enjoyment of their homes; where we all can breathe good quality air; where children, seniors and others are everywhere visible on the streets; and where everyone is able to get easily and comfortably to stores, schools, community centres, parks, libraries, post offices or medical services, whether on foot, using a bicycle, in a wheelchair, on the bus/train or in a car.

Assumptions

In the liveability of our inner-city communities lies the health and sustainability of our region. Thus, the health and welfare of communities must take precedence over the convenience of drivers. Regional transportation policy must facilitate this shift in behaviour.

Liveable communities should be the major focus of this report, not moving cars.

As the Region grows larger and larger, more and more people will feel the effects of increased traffic on regional roads. This study happens to assess their effects on Bronson Avenue; tomorrow, the concern will be somebody else's street and somebody else's community.

Continuing to use historic information to project and provide for future behaviour will never effect change. (Recall the definition of madness, above.)

Objectives

To reduce automobile traffic on the Airport Parkway - Bronson corridor by offering travellers real transit alternatives and providing incentives for transit use.

To mitigate the effects of current traffic volumes and behaviour, reduce the peak time traffic volumes to 90% of capacity and to slow down the projected rate of traffic volume increase. As already noted, the transportation infrastructure that is developed will determine, to a huge extent, the travel choices people make.

To ensure that funding of transportation infrastructure development privileges transit and other environment-friendly alternatives over roadways.

To ensure the public is educated about the availability and attraction of transit options. (Official Plan policy 9.8.3)

To encourage drivers to consider their responsibility for the health, safety and comfort of the neighbourhoods through which they drive and to drive always as if they were on their own street.

STRATEGY

The extensive APETIS community consultations found overwhelmingly that there should be a different focus to regional transportation planning; specifically, that we must look at long term solutions to transportation demand and put the sustainability of the community first. We can no longer afford to cater to the short-term convenience of one group of regional citizens at the expense of the long-term health and survival of the regional community as a whole.

Some solutions

1. No new regional roads be built and any money that might have been used for this purpose go first into transit service expansion and improvements, pedestrian facilities and access to cycling.
2. Lobby for changes to federal public service parking policies (e.g. increase parking charges) and work with other employers to provide disincentives for provision of employee parking, e.g. Nortel/Moodie Drive expansion.
3. Continue to lobby federal government for tax-exempt employer-provided transit passes.

4. Base ROC transportation planning solidly on implementation of the Kyoto Accords.
5. Continue to lobby provincial government for access to fuel tax revenues to subsidize new public transit initiatives and for the right to use red light cameras and photo radar, should the region so chose.
6. Accelerate implementation of park and ride and expand where warranted (see Aylmer park and ride).
7. Make visible the real per-user cost of automobile usage as well as real per-user cost of public transit services.
8. Require that all future subdivision plans include a public transit component which details how public transit has been integrated into the design and ensures that public transit is a privileged transportation mode for that community.
9. Require that infrastructure for new developments privilege transit travel. Revise requirement that developers finance roadway modifications and offer them incentives to design transit-supportive development. Ensure standards provide for easy transit access into and through new developments.
10. Link regional development planning to existing/projected transit nodes.

CONCLUSION

If you want to do things differently you have to do things differently.

David Gladstone
Chair, APETIS Steering Committee

Annex A

Airport Parkway Extended Traffic Impact Study Steering Committee membership included representatives from the following organizations:

Carleton University Administration

Carleton University Student's Association

Centretown Citizens' Community Association

City Centre Coalition

City of Ottawa

Dalhousie Community Association

Dow's Lake Residents Association

Glebe Community Association

Hunt Club Community Association

National Capital Commission

Old Ottawa South Community Association

Ottawa East Community Association

Ottawa McDonald-Cartier International Airport Authority

Ottawalk

Regional Cycling Advisory Group

Region of Ottawa-Carleton staff - Planning and Development Approvals Dept. /

Environment and Transportation Dept.

Riverside Park Community Association

Transport 2000