

WELCOME BACK!!

After a pleasant summer hiatus, URA is back at work. We look forward to communicating with you using emails, newsletters and meetings, and advocating on your behalf during the upcoming year.

Unionville Main Street Vision Plan

As stated in our last newsletter, the consultant report is now final and available on the City website. A staff report, presumably including implementation plan and funding sources, will be presented to Development Services Committee, likely not before mid - November. Ultimately, a new Secondary Plan will be developed by the City.

The consultant report contained a number of good ideas, but also left a number of questions unanswered. During the summer, the URA Directors studied the report in anticipation of the need to make a formal submission in September. However, as a submission will likely not be required until November, or later, we are now working towards having a presentation by staff or the consulting team to our members in early November. In the meantime, please send any comments you may have on the report to us, as valued input.

All Candidate Meeting(s) Tuesday Sept. 23 & Oct. 7, 2014

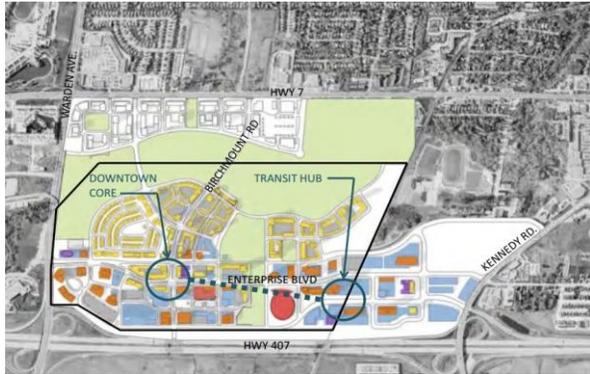
URA is pleased to host two All Candidate Meetings in conjunction with the upcoming municipal election on October 27. Our first meeting will be on **Tuesday, September 23, 7:00 pm at the Chinese Cultural Centre of Markham, 28 South Unionville Ave, Suite 2102** and will involve the candidates for Regional Councillor. There are 12 registered candidates and all have been invited

Our second meeting will be on Tuesday, October 7, 7:00pm at the same venue and will involve the candidates for Ward 3 Councillor. There are 6 registered candidates and all have been invited.

We welcome member input on questions and topics. These can be sent to us prior to the meetings, or raised during the meetings.



Markham Centre Mobility Hub and Community Plan



After a number of false starts, the Mobility Hub study is finally underway, lead by Arup, a large engineering firm. The objectives are to define the transportation infrastructure, land uses, densities and implementation plan (including phasing, staging and finances) for the area within about a 1 km radius of Unionville GO station. The study will inform an updated Markham Centre Secondary Plan.

URA representatives have met twice with Arup on a confidential basis and have provided extensive comments on study scope and on some of the preliminary options that Arup has developed. A public meeting is planned for November, which will be the first opportunity for the public to review the proposed plans.

York University Campus for Markham Centre (Our Ward!)

As most readers know, in June, York University selected Markham Centre for its planned campus expansion. In September, Markham and York Region approved the dedication of 5 acres of land in Markham Centre, and \$25M in funding, respectively, to support the proposed project.

The ball is now with the Province to determine whether York is selected as one of the universities that will be given permission to expand.

GO Transit Stouffville Corridor Rail Service Expansion

The Environmental Study Report (ESR) for this project was released in late July. It studied the infrastructure needs to twin the tracks from Scarborough Junction to Unionville GO Station to allow all-day two-way train service. The report estimated a preliminary capital cost of about \$270M. This project is currently unfunded.

URA did not submit comments on this Report. Instead, we relied on the comments submitted by Transport Action Ontario (TAO), a non-government organization that advocates for sustainable transportation. URA has worked closely with TAO on many projects. TAO has followed the Stouffville file closely.

The TAO comments noted that this corridor has been much in the news lately. It is part of the Province's Regional Express Rail plan, and a key component of Toronto mayoral candidate John Tory's Smart Track plan. It is also a promising option in the Metrolinx Yonge Relief Network Study. Therefore all signs point to this line being a high priority candidate for funding for electrification and frequent service in the near term. TAO urged prompt amendment of the ESR to incorporate these aspects.

TAO also commented at length about the importance of installing pedestrian infrastructure (e.g. gates) so that the train whistle can be silenced, both in the study area (Unionville to Scarborough) and in the area between Unionville and Mount Joy stations.

Electrification



Rouge National Urban Park



Many URA members may not be familiar with exciting news happening just a few km east of us. In 2011-2012, the Federal Government announced the creation of Rouge National Urban Park and committed \$140M over 10 years to get it established. The park will be about 50 sq. km, of which 68% is in Markham, extending east of Don Cousins Parkway/9th Line between Steeles Ave. and 19th Ave.

This will be Canada's first national urban park. In June, Parks Canada issued a draft Management Plan, largely to positive comments. The Plan will balance ecological, social and agricultural values. The Plan envisions an extensive trail network and numerous welcome centres. Markham staff has commented that this Plan contains creative and innovative initiatives and targets to deliver significant park infrastructure over the next 10 years.

Emerald Ash Borer Update

As is evident by looking at our community, ash tree demise has accelerated very rapidly in the past year, due to the pest infestation compounded by the December ice storm. In response, the City significantly advanced its schedule of tree removals for 2014. By the end of this year, 75% of the City's 16,000 ash trees in boulevards and manicured parks will have been removed, with 95%+ removal by the end of 2016. Treatment of trees with chemicals (TreeAzin) to slow down the demise has been limited to a few hundred trees. A very strong tree replanting program is slated for 2015 – 2017.

Readers will recall that Council approved a 0.5% tax rate increase in the 2013 budget to fund this program. At this time, the program remains on budget, at least through 2017.

What is the URA?

A non-partisan association of the residents of Unionville

- ✓ Boundaries: Warden Ave. to McCowan Rd. and Sixteenth Ave. to Hwy 407
- ✓ Founded in 1974 to protect the interests of the community
- ✓ Registered with the Province of Ontario and the City of Markham

What does URA do?

- ✓ Stays current on events, activities and issues in Unionville
- ✓ Keeps our members informed through regular email broadcasts and monthly meetings (with guest speakers on hot topics)
- ✓ Ensures our residents' views are known and communicated to local, regional and provincial government officials and representatives
- ✓ Provides information on our website on active issues
- ✓ Organizes special events (e.g. All-Candidates meetings during elections, issue based meetings)

Join Us!!

Your Voice
Makes Our Voice Stronger

For more membership info, please go to our web site

<http://www.unionvilleratepayers.com/membership.htm>