

## March 7th Member Meeting

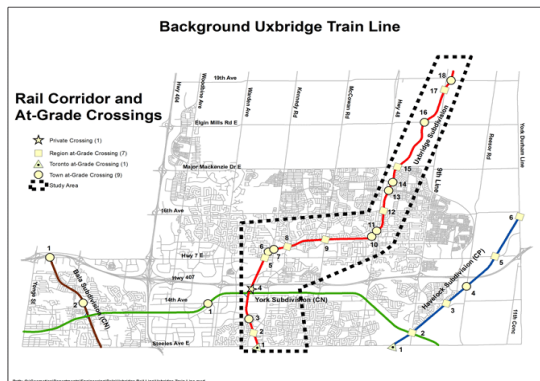
Our next members' meeting will be on Monday, March 7, 2016 at 7:00 pm at the Markham Pan Am Centre. Originally we invited City of Markham staff to present an overview of the Markham Zoning By-law Project, but unfortunately the speaker is unable to attend due to a last minute scheduling conflict. Instead, a URA subcommittee representative will speak on:

- (1) current Markham zoning by-law issues
- (2) the York Region Master Transportation Plan.

This will kick off the two special interest subcommittees while furthering our civic and government engagement.

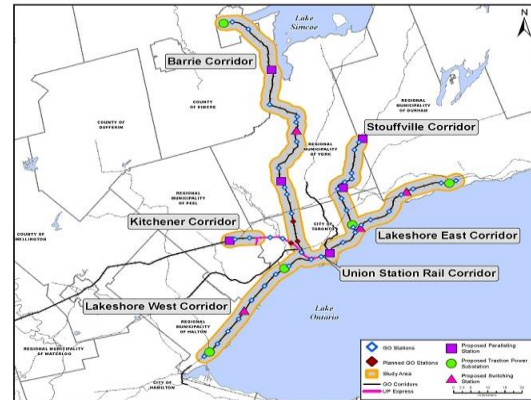
We look forward to seeing you on Monday March 7th.

## GO Whistle Cessation Public Meeting



As stated in our February newsletter, progress on whistle cessation has been good. The City has set up a new web page on this project <http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/MunicipalGovernment/AboutMunicipalGovernment/MajorCityProjects/TrainAntiWhistling/> and will be conducting a public information session on March 3, 2016 at 7:00 pm at Council Chamber.

## Metrolinx GO rail electrification



Metrolinx has been conducting public meetings across the Greater Toronto area on their network electrification plans. The goal is to enable 15-minute service on most GO corridors with electrified trains by about 2023. In total, about 262 km of track will be electrified, including the entire Stouffville corridor from Union Station to Lincolnville. The project will require high voltage connections to Hydro One's existing grid, traction power substations and power distribution facilities near the corridors. On the Stouffville line, two power distribution (paralleling) stations are planned – in the 407 corridor and at Lincolnville.

The current service concept for our corridor is to provide 15-minute all-day, two-way service from Unionville to Union Station, 20 minute peak and 60 minute two-way off-peak service between Mt. Joy and Union Station, and 20 minute peak-only service between Lincolnville and Union Station. Two additional stations (14th Ave and Major Mackenzie) are being studied within the City of Markham, but may not make the final approved list. Metrolinx and the local transit agencies (TTC, YRT) are also studying integrated transit fares, including reducing the double fare when transferring from YRT to TTC or from GO to TTC. Further details on all these initiatives are expected in June.

## York Region Chair Election



In 1971 the York Region government was created to represent the nine regional municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, Markham, Richmond Hill, Whitchurch-Stouffville and Vaughan. The York Region Council consists of 20 elected representatives including nine mayors, four regional Councillors from Markham, three from Vaughan, two from Richmond Hill, one from Georgina and one from Newmarket. The Council members, in turn, elect the Region Chairman for a four-year term. Durham, Halton and Waterloo Chairs, on the other hand, are elected by voters.

At the November 19, 2015 Council meeting, Markham Regional Councillor Joe Li proposed that the Region Chair be filled by means of a region-wide election. After discussion at the February 18, 2016 Council meeting, the motion to conduct a comprehensive governance review, that included the make-up of Council members and the possibility of an elected Chair, was approved by a vote of 14 to 5.

In the meantime, Newmarket MPP Chris Ballard has proposed Private Member's Bill 42, the Municipal Amendment Act, in the Ontario Legislature, for the election of the Chair of York Region. Some York Region Council members advocate the bill should apply to all of Ontario and not just York Region. As of February 24, Bill 42 was sent to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly for consideration. In the meantime, the York Region governance review is expected to be complete by the end of 2016.

## York University Update

Since the Government of Ontario's May 20, 2015 York University Markham campus announcement, York University has worked with Markham Council's campus committee on the following phases:

Phase 1 – a 12 story campus building with a 3 story building in the foreground.

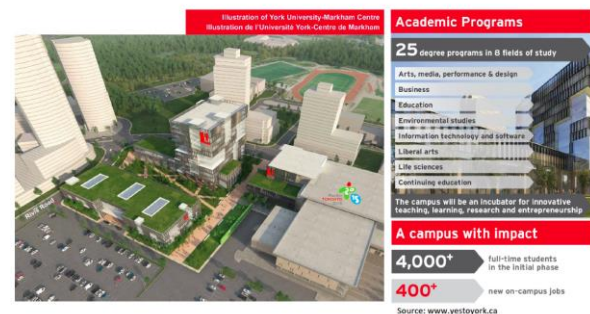
Phase 2 - a 15 story campus building with a 4 story building in foreground with the possibilities of connecting the two buildings.

Future discussion will include (1) the sharing of library facilities between York University and Markham Libraries; (2) heating and cooling provisioning by Markham District Energy and (3) a roadway between York Campus and Pan Am Centre.

The York University Development Corporation has also worked with city staff on the following:

- estimate construction cost (September 2015)
- review with Infrastructure Ontario (October 2015)
- submit to Treasury Board (November 2015)
- feedback by Treasury Board (December 2015)
- submit to provincial budget (February 2016)

On February 2016, the Government of Ontario announced the 2016 budget that includes the 4,000 student York University Markham Campus, as part of its \$3 billion post-secondary education infrastructure funding. In the meantime, a late January 2016 Markham Council meeting confirmed that the Markham campus will open Labor Day September 2020. The first year will accommodate 1,000 students. 1,000 students will be added every year thereafter until reaching 4,000 students in 2023.





## 2016 Ontario Budget

Jobs for Today and Tomorrow



Ontario Finance Minister Charles Sousa announced a \$133.9B spending budget for fiscal 2016-17. The budget includes a \$4.3B deficit and a fiscal target to balance the budget by 2018-19.

- 2015-16 budget deficit of \$5.7B with a GDP growth of 2.2%
- 2016-17 budget deficit of \$4.3B with a GDP growth of 2.4%
- 2017-18 budget with no deficit with a GDP growth of 2.2%

The Ontario Government has increased infrastructure spending from \$130B over 10 years to \$160B over 12 years. The stimulus package funding includes the following borrowing projections:

- 2015-16 debt of \$296B with \$11.2B for interest
- 2016-17 debt of \$308B with \$11.7B for interest
- 2017-18 debt of \$326B with \$12.4B for interest

Key highlights of the 2016 Ontario budget include:

- \$13.5B for regional express rail expansion that includes 15-minute GO Train service along the Stouffville line.
- \$1.9B carbon cap and trade tax on gasoline (4.3 cents per liter) and natural gas (average increase of \$5 per month)
- post-secondary tuition for students with a family income of less than \$50,000 will be free and 50% of the students with family income below \$83,000 will receive a non-repayable tuition grant
- children's activity tax credit (i.e. hockey) and healthy home tax credit for senior have been removed
- \$250 million more for community health care; \$155 million more over three years on residential hospice & palliative care
- Ontario public drug program increases the income deductible threshold for seniors from \$16,018 to \$19,300 per year benefiting 170,000 more seniors; annual deductible increases from \$70 to \$170 or \$7.11 per prescription for seniors above the threshold
- \$170 shingle vaccine will be free for those between the ages of 65-70
- The \$30 Drive Clean fee will be eliminated in 2017-18

### 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!!

Together Our Voice  
Is Stronger

For more membership info, please go to our web site

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