

Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital
Alliance pour les espaces verts dans la capitale du Canada

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Ottawa Transportation Committee meeting of November 15, Agenda Item 1

Transportation Master Plan: Comments

Protecting the Greenbelt

The highest projected travel demand increase is from Outer Suburb to Outer Suburb (+26,500 by 2031). But because of the design of the road network, many of these trips require crossing the Greenbelt twice! There should be other options to satisfy this, the second-largest expected demand and the largest demand increase. <See GRAPH>

Road Widening through Stony Swamp

We object to the proposed widening of Hope Side Road to Highway 416 via Old Richmond Road ("Kanata South Link," planned for 2014-19) and of Hope Side Road itself (planned for 2026-31). They are found on page 112 of Table A3 of the Plan.

Instead of widening Hope Side Road and then Old Richmond Road through Stony Swamp, traffic could be directed to Fallowfield Road and onto Highway 416. This is a far more benign option. It avoids Stony Swamp altogether. <See MAP>

Staff responsible for the environmental assessment of these projects provided us with a document comparing the two options. The comparison found that both options can satisfy expected traffic demand. In a comment to staff on October 22, 2013 (attached), we have argued that the Fallowfield option was not properly assessed. We showed that the evaluation matrix demonstrates a systemic bias against natural systems and in favour of widening transportation corridors through sensitive NCC lands. It fails to acknowledge the importance of directing traffic away from natural systems rather than through them. Further, the evaluation matrix relies on speculation unsupported by either OP policy or the PPS to dismiss the Fallowfield option.

Also missing from the comparison is an assessment against the findings of the *Joint Study to Assess Cumulative Effects of Transportation Infrastructures on the National Capital Greenbelt - Study Report* (November 2012; City of Ottawa and NCC). The evaluation should compare the two options in the degree to which they mitigate the type and quantity of negative effects estimated in the Joint Study.

Airport Parkway widening and LRT to the Airport

We are pleased to hear that an LRT link to the Airport will be given another look. Ottawa stands out as one of the few major capitals without a rapid transit connection from its airport to the city... while the train zooms by and the Parkway is congested...

The LRT extension to Bowesville is not properly costed, as comment from the Airport Authority has pointed out. Experience with the installation of a 914 mm feedermain in 2011 has shown that the rail line passes through areas with very high groundwater level. This will make construction of an underpass (eventually needed when the Airport's runways are extended) and its maintenance very expensive.

The proposed widening of the Airport Parkway (in 2014-19 from Brookfield to Hunt Club, in 2026-31 from Hunt Club to the Airport, that portion with bus/HOV lanes) should be put on hold until the impact of an LRT connection on car traffic, to the Airport and points south, is assessed. Alternatively, the extra lanes in the Brookfield-Hunt Club portion should be reserved for HOV and taxi traffic. As yet another alternative, taxi traffic could be allowed on the transitway from, say, Hurdman, following proper training and certification of drivers.

As a general rule, widening roads is not a solution to congestion, as multiple examples, locally (Hunt Club) and around the world have long shown. Most road widenings become pointless after a while.

Complete Streets

We support the policy direction toward Complete Streets.

Transparency in Mapping

The "Affordable Road projects" map (Map 10) is misleading in that it does not show the projects for which funding is in place but which are not yet built, e.g. Armstrong Bridge, the Hunt Club extension to the 417, etc. The full list of funded projects (Exhibit 7.2, page 70) should be shown on the map for proper context.

Map 4 (Primary Rural Cycling Network) is misleading in that it does not distinguish between "Existing" and "Proposed" routes. We understand that very few if any of these routes are currently suitable for cycling.

Transparency in cost accounting

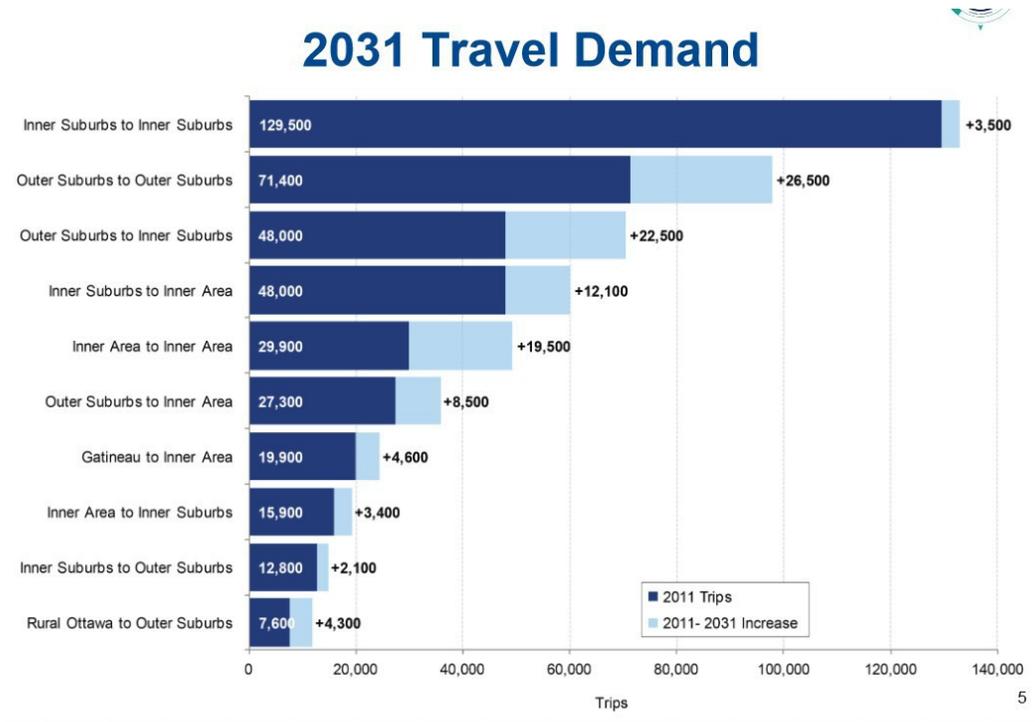
Citizens would much appreciate seeing an annual accounting and projection of all costs related to roads -- capital and maintenance. It is very difficult to distill that from the evidence presented.

GRAPH and MAP follow.

Attachment: Comment on the evaluation table on Fallowfield vs. Hope Side Road + Old Richmond Road, dated 22 October 2013

Graph - 9 October 2013 TMP, Exhibit 2.11, page 25

Showing 2011 Travel demand (all modes) and projected increase to 2031 "in the morning peak period on a typical weekday"



Map - 2031 Network Concept, draft version 2

Exhibit 4-9: Auto Volumes – 2031 Network Concept (Morning Peak Hour, Average Peak Period Demand)

