

URA Position on Kennedy Road Environmental Study Report
April. 7, 2021

The Region of York issued a Notice of Completion for the Kennedy Road Environmental Assessment on March 18, 2021. The URA submitted the following comments to the Region on April 7, 2021.

The URA has been involved with this Environmental Study since its inception and has carefully reviewed the Environmental Study Report. As with 16th Avenue, we continue to question the strategic fit of road widening for HOV/Transit in a future of new technologies, work-from-home, climate change and sprawl reduction. We have been communicating with the Region to model various future scenarios as part of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) update, and have received a commitment that these scenarios will be modeled.

Although the improvements to Active Transportation (AT) are good, there is skepticism that the mode shift to transit will occur and that the HOV/Transit lanes will be effective. It is feared that the widened roads will just become wider roads for general purpose traffic.

We acknowledge that the Study started with the premise that Phase 1 (problem/opportunity) and Phase 2 (alternative solutions) of the Environmental Assessment process were established in the approved 2016 TMP and that the TMP had selected road widening for Transit/HOV/AT as the preferred solution. Therefore the Study was limited to Phase 3 (alternative design concepts for the preferred solution). Within this mandated narrow scope, the Study did a good job identifying the major challenges and coming up with good recommendations.

We do have a few comments:

- Width of AT Facility in Centres – we are concerned that a 3.0 m MUP in the intensive areas of Milliken Centre and Markham Centre will be inadequate and lead to pedestrian-cyclist collisions. The design should look to separate these users, as was done on Highway 7 between Sciberras and Town Centre. We recognize the need to be mindful of continuity of the facility beyond these centres.
- 407 Ramp Bridges - Given the size of the whole project, we feel that the ultimate vision of adding AT bridges over the on-ramps of the 407 should be done together with the bridges across the expressway. It would make AT travel much safer and would save cost in the long run by completing the AT bridge construction as one project. It also means only a one-time construction period.
- Rail Crossing at Clayton – The ESR suggests that an underpass at Clayton is in the distant future. However, we understand that Metrolinx has already started an EA. We support this.
- Access to Denby Crescent and 2nd Street – The ability of residents of these streets to get in and out will be severely restricted, as only a RIRO is proposed. These are “no outlet” streets with no other access than from Kennedy. Improved access from Kennedy from the south (for Denby) and from the north (for 2nd Street) needs to be studied.
- Noise barriers – We support the comments of Councillor McAlpine that there needs to be clarity on placement and ownership of these barriers.
- Several Minor Points in Appendix A
 - Plate for Kennedy/Bur Oak intersection should reflect future extension westward into York Downs

- Plate for Kennedy/16th intersection should depict E-W cross-rides on both sides, to connect with the planned AT facilities on both sides of 16th
- Plate for Kennedy/Maj Mac intersection should depict E-W cross-ride on south side to connect with existing MUP on Major Mac.