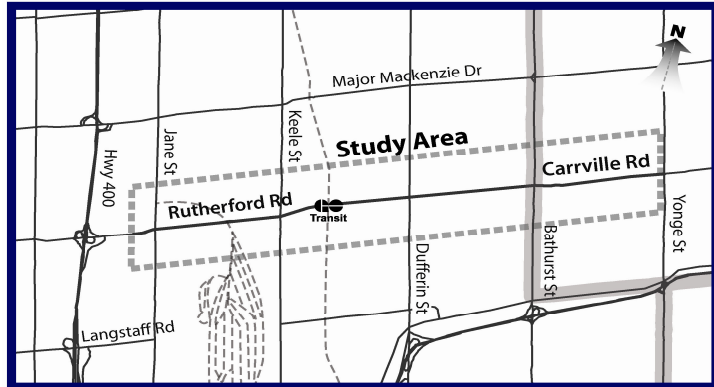




# Rutherford Road / Carrville Road Environmental Assessment Study



## WORKSHOP FEEDBACK REPORT

Workshop to Consider Options for  
Rutherford Road Improvements at GO Rail Crossing  
November 30, 2011  
Forest Run Public School

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Environmental Assessment Study  
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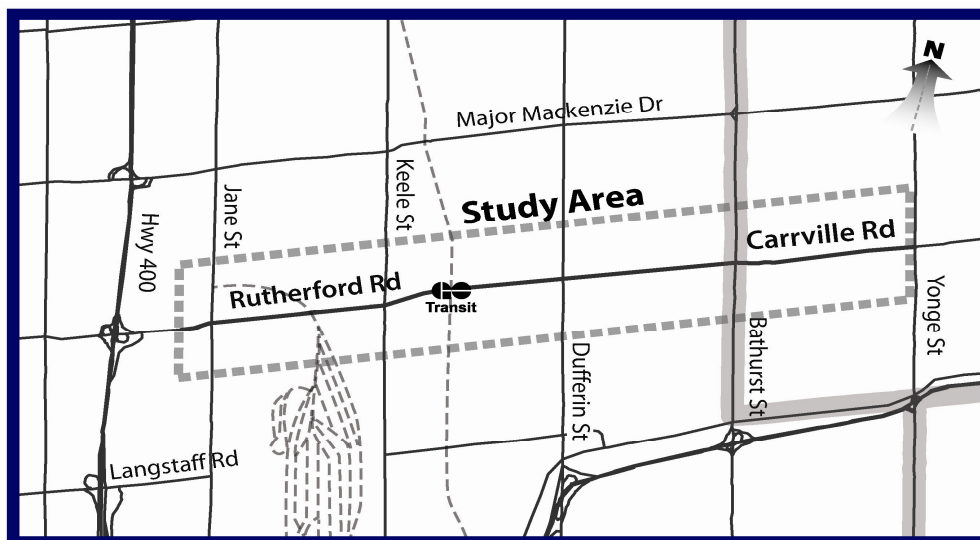
# York Region Rutherford Road / Carrville Road Environmental Assessment WORKSHOP FEEDBACK REPORT

Workshop to Consider Options for  
Rutherford Road Improvements at GO Rail Crossing  
November 30, 2011  
Forest Run Public School

## 1. BACKGROUND

York Region is examining future corridor needs and improvements for Rutherford Road / Carrville Road between Jane Street and Yonge Street. This study is being carried out through an open public process in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process which is an approved process under the Environmental Assessment Act. The study will include: the definition of problems and opportunities, consideration and evaluation of alternative solutions, development of alternative design concepts for the preferred solution, and compilation of all the technical and consultative work into a document for public review referred to as an Environmental Study Report.

Public input is an important part of the multi-step Rutherford Road / Carrville Road Class EA process and a number of public and stakeholder consultation activities will be held this year as we move forward. The Region is committed to engaging a broad cross section of interests including residents, businesses, and stakeholder organizations within and adjacent to the corridor to ensure a balanced constructive discussion of study challenges and opportunities.



A key component of the study is consultation with the general public and stakeholders through Public Consultation Centres (PCCs) and stakeholder workshops. While there will be formal opportunities for input, the Region also encourages contact with the Project Manager to share perspectives and information, through posting on the study web site and submitting comments in the form of letters, email and/or phone conversations all of which will be reviewed and documented.

The second round of public consultation meetings was held in September 2011. Lloyd Fernandes, York Region Project Manager and Tyrone Gan, Consultant Project Manager with HDR | iTRANS gave presentations on study objectives, feedback from PCC 1, overview of alternative solutions considered and criteria used. They then presented how the alternative solutions were evaluated and presented the recommendations for each of the three corridor segments for public discussion. Further information about this study and presentation materials provided at these meetings are available at [www.york.ca/RutherfordCarrvilleEA.ca](http://www.york.ca/RutherfordCarrvilleEA.ca).

## **2. CONTEXT FOR THE WORKSHOP**

In the next phase of the EA, the project team will develop Alternative Design Concepts to implement the Preferred Alternative Solution, and evaluate those concepts. A component of the presentation and discussion at the public meetings in September involved an overview of key design considerations. It was noted that key areas of the corridor will require careful consideration including: watercourse crossings, CN Bridge, GO Rail crossing and road improvements. With respect to the Rutherford Road improvements at the GO Rail crossing, the Region advised that opportunities include: maintaining an at-grade crossing, creating an overpass, creating an underpass and a hybrid option (modifying both the rail and road). The Project Team identified the importance of holding a focused workshop for anyone interested in this rail crossing to discuss the options and to learn from the community about concerns and suggestions.

The workshop to discuss improvements at the GO Rail crossing was held from 6:30 to 9 p.m. on November 30, 2011 at the Forest Run Public School.

Outreach was undertaken to notify the public about the workshop by:

- Direct mailing letter invitation to workshop to houses that back onto the corridor on November 14, 2011.
- Direct mailing of flyer with invitation to the workshop to all houses in the community on November 14, 2011.
- Email notification on November 9, 2011 and direct mailing of letter and flyer on November 14, 2011 to stakeholders on project mailing list.
- Phone call invitation to Maple Village Ratepayers Association: November 10<sup>th</sup>, November 29<sup>th</sup> (left voicemails)
- Email invitation to Technical Advisory Committee on November 28, 2011.
- Notices posted in local newspapers:

- *Richmond Hill Liberal* – Thursday November 17<sup>th</sup>, Saturday November 19<sup>th</sup>, Thursday November 24<sup>th</sup> and Saturday November 26<sup>th</sup>
- *Vaughan Citizen* – on Thursday November 17<sup>th</sup>, Sunday November 20<sup>th</sup>, Thursday November 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday November 27<sup>th</sup>
- *Lo Specchio* – Friday November 18<sup>th</sup> 2011 and Friday November 25<sup>th</sup> 2011.
- Notice posted on Region’s web site;
- Mobile Sign: 2 signs on display by Rutherford GO Station from November 11 to November 30
- Notices posted in GO Station: November 14 – November 30<sup>th</sup>
- York Region Corporate Communications Notification

The purpose of the workshop was to identify ideas, concerns and input for considering options for Rutherford Road Improvements at the GO Rail Crossing. Twenty-four residents participated, many of whom directly back onto Rutherford Road or live in the community adjacent to the GO Station. Regional Councillor Schulte attended as did Councillors lafrate and Rocco. A representative from MPP Peter Shurman’s office also participated

The format for the workshop involved a series of mini-presentations followed by roundtable discussions and rotating stations where the different GO Rail crossing options were reviewed and discussed. The first part of the discussion involved working at three tables to respond to the following questions.

1. What issues are you experiencing relative to the crossing of the GO Rail tracks when travelling along Rutherford Road?
2. What community considerations should be factored into the decision-making?

Project team members assisted in recording all of the ideas expressed. The facilitator recapped the input received from each group and held an overall discussion to identify any additional comments or ideas. The input from the discussion is found in section 3 of this report.

The second part of the workshop involved small groups rotating around four stations (one for each crossing option) providing input on post-it flipchart paper as to what they perceived to be the advantages and disadvantages of each of the four options presented. A blank sheet was provided for noting additional ideas, questions and comments. The material posted for discussion is noted on Table 1. Project Team members assisted at each station to provide clarification on material displayed and to assist in recording of ideas and comments. The input from these discussions is found in section 4.

At the conclusion of the workshop, Sue Cumming facilitated a wrap up discussion to determine if there were other design options that should be considered and any other issues that the Project Team should consider. Tyrone Gan indicated that the next step was to review and evaluate the options to develop a preferred option which would be reviewed with the public in late winter/spring of 2012.

Table 1: Information displayed for discussion at Workshop

<p><u>Station 1: At-grade</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Aerial with 6 lane at grade roadway design</li> <li>-Existing section of the roadway</li> <li>-6-lane section of the roadway</li> <li>-Existing conditions photo boards</li> </ul>	<p><u>Station 2: Overpass</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Aerial with 6 lane overpass roadway design</li> <li>-Existing section of the roadway</li> <li>-Overpass section of the roadway</li> <li>-Existing conditions photo boards</li> <li>-Overpass photo boards</li> <li>-Profile/layer drawing showing the height of the overpass relative to the houses</li> </ul>
<p><u>Station 3: Underpass</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Aerial with 6 lane underpass roadway design</li> <li>-Existing section of the roadway</li> <li>-Underpass section of the roadway</li> <li>-Existing conditions photo boards</li> <li>-Underpass photo boards</li> <li>-Profile/layer drawing showing the depth of the underpass relative to the houses</li> </ul>	<p><u>Station 4: Hybrid</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Existing section of the roadway</li> <li>-Underpass hybrid section of the roadway</li> <li>-Overpass hybrid section of the roadway</li> <li>-Existing conditions photo boards</li> </ul>

\*This information is available on the project website, <http://www.rutherfordcarrvilleea.ca/newsnotes.html>

This report prepared by Sue Cumming, Cumming+Company who facilitated the discussion documents the input received and includes the workshop table discussion, points noted at the stations for each option and comments noted on forms handed in at the workshop.

### 3. EXISTING COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The workshop attendees identified many existing concerns about travelling along Rutherford Road and at the GO Station. A number of other significant concerns and community considerations were raised pertaining to noise, safety and traffic infiltration. Each group identified the following concerns:

- Significant congestion and queuing along Rutherford east and west of the GO Station. Rutherford was noted to be congested most of the time in this area.
- Parking capacity and poor access to GO Station.
- People parking on the south side of Rutherford Road (east and west) of the entrance to the GO station to drop passengers off and to wait for their return. Some jump the curb and wait between the curb and sidewalk. Poor sidewalk conditions.
- Traffic infiltration through the neighbourhood with the need to put in stops signs and other barriers to reduce traffic infiltration.
- Noise concerns from loud train horns – freight and GO trains.
- Noise, dust, nuisances, at-grade congestion are crippling movement and impacting the surrounding community
- Traffic infiltration through the neighbourhoods. Stop signs on residential streets are needed (Some key locations were noted on the aerial maps). It was also noted that some of the restriction in place are prohibiting people from getting to their homes and access to Rutherford needs to be addressed.

- Lack of noise attenuation including gaps in certain areas along Rutherford that are creating poor conditions for residents.
- Significant safety issues at crossing.
- Better access is needed to Rutherford for residents
- Need for better enforcement and consistent speed along the corridor.

The more detailed comments and input are noted in the following feedback charts.

Table 2 – Detailed input on Community Issues and Considerations

<b>Discussion Table 1 - Existing Community Issues and Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traffic infiltration – traffic uses Confederation Parkway as a shortcut to get to Langstaff and then over to Keele street to avoid Rutherford and the GO Crossing. Congestion on Confederation Parkway spills onto Peter Rupert Avenue – the travel time can increase from 2 minutes under free flow to 15 minutes under congested conditions. Many stop signs and traffic infiltration lead to significant congestion and queuing along Confederation Parkway. When there are queues on Rutherford due to train crossing, northbound left-turns aren't possible off of Confederation Parkway because the roadway is already full of vehicles (even though there is an advance green light)</li> <li>▪ Congestion at the crossing is a huge concern – the queuing can go as far as Confederation Parkway. Congestion is a cause of dangerous pedestrian and vehicle behavior (racing across tracks)</li> <li>▪ Barrhill through prohibition makes it challenging for residents to get home</li> <li>▪ GO Station signal – used to be a bus loop, now functions as a kiss and ride.</li> <li>▪ Parking capacity issues at GO Station: People park on the curb of Rutherford (east and west of the tracks) to pick up/drop off GO Station users – this can cause people to run across the tracks in front of on-coming trains. Pedestrians and vehicles sometimes race across the tracks in front of on-coming trains</li> <li>▪ Noise is the biggest concern (vehicles and trains). Noise wall on the berm stops at a certain point – there are noise impacts to the homes that are not protected by this noise wall. GO Trains should sound the horn before they start moving (Northbound direction). When trains move NB, the gates close twice – they only need to close once. Freight trains at night are very noisy; there are 4-5 trains each night, and they can wake people/children up. Train horns are sounded for a significant distance along the tracks.</li> <li>▪ Yonge/Carrville overpass – noise and pollution have tripled since its construction, and privacy is a concern (vehicles can see into people's backyards)</li> <li>▪ Vaughan Mills is a huge source of traffic – congestion became much worse after construction of Vaughan Mills</li> <li>▪ HOV lanes are a good idea in theory, how much carpooling actually happens among GO users?</li> </ul>
<b>Discussion Table 2 - Existing Community Concerns and Considerations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traffic gets backed up to Dufferin/Jane and at north and south streets.</li> </ul>

- Noise concerns from the train.
- Access to GO – one entrance to the station which backs up traffic causing people to stop all over the roadway to drop people off.
- Need consistent 60kph speed limit
- Should consider missing Langstaff Road connection over the CN Rail – important missing link that is needed to move traffic east and west. It was noted that this could lessen the traffic congestion on Rutherford Road.
- Careless driving witnesses with people rushing to station.
- Expansion of GO parking lot – may need multi-level parking.
- Need to extend noise barrier on north side of Rutherford – stops short exposing homes to high noise levels.
- Need to look at traffic infiltration and put in place barriers to protect homes in the area.
- Solution need to address the following community issues: Noise, dust, nuisances, at-grade is crippling movement and impacting community – do something, stop signs on residential streets are needed (some key locations noted on aerial), better enforcement, better access to Rutherford – right turn lanes.

### **Discussion Table 3 - Existing Community Concerns and Considerations**

#### ***Experiences noted:***

- Train results in gates going down twice for a northbound train which has a triple impact on Rutherford as gates stop traffic twice. This causes problems clearing of cars from the lot and no capacity on Rutherford to accept the cars due to the backlog of cars. When the gates come down traffic backs up to Dufferin in the westbound direction and to Greenock in the eastbound.
- Eastbound left turn onto Barrhill has poor sight lines due to Rutherford Road curve.
- Traffic and delay are a problem. Experiencing congestion. Lack of east-west routes – it was noted that Rutherford is the first main east west street north of Highway No. 7.
- Train noise – perception that noise increases since installation of the east noise wall north of Rutherford.
- Combination of congestion and GO transit cars.
- Low light levels.
- Use of on-road kiss and ride due to congestion within the GO transit parking lot. Congestion within the parking lot with poor circulation. Wait times of 15 minutes to get out of parking lot.
- Historical infiltration – not as much now due to prohibitions.
- Illegal through movements on northbound Westburne/Barrhill hold up left and right turn movements on the south leg.
- Local residents need to turn left to travel to subdivision immediately north of Rutherford – restricted.

#### ***Other community considerations identified:***

- Train noise (the whistle was noted to be loud and irritating)

- Freight train noise in the early morning (although only a few trains – noise levels are high)
- Impacts from anticipated increase frequency of freight
- Braking of trains and trucks
- Traffic congestion on Rutherford at all times
- People not obeying/ignoring rail crossing arms – it was noted that when the gates are down that pedestrian walk through anyway as do cyclists. Safety gates are ignored and pedestrians cross
- People parking on the south side of Rutherford Road (east and west) of the entrance to the GO station to drop passengers off and to wait for their return. Some jump the curb and wait between the curb and sidewalk. Poor sidewalk conditions included added dirt from cars, and conflicts with cars. This needs to be addressed now
- Poor cycling conditions – suggest separate cyclists from the traffic which would potentially require the traffic to slow down. Would prefer having a separate barrier to completely separate the cyclists to improve safety.
- Constraints of space for the road and bicycle – bicycles can't use Rutherford
- Congestion on Barrhill intersection deters people from parking at the GO lot which leads to people parking on Rutherford. It was noted that this occurs for every train, not just during the peak usage times. GO should consider addressing this issue through additional exits from the GO Parking lot and potentially more parking.
- Too many traffic lights between Dufferin and Highway 400 – it was noted that there are 12 traffic lights along this area. Two trucks can cross per light. Changing the crossing now would not change congestion from the traffic lights.
- Concerned about severe construction disruption to residents – similar to overpass south of Highway 407 which took one year to construct. How would this impact the station and train frequency? How would this be maintained? When would construction occur?
- What happens when GO doubles the tracks which could happen over the next 5 years?
- Transit turning from outside lane would have to change lanes at GO Station access. Should consider separate lane for YRT and consider grade separation to the GO Station.

#### **4. FEEDBACK ON OPTIONS IDENTIFIED FOR THE RAIL CROSSING**

During the second part of the workshop small groups rotated around four stations providing input on post-it flipchart paper as to what they perceived to be the advantages and disadvantages of each of the four options presented. The options include:

- At grade crossing
- Overpass
- Underpass
- Hybrid of over and under the road/rail.

Maps, aerials and cross-sections were provided for each. A blank sheet was also provided for noting additional ideas, questions and comments. The feedback on the alternative solutions is found at Table 3.

**Table 3**

FEEDBACK ON ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS – ADVANTAGES, DISADVANTAGES, ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FOR EACH

Option	At Grade	Underpass	Overpass	Hybrid
<b>Potential Advantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cost savings</li> <li>● Minimal construction disruption for road and rail and speed of construction</li> <li>● Smaller ecological footprint although this may be discounted by idling</li> <li>● Could be pedestrian and cyclist friendly</li> <li>● Indicates multiple times that a comment was mentioned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduced noise from cars (train noise will still continue)</li> <li>● Keeps traffic flowing</li> <li>● Less pollution from buses without at-grade crossing and reduced congestion</li> <li>● Extent of the works laterally towards the houses is minimized compared to the other options</li> <li>● Will not increase noise by elevating cars and trucks</li> <li>● Could be pedestrian and cycling friendly for both across the corridor and for access to and from GO station</li> <li>● Better aesthetics from resident perspective</li> <li>• Trains would not have to sound horn</li> <li>• Rutherford already a raised grade – easier to dig under with less depth to grade at Keele or Peter Rupert.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less costly</li> <li>• Disruption to traffic (vehicle and rail) less during construction</li> <li>• May be easier to implement</li> <li>• Neutral on train noise</li> <li>• More convenient access for buses to trains</li> <li>• Less impact to the environment – would not have to pump water</li> <li>• Easier to maintain including snow removal and road maintenance</li> <li>• Grassed embankment is aesthetically pleasing</li> <li>• Better than at-grade</li> </ul>	<p>Road Over/Rail Under</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best of all worlds?</li> <li>• Beneficial to have a less tall overpass, less visual intrusion</li> <li>• Rail lower – advantage to homes along the rail tracks</li> <li>• Rail lower – less train noise</li> <li>• Rail lower – less visual impact</li> </ul> <p>Road Under/Rail Over</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less traffic noise than the overpass option</li> <li>• What are the advantages?</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Disadvantages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Traffic congestion</li> <li>● Continuation of carelessness and road rage</li> <li>● Air pollution</li> <li>● Noise</li> <li>● More drop-offs on Rutherford</li> <li>● Accidents due to volume</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cost to lower watercourse and address aquifers (need to pump water)</li> <li>● Pumps would likely inhibit some amphibian movements</li> <li>● Costlier than overpass</li> <li>● During construction more disruptive to both rail and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant increase in traffic noise would be unacceptable</li> <li>• Eyesore</li> <li>• Difficulties for transit to access GO Station</li> <li>• Cyclists and pedestrian access to station is less</li> </ul>	<p>Road Over/Rail Under</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise, congestion and pollution increase to residents with overpass</li> <li>• Impact to GO entrance with grade</li> <li>• Cost</li> </ul> <p>Road Under/Rail Over</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian crossing distance increases and does not solve the issues of pedestrians crossing tracks</li> <li>• Decreasing distance between Rutherford and houses</li> <li>• Bottleneck negates transit potential</li> <li>• Does not address growth in transportation needs and trucks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• road traffic (temporary)</li> <li>• Safety concerns for eastbound left onto Barrhill</li> <li>• May be noise due to profile change</li> <li>• Potential flooding due to pump capacity or failure with major storm event</li> <li>• Pedestrian access to the GO Station from the north side of Rutherford – can't be addressed without a pedestrian bridge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• desirable - longer distance to walk</li> <li>• Safety concerns from icy conditions on steep grade</li> <li>• Anticipated higher cost</li> <li>• How will people cross Rutherford right by the tracks? Would necessitate a foot bridge</li> <li>• Widened road for six lane platform creates a larger footprint and steeper grades</li> <li>• Increased pollution from road</li> <li>• Property value is compromised</li> <li>• Sound barrier needed on road noise level will add to visual disruption and no barrier will not address noise increase</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option offers the worst of everything</li> <li>• Impacts to GO station and driveway</li> <li>• Noise concerns</li> <li>• Cost</li> <li>• Risk of flooding</li> <li>• Train Noise</li> </ul>
<b>Comments / Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not do this as an interim step – not looking for a piecemeal approach</li> <li>• Need a consistent speed limit.</li> <li>• GO parking lot is too small – cars park on roadway, on sidewalks, on boulevard wherever they can.</li> <li>• Need police enforcement.</li> <li>• Cars should not be allowed to turn right onto Westburne.</li> <li>• Do not want wide median like on Dufferin Street – need to better utilize space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing berm and noise barrier in northwest quadrant should be extended to Barhill.</li> <li>• Intermittent creek/seasonal flow – dries up in the summer.</li> <li>• Is there an opportunity to reroute the watercourse instead of pumping?</li> <li>• Consider stairs access to GO Station and elevator for accessibility for strollers and those with accessibility needs.</li> <li>• Consider buffer or barrier between HOV lane and Bike lane.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barrier walls for noise</li> <li>• Resident would prefer to see embankment versus a barrier wall/grassed embankment hides taller noise wall.</li> <li>• High school impact?</li> <li>• Consider how pedestrians access Station from either side of the tracks.</li> <li>• Separate facility for transit access to GO Station (grade separation).</li> <li>• If snow is stored on embankment, it would be a potential issue for residents.</li> <li>• Potentially separate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a hybrid option only if the normal overpass and normal underpass are screened out for some reason</li> <li>• -Who pays? Metrolinx?</li> <li>• -Noise and pollution due to traffic is more of a concern than the noise and pollution due to trains</li> </ul>

pedestrian and cyclists from  
GO Station with traffic then  
separate past noise wall.

## 5. OTHER COMMENTS NOTED THROUGH WRITTEN FORMS

In addition to the workshop discussion, a general comment form was provided for people to identify other comments or ideas. Thirteen forms were handed in at the end of the workshop. The following comments and ideas were noted:

### ***Comments about the proposed options and solutions:***

- . Teston Road is split and needs to be solid road. Langstaff Road is split and needs to be a solid road.
- . Should consider tunnel for cars on Rutherford. The six lane expansion will only work with one of the by-pass options.
- . Bicycle lanes need real separation from car lanes – not just a white lane on asphalt (like it is now on Dufferin Street)
- . Disruption to GO train, the station and access to the station is a major concern. This is how 10,000 people get to work every day.
- . Need to put a stop sign at Patna and Barrhill to slow traffic coming off Rutherford.
- . Noise barrier in the interim along Rutherford between the tracks and Barrhill is needed.
- . Overpasses are a huge impact on the whole area, visually and are a physical wall creating sound and pollution problems for local residents.
- . The creek that crosses Rutherford seasonally dries between the tracks at the GO to Confederation Parkway. In the middle section there is no marine life – unless there is amphibian migration.
- . I prefer the underpass scenario and want to see designs turned into pictures of options. (two people noted this on the general comment form)
- . With road going under rail, stairs were mentioned for shorter walking distance for pedestrians. It is also necessary to add elevator for people with strollers or disability.
- . At the GO parking lot have “no right turns” allowed onto Westburne Road. Force all cars south on Westburne Road. Will cost be the determining factor for the final decision? Option 4 – hybrid needs to consider rail lines completely under Rutherford west of Keele Street at Sports Stadium complex. I would strongly prefer this suggestion.
- . What possible solution is there for residents off Carrville pulling out of residences and backing onto coming traffic. Parking is a challenge for those residents.

### ***Comments about the use of feedback received and notification:***

- . How important is feedback of immediate resident to the final outcome?
- . Could this information be sent home via email or mail?
- . Please ensure that the collection of community input doesn't stop here. Please move quickly on resolving our congestion issues. Thanks for listening to us.
- . Can the public notification be more visual to residents in Dufferin Hill? Suggest that you could postings at bus stops, more letters and publish in newspapers – Vaughan, etc.

- Concerned that although I live on Westway backing onto the track and visual to the GO Platform, I didn't receive a letter or a flyer. The community (immediate) is just as important as region and traffic.

## **6. NEXT STEPS**

The input received through the workshop discussion will be used to review and evaluate the options for Rutherford Road improvements at the GO Rail Crossing. The project team will be evaluating these as part of the next phase of work on the EA study and will determine a preferred solution for review with the public in the spring of 2012.

Information will continue to be posted on the study web site at [www.york.ca/RutherfordCarrvilleEA.ca](http://www.york.ca/RutherfordCarrvilleEA.ca).