

Sat. 19th May

Review of Stadium Shopping Centre Report on Transport Impact Assessment (D.A Watt Consulting).

1) Background.

Although this report seems a comprehensive document it has several flaws and reveals some disturbing conclusions about the existing traffic volumes and impact of the proposed Stadium Shopping Centre (SSC) upon traffic flows upon Uxbridge Drive opposite the SSC and especially at the junction with 16th Avenue N. The existing and future congestion problems at peak volume times are severe in themselves, especially since the redevelopment seems likely to occur before any changes are made along 16th Av. They have even more serious implications for future access to The Foothills Hospital and the Emergency Wards. Apart from the possibility of gridlock developing due to the scale of the SSC redevelopment plans, it will only take one accident on this congested intersection at peak vehicle times to severely impede access to the Emergency Wards.

2). Dated or Missing Information. Several tables in the report contain dated information and should have been brought up to date. For example Table 9 showing employment in the areas around SSC, uses 2006 census data for population and employment. This is already 7 years old and ought to be updated to the 2011 census figures. In addition it is quite remarkable that this table does not contain a figure for the student population of the university—although there is a figure of 8.957 for employment. So the impact of approximately 30,000 students on this area is not taken into account! It is also worth mentioning that the proposed Field House for the Foothills Athletic Park is dismissed on p.26, although could also have a significant spill-over effect on SSC – given the experience of increased congestion during the CFL games at McMahon Stadium. There is no attempt to measure the additional impact of the new building recently confirmed (early 2013) for the Tom Baker Cancer Clinic in the vicinity of 27th Street/16th Avenue which will surely to increased traffic flows to and from 29th Av into 16th Av.

Surely it is also dubious to use 2006 figures for Mode Split in Table 5. In addition it is very likely that the figures for the travel habits of people in Apartment Complex area in Univ. Heights will be different from those in the single family dwellings in the area. Any figures should be based on the patterns of the Apartment complex inhabitants, not generalized to the whole area, especially given the number of senior citizens in the single family dwellings of UH. This later point also means that within ten years there is likely to be a major change in the composition of UH as new residents replace the existing ones. In any case the comparison with Coventry Hills and Glamorgan is spurious since UH is surrounded by major employment zones unlike the other two places. It must also be noted that the report states that potential right in and out access is currently being explored (p.30). Given the current congestion on the Uxbridge-16th Av, intersection at peak periods this critical matter should be settled well before any final decision on the development plan can be made.

3) Survey Times and Dates? Table 2 (p.12) shows the daily traffic counts collected by city staff at three locations , with the Uxbridge Drive data from Tuesday-Friday Feb. 12-15, with other information from 2011 and 2008. The detailed intersection turning movement counts collected by Watts Consulting shown in Table 1 (p.9) were obtained on parts of two days, in this case on Tuesday Feb. 12th for part of the SSC area and Weds 13th Feb. for another part. Why was the survey carried out in the middle of winter. This must underestimate the traffic volumes. When the weather is better more people and cars are likely to be travelling on the various roads, which would increase the traffic volumes and hence potential congestion. In addition it is shown in Table 16 (Parking Data) that there are considerable variations in the ticket purchases, with Friday March 1 showing peak numbers of 752 for the total and 720 for the 2 hour period. The next highest is for Weds at 421 and 386, with Tuesday at 583 and 543.

Hence it seems that the traffic counts were taken on days far below the peak use of the existing Shopping Centre. This implies that traffic counts on a Friday and certainly in late Spring or Summer months are likely to be far higher.

4) Underestimates in Traffic Projections with Current Situation.

a) The Trip Projection Data in the Appendix. K1-K6 show the values generated for the various land uses, which are then aggregated to produce the final Site Generated Traffic Volumes, p34, Figure 14.

The generated numbers for retail and restaurant traffic from the proposed redeveloped centre were added together to show the number of vehicles predicted to be leaving and entering the area at the two entrance/exit points.

This is an example of Peak PM flows (when congestion is greatest) only to illustrate the point

Predicted Retail and Rest't **North:** In... 45 Out....38 **Total 83** **South:** In..86 Out...69 **Total 155**

Current Flows (from Fig 14) **North:** In 123 Out ...122 **Total 245** **South In.. 132. Out 140. Total 272**

One accepts these N and S locations are in different places, but the figures should be comparable if the same amount of retail./rest/t space is to be created in the development as stated in the report. Other examples of differences in the generated flows for the same types of businesses exist when the figures are compared.

The major discrepancies (295% North and 75% South Exit) throw doubt upon the traffic generation figures for the uses that are comparable to the existing uses. This means the projections for traffic generation are far too low, which will lead to be far more congestion on Uxbridge and its junctions than the predictions imply.

b) TOD values. Many of the trip projection values are based on TOD values..If the Stadium SC Site was on a rapid transit system they would be justified. It is not. At this time there are no firm plans or financial commitment for rapid transit along 16th Av. So such estimates should not be used in the report.

c) Office-Medical Office Space. It is very curious how the balance of office space is shown in Table 12 is allocated between Medical 100,000 sq. ft and Office 255,00 sq ft. Since the area is so close to the hospital there could be more demand from this complex. So the figures ought to be reversed which would then generate 3 times as many parking spaces and add significantly to the parking requirements. Given the future development of West Campus and the Children's Hospital any overflow offices from Foothills should be located there..

5) Unwin

Many people at the Community meetings have complained about the congestion along Unwin. It is noted that the report states that its existing daily volume of 5,500 vehicles per day "is at the upper end of the City's environmental design guide thresholds (EVDT)for collector roads". Later the reports states the developmet is expected to generate more traffic along Unwin...with an estimated increase of 200 vehicles at AM and PM flows. Why are only the peak values used. What about the rest of the day? Even the 400 extra vehicles will put Unwin above the EVDT limit. The suggestion forvarious traffic calming will hardly mitigate this congestion problem, which will be greater because the future development of the Foothils Medical Complex will itself generate more traffic heading to this large employment and medical area on the shortest route from Crowchild and the north.

6) Parking Issues

Although there are tables showing the city bye-law requirements for various amounts of land use in the report, there is no discussion of the type of parking structures envisaged and whether they will be 'pay for entry' structures. A Pay for Parking will seriously affect the use of the shops in any redeveloped centre. Although some surface parking is envisaged no estimates are provided. It is bound to be minimal if it is only along the new roadways. Moreover, given the very large of stalls required (over 2,000!) , there is bound to be congestion associated with entry and exit at peak times which will spill over on to Uxbridge. This factors should be taken into account, especially given the delays that occur when paying for the exits and the time taken for barriers to rise.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the Watts report suggests that future traffic volumes generated by the proposed redevelopment can be accommodated, it is concluded that the traffic volumes generated by the development are underestimated. So that future congestion along Uxbridge at peak times will seriously affect the community and the impeded the flow along the Trans Canada. It is not enough to suggest that future transit and traffic lanes will be built along the Trans Canada...They should be in place before any development occurs on the site.

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