

# The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole  
Transportation Services  
April 8, 2021

Report of the Commissioner of Transportation Services

## Traffic Bylaw Amendment to Support High Occupancy Vehicle Lane Designation

### 1. Recommendations

1. Lane Designation Bylaw No. 2020-53 be amended to designate high-occupancy vehicle lanes on Major Mackenzie Drive West (Y.R. 25) between Barons Street and Highway 27 (Y.R. 27).
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerk of the City of Vaughan and Chief of York Regional Police.
3. The Regional Solicitor prepare the necessary bylaw.

### 2. Summary

This report seeks Council approval to designate high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27 (Attachment 1).

Key Points:

- The Environmental Assessment Study supports HOV lanes on Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27
- Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27 was completed ahead of schedule and requires HOV lane designation
- Designating HOV lanes requires a bylaw approved by Council

### 3. Background

**Council previously approved high-occupancy vehicle lanes on all new six-lane roads to increase the total number of people moving through the corridor**

In October 2006, Council approved implementation of HOV lanes for projects involving a road widening to six lanes as part of the Towards Great Regional Streets Design Guidelines.

Fulfillment of these objectives requires investment in transit corridors and strong policies to promote and facilitate transit-oriented development.

HOV lanes increase the total number of people moving through the corridor, may provide substantial savings in travel time and offer a reliable and predictable trip for travellers. Traditional HOV lanes are in the curbside lane for the exclusive use of motor vehicles with two or more persons, motorcycles, scooters and bicycles. The Region and City of Toronto follow a similar approach in which these vehicles have exclusive use of HOV lanes. Single-occupant electric vehicles with green licence plates do not support the intent to maximize people-moving capacity. Based on this rationale, the Region and City of Toronto do not permit their use in HOV lanes, contrary to provincial HOV lanes on 400-series highways.

### **The Environmental Assessment Study supports HOV lanes on Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27**

The reconstruction of Major Mackenzie Drive West from Highway 50 in the west to Highway 400 in the east in the City of Vaughan is underway to accommodate growth and economic development, improve traffic flow, provide public transit connections and more travel options for all travellers.

The Environmental Assessment Study supports HOV lanes on Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27. The remaining section of Major Mackenzie Drive West between Pine Valley Drive and Islington Avenue is currently under construction and will require a future HOV lane designation. Once construction is complete, staff will seek Council approval for an HOV lane designation.

### **Designating an high-occupancy vehicle lane requires a bylaw approved by Council**

Bylaw No. 2020-53 designates lanes on Regional roads for the exclusive use of certain classes of vehicles. To add or remove an HOV lane designation, the bylaw must be amended.

In [April 2017](#), Council amended the lane designation bylaw for Major Mackenzie Drive West between Pine Valley Drive and Highway 400.

In [October 2020](#), Council approved HOV lane designation for Major Mackenzie Drive West between Highway 27 and Islington Avenue.

## **4. Analysis**

### **Opening partial sections of Major Mackenzie Drive West as they are completed will add road capacity**

Due to complexity and constructability of certain portions of Major Mackenzie Drive West, improvements will be opened in phases. Opening each road section as it's completed will increase capacity and continue to foster economic growth through an improved goods movement network on Regional roads. Motorists are more inclined to become familiar with

how a six-lane road operates with each completed six-lane road section opened. This will help set driver expectations for the future road section openings.

### **Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27 has been completed ahead of schedule**

In December 2020, the public was informed Major Mackenzie Drive West between Highway 27 and the CPR tracks would be substantially completed ahead of schedule and open to vehicle use only, with pedestrian access to follow when all work is completed in the fall of 2021.

Due to the opening during the winter months, the required HOV lane designation pavement markings were unable to be completed due to weather and pavement temperatures. HOV signs were installed and bagged until the lanes have been designated. Curbside lanes have been operating as general purpose lanes.

### **High-occupancy lane designation is required on Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27**

HOV lanes need to be designated on the most recently reconstructed section of Major Mackenzie Drive between Barons Street and Highway 27 to provide continuity along the corridor. Dedicated HOV lanes for buses and passenger vehicles with more than one person will help minimize delays to buses and achieve high service frequencies and reliability for transit service along this corridor as well as encourage carpooling.

To expand the transportation network and accommodate travel demand growth, staff propose Bylaw No. 2020-53 be amended to include designation of the six-lane Regional road listed in Table 1 as an HOV lane.

**Table 1**  
**Proposed High-Occupancy Vehicle Lane**

<b>Portion of Highway</b>	<b>Limit</b>	<b>Class of Vehicle</b>	<b>Times and Days</b>
Major Mackenzie Drive West (Y.R. 25) located in the curb lane	West limit of Highway 27 (Y.R. 27) to 20 metres west of Barons Street	HOV lane designation required for transit and passenger vehicles with two or more persons, motorcycles, scooters and bicycles	7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Friday, effective April 22, 2021

## **Staff will report back to Council as the remaining section of Major Mackenzie Drive West between Pine Valley Drive and Islington Avenue nears completion**

Staff will report back to Council regarding the required traffic bylaw amendments to support HOV lane designation on the remaining section of Major Mackenzie Drive West between Pine Valley Drive and Islington Avenue, targeted for completion late 2021.

### **5. Financial**

All costs associated with ground-mounted and overhead lane designation signage are included in the annual Capital works project budget.

York Region Transit will experience a positive financial impact with transit buses using an HOV lane. When reduced travel time is greater than the bus route frequency, buses can be removed from the route while maintaining the same level of service. This reduces operating costs and provides customers with a faster commute. Dedicated bus lanes have shown reductions in travel time between 15-30% compared to general purpose lanes.

### **6. Local Impact**

Local municipal staff has been informed of the recommendations contained in this report. Travellers will be provided with multi-modal travel options and improved transit service offering more sustainable transportation options, including a more connected and efficient transportation network.

### **7. Conclusion**

The Environmental Assessment Study supports HOV lanes on Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27. High-occupancy vehicle lanes increase capacity on busy corridors, benefit transit operations and support planned growth to better serve travellers in the Region.

Major Mackenzie Drive West between Barons Street and Highway 27 was completed ahead of schedule and requires HOV lane designation. Designating HOV lanes requires a bylaw approved by Council. Staff will report back to Council on the remaining section of Major Mackenzie Drive West between Pine Valley Drive and Islington Avenue upon construction completion.

The Regional Solicitor is required to amend Bylaw 2020-53 as described in this report. The Regional Clerk is to notify the Clerk of the City of Vaughan and Chief of York Regional Police of the amendment.

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For more information on this report, please contact Joseph Petrunaro, Director Roads and Traffic Operations, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75220. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by:



**Paul Jankowski**  
Commissioner of Transportation Services

Approved for Submission:



**Bruce Macgregor**  
Chief Administrative Officer

March 19, 2021  
Attachment (1)  
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