

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Committee of the Whole

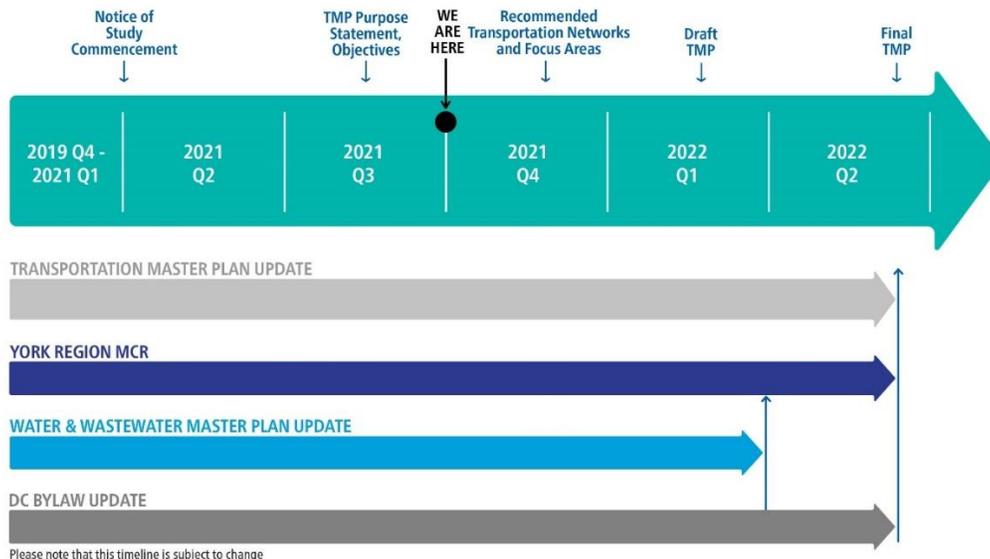
From: Ann-Marie Carroll
Acting Commissioner of Transportation Services

Date: September 24, 2021

Re: Transportation Master Plan – Update on Public Engagement and Strategic Planning

This memo informs Council on the outcome of stakeholder engagement related to the update of the Region’s Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and the draft strategic planning work. As shown in Figure 1, timing is being phased to ensure transportation recommendations are aligned with the needs of the Municipal Comprehensive Review and the Development Charges Bylaw update.

Figure 1
TMP Project Overview and Target Schedule



Please note that this timeline is subject to change

TMP Update aligns with ROP, WWMP and DC Bylaw Updates

Citizen and stakeholder engagement began early 2021 and will be ongoing throughout the Transportation Master Plan update process

On [June 10, 2021](#) Council was informed about the TMP public and stakeholder engagement strategy to understand citizen needs and priorities for the transportation system to 2051. The engagement results have guided the draft strategic planning work, which includes the TMP purpose statement, guiding principles and strategic objectives.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional in-person engagement has not been possible, so staff has been creative in developing virtual and telecommunications options, including on-line and telephone surveys, virtual open houses, one-on-one interviews and an educational video.

Engagement undertaken was to learn more about current community values and how they may affect future transportation choices, including:

- A phone survey conducted by Forum Research Inc. spoke to more than 1,300 York Region citizens about community values, transportation priorities and travel habits
- Targeted meetings and surveys to better understand the needs of specific groups in the community, including:
 - Youth (under the age of 25)
 - People with low income
 - Citizens in the Region's northern municipalities
 - People with disabilities (through the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee)
 - Active and sustainable mobility users
 - The business community
- Meetings with local municipalities and government agency representatives through a Partnership Advisory Group that began in spring 2021 and will continue throughout the TMP update process
- Feedback from Regional Mayors, Councillors and York Region senior management, which provided additional insights into the issues facing our communities
- Virtual public open houses, first of three held July 15, 2021, attracting 138 and approximately 200 additional citizens viewing the recorded presentation or completing the online survey
- Educational video explaining the importance of the TMP and highlighted projects delivered under the current Transportation Master Plan

Citizens and stakeholder groups will continue to be engaged throughout the TMP update process.

Engagement results indicate safety, transportation options and acknowledgement of community diversity of the Region is top of mind for citizens

Throughout the consultation process, safety ranked as a top priority, cited as one of the most important aspects of the transportation system. Feeling safe and comfortable were factors often mentioned that would encourage people to walk or cycle more often.

Citizens also want a range of viable, affordable travel options to meet their evolving needs. When asked to rank the various modes of transportation in terms of importance, walking, cycling and taking transit were consistently rated at the top.

Creating connections between and within communities for ease of movement of people and goods was important. Staff heard that easy access to destinations essential for daily needs, activities and services is top of mind for citizens and they would like parks and greenspaces close to home. Complete and connected networks for walking, cycling, taking transit and driving are vital to enable citizens to use a range of transportation modes when moving around the Region. The connection between transportation and land use planning was emphasized as being integral in creating quality places where people want to live, work, play and learn.

Citizens echoed that one size does not fit all as the Region is diverse in demographics and geography, and it is important to recognize the unique needs of different travellers and communities. The engagement results show that citizen priorities and how they use the transportation system vary, and can change over time. The transportation needs of urbanized communities are different from suburban and rural communities, and future planning must consider transportation services required to serve the Region's urban areas as well as smaller towns and villages.

Engagement results were used to formulate the purpose statement, guiding principles and strategic objectives that will provide direction to 2051

The purpose statement, guiding principles and strategic objectives will be used by staff to establish the direction for the delivery of transportation services to 2051:

1. Draft TMP purpose statement – The draft purpose statement is “Plan, build, operate and maintain a transportation network for all travellers that is safe, reliable, future-ready, sustainable and balances the needs of the unique communities we serve”.

Through consultation with Council, stakeholders and the public, the draft purpose statement was well-received, with most comments indicating it is on the right track and accurately captures the future vision for transportation in York Region. The importance of including references to safety, fiscal and environmental sustainability, connectivity, diversity and adaptability was emphasized.

2. Draft guiding principles - Represent what the Region's citizens value and deem important in making transportation decisions. These were developed to provide direction on how to realistically achieve the purpose statement, as future transportation initiatives should support one or more of these values. The draft guiding principles are:

- 1) Safety
- 2) Inclusive and Equitable
- 3) Protect the Environment
- 4) Affordable Today and Tomorrow
- 5) Balance the Needs of Communities and Commuters
- 6) Future-Ready

Through public and stakeholder consultation, the draft guiding principles were well-received with most comments indicating they accurately capture the most important and relevant transportation values for the Region's citizens. The importance of including values around fiscal and environmental sustainability, putting people (not single occupant vehicles) first, complete communities and an integrated transportation network were emphasized.

3. Draft strategic objectives - Support the TMP purpose statement and provide guidance and direction to evaluate Regional programs and initiatives. These will help guide the development of future action plans to prioritize and deliver relevant projects. The draft strategic objectives are:
 - 1) Making the best use of the roads, structures and services already in use
 - 2) Encouraging all types of travel
 - 3) Providing a resilient transportation network that is adaptable to the changing environment
 - 4) Enhancing partnerships
 - 5) Actively engaging and educating all stakeholders

Through public and stakeholder consultation, the draft strategic objectives were well-received, with comments indicating they capture the most appropriate objectives to support the TMP draft purpose statement and draft guiding principles. The value of focusing on resiliency, connectivity, a range of travel options and partnerships was highlighted.

Feedback received through the engagement process will inform the draft recommendations for the transportation network and focus areas to be developed this fall

The Transportation Master Plan is progressing on schedule to support corporate initiatives, such as the Municipal Comprehensive Review and 2022 Development Charges Bylaw Update. Future TMP update activities include:

- Identifying recommended transportation networks for active transportation, transit and roads to support Regional growth to 2051, including considerations to the impact of the Yonge North Subway Extension on the Richmond Hill Centre and Langstaff secondary plan areas.
- Developing recommended focus areas to inform the strategic direction going forward.
- Seeking input on the draft recommended transportation networks and focus areas with the public through a second virtual Public Information Centre in fall 2021, and with other stakeholders including the local municipalities, emergency services, conservation authorities and others.
- Preparing the draft TMP recommendations.

Staff will report to Council in early 2022 on the Transportation Master Plan draft recommendations, with the final plan presented to Council in June 2022.



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