



Office of the Commissioner
Public Works Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Whitchurch-Stouffville Council

From: Brian Titherington, Director, Transportation Infrastructure Planning

CC: Wayne Emmerson, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, York Region
Bruce Macgregor, Chief Administrative Officer, York Region
Lina Bigioni, Chief of Staff, York Region
Erin Mahoney, Commissioner of Public Works, York Region
Lauren Crawford, Manager, Public Works, York Region
Christopher Raynor, Regional Clerk, York Region
Brian Kavanagh, Director of Public Works, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

Date: August 25, 2022

Re: 2022 Transportation Master Plan - Response to Whitchurch-Stouffville Council Resolution

On June 30, 2022, the Regional Clerk received a letter from Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Council (Attachment 1), summarizing a resolution adopted at their June 15, 2022, meeting requesting the Region consider revising the 2022 Transportation Master Plan (2022 TMP), to reflect comments from the Town.

Comments received from the Town primarily relate to near-term and detailed work that will be undertaken following endorsement of the 2022 TMP. While the 2022 TMP addresses future work under near-term Focus Areas such as safety, transportation equity and boulevard jurisdiction, it is primarily a long-term planning study that provides the 30-year outlook for transportation to support population and employment growth forecasts in the Region to 2051. As such, much of the follow-up to the Town's comments will be addressed through near-term studies and operational reviews.

Responses to specific comments identified by the Town are summarized in the table below.

	Items in Whitchurch-Stouffville Resolution:	York Region Response:
Council Resolution		
1	That the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville request that York Region investigate the feasibility of converting signalized Regional road intersections along the Stouffville Road corridor to roundabouts, where applicable, and proceed to design and construction phases as appropriate;	A Traffic Safety Engineering Consultant has been retained to conduct a safety audit for the portion from Highway 48 in the west to the Town limit in the east. The audit will identify potential traffic operational measures to improve safety, including, application of a PREPARE TO STOP sign with amber flashers and the feasibility of converting signalized intersections to roundabouts. Town staff will be invited to participate in the safety audit. Results are planned to be reported to Council in 2023.
2	That the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville request that York Region investigate the addition of prepare-to-stop signs on Regional Road intersections along the Stouffville Road corridor; and	
3	That the Town’s comments on the York Region 2022 Draft Transportation Master Plan, included in the Memo to Council dated June 14, 2022, be sent to York Region for their consideration as part of the finalization and implementation of the Plan.	Town comments and associated responses on the 2022 TMP are noted below.
Comments on the Transportation Master Plan		
4	<p>Three Minister’s Zoning Orders (MZOs) have been announced There will be significant intensification and transportation routes will see significantly more volume within the next five years. There are concerns about traffic congestion in this area. The road widenings in these areas should be considered in York Region’s current TMP. The Region’s TMP should speak to the timing associated with these projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> southwest corner of Hwy 48 and Town Line within the Community of Stouffville 	The Region recognizes the importance of coordinating future growth with infrastructure needs. As such, the 2022 TMP was completed as part of a concurrent planning process along with the Water and Wastewater Master Plan, Development Charges By-Law, and the Regional Official Plan update. This coordinated process ensures an integrated approach to align growth with infrastructure. There are several areas across York Region that are subject to Minister’s Zoning Orders. While the magnitude of growth, timing and service requirements are still being defined for these areas, the Region will ensure that planning and infrastructure decisions

	Items in Whitchurch-Stouffville Resolution:	York Region Response:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and one at the intersection of 19th Avenue and McCowan Road within the City of Markham. 	<p>are coordinated as specific development areas evolve.</p> <p>Section E3.4 Transportation needs details the Region’s commitment to continuing to work with all levels of government to review the rapid transit, active transportation, and road improvements and to meet the evolving needs of these communities.</p>
5	<p>The Region’s TMP update should speak to the timing associated with all their projects including land procurement, road construction and trail / cycling facility construction. Trail system connections, including Rouge National Urban Park connections, should be prioritized in order to connect Federal, Regional and local municipal lands for resident enjoyment and in support of healthy and active lifestyles.</p>	<p>The 2022 TMP is a long-term planning study that provides the 30-year outlook for transportation to support population and employment growth forecasts in the Region to 2051. The timing of transportation projects is reviewed annually as part of the Council approved 10-year transportation capital program.</p> <p>The 10-year capital program is also reviewed annually with the local municipalities.</p>
6	<p>Jurisdiction of York Region boulevards poses a challenge. The Region is responsible for the roadway, however local municipalities are responsible for construction and maintenance of lighting and active transportation facilities in the right-of-way including bike lanes, sidewalks and multi-use paths. This poses concerns for permitting and conflicting adjacent maintenance requirements.</p> <p>The Region has noted that boulevard jurisdiction falls under the 'Review the role and function of Regional Corridors' Focus</p>	<p>York Region understands challenges with varying responsibilities between local municipalities and the Region. The Region is committed to working with the Town in reviewing the role and function of the Regional Corridors Focus Area.</p> <p>As outlined in Section F6.1 Ownership and use of boulevard, ownership and maintenance responsibilities of boulevard elements including multi-use and cycling paths are not well-defined. York Region has begun the process of identifying opportunities and challenges</p>

	Items in Whitchurch-Stouffville Resolution:	York Region Response:
	<p>Area, and that additional feedback and engagement will be provided in the next four-year term of Council.</p> <p>The Feb 2022 resolution by the City of Vaughan regarding York Region assuming all winter maintenance including snow clearing on sidewalks adjacent to regional road.</p> <p>This review by the Region is considered a starting point in terms of reviewing the various responsibilities within York Region rights-of-way. It is recommended that York Region expand the review to include the remaining areas of municipal responsibility in York Region rights-of-way.</p>	<p>of possible ownership and maintenance models associated with all boulevard elements present in the Region’s right-of-way to better clarify and delineate responsibilities between the Region and the Town.</p> <p>The Region is aiming to further consult and engage with local municipalities on this focus area in late 2022 and early 2023.</p>
7	<p>Traffic safety on York Region roads is a serious concern. Traffic calming is required to improve traffic safety.</p> <p>The Town was required to initiate and fund the installation of traffic delineators on Aurora Road in 2021. York Region must take responsibility for the implementation of effective traffic calming measures on regional roads.</p>	<p>Transportation safety was identified as a top concern by many stakeholders through the 2022 TMP consultation process. As such, a Focus Area on safety is identified in the 2022 TMP for future action.</p> <p>Regional roads generally carry higher volumes of traffic, including trucks for goods movement, for longer trips across municipal boundaries. As such, traffic calming measures are generally not considered. That said, the Region will continue to work with our local partners to respond to requests for sections of regional roads which serve a more local function. This was the case for the Town-led initiative to implement centre line delineators on Aurora Road in the Ballantrae Public School and Ballantrae Community Centre areas.</p>

	Items in Whitchurch-Stouffville Resolution:	York Region Response:
8	<p>The Region's Two-Year Limited Use Automated Speed Enforcement Program began in November 2020 and has been applied to 12 Community Safety Zones encompassing 19 school areas spread throughout all nine local municipalities. The Town encourages the Region to expand this program in Stouffville and continue to lobby for implementation of an Administrative Penalty System to facilitate such expansion.</p>	<p>In June 2022, Regional Council authorized continued use of automated speed enforcement, including addition of two new automated speed enforcement mobile cameras in 2023. Over the next four years, 60 additional cameras are proposed to be included in the multi-year (2023-2026) Public Works operating budget. The expansion of the Automate Speed Enforcement (ASE) program will help achieve the goal of having one ASE camera in every community safety zone, covering all public schools on regional roads by 2027. As noted, expansion of ASE will be reliant on successful implementation of the Administrative Penalty System. The Region continues to lobby the Province for implementation of this System.</p>
9	<p>Particular traffic safety concerns have been recognized at York Region intersections along the Stouffville Road corridor between Highway 48 and the west Town boundary. Staff recommend that York Region investigate the feasibility and appropriateness of converting the signalized Regional road intersections along Stouffville Road to roundabouts as a means of improving the safety of the intersections. Roundabouts have been proven to decrease accidents, decrease the severity of accidents and the number of fatalities, improve intersection capacity and improve environmental performance.</p>	<p>As noted previously, transportation safety was identified as a top concern by many stakeholders through the 2022 TMP consultation process. As such, a Focus Area on safety was identified in the 2022 TMP for future action.</p> <p>Specific to the Stouffville Road corridor, a Traffic Safety Engineering Consultant has been retained to conduct a safety audit for the portion from Highway 48 in the west to the Town limit in the east. The audit will identify potential traffic operational measures to improve safety, including, application of a PREPARE TO STOP sign with amber flashers and the feasibility of converting signalized intersections to roundabouts.</p>

	Items in Whitchurch-Stouffville Resolution:	York Region Response:
		Town staff will be invited to participate in the safety audit. Results are planned to be reported to Council in 2023.
10	<p>As the Town of Stouffville grows and as travel patterns change post-pandemic, there is an increasing need for local transit. This ties into three of the Region’s focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation equity: options for all lifestyles, life stages and abilities • Reduce car travel • Financial and environmental sustainability Council Memorandum June 14, 2022 <p>It is the Town’s expectation that the Region will provide local options for Stouffville residents to make use of a broad range of transit options that increase equity, reduce car travel and improve environmental sustainability. There is a growing demand to make life without a car an option for Stouffville residents.</p> <p>Specifically, this will be achieved through expansion of fixed route transit in existing areas, newly developing areas such as MZO and MTSA lands, and to key destinations in neighbouring municipalities. Expansion of the Mobility-On-Request service is also required, including the addition of new destinations.</p>	<p>The 2022 TMP recognizes the importance of transit and active transportation in developing a transportation network that offers travellers more options, protects the environment, and fits within the Region’s budget. The 2022 TMP aims to achieve this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting a critical shift towards active and eco-friendly travel by making those options readily available to more residents • Continuing to help make the entire transportation network safer for all users • Focusing on the transportation needs of all road users, including drivers, passengers, transit riders, pedestrians, and cyclists • Using assets like boulevards along roads and underused public lands for active and eco-friendly travel <p>York Region Transit continues to promote a variety of transit services in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, including travel training and transit orientation opportunities. Communication continues to be provided through the local On the Road magazine, digital ads, posters for distribution at libraries, community centres, schools and senior homes, postcards, social media, and Curbex signs.</p>

	Items in Whitchurch-Stouffville Resolution:	York Region Response:
		<p>Service changes are informed by the annual plan process through extensive review of ridership data, customer feedback, development applications, and stakeholder feedback. York Region is committed to support the Stouffville community through a variety of transit options, including local, Mobility On-Request, school specials, connections to the GO station. Staff continues to work closely with municipal staff to identify transit expansion opportunities to support the Major Transit Station Area and Minister’s Zoning Order lands.</p>
11	<p>Regional roads must be designed and renewed to encourage and accommodate all types of travel for all ages and abilities. This includes active and eco-friendly travel options such as walking, cycling, scootering and hiking; as well as micromobility options such as e-bikes and e-scooters. The Town encourages the Region to improve rights-of-way to include dedicated and safe active transportation options, and to expand policies to manage the safe use of alternative forms of transportation.</p> <p>A Regional network of connected bike lanes that are separated from roadways will provide the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When cycling is safe and convenient, more people choose to travel by bicycle instead of by automobile. • In a protected cycling network, cyclists move predictably, reducing conflicts between cars and bicycles. • More cyclists mean fewer cars on the road and thus shorter commute times. • Cyclists who ride on the sidewalk often do so out of fear of riding in car traffic. 	<p>The 2022 Regional Official Plan adopted by Council on June 30, 2022 recognizes prioritizing active transportation can help reduce automobile traffic and pollution, make communities more liveable, create a pleasant and safe environment, reduce noise, and promote healthy lifestyles (6.3.1 to 6.3.10). It aims to achieve this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting and developing local and regional transportation networks with safety and connectivity as a top priority • Ensuring the active transportation networks are integrated with other sustainable modes of transportation including transit • Providing connected, comfortable, safe and accessible pedestrian and cycling facilities that meet the needs of the Region’s residents and workers, including children, youth, seniors and people of all abilities

	Items in Whitchurch-Stouffville Resolution:	York Region Response:
	<p>When cyclists have a protected lane to ride in, they don't need to ride on the sidewalk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling has significant public health benefits, reducing the incidence of diabetes, heart disease and some types of cancer, and improving mental health, lessening the burden of healthcare on taxpayers. • Increased cycling means lower greenhouse gas emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using assets like boulevards along roads and underused public lands for active and eco-friendly travel <p>Sections E.3.1 A larger more integrated active transportation network and F6.2 Micromobility in the 2022 TMP both clarify the Region's commitment to enhancing the safety and quantity of active transportation facilities and micromobility in Regional rights-of-way. This includes the intention that where possible, cycling lanes should be located off the road rather than on the road next to vehicle traffic.</p>

Consultation with local partners, stakeholders, Indigenous communities and the public are key components for successful delivery of the 2022 Transportation Master Plan. Regional staff appreciate the comments from Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville and look forward to continuing the conversation with Town staff. Further information on the 2022 TMP can be found on the project website at www.york.ca/tmp.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Lauren Crawford, Manager, Transportation Long-Term Planning, Public Works at lauren.crawford@york.ca.

Brian Titherington
 Director, Transportation Infrastructure Planning, Public Works

Attachment (1)
 14037408