

Proposed Regional Strategies

York Region Transportation Master Plan Update

This is a list of draft policy and strategy recommendations that support and promote the use of sustainable transportation modes. These should be implemented along with the network elements and are fundamental to the sustainability foundation of the updated Transportation Master Plan.

These policies and strategies will require the collaboration and partnership of York Region with other agencies including the local municipalities, the Province, Metrolinx, GO Transit and adjacent municipalities in implementing them. The specific roles and responsibilities of each partner and York Region will have to be defined at the implementation stage.

	Regional Strategy	Responsible Agency		
		York Region	Local Municipality	Other Agencies
1.0	Transit			
1.1	Work closely with GO Transit to maximize YRT access to GO Transit rail stations, bus stations and park-and-ride lots in York Region, and to increase shuttle and community bus services that meet train departures and arrivals in areas around GO stations.	✓		✓
1.2	Continue to coordinate YRT services with adjacent transit systems, including the TTC, Brampton Transit, and Durham Region Transit through initiatives such as interlining and shared terminals.	✓		✓
1.3	Install bike racks on all buses and amend the Highway Traffic Act and Public Vehicles Act to allow for these racks.	✓		✓
1.4	Work with other agencies to implement fare integration and/or eliminate double fares at regional boundaries.	✓		✓
2.0	Active Transportation			
2.1	Implement the Regional and municipal cycling and pedestrian plans.	✓	✓	✓
3.0	Planning & Design			
3.1	Ensure transit service and infrastructure are built into new subdivisions, employment areas and major commercial centres within the first 3 years.	✓	✓	
3.2	Work with local area municipalities to implement minimum density requirements that are supportive of higher order transit.	✓	✓	
3.3	Adopt a policy for inclusion in the ROP which compels local municipalities, particularly those that are already urbanized, to achieve the minimum densities needed to sustain higher order transit and promote TOD, as per the Places to Grow strategy.	✓	✓	
3.4	Amend the ROP to include TOD guidelines as policy guidelines, thereby effectively promoting sustainable development for higher order transit.	✓		
3.5	Coordinate zoning bylaws, urban design guidelines, parking standards, and site plan controls to ensure they are consistent with the TOD Guidelines and the Regional Centres and Corridors strategy.	✓	✓	
3.6	Require the involvement of YRT staff in secondary/site plan review processes, to ensure inclusion of transit perspectives.	✓	✓	
3.7	Implement Community Improvement Plans for TOD at high priority locations and at Regional Centres, in cooperation with the local municipalities.	✓	✓	
3.8	Connect all transit stops directly to sidewalks and adjacent buildings in urban areas.	✓	✓	
3.9	Minimize walking distances between new development sites and transit stops through the location of site accesses.	✓	✓	
3.10	Update policies regarding provision of sidewalks on Regional roads in urban areas; consider a provision to require sidewalks on both sides of the street (in urban areas and major roadways).	✓	✓	
3.11	Review and update design standards for sidewalks and the pedestrian environment.	✓	✓	
3.12	Work with the local municipalities to implement a coordinated program of site design that is oriented to transit and pedestrians, and to review zoning along transit corridors to ensure that land use density supports rapid transit.	✓	✓	
3.13	Adopt the Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers' (CITE) site design guidelines to promote sustainable transportation.	✓		
3.14	Partner with the municipalities to plan for retail, institutional and commercial uses that are focused on the street, with parking positioned behind the buildings. "Big box" retail plazas which are auto-focused should be strongly discouraged or prohibited.	✓	✓	
3.15	Explore opportunities to harmonize lighting, sidewalk and road improvements within Regional rights-of-way.	✓	✓	
3.16	Promote pedestrian safety and comfort through building and site design through review of development applications.	✓	✓	
3.17	Enhance the pedestrian-scale environment at street level in urban areas.	✓	✓	
3.18	Partner with school boards to plan for schools and other facilities that are located on transit routes (high schools and pedestrians and bike focused in terms of all facilities' site design).	✓	✓	✓
3.19	Develop and Provide a detailed Best Practices Planning Handbook to York Region and municipal staff, as well as the development community.	✓	✓	✓
3.20	Accommodate people with disabilities and special needs on the pedestrian and transit systems, per the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.	✓	✓	✓
3.21	Develop gateway "mobility hubs" at major entry points to the Region and to the YRT system and GO Stations. These hubs should be the focus of transit-oriented development as well as kiss'n'ride, park-and-ride and carpool facilities. The plans should be site specific.	✓	✓	✓

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3.22	Develop a procedure to ensure local municipalities, YRT/Viva and GO Transit together explore maximize TOD opportunities around VIVA and GO station sites.	✓	✓	✓
3.23	Require developers to provide high quality pedestrian connections to the Regional road network as part of site plan approvals in urban areas, as well as effective pedestrian permeability through the site.	✓	✓	
3.24	Implement a policy allowing the Region to declare a particular interest in development applications that take place in the vicinity of the Regional Corridors, Centres and nodes, as a means to ensure a sustainable pattern of development for higher order transit.	✓	✓	
3.25	Develop financial incentive programs to encourage TOD in the Regional Centres and Corridors.	✓	✓	✓
3.26	Work with existing major auto-focused retail sites as these redevelop, to plan for transit-focused intensification within Regional Centres and Corridors.	✓	✓	
3.27	Create a site plan checklist to gauge TOD elements of a proposed development. The Region should utilize the Promoting Sustainable Transportation through Site Design (2005) manual developed by CITE to facilitate its TOD strategy (Consider application of CITE's 'Greenmodes' site design software to enhance sustainability).	✓	✓	
3.28	Develop materials and create a website link from York Region's website as a resource for planners, developers, policy-makers and citizens who are interested in the implementation of TOD.	✓		
3.29	Develop a mechanism to assess the redevelopment potential of sites in Regional Centres and Corridors and review potential "quick win" sites for TOD.	✓		
4.0	Intelligent Transportation Systems & New Technologies			
4.1	Expand the Viva ITS program, and introduce traveller information systems in the short-term, improved signal progression, and queue jump lanes throughout the Region, where appropriate, to improve transit performance relative to single occupant vehicles.	✓		
4.2	Implement a comprehensive Advanced Traffic Management System in key areas in York Region, particularly on the Highway 7 / Highway 404 area and Highway 7 / Highway 400 area.	✓		✓
4.3	Review the location of left turn lane detector loops on arterial roads, and ensure that they are set back from the stop bar to the location of the third vehicle in the turning stream and, where appropriate, incorporate both a stop bar and a setback loop	✓		
4.4	Introduce a system of adaptive signal control on key urban arterials, where necessary.	✓		
4.5	Integrate system-wide traffic signals through a centre-to-centre (C2C) interface to support daily operations, provide traveller information and emergency response.	✓		
4.6	Require the Region's traffic control system to be compliant with the National Transportation Communications for ITS Protocol (NTCIP) to ensure ITS measures are implemented properly.	✓		
4.7	Develop and implement a Transit Video Survey Tool once YRT has completed the system-wide deployment of on-board video surveillance systems.	✓		
4.8	Develop a web-based delivery of real-time traffic information to assist drivers in determining times and routes for travel.	✓		
4.9	Create a Travel Demand website which would build on the Smart Commute Association's website by expanding on the current system.	✓		✓
4.10	Review policy on pedestrian push-buttons to improve tactile and visual response, as well as the adequacy of walk time and the universal application of countdown displays.	✓		
4.11	Discontinue the use of pedestrian push-buttons for pedestrian phases across the "minor" street that has a short pedestrian walk distance, beginning with signalized intersections in Regional Centres and on Regional Corridors. Thus all pedestrian crossing of the minor street would be continuously called.	✓		
5.0	Roadways and Highways			
5.1	Initiate HOV2+ lanes for all road segments scheduled for widening to 6 lanes.	✓		
5.2	Cap road widenings to a maximum of 6 or 7 lanes, including transit lanes.	✓		
5.3	Strongly promote all local municipalities to ensure continuous mid-concession block collector roads are implemented east-west and north-south in all new urban developments (two per direction per concession). Transport Planning for each concession block should be based on an integrated assessment of needs for surrounding arterials and internal collectors.	✓	✓	✓
5.4	Require the local municipalities to design collector roads to accommodate local transit services. Speed humps and other design elements that restrict transit access and reliability should be prohibited on these roads.	✓	✓	
5.5	Support the use of current HOV lanes on Highway 404, as well as any future highway HOV lanes, through the addition of park-and-ride and carpool lots at strategic locations.	✓		✓
5.6	In areas of low pedestrian activity, consider roundabouts as an alternative signalizing intersections.	✓	✓	
6.0	TDM			
6.1	Develop a TDM strategy in conjunction with municipal agencies, school boards, hospitals, colleges and major employers that includes actions, timelines and targets.	✓	✓	✓
6.2	Require TDM plans or strategies for any major commercial or employment development application (over 100 employees).	✓	✓	
6.3	Encourage private sector employers to implement TDM programs	✓	✓	✓
6.4	Partner with major retail stores to develop incentive programs for high school and university students (or others) using transit. Incentives could include discounts at local restaurants, clothing stores, etc.	✓		✓
6.5	Partner with major retail stores to develop incentive programs for seniors using transit. Incentives could include discounts at local restaurants, theatres, etc.	✓		✓
6.6	Explore opportunities to develop a discounted university and college transit pass program ("U-Pass") with YRT.	✓		✓
6.7	Consider incentives that promote transit and discourage all-day parking (e.g. subsidize auto share programs).	✓	✓	
6.8	Develop TDM promotional plan in conjunction with municipalities and key stakeholders (e.g. major employers and 'green' organizations).	✓	✓	✓
6.9	Encourage developers to provide information about transportation alternatives, including local transit routes and schedules, to new home buyers.	✓	✓	
6.10	Adopt a "putting pedestrians and transit first" policy approach into the Official Plan.	✓		
6.11	Implement Commuter Trip Reduction Programs.	✓	✓	

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7.0	Parking			
7.1	Mandate provision of carpool preferential parking for employment uses.	✓	✓	✓
7.2	Offer carpools preferential parking at all Regional facilities. Also offer preferential parking for vehicles powered by alternative fuels.	✓		
7.3	Develop a framework to establish a Regional Parking Authority that would set parking policy within York Region.	✓	✓	
7.4	Develop parking strategies in each Regional Centre and on Regional Corridors (within 500 metres along each corridor) to avoid over-supply, provide the appropriate form of parking, and structure fees that discourage all-day parking through Regional or Municipal parking authorities.	✓	✓	
7.5	Adjust the quantity of long-term parking for commercial, employment and residential uses to reflect the level of transit services and other sustainable modes.	✓	✓	
7.6	Reflect on-street parking as part of the supply for development where possible.	✓	✓	
7.7	Encourage car-share programs at GO Stations, YRT/Viva terminals and major employment centres.	✓		✓
7.8	Encourage shared parking arrangements among neighbouring properties and reflect this in the parking supply for development.	✓	✓	
7.9	Investigate the utility of car-share programs at YRT/Viva terminals, GO stations and major employment areas, and if they are found to be of benefit, consider subsidizing them for a start-up period.	✓	✓	✓
7.10	Adjust setbacks to ensure that parking is located to the side or rear of new developments.	✓	✓	
7.11	Work with local municipalities to introduce residential parking maximum standards in Regional Centres and Corridors.	✓	✓	
8.0	Regional Collaboration			
8.1	Define a mechanism for ongoing coordination with local municipalities and stakeholders relative to research or future sustainable transportation planning needs (for example, consider establishing and leading a working group, and promote it through the Urban Development Institute).	✓	✓	✓
9.0	Goods Movement			
9.1	Develop an ITS plan for goods movement.	✓		✓
9.2	Restrict delivery times by heavy vehicles to mid-day periods outside of peak commuter travel times within the Regional Centres and along Regional Corridors.	✓	✓	✓
9.3	Plan for effective freight movement systems that minimize impacts on the road network, including potential dedicated road links and rail services, as well as intermodal facilities.	✓		✓
10.0	Funding			
10.1	Pursue a permanent gas tax transfer program with the provincial and federal governments.	✓		✓
10.2	Seek additional forms of transit subsidies for stable transit funding from the provincial and federal governments.	✓		✓
10.3	Request the Province to Modify the Development Charges Act to better support transit and sustainable transportation services.	✓		✓
10.4	Pursue Public Private Partnerships to fund sustainable transportation initiatives.	✓		✓
10.5	Explore road user fees in highly congested urbanized areas.	✓	✓	✓
11.0	Marketing & Education			
11.1	Work with other Regions and municipalities to develop television programming focused on sustainable transportation issues.	✓	✓	
11.2	Produce a recurring newsletter highlighting the Region's sustainable development practices, recent achievements, relevant data and schedule of events or programs offered by the Region or other area agencies discussing sustainable development and transportation issues.	✓		✓
11.3	Work with the local media to develop op-ed pieces or other articles/segments highlighting the Region's sustainable transportation initiatives developed in response to growing congestion.	✓		
11.4	Invite the local media to attend an annual transportation "fair" exhibiting the many programs and services initiated by the Region, Smart Commute and other green organizations to promote sustainability.	✓		✓
11.5	For all residents moving into York Region, mail a package of materials to them explaining the transportation services offered in the Region (such as YRT, carpooling or auto sharing). Consider incentive packages for transit as well.	✓	✓	
11.6	Celebrate sustainable transportation success stories through initiatives such as annual awards for volunteers, programs and projects.	✓	✓	✓
11.7	Work with the municipality to plan and implement regular car-free festival days in each to create a culture of sustainability.	✓	✓	✓
11.8	Produce all educational materials in key languages.	✓		
11.9	Host seminars to engage different ethnic groups in discussing sustainable transportation initiatives.	✓	✓	✓
11.10	Work directly with area community and cultural centres to promote relevant programs and initiatives.	✓	✓	✓
11.11	Develop curriculum/courses/programs with school boards and higher education institutions that promote the Region's sustainable transportation initiatives. Content should be meaningful, relevant, easy to understand and provide opportunities for interaction with students.	✓		✓
11.12	Actively work with the school boards to implement Safe Routes to School programs, by focusing on environmental and health benefits, as well as the low security risks associated with walking to school; and continue to expand the YO! program at York Region high schools.	✓		✓
11.13	Work directly with large independent living facilities and retirement communities to promote relevant programs and initiatives.	✓		
11.14	Consider developing services targeting seniors. For example, some communities operate bus services that exclusively serve retirement communities, grocery stores, hospitals, medical clinics and pharmacies.	✓		
11.15	Host annual or bi-annual focus groups with randomly selected residents and businesses to: identify marketing strengths and weaknesses; test new marketing strategies; and develop other means to educate the public.	✓		

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11.16	Conduct a random sample public opinion survey with York Region residents and businesses every two years to assess changes in travel behaviour, and evaluate whether the Region's sustainable transportation message is understood and recognized.	✓		
12.0	Environmental Protection Measures			
12.1	Monitor natural heritage and environmental feature impacts resulting from transportation projects and publish a biennial report card.	✓		✓
12.2	In planning for new development areas, work with the municipalities to include a scoping of environmental impacts, and where warranted, consider land use and transportation options which can avoid greenfields development in favour of more compact, transit-oriented patterns of development with a pedestrian-scaled road network	✓	✓	
12.3	Plan new transportation facilities to avoid significant natural heritage features, including the habitats of threatened and endangered species, greenways, wetlands, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest, wellhead protection zones, and also natural hazard areas (in accordance with Section 3.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement). For any existing transportation facilities in such areas for which an improvement is identified, plan for improvements to alternative corridors outside the hazard area wherever possible.	✓		✓
12.4	In planning for transportation corridors, take into consideration those species, habitats and ecological functions which are significant at the Regional and local levels.	✓	✓	✓
12.5	When improving road infrastructure, take the opportunity to improve environmental functions and habitat connectivity through upgrades of existing crossing structures (bridges and culverts).	✓		✓
12.6	In planning for transportation corridors, take into consideration the impacts on prime agricultural land (as per the PPS), and alternative corridors or more sustainable improvements	✓		✓
12.7	In prioritizing road improvements, take into account both the demand for expanded capacity and the need for improved environmental functions and features	✓		✓
12.8	As part of transportation design and construction, consider the introduction of stormwater and water balance measures to counter the adverse impacts of urbanization	✓		✓
12.9	Review and update the Region's winter maintenance management policies and practices to ensure that these minimize damage to the natural environment, while still providing a safe transportation environment	✓		
12.10	Monitor natural heritage and environmental feature impacts resulting from transportation projects, and report bi-annually on these in a report card to trace progress and trends	✓		
12.11	Work with local municipalities and the construction industry to develop Environmental Best Management Practices to minimize the impact of road construction on the environment (and enhance it where possible). The BMP should address stormwater management, erosion, runoff, and effects on wildlife and features. Once the document is developed, require that the policies be implemented at all transportation construction sites.	✓	✓	✓
12.12	Coordinate the Region's road and transit networks as well as planning regimes with other local municipalities to minimize infrastructure needs and minimize damage to the natural heritage and environmental features.	✓	✓	✓
12.13	Enhance, preserve and maintain greenways to the extent possible in accordance with provincial legislation requirements.	✓		✓
12.14	Work with the local municipalities and developers to minimize the effects of parking facilities on the natural environment, through: a) requirement for shade canopy; b) minimizing impermeable surface areas; c) minimizing parking stall dimensions and proportions of parking designated for compact cars; d) reviewing water quality protection measures; e) colour of pavement to minimize heat absorption; f) introduction of green roofs on garages, and g) review of lighting requirements to minimize light pollution. These policies should be enacted for all Regional and municipal parking facilities as a first step, and implemented for private parking facilities based on a detailed review of the minimum lot/garage sizes to which these policies would apply.	✓	✓	✓
12.15	Develop environmental protection measures for transportation system elements to reduce vehicular-animal interaction and impacts on animal pathways.	✓		✓
12.16	In rural areas, consider roadside plantings to discourage habitat immediately adjacent to infrastructure that would conflict with wildlife, and to improve driver sightlines.	✓	✓	✓
12.17	Introduce warning signs in areas of significant wildlife movement.	✓	✓	✓
12.18	Consider viaducts or drainage systems sized as 'eco-passages' to facilitate wildlife movement.	✓		✓
12.19	Implement temporary or seasonal speed limits in high wildlife mortality zones.	✓	✓	✓
12.20	Design transportation facilities to celebrate the environment, through preservation of view corridors, design of bridges to highlight the presence of watercourses, and other elements.	✓		✓
12.21	Identify standard mitigation measures to apply to all construction projects in order to minimize environmental impacts from construction activities.	✓		✓
12.22	Fully document the characteristics of natural heritage features within the study area of a specific project by using the environmental study of individual project elements. This includes not only significant habitats and features, but also corridors of movement of both fish and wildlife that may be significant.	✓		✓
12.23	Avoid abundant amounts of lighting in environmentally vulnerable sites. Where required, use lower wattages and restrict lighting only to road illumination.	✓		✓

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