

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION



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Sustainable Transportation System in York Region



In recent years, York Region has sought a more sustainable and balanced transportation planning approach to accommodate population and employment growth. The balance between road and transit infrastructure is reflected in the 2002 Transportation Master Plan which changed how the Region looked at its transportation system. Some of the transit initiatives include:

- Local and express services operated by York Region Transit, Brampton Transit and the Toronto Transit Commission.
- Viva rapid transit service operated by York Region Transit;
- Inter-regional rail and bus services provided by GO Transit; and
- Specialized transit services for people with disabilities operated by YRT.

York Region's planning initiatives make it a national leader in promoting sustainable transportation policies. Other communities across Canada and

in the Province of Ontario have followed suit, developing their own sustainable transportation programs. The 2009 update to the Transportation Master Plan will allow the Region to address future transportation needs in an efficient and integrated manner, while meeting and exceeding Federal, Provincial and Regional initiatives that support sustainable development.

York Region's Transportation Master Plan process has resulted in a set of progressive transit, roadway and policy recommendations that support the Region's Vision of a more sustainable transportation system. The need for such a transportation system is clear: the fast pace of growth projected in York Region between now and 2031 must be complemented by a transportation system that preserves the environment, enhances the Region's economic viability, seamlessly integrates with new and existing developments, and offers more reliable travel choices for residents and employees.

The major elements of the Region's sustainable transportation system include:

- Rapid transit corridors that move more people faster and more efficiently from place to place;
- Local transit services that are connected to and complement rapid transit corridors in order to serve more communities within the Region;
- Innovative technologies, such as universal transit signal priority and Smartcards, that improve the speed and reliability of transit operations;
- A road system that supports existing and future sustainable transportation enhancements through queue jump lanes, cycling-only lanes, exclusive transit lanes and HOV lanes; and
- Efficient use of the road network through reducing the number of single occupancy trips through Transportation Demand Management programs, such as carpooling.

Some of the key components of the Region's sustainable transportation system are provided in the following pages.

Public Transit in York Region



At the end of 2008, the York Region Transit (YRT)/Viva system consisted of 126 routes (including 34 special routes designed for high school trips) covering all nine area municipalities.

YRT has a fleet of 407 conventional transit buses, 101 Viva rapid transit buses, and 22 community buses, which are maintained and operated by four different private contractors. As well, YRT contracts services from the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), which extends 13 of its routes into York Region.

YRT/Viva transit operates from 7 terminals (Promenade Mall, Vaughan Mills Mall, York University, Richmond Hill Centre Terminal, Yonge-Bernard, Finch GO Bus Terminal, and Newmarket Bus Terminal), 112 Viva stations and 4,500 conventional bus stops. 780 of these stops and stations are equipped with shelters.



QUICK FACTS

In York Region there are approximately:

- 120 YRT routes
- 13 contracted TTC routes
- 5 Viva routes
- 1 contracted GO bus route
- 112 Viva stops
- 70 stops equipped with bike racks (173 racks total)
- 10 solar shelters
- 3 GO Train services: Barrie-Bradford, Richmond Hill and Stouffville
- 14 GO train stations
- 9 GO bus shuttle services

GO Transit in York Region

GO Transit is an inter-regional public transit system, linking the City of Toronto with the surrounding regions of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and beyond. GO Transit carries nearly 55 million passengers a year in an extensive network of train and bus services; it runs 183 weekday train trips and 2,046 weekday bus trips daily, carrying about 215,000 on a typical weekday – 180,000 on the trains and 35,000 by bus.

Since it began operating in May 1967, a billion people have taken the GO Train or the GO bus. Now part of Metrolinx, the Provincial agency charged with planning and coordinating transit services in the GTHA, GO Transit provides safe, convenient, and efficient transportation to the communities of the GTA and beyond.

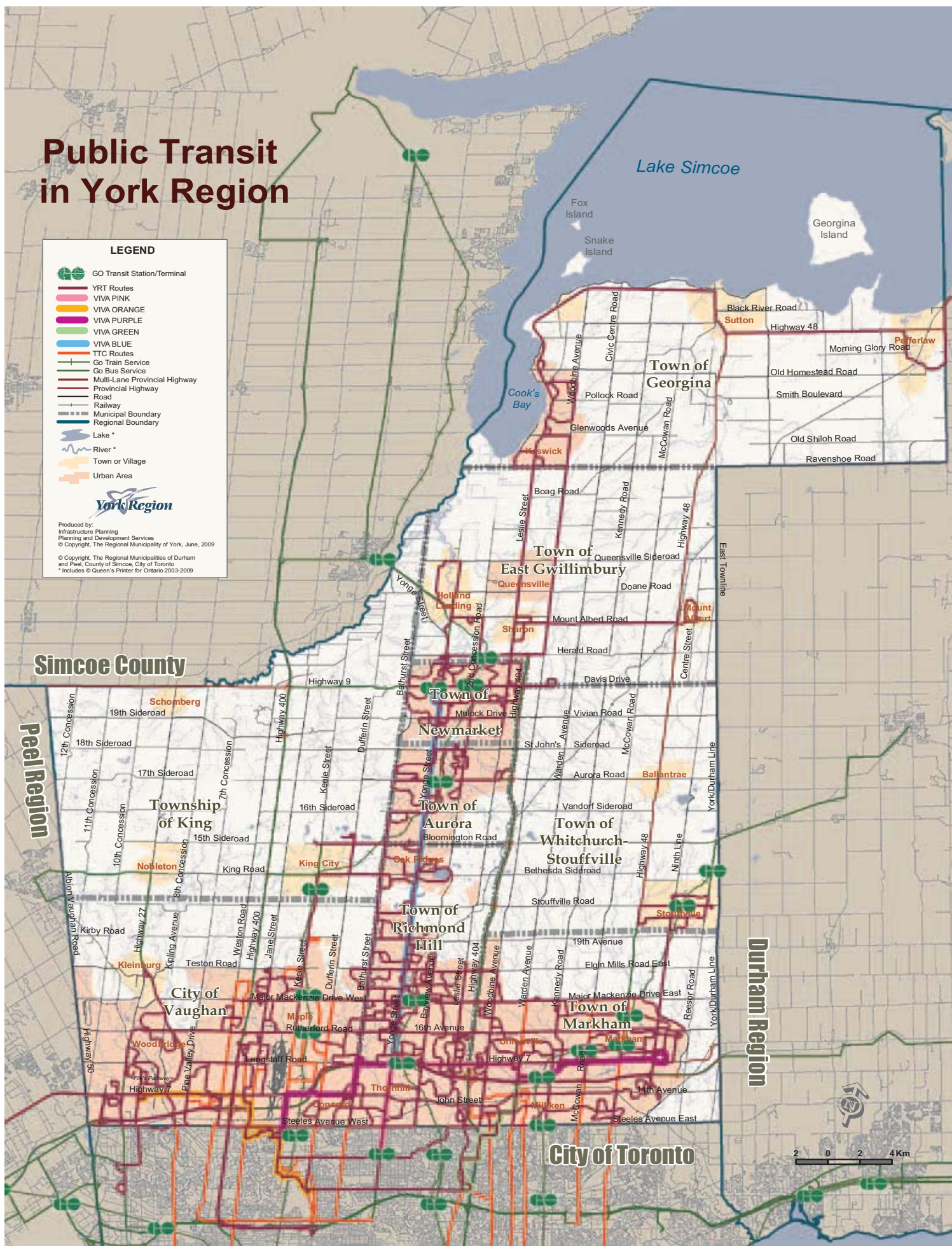
GO Transit operates three rail lines (Barrie-Bradford, Richmond Hill, Stouffville) in York Region servicing 14 GO train stations. GO Transit also services two bus-only terminals (Finch GO Bus Terminal and Newmarket Bus Terminal) providing bus service to a large area of the Region. Currently the most popular GO Bus route is the 407 York University Express service, which operates mostly along Highway 407 ETR.



DID YOU KNOW?

- In 2008, Viva/YRT carried 18.8 million passengers
- 86% of the YRT/Viva fleet is accessible to persons with disabilities
- YRT operates four community routes and five express routes in York Region

Public Transit in York Region



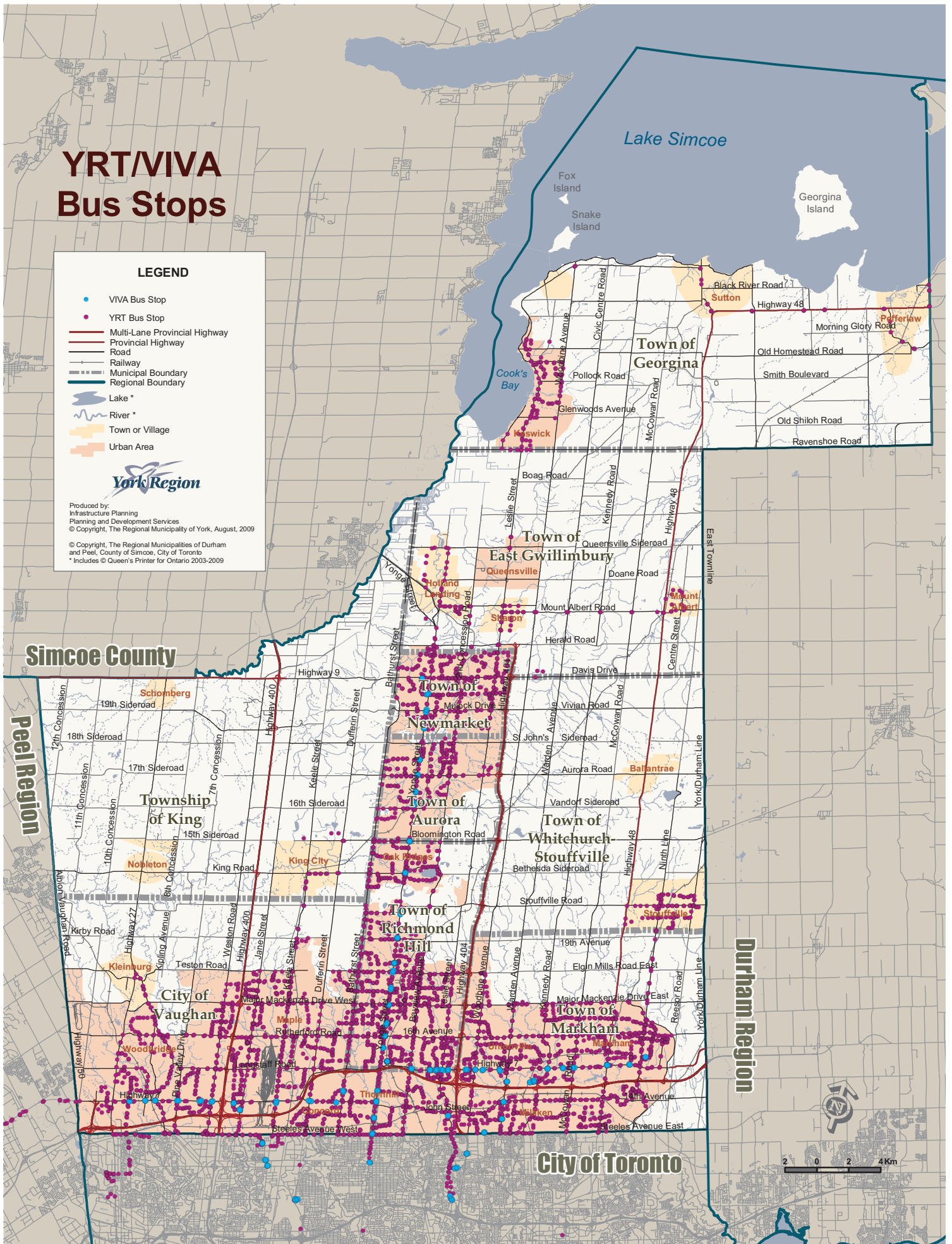
YRT/VIVA Bus Stops

LEGEND

- VIVA Bus Stop
- YRT Bus Stop
- Multi-Lane Provincial Highway
- Provincial Highway
- Road
- Railway
- - - Municipal Boundary
- Regional Boundary
- Lake *
- River *
- Town or Village
- Urban Area



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Local Transit Service Coverage



York Region Transit has developed minimum standards that must be considered in developing a multi-modal transportation system. Throughout the YRT/Viva system, certain routes and services are designated as Base Services, to ensure a basic level of access throughout the service area.

In the larger urban areas, Base Services form a **Base Grid** route network of fixed routes, connecting major trip origins and destinations. Base Services operate 7 days per week, in all operating time periods. Base Services are designated in the major east-west and north-south travel corridors on the main arterial roads to ensure that 90 per cent of all major residential and employment



areas are within 500 metres during the weekday and 1000 metres during the weekend of transit service.

During the weekday morning and afternoon peak periods, the frequency of service ranges from 8.5-10 minutes along Viva Routes, 20 and 30 minutes along the Base Grid and Local Routes, and 60 minutes on Community Bus routes. During off-peak periods, holidays and during the weekend the frequency of services decreases to 30 minutes along the Base Grid, 60 minutes along Local Routes and 2 hours along Community Bus routes.

Currently, 81% of the urban area in York Region is within 500 metres of a transit route.



DID YOU KNOW?

The four-digit number posted at your bus stop is your key to schedule information.

Get to know your number and use it online with **rideQuest Click**, on the phone with **rideQuest Call** or through email with **Next Bus**.

CONTACT INFORMATION

York Region Transit
Call Centre, Hours of Operation:
7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
(Monday-Friday)
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
(Saturday, Sunday & Holidays)



905-881-5167



1-866-276-7478



<http://www.yrt.ca>

YRT/Viva Family of Vehicles in 2009

QUICK FACTS

- 86% of the transit fleet is accessible to persons with physical disabilities
- Viva Rapid Transit service along Yonge Street uses 60 ft. articulated buses and 40 ft. buses on Highway 7
- The average age of the transit fleet is 7.1 years
- The current transit fleet consists of buses manufactured by:
 - Orion
 - Thomas Dennis
 - New Flyer
 - Van Hool
 - ElDorado National
 - Classic
 - Elf (Mobility)

A family of public transit services is available in York Region consisting of the following:

- Conventional transit services provided by York Region Transit (YRT), Brampton Transit, and contracted Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) routes.
- Viva Rapid Transit service provided by York Region Transit (YRT).
- Inter-regional rail and bus services provided by GO Transit.
- Specialized transit services for persons with disabilities (YRT Mobility Plus).

In addition, Transit Georgina is a non-profit service affiliated with YRT that provides similar services largely within the Town of Georgina.

Type of Vehicle		Number of Active Revenue Vehicles	Estimated Maximum Vehicles Operated During Weekday Peak Period	Estimated Maximum Vehicles Operated During Weekday Midday Period	Average Age of Active Revenue Vehicles
Standard Conventional Bus (30', 35', 40')	Low Floor	376	212	83	7.1 Years
	High Floor Accessible	5			
	High Floor Non-Accessible	26			
Viva Rapid Transit	40'	60	76	40	
	60'	41			
Community Bus (less than 29.5')	Low Floor	22	4	4	
Total		530	292	127	



YRT Mobility Plus

YRT Mobility Plus provides door-to-door service for residents of York Region with special needs, who are unable to board, ride or disembark from a regular transit bus. A fleet of 23 buses, supplemented by a series of taxis and vans, are used to provide this service as far south as Highway 401.

There are designated Mobility Plus bus stops where passengers can transfer to/from TTC WheelTrans.

Beginning Fall 2008, a fast, easy and convenient way to confirm and cancel rides was introduced with the new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) automated phone system. IVR is available 24/7 and has eliminated the need to speak with a Trip Reservationist. It allows Mobility Plus customers to confirm and cancel rides with the buttons on their Touch-Tone phone or by speaking select words. IVR is quick, easy and removes the need to speak with an operator. The IVR system also provides customers with the option of speaking to a Mobility Plus Trip Reservationist.



Richmond Hill Centre Terminal Pedestrian Bridge Elevators Now in Service to Langstaff GO Station

The elevators at the pedestrian access bridge at Richmond Hill Centre Terminal are now in service.

The new pedestrian access bridge opened in March 2008 and provides a convenient connection between YRT/Viva services at Richmond Hill Centre Terminal and GO Transit services at Langstaff GO Station. In addition to the new elevators, there are staircases on both sides of the bridge.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information on YRT Mobility Plus please contact:

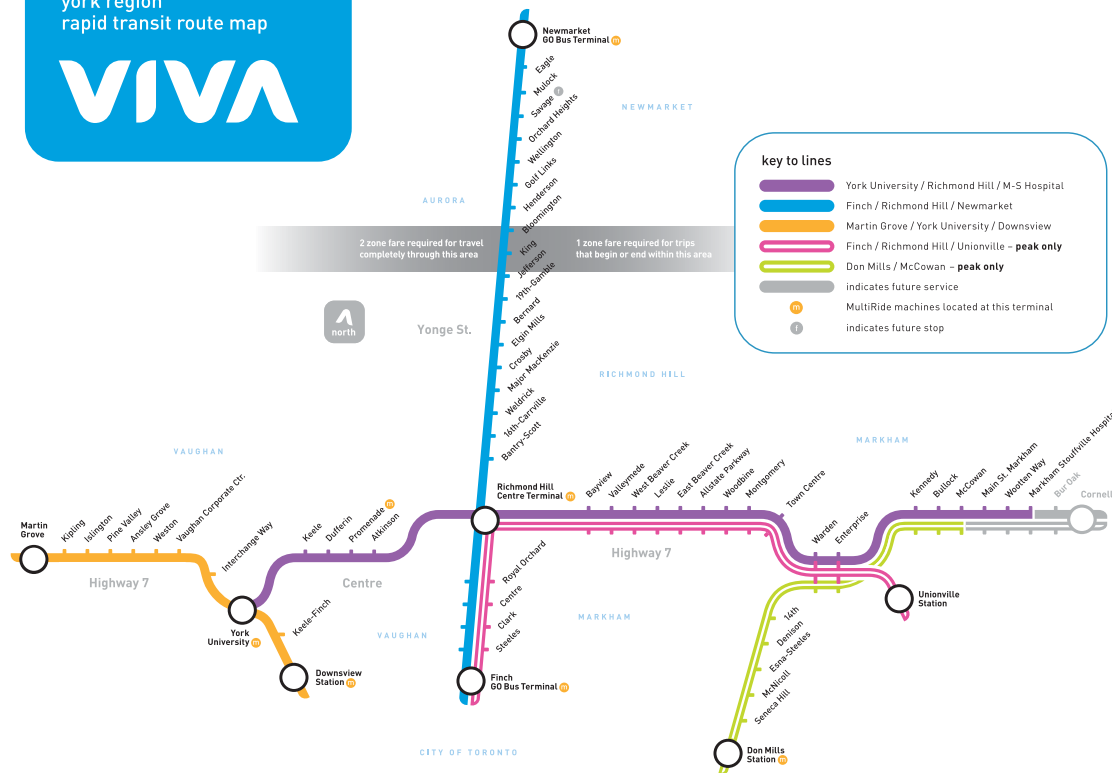
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📞 1-866-744-1119
🌐 <http://www.yrt.ca/specialized.asp>

york region
rapid transit route map

VIVA



DID YOU KNOW?

At the end of 2008, all

York Region Transit (YRT), Viva and Mobility Plus vehicles had state-of-the-art security equipment installed. Cameras will assist Operations staff and Enforcement Officers to better resolve customer concerns, safety and security issues.

QUICK FACTS

There are 5 Viva lines:

- Blue
- Purple
- Orange
- Green
- Pink

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR Viva

York Region Rapid Transit Corporation - Viva

905-886-6767

<http://www.vivanext.com/>

Started in the fall of 2005, Viva represents the next generation in transit service to the Region, providing specially marked state-of-the-art buses, operating up to 20 hours a day and running every 8.5-10 minutes during the morning and evening rush hours. Queue jump lanes and traffic signal priority measures speeds buses through congested intersections.

Viva currently operates along 5 transit routes:

Finch-Richmond Hill-Newmarket

Running along Yonge Street from Newmarket to the GO Transit Finch Station in north Toronto with additional peak period services between Finch Station and Bernard Station.

York University-Richmond Hill-Markham Stouffville Hospital

Running along Highway 7 from York University to the Markham Stouffville Hospital, this route serves York University, Promenade Mall, Richmond Hill Centre (Yonge Street and Highway 7), Markham Centre (Warden Avenue and Highway 7 area), Main Street Markham and Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Martin Grove-York University-Downsview

Provides an important connection between the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and the TTC's Downsview Station, via York University

Don Mills-McCowan

Provides a connection between the Markham Centre and the TTC's Sheppard subway line at Don Mills Station.

Finch-Richmond Hill-Unionville

Operates from Unionville GO Station, along Highway 7 and south on Yonge Street to Finch Station during weekday peak periods only.



vivanext

York Region is working hard to improve our transit system. The second phase of the Viva network (VivaNext) will consist of extensions of the Spadina and Yonge Street subway systems to Highway 7, and the construction of dedicated transit lanes along Highway 7 and Yonge Street to separate rapid transit vehicles from the general traffic.

The Region is currently in the process of completing the detail design, and construction is expected to start soon along portions of Yonge Street and Davis Drive in Newmarket, and portions of Highway 7 and Yonge Street within the Towns of Markham, and Richmond Hill, and the City of Vaughan. TTC, in partnership with York Region, is completing the detail design and will be constructing the extension of the Spadina Subway from Downsview Station to the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre.

In phase three, light rail transit and subway extensions are planned to be built with further bus rapid transit expansion to handle the growth in ridership.

Vivanext Rapidways receive \$1.4 billion

On April 1, 2009, Premier Dalton McGuinty was joined by York Region Chairman and CEO Bill Fisch to announce that the Province of Ontario was committing \$1.4 billion to VivaNext rapidways – part of Viva's plan for the next generation of rapid transit in York Region – over the next five years.

During his announcement, Premier McGuinty asserted: "We need to move quickly to build a better public transit system for commuters. Our investments in transit will create jobs, help stimulate the economy and improve the air we breathe."

Prior to Premier McGuinty's announcement, funding for the VivaNext Spadina subway extension had already been secured from all levels of government and preliminary construction is well underway. With the Province's \$1.4 billion funding commitment, York Region is set to begin building the Davis Drive, Highway 7 and Yonge Street rapidways. While it is the subway extensions that will get you in and out of Toronto more quickly, it is the rapidways that will get you around York Region's busiest corridors faster. Up to 40% faster!



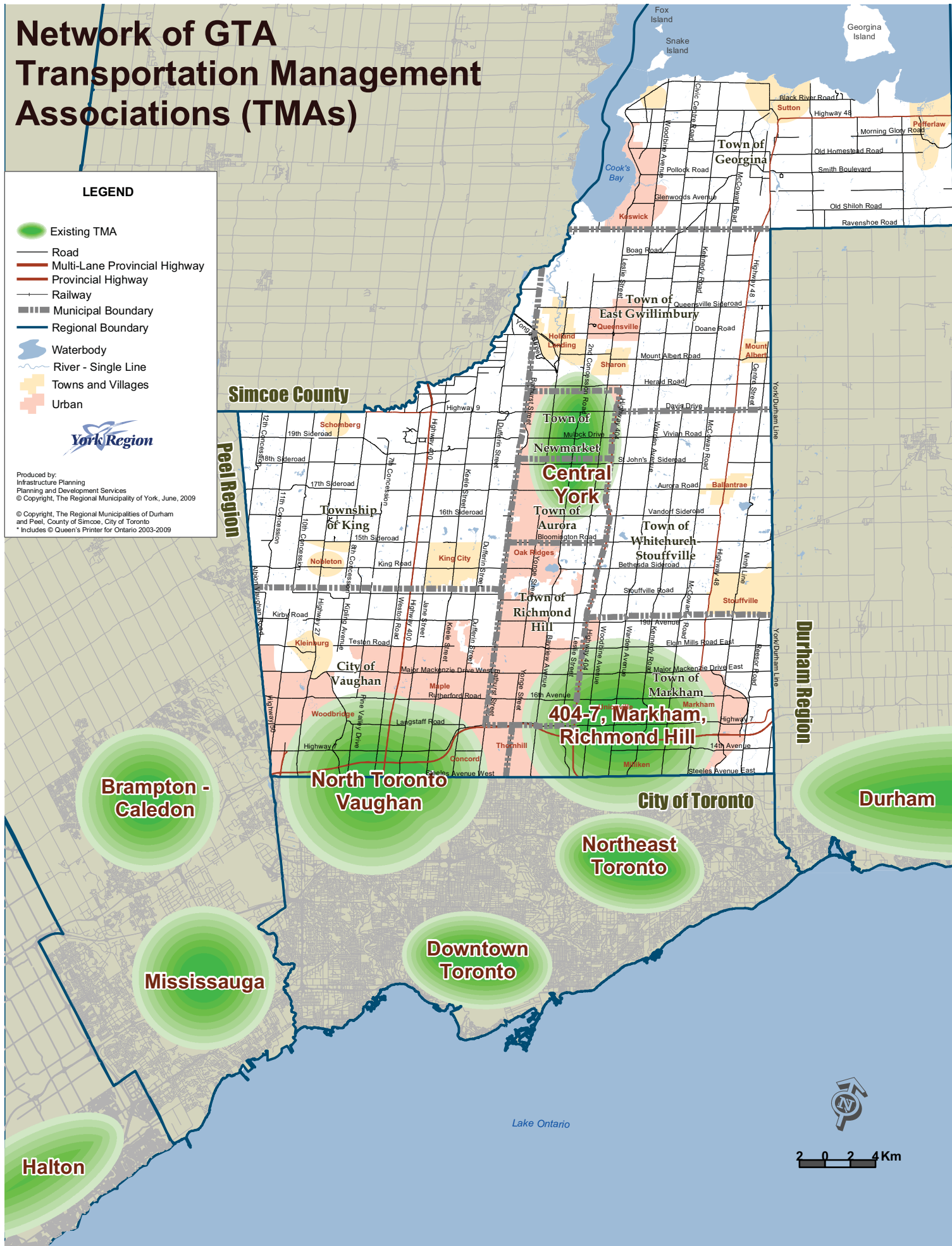
Network of GTA Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)

LEGEND

-  Existing TMA
-  Road
-  Multi-Lane Provincial Highway
-  Provincial Highway
-  Railway
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Regional Boundary
-  Waterbody
-  River - Single Line
-  Towns and Villages
-  Urban



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Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

In addition to expanding our transportation network and working to keep traffic flowing as smoothly as possible, York Region is working to reduce the demand on the road network. History has demonstrated that expanding roads and highways to relieve traffic congestion is, at best, a temporary solution. Besides, many Regional roads have no space left to add lanes. Reducing the demands on our road network has a number of direct and indirect benefits:

- Reducing or eliminating the need to add new and costly transportation infrastructure
- Preservation of sensitive environmental features and wildlife that enhance our communities
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Improving air quality
- Improving public health (from increased use of active transportation modes such as walking and cycling as well as public transit)

Transportation Demand Management is a suite of policies and programs designed to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips and promote sustainable transportation. TDM can include increased use of transit, carpooling, walking, and cycling, as well as trip elimination through telecommuting. Implementing TDM initiatives involve changing the way the Region plans and build infrastructure, public education and social marketing and, perhaps most importantly, innovation.

There are a number of TDM initiatives underway in York Region. Some are described below.

- The Smart Commute program works with large and small employers in the Region to provide viable sustainable transportation alternatives for staff. See the following page for more information.
- The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (PCMP), adopted in 2008, provides the framework for a Regional-scale cycling network to make it easier for residents to commute by bicycle.
- High-Occupancy Vehicle lanes were recently introduced on Dufferin Street between Steeles Avenue and Langstaff Road in Vaughan. These lanes give priority to buses and carpools.
- A new carpool lot and shuttle service to the East Gwillimbury GO station opened in South Keswick in 2009. The cost of the carpool lot is being covered by a land developer as a way of encouraging residents to use transit and carpool.



CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact:

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Smart Commute

Smart Commute helps local employers and commuters to explore different commuter choices like carpooling, teleworking, transit, cycling, walking or flexible work hours. Its goal is to help make commuting easier, healthier and more enjoyable.

Smart Commute offers a wide array of services to make commuting easier in the GTHA:

- CarpoolZone.ca: a ride matching service that identifies potential carpooling partners based on travel route, work hours and personal preferences
- Site assessments and surveys to understand employee commute behaviour and recommend a trip reduction strategy best-suited to each work site
- Shuttle programs
- Emergency Ride Home programs
- Incentives and promotions
- Employee Work Arrangement Solutions: telework, compressed work weeks and flex hours, workshops, lunch and learns and seminars
- Clean Air Commute and other annual events



DID YOU KNOW?

Smart Commute is a partnership between Metrolinx and the cities and regions of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). It aims to reduce traffic congestion and to take action on climate change by providing commuters with viable alternatives to single-occupant vehicle trips.

The contributing Municipal partners of Smart Commute include:

- Region of Durham
- Region of Halton
- Region of Peel
- Region of York
- City of Brampton
- City of Burlington
- City of Hamilton
- City of Mississauga
- City of Toronto
- City of Vaughan
- Town of Markham
- Town of Newmarket
- Town of Richmond Hill

Smart Commute was established in 2004 as a partnership between the cities and regions of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area, with funding from Transport Canada's Urban Transportation Showcase Program. York Region was the corporate home of Smart Commute until January 1, 2008 when the Smart Commute Association became part of Metrolinx, the Provincial authority overseeing the development and implementation of an integrated transportation system for the GTHA. Smart Commute is implemented primarily through local Transportation Management Associations. TMAs are non-profit organizations aimed at providing sustainable transportation solutions as well as improved mobility and accessibility. TMAs are defined by service areas bounded by municipal or physical boundaries, or they can also encompass a defined employment area.

The programs provided by each TMA are unique to its service area but involve some combination of the full range of TDM measures identified above. A TMA will identify

which services are best suited to an employer, given their location and commuting patterns of their staff.

In 2008, the Smart Commute program won the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' CH2M Hill Sustainable Community Award for Transportation. Also in 2008, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute recognized Smart Commute with two awards: Excellence in Planning, and the inaugural Healthy Communities Award.

York Region is a leader in the Smart Commute program. Currently, there are three TMAs operating in York Region. The Region, in partnership with Metrolinx and the with local municipalities, provides funding to these organizations.



Smart Commute North Toronto, Vaughan

Previously known as the Black Creek Transportation Management Association, this was the first TMA in the Greater Toronto Area. North Toronto, Vaughan works with major employers, including Powerstream, Direct Energy, Pearson Publishing, Vaughan Mills Mall, and Knoll.

Smart Commute 404-7

Operated by the Markham Board of Trade and the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce, 404-7 reaches out to the businesses affiliated with the Board or Chamber. Several major 404-7 employers in Markham and Richmond Hill include IBM, MMM Group, iTrans Consulting, Philips Canada, and the offices of the Towns of Richmond Hill and Markham.

Smart Commute Central York

Operating out of the Newmarket Chamber of Commerce, Smart Commute Central York serves Newmarket, Aurora, and East Gwillimbury. Its major employers include Southlake Regional Hospital, State Farm Insurance, Scholastic Publishing, the Town of Newmarket, and the Region's offices in Newmarket.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR TMA'S

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Carpool and Commuter Parking Lots

Commuter parking lots are used to promote carpooling and transit to auto users. Carpool lots are typically located at highway interchanges and provide convenient access and egress from the 400 series highways. Some of these sites also serve as transit stops. Park 'N' Ride and GO Transit stations provide auto drivers with convenient locations to access YRT/Viva or GO services. Many of the YRT Park 'N' Ride lots are located at convenient trip ends such as shopping malls or recreational centres.

▲ Carpool Lots

- Highway 48 and High Street
- Highway 7 and Highway 400
- Highway 9 and Highway 400
- Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 400
- King Road and Highway 400
- Aurora Side Road and Highway 404
- Davis Drive and Highway 404

🚗 YRT/Viva Park 'N' Ride Lots

- Aurora Community Centre - Aurora Heights Drive, one block north of Wellington Street
- South Keswick Commuter Parking - southwest corner of Woodbine Avenue and Glenwoods Avenue
- Denison Square – Highway 48 & Denison Street
- First Markham Place – Highway 7 & Fairburn Drive (Bay – Home Outfitters Parking Lot)
- Fortino's Super Mall – Kennedy Road & Denison Street
- Markham Village Community Centre – Highway 48 & Highway 7
- Markville Mall – Highway 7 & McCowan Road
- Thornhill Community Centre – Bayview Avenue & John Street

- Al Palladini Community Centre – 9201 Islington Avenue
- Maple Community Centre – 10190 Keele Street

🟢 GO Transit Stations/Park 'N' Ride Lots

- Aurora (Wellington Street)
- Centennial (Community Centre, McCowan)
- East Gwillimbury (Green Lane and 2nd Concession)
- Finch GO Bus Terminal (Yonge Street and Bishop, North York)
- King (Station Road)
- Highway 9 and Highway 400 (Carpool Lot)
- Langstaff (Highway 7)
- Maple (Major Mackenzie)
- Major Mackenzie Drive and Highway 400 (Carpool Lot)
- Markham (Main Street)
- Milliken (Steeles Avenue)
- Mt. Joy (Highway 48)
- Newmarket GO Rail (Davis Drive)
- Newmarket Bus Terminal (Highway 9 / Eagle Street)
- Stouffville (Main Street)
- Richmond Hill (Major Mackenzie)
- Rutherford (Maple)
- Unionville (Kennedy Road)



Carpool and Commuter Parking Lots

LEGEND

- GO Transit Stations/Park 'N' Ride Lots
- Carpool Lot
- YRT / VIVA Park 'N' Ride Lots
- Multi-Lane Provincial Highway
- Provincial Highway
- Road
- Railway
- Municipal Boundary
- Regional Boundary
- Lake *
- River *
- Town or Village
- Urban Area



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Cycling Network



The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (PCMP) was endorsed by Regional Council in April 2008.

QUICK FACTS

Phase 1 is proposed to deliver:
260 km of bike lanes /paved shoulders
34 km of multi-use trails;
85 km of signed bike routes;
and
45 km of sidewalks.

Phase 2 is proposed to deliver:
198 km of bike lanes /paved shoulders;
27 km of multi-use trails;
39 km of signed bike routes;
and,
17 km of sidewalks.

York Region's cycling network will consist of:

- **on-street bike lanes and paved shoulders** (defined as: a facility located in the traveled portion of the roadway and is designed for one-way bicycle

traffic. Bike lanes are typically located on urban streets. Paved shoulders are often used to accommodate cyclists on rural road cross-sections);

- **signed-only cycling routes** (defined as: an on-road bicycle route denoted with bicycle route signage and optional pavement markings and requires no other physical changes to the roadway. Cyclists share the travel lane with motor vehicles); and
- **multi-use trails or path** (defined as: a facility that is completely separate from the traveled portion of a roadway, and may take the form of an in-boulevard trail in a public road right-of-way or an off-road multi-use trail within a greenway/abandoned rail corridor, or utility/hydro corridor).

This network will be delivered in three phases over a 25-year period.

Phase 1 is a 5-year action plan. Phase 2 will continue the network implementation and programs for the next 5-year period. Together, Phases 1 and 2 are designed to coincide with York Region's 10-Year Roads Construction Program.

The process to manage the implementation program includes:

- The 10-Year Roads Construction Program which includes many projects that will have cycling facilities as part of the road improvement

- The Municipal Partnership Program, through which York Region will contribute up to 50% of the construction cost of approved project submissions from local municipalities and agencies/stakeholders; and
- An Inter-Municipal Working Group that includes staff from each of the local municipalities, conservation authorities, school boards as well as the Regional Planning, Health, Transportation and Police Services to review and coordinate progress.

The first four kilometres of bike lanes were recently implemented on Dufferin Street between Steeles Avenue and Langstaff Road.

Since Phase 3 is part of the longer-term strategy, its elements will be confirmed and incorporated into updates of the PCMP and capital roads program.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about the PCMP please contact:

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Infrastructure Planning Branch

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PROPOSED LONG-TERM CYCLING NETWORK

LEGEND

Cycling Network

- Proposed Bike Lanes
- Proposed Paved Shoulder
- Proposed Signed Route
- Proposed Multi-Use Trail
- Existing Signed Route
- Existing Multi-Use Trail
- Oak Ridges Trail
- Proposed Lake To Lake Route
- ▲ Cycling Gateways
- Oak Ridges Moraine
- Regional Centres
- Multi-Lane Provincial Highway
- Provincial Highway
- Road
- Railway
- Municipal Boundary
- Regional Boundary
- Lake *
- River *
- Town or Village
- Urban Area

York Region
MMM GROUP
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Simcoe County

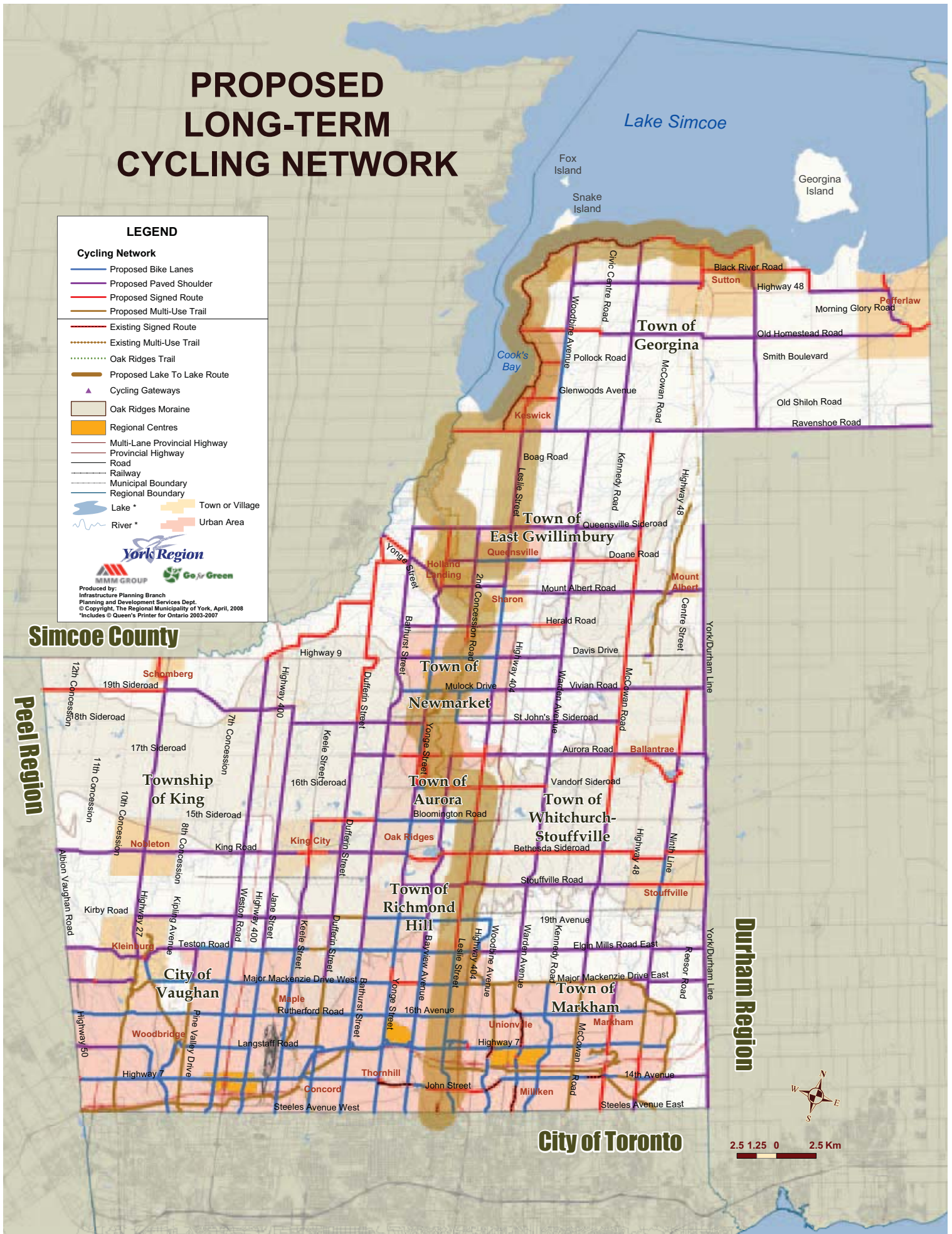
Peel Region

Durham Region

City of Toronto



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Sidewalks

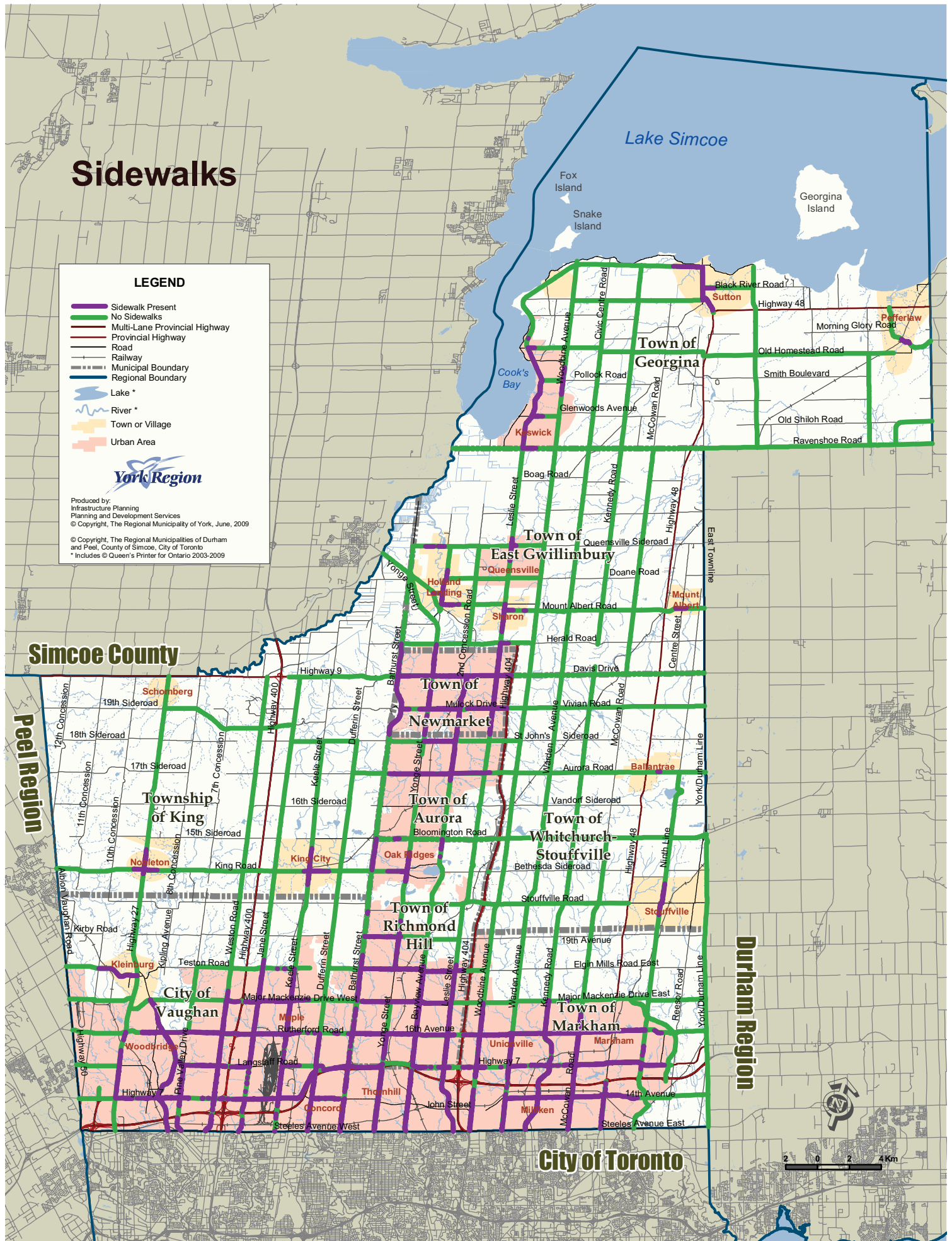
LEGEND

- Sidewalk Present
- No Sidewalks
- Multi-Lane Provincial Highway
- Provincial Highway
- Road
- Railway
- Municipal Boundary
- Regional Boundary
- Lake *
- River *
- Town or Village
- Urban Area



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Sidewalks Along Regional Roads



Benefits of Sidewalks

Sidewalks are essential to encourage public transit use, walking to school, to support efforts to reduce obesity and as a health improvement benefit to people of all ages.

There are many other benefits of a comprehensive sidewalk network, including:

- Increasing pedestrian safety
- Providing transit access
- Helping to reduce the reliance on cars
- Required for “Main Street” type commercial areas
- Enhancing residential communities
- Providing mobility for elderly and mobility impaired
- Helping improve air quality
- Enhancing quality of life

User-Friendly Pedestrian Facilities

Improving conditions for walking is more than just creating a network of connecting pedestrian facilities such as sidewalk and pathways. Although these facilities are important, the essential element is to create a system that “engages” pedestrians and makes them feel comfortable when using it, rather than a system that treats them as an after-thought. Therefore the following improvements for walking in York Region will be incorporated into the pedestrian network system:

- Enhance connections between neighbourhoods;
- Add destinations;
- Add street trees;
- Create interesting places to see along routes; and
- Add or widen trails in open spaces.

The planned network consists primarily of sidewalks on Regional roads. Any locations where sidewalk links are missing have been identified. In some areas, the network includes linear off-road multi-use trails.

In urban areas, sidewalks will be provided on both sides of arterial and collector roads, and off-road links should facilitate direct connections with transit stations and other key destinations.



DID YOU KNOW?

The completed system will comprise over 683 linear km of sidewalks with 486 linear km of sidewalks existing today.



“Every street should be viewed as a pedestrian street”

Street Tree Program

(Trees within the Public Right-of-Way)



CONTACT INFORMATION

Natural Heritage & Forestry Services
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Landscaping is a key issue along Regional roads and in medians. The use of trees and other plantings can enhance the streetscaping of Regional roads and the pedestrian environment, as well as reduce noise and air pollution. Landscaping increases real estate values and acts as a traffic calming measure.

Tree planning, tree maintenance and other related streetscaping components along Regional roads will continue in accordance with the Region's streetscaping policy and Regional standards for six lane roads. The planting of trees along arterial roadways continues to increase in conjunction with capital projects, local enhancements, infill planting and requests. Tree maintenance requirements also continue to increase. A comprehensive street tree health assessment was conducted in 2003 and will be conducted again in 2009. A Street Tree asset inventory was completed in 2006. Street tree health and warranty inspection occur annually. Natural Heritage and Forestry Services Staff will continue to refine tree planting guidelines, criteria, standards and review appropriate maintenance practices including: watering, soil modification, use of rodent guards, fertilization, and pruning.

Trees are typically placed further than 2.5 metres back from the curb in order to protect them from salt spray, vehicle impacts, allow for proper sightlines and snow storage. Street Tree planting locations are often defined by a balance of tree health considerations, utility locations, streetscaping features, sidewalks and property limits. It is recognized that Street Trees are a Regional asset with environmental benefits which are an integral part of communities and contribute to a sense of place.

In 2008, 2,146 trees were planted within the Regional road allowance.



Illumination (Street lighting)

Providing street lighting is the responsibility of the Region at intersections of Regional roads and the responsibility of local municipalities between intersections. Appropriate lighting must address the needs of vehicles as well as pedestrians. Properly lit urban streets not only increase pedestrian safety, but attract pedestrian activity to an area. Consistent standards for well-designed lighting, like good building design, will enhance the aesthetics of the street. In 2008, the Region owned and maintained approximately 5,100 streetlights, and maintained approximately 500 more for other jurisdictions including MTO and 407 ETR along the Regional road network.

The Streetscape Program



Streetscaping is the art of designing a street in a manner that recognizes and responds to the unique context of the area. Streetscape design balances the aesthetic and functional components of the right-of-way to create a pleasant and functional environment for different user groups including; vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians, trucks and transit.

The profile of streetscape design is being elevated on various projects with a greater awareness and expectation in an urbanizing region. The scope of the Streetscape Program was originally limited to Transportation Services-Roads Branch-Capital Delivery. In the past couple years, the focus of the Streetscape Program is expanding to other areas as public realm quality is directly affected by adjacent urban development and form.

Streetscape design is critical in supporting the physical implementation of some key goals in the York Region Official Plan, the Vision 2026 document and York Region's Greening Strategy.

A few examples of these goals include:

- “To promote compact urban form, transit use and trip reduction as a means of reducing energy consumption and improving air quality”
- “To facilitate walking, cycling and trails”
- “York Region residents will live work play and learn in healthy accessible and safe neighbourhoods that are vibrant, exciting and people friendly”

To ensure that these goals are achieved, York Region is mandated through the following policies to integrate streetscape design on Regional road-widening capital projects to provide vision and direction on the physical form of Regional roads:

- Regional Streetscape Policy
- Towards Great Regional Streets (Regional standard for six-lane roads)
- Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program
- Lay-By Parking Policy

- Noise Policy
- Street Tree Planting/Maintenance Program

Municipal Street Partnership Program (MSPP)

In October 2006, Regional Council approved the adoption of the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program. The policy set out criteria for potential Regional funding contributions towards locally initiated enhanced streetscape design on Regional roads. This program provides funding for up to 50% of the project cost.

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