

# COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY: RUTHERFORD ROAD IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT UPDATE

July 22, 2025

## York Region Attendees:

- Salim Alibhai, Director, Capital Delivery – Transportation, Public Works
- Paul Acquaaah, Manager Engineering, Capital Delivery – Transportation, Public Works
- Nelson Costa, Manager, Corridor Control and Safety, Public Works

Following a welcome and opening remarks by Regional Councillor Ferri, Salim Alibhai provided a presentation on the Rutherford Road projects.

Below is a summary of key discussion points covered in the presentations, as well as a high-level summary of questions and responses that followed.

## Presentation Summary

### PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

- Provide an overview of the Rutherford Road improvement project
- Share progress updates on current construction phases
- Outline next steps and anticipated timelines

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

As York Region's population and businesses grow, public roads are accommodating more travellers, goods and services. The Region is investing in transportation improvements across the City of Vaughan to address the needs of residents, businesses and the travelling public, as traffic congestion is identified as the number one public concern in Vaughan.

Rutherford Road is a very large, multi-phase project undertaken to add capacity to the road network by widening the road to six lanes and improve infrastructure for other modes of travel, such as transit, cycling or walking. Work is being undertaken from Highway 400 to Bathurst Street.

Road rehabilitation was completed in 2021 on the section from Highway 400 to Jane Street, and the widening and underpass between Westburne Drive and Peter Rupert Avenue was completed in 2022.

There are two sections currently underway: from Jane Street to Westburne Drive and from Peter Rupert Avenue to Bathurst Street, described in further detail below.

## PROJECT LIMITS

### Rutherford Road, Highway 400 to Westburne Drive

- **Status:** Ongoing (construction start: Summer 2021, anticipated completion: Fall 2026)
- **Improvements include:**
  - Reconstructing and widening from four to six lanes including left-turn lanes from Jane Street to Westburne Drive
  - Resurfacing Rutherford Road from Highway 400 to Jane Street
  - Replacing the existing bridge over the CN rail tracks with a wider bridge to accommodate the new lanes, pedestrian/cycling paths and median
  - Replacing and/or extending four existing culverts
  - Modernizing and upgrading traffic signals to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements
  - Installing new boulevard bicycle tracks and sidewalks
  - Installing and upgrading street lighting
  - Installing a boulevard with raised median planters and enhanced streetscaping features
  - Installing retaining walls and traffic noise barrier walls
  - Upgrading storm sewer systems
  - Shifting the median on Keele Street south of Rutherford Road, at Sherwood Park Drive to the west, making space for more vehicles in the northbound left turning lanes and removing the southbound left turn lane to the commercial plaza
- **Challenges:**
  - Underground infrastructure
    - Complex underground utility work including sewers and watermain
    - Unexpected utility conflicts discovered during construction requiring review and redesign by engineers to resolve
  - Replacement of large culverts
    - Unforeseen ground conditions required an engineered solution to stabilize the soil below a large culvert
    - Severe storms delayed culvert work west of Greenock Drive (flooding on site) due to high water levels
  - Bridge widening over CN Rail's MacMillan Yard:
    - Restricted time to work in the CN corridor
    - Changes to business operations resulting in changes to staging
    - Coordination with CN Rail due to 24/7/365 operations
- **Progress:**
  - Road widened from east of CN Rail bridge to Keele Street
  - Installed new cycle tracks and sidewalks through much of the corridor
  - Updated two intersections with designated left turn lanes, including Rutherford Road at Melville Avenue and at Greenock Drive
  - Median installation underway for streetscaping to reduce the risk of serious collisions, increase pedestrian safety and reduce pollutants

### **Additional information regarding work at the bridge over CN Rail tracks:**

MacMillan Yard is the main Toronto-area railway classification yard for CN Rail and the second largest railway classification yard in Canada, measuring approximately three kilometres in length and one kilometre in width. The yard is designed to take incoming trains and reorganize and rejoin the individual cars based on destination to create new departing trains. Rutherford Road passes over the two hump pullback tracks at the north end of the yard, which curve to the west to end at the east side of Jane Street.

Expanding the bridge over the CN Rail tracks requires extensive work underground, at track level and on the bridge and roadway above the tracks. Completing this work, while maintaining operations at one of the largest and busiest rail yards in North America, has been extremely challenging. Trains operate around the clock. Any work in the area requires coordination with CN Rail and their permission. Restrictions implemented by CN Rail, prohibiting work near active rail tracks for safety, have not allowed work to progress as originally planned.

To mitigate these restrictions, a detour track was built, creating a dedicated work zone that allowed work to proceed and two large pier extensions on the west side were completed. To complete the pier extensions on the east side, a new rail track must be installed, requiring slope stabilization, watermain protection and retaining wall construction.

The time needed to investigate and revise the designs, to add and relocate the new rail track and constructing this solution have delayed completion of the bridge. The east pier extensions are expected to be complete in late 2025. Once complete, work will begin to demolish and remove the old bridge and roadway, then replace it with a new, wider structure.

### **Sequence of work at CN Rail bridge:**

#### **Work completed to date:**

- Widened bridge abutments (supports at the end of the bridge)
- Constructed a detour track to shift trains away from the piers (supports in the mid-section of the bridge) to create a safe work zone
- Installed caissons and prepare foundation for pier extensions
- Constructed the west pier extensions (north and south sides)
- Prepared west side to receive a detour track
- Created a level track bed
- Cut back and stabilized the slope by soil nailing, shotcreting and constructing a large retaining wall
- Installed watermain protection for a large watermain that runs below the location of the new detour track (to protect against the weight of the trains)

#### **Outstanding work:**

- Install new detour track and shift train traffic to create a safe work zone on the east side
- Construct the east pier extensions (north and south sides)
- Move to road level and shift traffic to one side of the bridge, with only one lane in each direction
- Remove bridge deck and old girders
- Install new girders (adding to the total number for a wider bridge)

- Replace bridge deck (including pouring concrete, waterproofing, paving, installing sidewalk and railings)
- Flip traffic to the other side (to the completed portion of new bridge) and repeat steps to replace the other half

## **Rutherford Road, Peter Rupert Avenue to Bathurst Street, and Dufferin Street, Apple Blossom Drive to Marc Santi Boulevard**

- **Status:** Widening of Dufferin Street from four lanes to six lanes, from Apple Blossom Drive to Marc Santi Boulevard, was completed in 2024. Rutherford Road improvements between Peter Rupert Avenue and Bathurst Street are nearing completion (Construction start: Spring 2023, anticipated completion: Fall 2025)
- **Improvements to Rutherford Road and Dufferin Street include:**
  - Widening from four to six lanes
  - Upgrading intersections and installing new traffic signals
  - Installing a cycle tracks and sidewalk on both sides of the road
  - Replacing culverts and storm sewers
  - Upgrading streetlighting
  - Adding streetscape features within islands and boulevards

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

All work on Rutherford Road and Dufferin Street, in particular at all culvert locations, is being completed under strict natural environment protection measures. The work is being undertaken under environmental permits issued by regulatory authorities.

Environmental stewardship was demonstrated through the protection and rescue of snapping turtle eggs from the active construction site. The eggs were transported to the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre in Peterborough, where they hatched and were eventually released into wetlands near the project limits.

## **TIMELINES & NEXT STEPS**

Planned next steps include:

- Continue road work, including curb and median installations
- Complete track level work and move to road level to remove existing CN Rail bridge deck and girders, install new girders and install new deck to complete bridge expansion over CN Rail tracks
- Finalize road paving, sidewalk, and cycle track installations

## **TRAFFIC IMPACTS**

- Two lanes will be open in each direction with work mainly taking place outside peak travel times
- Traffic may be reduced to one lane in each direction during off-peak travel times
- Work at night for some activities, such as paving
- In late 2025, Rutherford Road will be reduced to one lane in each direction between Creditstone Road/Melville Avenue and Greenock Drive to accommodate bridge work

- As part of the Ministry of Transportation's project to widen Highway 400 from south of Langstaff Road to north of Major Mackenzie Drive, lanes are reduced on Rutherford Road at Highway 400 to complete bridge rehabilitation work
- Rutherford Road is expected to be open to six lanes from Keele Street to Bathurst Street in late 2025. Rutherford Road from Jane Street to Keele Street will remain four lanes until the bridge work is complete in Fall 2026.

## COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

York Region is working to balance construction efficiency, commuter needs, and community impact. Efforts include minimizing disruptions, maintaining safety, and addressing stakeholder concerns.

## STAY INFORMED

- Visit [york.ca/RutherfordRoad](http://york.ca/RutherfordRoad) for project updates and to subscribe to e-news
- Follow @YorkRegionGovt on Facebook and X
- Send inquiries to [transportation@york.ca](mailto:transportation@york.ca) quoting "Rutherford Road Improvements"
- Visit [york.ca/RoadConstruction](http://york.ca/RoadConstruction) for information about road construction projects in your community

## Community Meeting Q&A Summary

### CN Rail location and operations

**Question:** Why is the CN Rail yard located in its current location and are hazardous materials/chemicals handled by this yard?

**Response:** It is the Region's understanding that CN moved operations to this yard in 1965, when the area was largely rural, without anticipating the future growth in the area. York Region or the City of Vaughan does not have jurisdiction over CN Rail operations. Questions about materials should be directed to CN Rail or to the federal MP, as rail is federally regulated.

**Question:** What has caused the delay in construction and why were these issues not anticipated?

**Response:** The Region has successfully completed a number of bridge widenings over rail tracks, including CN Rail tracks, most recently on Keele Street, north of Highway 407. The Region anticipated this location, given its proximity to the Macmillan Yard, would be more difficult and had planned for some reduced productivity. Unfortunately, changes to restrictions placed on the Region's contractor once work had started and changes to CN's business operations, has made work much more challenging than anticipated.

**Question:** Is the Region considering connecting Langstaff Road, over the CN yard?

**Response:** There is a group looking at the feasibility of constructing the missing link on Langstaff Road. The project would be very costly and challenging. As an interim solution to help alleviate congestion, the City of Vaughan is currently constructing the connection of Kirby Road. The Region has completed studies as part of an environmental assessment study and is getting ready to commence the detailed design for the Teston Road missing link.

## Medians and tree planting

**Question:** What will be done on Rutherford Road between Greenock Drive and Sherwood Park Drive, where trees have been removed? Can we get a noise barrier or fence?

**Response:** The Region will be replanting with trees and shrubs. The location does not meet the requirements for a noise barrier and the Region does not build decorative or privacy fences.

**Question:** Will the planter/entrance feature at the north-west corner Rutherford Road and Greenock Drive be re-instated following construction?

**Response:** The Region will follow up directly with the resident regarding plans for the entrance feature.

## Construction impacts and productivity

**Question:** Why does it appear that there is no work happening, especially in the vicinity of the CN Rail bridge?

**Response:** At the CN bridge, work is currently at track level, away from driver line of sight at road level. Work may not be happening on certain days due to inclement weather and even after the weather event, for example after a heavy rainfall, the contractor needs to wait until things get dry, or work may be happening at one end of the road and no work somewhere else due to scheduling of work activities/sub-contractors or sequencing of activities, for example waiting for concrete to cure.

**Question:** Who is paying costs associated with delays?

**Response:** The Region is focused on completing the work. Additional costs due to unforeseen circumstances will be assessed and funds will be re-allocated to cover these costs.

**Question:** How long will lanes be reduced on the bridge over the CN Rail tracks?

**Response:** Lanes will be reduced to one lane in each direction for a few months, depending on the level of productivity allowed by CN imposed restrictions while working over the tracks.

**Question:** How will the impact to traffic be mitigated while lanes on the bridge are reduced? Some traffic signal timing needs to be adjusted (i.e. increase timing for northbound traffic at Rutherford Road and Creditstone and at Highway 7 and Jane Street)

**Response:** The Region will review and adjust/optimize signal timing in the area.

**Question:** Can the City of Vaughan look at re-opening a temporary detour road through the Sports Complex?

**Response:** The City of Vaughan will need to consider safety and liability issues and consider options to create/open a temporary detour road.

**Comment:** Some sidewalks have been closed due to construction.

**Response:** Pedestrian access will be maintained on a minimum of one side of the road at all times. There are no existing bicycle facilities on Rutherford Road. Cyclists are to use the roadway in accordance with the Highway Traffic Act and/or boulevard(s) in accordance with Local By-laws.