



moving on sustainability

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE

NOVEMBER 2009

executive summary



MOVING ON SUSTAINABILITY | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The future will be green, or not at all. This truth lies at the heart of humankind's most pressing challenge: to learn to live in harmony with the Earth on a genuinely sustainable basis.

-Sir Jonathon Porritt, Environmentalist

THE 2002 YORK REGION TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN: A PROUD LOOK BACK

In 2002, York Region approved an innovative Transportation Master Plan (TMP) that defined the Region's long-term transportation vision and provided a framework upon which transportation decisions would be made through the year 2031. The TMP also established policies and programs to support the long term vision and plan, and included an implementation strategy and Five Year Action Plan to meet the Region's future transportation needs.

In recognition of its progressive integration of land use and transportation growth management policies, the York Region Transportation Master Plan was the recipient of the 2001 Transportation Association of Canada's Sustainable Urban Transportation Award.

Since 2002, York Region has undertaken several initiatives in support of the bold vision of the original Transportation Master Plan, including:

- Commencing VIVA - the first phase of a regional Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system
- Undertaking Environmental Assessments for subway extensions and rapid transit service
- Initiating the Spadina Subway Extension with the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)
- Developing an implementation program for the next phase of the BRT system (dedicated rapidways) and working with Metrolinx to secure funding
- Adopting Transit Oriented Development guidelines
- Completing a Cycling and Pedestrian Master Plan





- Developing Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) through the Smart Commute initiative
- Implementing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs

Several programs recommended in the original TMP received financial support from both the Provincial and Federal governments. The VIVA rapid transit system is the most notable project funded equally by both senior levels of government and York Region. The Region's initiative to develop Transportation Management Associations through

the Smart Commute program was recommended in the TMP, and received partial funding from the Federal government to meet the government's Kyoto commitments.

THE YORK REGION TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE: MOVING ON SUSTAINABILITY

In 2006, York Region initiated an update of its TMP to address future transportation needs in a sustainable and integrated manner to address new Provincial initiatives and additional growth in the Region. The TMP update was also undertaken to further refine the transportation opportunities and challenges first identified in the Region's 2002 Transportation Master Plan.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability is what many communities in North America are striving to achieve. And yet few communities know exactly what Sustainable Transportation is; moreover, those communities that do pursue sustainable transportation policies and initiatives may define it differently than other similar locales.

'Sustainable Transportation' has many definitions. Several international organizations accept the definition developed by the Canadian Centre for Sustainable Transportation, which states that a sustainable transportation system is one that:

- Allows the basic access needs of individuals and societies to be met safely and in a manner consistent with human and ecosystem health, and with equity within and between generations;
- Is affordable, operates efficiently, offers choice of transport mode, and supports a vibrant economy; and
- Limits emissions and waste within the planet's ability to absorb them, minimizes consumption of non-renewable resources, limits consumption of renewable resources to a sustainable yield level, reuses and recycles its components, and minimizes the use of land and the production of noise.



Transport Canada adopted seven strategic challenges to promote sustainable transportation practices "to preserve and strengthen Canada's transportation system and advance Canadians' quality of life...{to} provide a framework that addresses the three elements of sustainable transportation - social, economic and environmental." The seven strategies adopted to promote sustainability in Canada, include:

- Encourage Canadians to make more sustainable transportation choices;
- Enhance innovation and skills development;
- Increase system efficiency and optimize modal choices;
- Enhance efficiency of vehicles, fuels and fuelling infrastructure;
- Improve performance of carriers and operators;
- Improve decision-making by governments and the transportation sector; and
- Improve the management of Transport Canada operations and lands.

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) published a ground-breaking report for the United Nations entitled "Our Common Future". Also known as the "Brundtland Report" after the Commission's chairwoman, the report developed guiding principles for sustainable development as it is generally understood today. The Brundtland Report defines sustainability as development that, "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

York Region accepted the Brundtland Report's definition and addressed it in its own "Triple Bottom-Line" approach to sustainability. The philosophy behind the "Triple Bottom-Line" approach is that all of York Region's initiatives should aim to simultaneously create environmental, social and economic benefits. This approach, emphasizing transparency, equity, accountability and community involvement as well as monitoring and continuous improvement towards sustainability, is integrated into many of the Region's initiatives.

MASTER PLAN GUIDED BY AN INNOVATIVE STUDY PROCESS

York Region developed an innovative study process to ensure that a more balanced, sustainable transportation system could be readily achieved. Key components of the study process included:

- Establishing the need for future transportation improvements based on growth projections;
- Undertaking a rigorous assessment of existing conditions, both in York Region and throughout North America, to identify potential measures to address the needs;
- A methodology to ensure potential transportation solutions would be judged more on their ability to be sustainable; and



- A proactive consultation process that included public meetings or workshops in each of the Region's nine municipalities.

SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES USED TO EVALUATE POTENTIAL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

In consultation with residents and key stakeholders, York Region developed a set of Sustainability Principles or "themes" to guide the selection of transportation infrastructure and services in the Region. The Principles included a number of specific objectives, as well as key measures to ensure that the Region's future transportation initiatives and policies properly reflect the conditions established by each principle. The 11 Sustainability Principles are provided below. A more detailed description of each principle is included in **Chapter 5** of the complete Master Plan Report.

1. Integrate Transportation, Land Use and Design
2. Protect and Enhance our Environment and Cultural Heritage
3. Support our Economic Well-Being
4. Provide Access and Mobility for Everyone
5. Adopt Energy Efficient Transportation Systems
6. Put Pedestrians and Transit First
7. Implement and Support Transportation Demand Management
8. Implement and Support Transportation Supply Management
9. Ensure Fiscal Sustainability and Equitable Funding
10. Further Encourage Communications, Consultation and Engagement
11. Conduct On-Going Performance Measurement and Monitoring

RESIDENTS: TO SEEK SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO TRAFFIC CONGESTION & GROWTH

In 2008, EKOS Research Associates, an independent market research firm, conducted a telephone survey with 1,011 York Region residents on issues about traffic and public transit. The survey was designed to gauge resident's views on traffic congestion, as well as to identify citizens' opinions on potential solutions to address the congestion.

Key results of the survey included:

- Traffic congestion, and the lack of transit services in York Region, are major issues of York Region residents;
- Support for public transit, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure is strong across all municipalities; and
- A majority of residents oppose measures such as widening roads only for cars, or building more roads and highways as a way to address congestion.

BOLD DIRECTIONS FOR A HEALTHIER, MORE SUSTAINABLE YORK REGION

In response to the growing need to address future growth and traffic congestion, and in support of Provincial legislation that sets clear standards for new development, the York Region Transportation Master Plan Update has developed a set of practical transportation solutions that will:

- Preserve and enhance the Region's sustainable natural environment;
- Support the Region's economic vitality; and
- Encourage healthier neighbourhoods and communities.

The recommended solutions, developed in close consultation with residents and stakeholders, support the notion to 'put pedestrians and transit first' - a common theme heard throughout the undertaking of this Master Plan Update. The Region's recommended infrastructure improvements that support a more sustainable transportation system are illustrated on pages 7 and 8.

Included among the more than 100 policies and strategies developed to address Regional growth is a set of Bold Directions that will have the most profound impact on the Region's transportation system. Twenty of the more significant 'Bold Directions' identified for this Transportation Master Plan Update are provided across the following pages. The full list of recommended solutions comprising of infrastructure and policy improvements is identified in **Chapter 6** of the complete Master Plan Report.

sustainable



bold directions



TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE AND POLICY IMPROVEMENTS

- Implementing transit priority improvements to enhance transit operations along most urban arterials.
- Building or expanding Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or Light Rail Transit (LRT) service on portions of Steeles Avenue, Highway 7, Major Mackenzie Drive, Bathurst/Dufferin Streets, Warden Avenue, Jane Street, Leslie Street, Yonge Street and Davis Drive/Green Lane.
- Improve rural transit links to King Township, Georgina, East Gwillimbury and Whitchurch-Stouffville.
- Providing queue jump lanes and transit priority at all traffic signals where transit service would benefit from this technology.
- Working with other agencies to implement fare integration and a pay-by-distance fare structure that would reduce or eliminate inequities for passengers crossing a zone or Regional boundaries.
- Working with local municipalities, particularly those that are already urbanized, to establish the minimum densities needed to support local transit or rapid transit service along designated transit spines.
- Developing 'mobility hubs' and local gateways at major entry points to the Region, the York Region Transit (YRT) system and at GO Transit stations.
- Expanding the VIVA/ YRT Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) program to improve transit performance compared to single occupant vehicles.

YORK REGION 2031 TRANSIT NETWORK

Transit Network Improvements

- Existing GO Rail Station
- Proposed GO Rail Station
- Commuter / HOV Parking
- Local Gateway to Transit Network
- Gateway Hub
- Anchor Hub / Regional Centre
- Special Study Area (see footnote)
- GO Rail Service
- 407 Transitway
- Rural Links
- Expressway Bus Service
- GTA West Corridor Concept
- Subway Extension
- Rapid Transit Corridor
- Transit Priority Network
- TTC Rapid Transit
- Recommended New Corridor

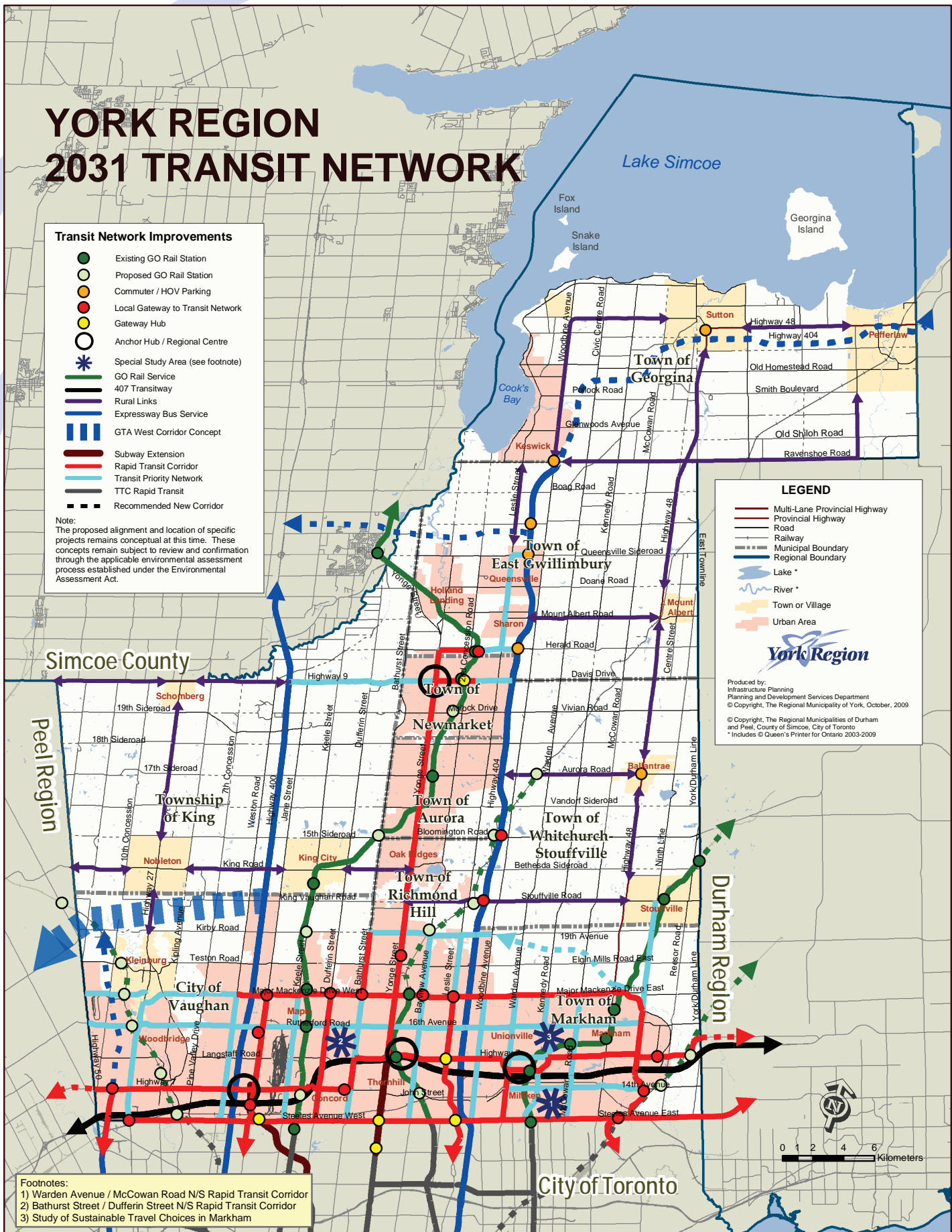
Note:
The proposed alignment and location of specific projects remains conceptual at this time. These concepts remain subject to review and confirmation through the applicable environmental assessment process established under the Environmental Assessment Act.

LEGEND

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



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Footnotes:
1) Warden Avenue / McCowan Road N/S Rapid Transit Corridor
2) Bathurst Street / Dufferin Street N/S Rapid Transit Corridor
3) Study of Sustainable Travel Choices in Markham

YORK REGION 2031 ROAD NETWORK

Road Network Improvements

- Jog Elimination
- New or Improved Highway Interchange
- Grade Separation
- Special Study Area (see footnote)
- Anchor Hub / Regional Centre
- New Local/Regional Road
- Arterial Road Improvement for Capacity
- Arterial Road Improvement to 6 lanes
- Road improvements to support Transit
- New Provincial Road
- GTA West Corridor Concept
- Provincial Road Improvement
- Recommended New Corridor

Note:
The proposed alignment and location of specific projects remains conceptual at this time. These concepts remain subject to review and confirmation through the applicable environmental assessment process established under the Environmental Assessment Act.

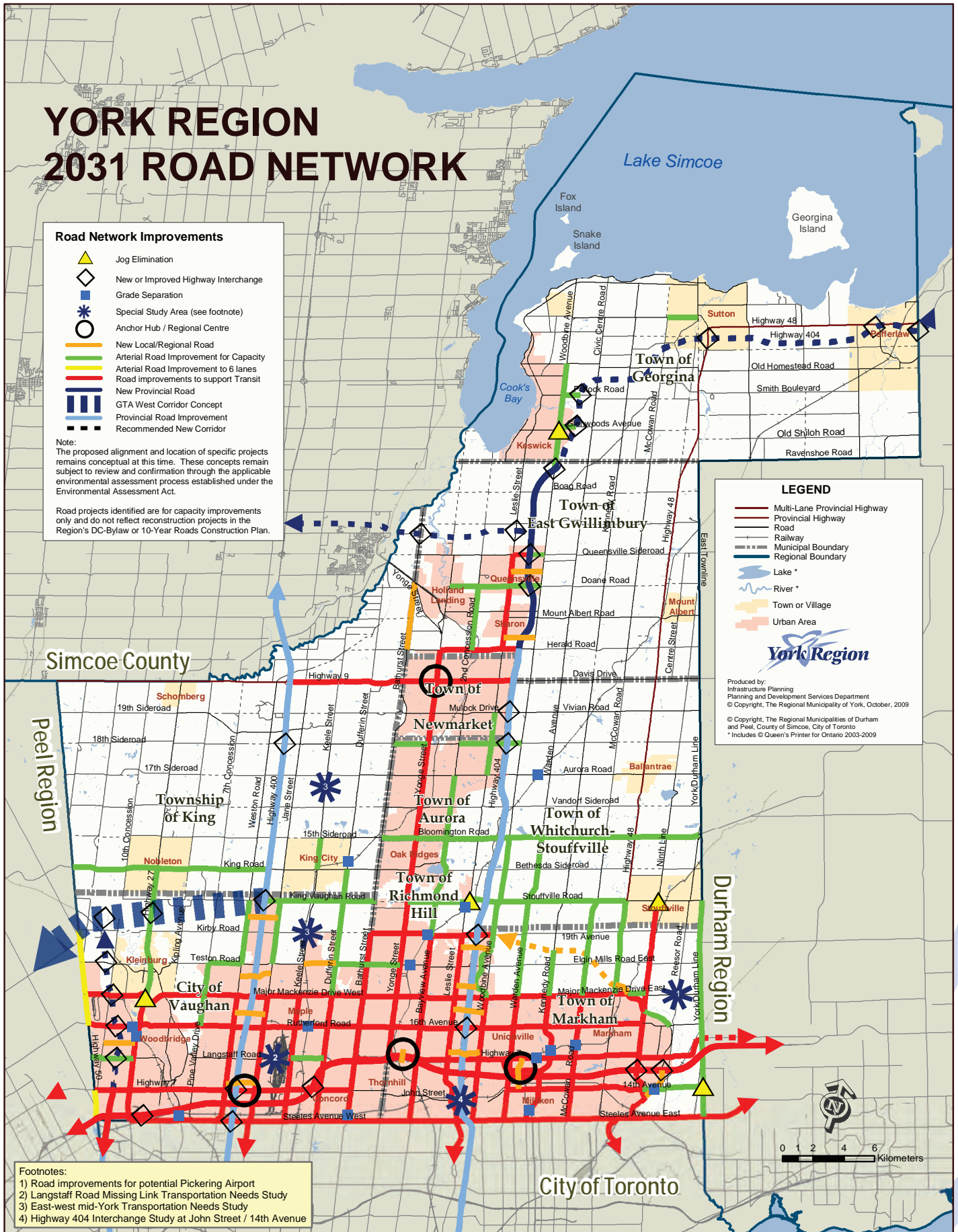
Road projects identified are for capacity improvements only and do not reflect reconstruction projects in the Region's DC-Bylaw or 10-Year Roads Construction Plan.

LEGEND

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

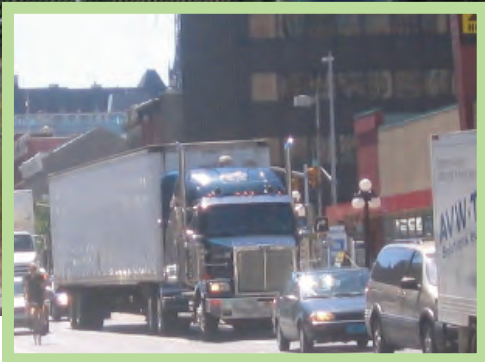
York Region

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Footnotes:
1) Road improvements for potential Pickering Airport
2) Langstaff Road Missing Link Transportation Needs Study
3) East-west mid-York Transportation Needs Study
4) Highway 404 Interchange Study at John Street / 14th Avenue

seamless



bold directions



ROAD IMPROVEMENTS SUPPORTIVE OF SUSTAINABILITY

- Constructing HOV lanes for all road segments scheduled for widening to six lanes, excluding rapid transit segments on Yonge Street and Highway 7.
- Limiting road widenings to a maximum of 6 through lanes, including transit lanes.
- Working with local municipalities to plan for and design continuous collector roads to accommodate local transit services, walking and cycling.
- Coordinate with each municipality to develop a Parking Authority to set a parking policy within York Region and ensure that an effective governance model is adopted in selecting individuals with appropriate experience and expertise to serve as Board Members of the Authority.
- Working with local municipalities to introduce maximum parking standards in Regional Centres and Corridors.
- Exploring road user fees in highly congested urbanized areas in coordination with Metrolinx and local municipalities.



active



bold directions

OTHER POLICIES AND STRATEGIES SUPPORTIVE OF SUSTAINABILITY

- Implementing the Regional and municipal pedestrian and cycling master plan policies and recommendations that give equal weight to infrastructure, implementation strategies and outreach programming.
- Partnering with local municipalities to plan for retail, institutional and commercial uses that are focused on the street, with parking positioned behind the buildings.
- Exceeding the requirements of the environmental assessment process in York Region to ensure local and adjacent municipalities minimize infrastructure needs while enhancing natural heritage and environmental features.
- Designing innovative public awareness campaigns to market sustainable transportation initiatives and strategies to all residents, particularly children, the elderly and new Canadians.
- Implementing effective freight movement systems that minimize impacts on the road network, including potential dedicated road links and rail services, as well as intermodal facilities.
- Restricting heavy vehicle delivery times to mid-day periods (outside of peak commuter travel times) within the Regional Centres and along Regional Corridors.

accessible



MOVING ON SUSTAINABILITY: AN INVESTMENT IN OUR FUTURE

Since York Region released its initial Transportation Master Plan in 2002, the transportation landscape has changed significantly. Now, more than ever, the benefits of sustainable transportation choices are being recognized and given priority over simply building new, or expanding existing roadways.

The pressure to build sustainable transportation services and the escalating cost to build, operate and maintain public infrastructure services is an ongoing concern to municipal organizations in Ontario, as it is to government jurisdictions everywhere. This has required transportation agencies around the world to look at new and innovative ways of delivering and financing transportation projects.

The Ontario government's commitment to MoveOntario 2020 provides the necessary financial support to initiate the capital expansion of much needed transportation infrastructure in the GTHA, including York Region. Under the leadership of Metrolinx and with the support of 1/3 funding by the Federal government, the Province will fund the remaining 2/3 of the capital expenditures for transit. While this is a welcome and significant contribution to the Region's immediate transportation funding needs, Metrolinx must also be a key partner in addressing the long term cost implications for the operation, maintenance and future rehabilitation of these new systems. Many decisions must still be made concerning the role and responsibilities of the Regional Municipalities with respect to future operations, maintenance and the cost-sharing of these systems.

York Region's ability to deliver the network outlined in the Transportation Master Plan Update will be dependent on secure sustainable funding, locally and from senior levels of government.

Key recommendations for York Region to explore for long-term alternative funding sources include:

- Continue to seek support for transit subsidies from the Federal and Provincial governments;
- Work with the Province to modify the *Development Charges Act* to guarantee more support for transit and other sustainable transportation services; and
- Consider private sponsorship of major infrastructure elements.

ESTIMATED 2031 COSTS

Total Capital Investment - \$18.3B

Annual Operating Cost - \$800M



Mayor
Frank Scarpitti
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jack Heath
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Jim Jones
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Gordon Landon
Town of Markham



Regional Councillor
Joseph Virgilio
Town of Markham



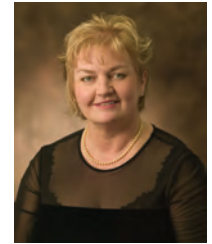
Mayor
David Barrow
Town of Richmond Hill



Mayor
Linda D. Jackson
City of Vaughan



Chairman & CEO
Bill Fisch



Regional Councillor
Brenda Hogg
Town of Richmond Hill

A Message from York Regional Council

The Regional Municipality of York has witnessed tremendous change over the past decade as more than a million people now call our area home. With our communities intensifying and our employment base expanding, the need for advanced transportation planning has never been greater.

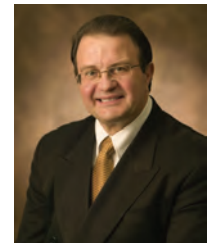
York Region introduced our first Transportation Master Plan in 2002 to help manage our infrastructure as our population blossomed. With a renewed focus on intensifying development instead of simply growing, the Region undertook a Transportation Master Plan Update exercise in 2006.

This Transportation Master Plan Update Executive Summary, titled *Moving on Sustainability*, provides a succinct overview of the three years of study, planning and public consultation that went into the development of the 2009 update. It focuses on expanding transit and rapid transit, while transforming our network of roads into more pedestrian-friendly transportation routes that encourage transit use, walking, cycling and carpooling.

It is a bold vision that will require working in partnership with our local municipalities and senior levels of government to help create and maintain the safe, healthy and caring communities that have made York Region the destination of choice for our residents.



Regional Councillor
Joyce Frustaglio
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
Vito Spatafora
Town of Richmond Hill



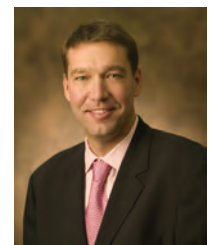
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City of Vaughan



Mayor
Tony Van Bynen
Town of Newmarket



Regional Councillor
Gino Rosati
City of Vaughan



Regional Councillor
John Taylor
Town of Newmarket



Mayor
Robert Grossi
Town of Georgina



Regional Councillor
Danny Wheeler
Town of Georgina



Mayor
Phyllis M. Morris
Town of Aurora



Mayor
Wayne Emmerson
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



Mayor
James Young
Town of East Gwillimbury



Mayor
Margaret Black
Township of King