



100 John West Way  
Aurora, Ontario  
L4G 6J1  
(905) 727-3123  
aurora.ca

Town of Aurora  
**Community Advisory Committee**  
No. CAC20-002

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**Subject:** Master Transportation Study Update

**Prepared by:** Michael Bat, Traffic/Transportation Analyst

**Department:** Planning and Development Services

**Date:** September 17, 2020

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## **Recommendation**

- 1. That Report No. CAC20-002 be received; and**
- 2. That the Community Advisory Committee comments regarding the recommendations for active transportation presented in the Transportation Master Plan be received and referred to staff for consideration.**

## **Executive Summary**

The Transportation Master Plan (the TMP) was presented to Council at the General Committee meeting on February 18, 2020. The recommendations were subsequently endorsed by Council at its meeting on February 25, 2020, subject to individual project review as part of the Capital Budget process and update to the 10-Year Capital Plan.

As directed by Council, the implementation of a road diet on Yonge Street was excluded from the TMP and be referred to the 2021 Capital Budget for consideration.

This report presents to the Community Advisory Committee the findings and conclusions of the TMP for information prior to finalizing the report for public comment as part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. The TMP provides both short-term and long-term recommendations to service Aurora's projected growth and identifies opportunities to create a sustainable, safe and accessible transportation network. The TMP consists of the following key components and discussions that focuses on active transportation:

- The TMP has been prepared in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Master Plan process;

- The TMP identified the existing traffic operational concerns and recommended Alternative No. 2 “TDM, Transit, and Active Transportation Improvements” and Alternative No. 3 “Operational Improvements” as practical solutions to accommodate future growth;
- Short-term opportunities and long-term planning were recommended to address existing demand and future parking needs within the Town;
- A Sidewalk Priority Plan has been developed by incorporating Aurora’s Sidewalk Gap Map and the 10-Year Construction Plan; and,
- A comprehensive and well-connected cycling network has been developed for the Town to promote cycling activities.

The Executive Summary of the TMP is provided in Attachment 1.

## Background

As approved by Council as part of the 2018 Capital Budget process, the Town initiated Capital Project No. 34529 – Master Transportation Study Update. The key objective of the study is to review and address existing transportation needs and provide support for Aurora’s forecasted growth to 2041 through long-term infrastructure planning and policy related solutions.

This study builds upon the Town’s 2013 Master Transportation Operations Study Update, which took a multi-modal approach to identify road network improvements and active transportation connections to meet Aurora’s future traffic demands.

To ensure the recommendations of the TMP are consistent with the objective envisioned by the Government of Ontario and York Region, the following key planning context and relevant background studies were reviewed:

- |                                                                       |                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • York Region Official Plan;                                          | • Town of Aurora Strategic Plan;                                           |
| • York Region Transportation Master Plan;                             | • Town of Aurora Official Plan;                                            |
| • York Region 10-Year Roads and Transit Capital Construction Program; | • Town of Aurora Trails Master Plan;                                       |
| • York Region Lake to Lake Cycling and Walking Trail;                 | • Town of Aurora OPA 73: Area 2C Secondary Plan;                           |
| • Provincial Policy Statement 2014;                                   | • Aurora Promenade Concept Plan, Streetscape Design & Implementation Plan; |
|                                                                       | • Metrolinx Barrie Rail Corridor Expansion;                                |

- Provincial Growth Plan 2019;
- Highway 404 Class Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Design Study;
- Metrolinx Wellington Street Grade Separation; and,
- Metrolinx 2016 GO Rail Station Access Plan.

## Analysis

### **The TMP was prepared in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (MCEA) Master Plan process**

This study was conducted in two phases in accordance with the requirements of Phases 1 and 2 of the Municipal Class EA which is an approved process under the Environmental Assessment Act:

- Phase 1: Identify the problem (deficiency) or opportunity; and,
- Phase 2: Identify alternative solutions to address the problem or opportunity by taking into consideration the existing environment, and establish the preferred solution taking into account public and review agency input.

### **The TMP reviewed the existing traffic operational concerns and recommended Alternative No. 2 “TDM, Transit, and Active Transportation Improvements” and Alternative No. 3 “Operational Improvements” as practical solutions to accommodate future growth**

A transportation needs analysis based on projected growth to 2041 is documented to identify the need for growth related transportation improvements to the existing transportation network. A total of four alternatives were identified and assessed:

- No. 1 – “Do Nothing”;
- No. 2 – “TDM, Transit, and Active Transportation Improvements”;
- No. 3 – “Operational Improvements”; and,
- No. 4 – “Road Capacity Improvements”.

Detailed assessment for each alternative are provided in Attachment 2 and the following solutions are recommended:

a) Alternative No. 2 – TDM, Transit, and Active Transportation Improvements:

This alternative proposes that the Town continue to work in partnership with York Region, SmartCommute Central York, Metrolinx, and the development industry to implement Travel Demand Management (TDM) policies and programs that encourage non-automobile travel to and from key destinations within and surrounding the Town.

b) Alternative No. 3 – Operational Improvements:

Operational improvements may take the form of traffic signal timing adjustments, traffic lane changes, safety improvements, parking modifications and sidewalk network improvements. On the basis that these have little impact to the existing built form of the Town with the ability to provide significant operational benefits.

**Short-term opportunities and long-term planning were recommended to address existing demand and future parking needs within the Town**

A parking needs assessment was undertaken as part of the TMP to document current parking conditions within the Aurora Promenade, including Yonge Street from Wellington to Church Street, Library Square, and the Aurora GO Station area. Based on this review, short-term opportunities to address parking issues are identified as well as development of a long-term plan for parking.

a) Short-term Recommendations (1-5 Years):

- The Aurora GO Station should continue to be monitored to ensure that there is no overflow during its actual peak hours on busy weekdays. Temporary parking solutions at Town Park, Sheppard's Bush Parking Lot on Industry Street and the Sheppard's Bush Soccer Field should be considered;
- If the traffic demand along Yonge Street from Wellington Street to Church Street increases, on-street parking along this segment should be strictly enforced to maximize safety and reduce congestion;
- Metrolinx is proposing to construct a new surface parking lot at 9 Scanlon Court with an estimated supply of more than 400 parking spaces. This is primarily to off-set the loss of existing Berczy Street surface parking lot on the west side of the rail corridor related to the new platform construction;
- A Parking Study prepared by BA Group was developed to address the parking needs from the proposed Library Square development and they are generally consistent with the recommendations provided in the TMP.

b) Long-term Recommendations (Greater Than 5 Years):

- Consolidation of private lots into municipally owned and managed lots promotes efficiency in land use, creates land for new development, and results in increased pedestrian activity in the area;
- 215 Industrial Parkway South is a property owned by the Town of Aurora and is currently leased to John Graves Simcoe Armoury. There is a possibility of this property to be converted to municipal parking lot in the future, if necessary;
- Consideration for on-street parking policies should be developed through further study to prevent GO commuters from parking on adjacent residential streets, including clear signage and information on where the appropriate over-flow parking is located; and,
- Provide residents the opportunity to apply for on-street parking permits for accessible users. Further study is required to determine an appropriate solution to address area specific needs.

c) Aurora GO Station Parking Recommendations:

Based on the April 2017 parking utilization study undertaken for Metrolinx for the Aurora GO Station (prepared by Wood Group), the following should be considered as supplemental parking sites: Town Park, Sheppard's Bush Soccer Field, and Sheppard's Bush.

- Town Park is currently under-utilized during the Friday PM Peak. It is recommend to revisit the existing parking restrictions (maximum 3 hours from 6 AM and 6 PM, Monday to Friday) and allow parking in these spaces to improve utilization of the infrastructure during the weekdays and avoid illegal parking;
- The existing parking lot for the Sheppard's Bush Soccer Field can provide a supplement space for parking. The parking characteristics would likely be characteristic of other recreational facilities with low utilization during weekday daytime, and higher during weekday evenings and weekends. It is recommended to revisit the existing parking restrictions; and,
- It is recommended that the Town engage with Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and Metrolinx to discuss the feasibility of permitting parking for GO train commuters at Sheppard's Bush and revisit the existing parking restrictions (maximum 3 hours from 7 AM and 7 PM, Monday to Friday).

The above referenced locations are illustrated in Attachment 3 and it is recommended the Town work with Metrolinx to develop a parking strategy for the Aurora GO train commuters.

**A Sidewalk Priority Plan has been developed by incorporating Aurora's Sidewalk Gap Map and the 10-Year Construction Plan**

A review of the current 2020 Sidewalk Gap Map as well as Aurora's current 10-year Construction Plan (2016-2027) was undertaken to develop a Sidewalk Priority List that will identify the priority in which the sidewalk gaps within the Town should be addressed.

Funding requests related to construction of sidewalks is usually included in the 10-Year Road Reconstruction Plan and is subject to Capital Budget process.

The recommended sidewalk construction plan is provided in Attachment 4.

**A comprehensive and well-connected cycling network has been developed for the Town to promote cycling activities**

A comprehensive review was conducted to identify opportunities for new on-street cycling facilities with a focus on appropriately designating space for cyclists between existing curbs, which can be implemented in a cost effective manner.

Recommendations build on the Town's existing and planned cycling network and are supported by a best practices review of design guidelines including travel and parking lane widths and considerations at intersections.

The TMP recommends that a separate Town-wide Active Transportation Master Plan be developed. Staff will be submitting a funding request to undertake this study as part of the 2021 Capital Budget process.

A list of cycling facility types is provided in Attachment 5 and the recommended cycling network is included in Attachment 6.

**Once the TMP is endorsed by Council the next step is to update the 10-Year Capital Plan to include the recommendations outlined in the TMP and initiate the Active Transportation Master Plan**

Staff will begin to implement the recommendations provided in the TMP once it is endorsed by Council, subject to Capital Budget process, including:

- Update the 10-Year Capital Plan to include the projects highlighted in the TMP;
- Build sidewalks in accordance to the Sidewalk Construction Plan and implement the cycling network accordingly as illustrated in Attachment 6; and,

- Initiate and develop a Town-wide Active Transportation Master Plan that builds upon the elements in the TMP including the Sidewalk Construction Plan and the Recommended Cycling Network illustrated in Attachment 6. Enter text

## **Legal Considerations**

None.

## **Financial Implications**

The initiatives and individual projects identified in the TMP will be subject to review as part of the Capital Budget process.

## **Communications Considerations**

Staff will issue the Notice of Completion (advertised through the Town's media channels) at the end of March and the study will be placed on the public record for a 30-day review period.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

This report supports the Strategic Plan goal of Support an Exceptional Quality of Life for All by examining traffic patterns and identify potential solutions to improve movement and safety at key intersections in the community.

## **Alternative(s) to the Recommendation**

None.

## **Conclusions**

This report presents to Community Advisory Committee the findings and conclusions developed as part of the TMP. The TMP provides both short-term and long-term recommendations to address the projected growth and identifies opportunities to create a sustainable, safe and accessible mobility network.

The following key recommendations are provided:

- To address future traffic growth, Alternative No. 2 “TDM, Transit, and Active Transportation Improvements” and Alternative No. 3 “Operational Improvements” are recommended as practical solutions;
- Consider implementation of short-term and long-term solutions to address existing parking demand and future parking needs for the Town;
- As complementary to Alternative No. 2 “TDM, Transit, and Active Transportation Improvements”, it is recommended that sidewalk gaps identified in the Sidewalk Construction Plan be addressed and begin to implement the cycling network as illustrated in Attachment 6; and,
- A separate Town-wide Active Transportation Master Plan is recommended which is subject to capital funding as part of a future Capital Budget process.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1:	TMP Executive Summary
Attachment 2:	List of Alternative Solutions
Attachment 3:	Possible Additional Parking Area for Aurora GO Station
Attachment 4:	Recommended Sidewalk Construction Plan
Attachment 5:	List of Cycling Facility Types
Attachment 6:	Recommended Cycling Network

## **Previous Reports**

General Committee Report No. PDS20-015, dated February 18, 2020.

## **Pre-submission Review**

Agenda Management Team review on September 3, 2020

## **Approvals**

**Approved by David Waters, Director, Planning and Development Services**