



Guiding Principles and Directions



Prepared for The Regional Municipality of Durham
by IBI Group

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the draft Transportation Directions. These directions will guide the development of the TMP's policies, strategies and actions. The development of the Transportation Directions will be an iterative process starting out with simple statements, which will be refined and expanded on based on staff, stakeholder and public input.

The Transportation Directions are comprised of three main components. The first level consists of high level principles, generally reflecting the Vision for the Region. The second level consists of the Directions themselves while the third level (to be developed) will include detailed policies, strategies and actions. Together with mapping, images and supporting information, the Directions will be developed as chapters or sections of the TMP document.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A focus on users

Durham Region's transportation system will support a variety of users and lifestyles in its urban, suburban and rural communities. While prioritizing both efficiency and sustainability, it will continue to offer choices that reflect the diverse needs of individuals of all ages and abilities, families of many kinds, and businesses of any size.

Connectivity

The Region's transportation network will offer direct, continuous routes for transit, car, and active transportation users, as well as for goods movement. It will also offer convenience for those transferring from one mode to another or moving between facilities and services of the different jurisdictions that serve Durham Region.

Public health and safety

Durham Region recognizes that the impacts of transportation on health are clearer than ever, and the TMP will strive to maximize the health benefits of safer roads, physical activity, and cleaner air. It will also increase access to health care by improving the availability of affordable, accessible travel modes like walking, cycling and transit.

Economic prosperity

Durham Region will attract business investment and support job growth by offering a transportation system that works smoothly. As the GTHA grows more congested, employers want to locate in communities with a range of efficient and healthy travel options that are valued by today's workers.

Environmental protection

Durham Region will minimize the impacts of transportation on the global climate, regional air quality, and local ecosystems. The Region will apply progressive approaches to infrastructure planning and design to shift demand to more efficient travel modes, bring trip origins and destinations closer together, and encourage the use of cleaner vehicles and fuels.

Collaboration and leadership

Durham Region will represent and defend the interests of area residents and businesses as it works with key provincial and municipal partners to reach shared objectives. As it promotes a shift to more efficient and sustainable travel choices, the Region will lead by example to motivate others.

Innovation

Durham Region will remain alert to emerging issues and changing trends that present new challenges or impact its chosen solutions. It will consider the benefits of new materials and technologies, monitor the experiences of its peers, test new products and ideas, and adopt those that prove successful.

TRANSPORTATION DIRECTIONS

DIRECTION #1



Strengthen the relationship between land use and transportation

Durham Region will deliver a transportation system that supports, and is supported by, current and future development, consistent with provincial legislation and policy, and in collaboration with Area Municipalities. It will provide a growing number of residents and businesses with practical and efficient mobility options for trips to work, school, and other destinations across the Region. Compact, mixed land use patterns and pedestrian-friendly design will encourage the use of sustainable modes. Transportation facilities and services will promote healthy community design and, by prioritizing more efficient travel choices, will mitigate the impacts of intensification on congestion.

DIRECTION #2



Elevate the role of integrated public transit including Rapid Transit

Durham Region will continue to emphasize transit's role in building a healthier and more inclusive community, and in developing stronger urban centres and corridors. Further development of rapid transit services within Durham Region will make transit more competitive compared to the car, and will be complemented by improved access to transit by foot and bicycle. Seamless integration of service across the Region's boundaries will be pursued through stronger partnerships with GO Transit, York Region Transit, and the Toronto Transit Commission. The goal will be to significantly increase transit's share of travel for commuting during peak periods, and for many other trip purposes during off-peak periods. Transit services will become more reliable, and advanced technologies will support new fare, security and customer information strategies.

DIRECTION #3



Make walking and cycling more practical and attractive

Durham Region will work towards shifting more short trips from cars to either foot or bike by collaborating with Area Municipalities to improve the connectivity, continuity, comfort, convenience and safety of walking and cycling routes. Significant growth in active transportation levels is both desirable and achievable and residents will find it easier to move within, through and between neighbourhoods without getting behind the wheel. The many residents of all ages and abilities who do not drive will enjoy greater opportunity through improved access to their daily destinations as well as to public transit services. Cycling routes that improve area municipal connectivity, are key commuter routes, or enhance Regional cycling tourism will be prioritized.

DIRECTION #4



Optimize road infrastructure and operation

Durham Region will manage congestion levels through a proactive combination of capacity, design, and operational strategies that can reduce the impact of bottlenecks and discontinuities, improve safety for all road users, and be adaptive to climate change challenges. The use of “complete street” approaches can extract the maximum public benefit from road facilities. When integrated into street planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance processes, complete street concepts can improve the safety and comfort of all road users—especially pedestrians and cyclists, but also transit riders, car and truck drivers, and emergency service providers. A connected, efficient network of complete streets can create an optimal balance of mobility choices, while maintaining the integrity of emergency routes. The important role of Regional roads in serving public transit and enabling the movement of goods across the GTHA will be preserved through right-of-way allocation, operational prioritization, and advanced technologies.

DIRECTION #5



Promote sustainable travel choices

Durham Region will pursue a number of approaches to maximize the return on investment in facilities and services for walking, cycling, public transit and carpooling. Those modes provide a suite of alternatives to driving and enable a variety of healthy, independent lifestyles for people—including children, youth, seniors and adults with disabilities—who cannot or choose not to operate their own car. Transportation demand management (TDM) measures engage with travellers, and offer information, incentives and assistance to make choices that work best for individual needs and preferences. TDM-supportive features in new developments, like parking for bicycles and carpooling, enable more sustainable choices and can be fostered through planning approval processes. In collaboration with the Area Municipalities, the Region can also implement parking management approaches that lead to a more efficient balance between car travel and more sustainable modes

DIRECTION #6



Invest strategically in the transportation system

Durham Region will work with federal, provincial and Area Municipal governments, as well as Metrolinx, to coordinate transportation investments and maximize overall benefits. The full life cycle of infrastructure and asset management programs will measure and forecast the implications of capital spending on future operational requirements. Investments will be guided by evidence-based decision making, considering financial and economic measures related to the performance of the transportation system, the needs and behaviours of its users, and the outcomes on many aspects of life and business in Durham Region.

DIRECTION #7



Improve goods movement to support economic development

Durham Region will ensure that its transportation network makes adequate provision for the needs of all modes of goods movement, including road, air, rail, marine, and intermodal. Providing efficient, continuous, and connected goods movement is integral to the Region's economic competitiveness and growth, including the growth of traditional and emerging agricultural industries in rural communities. The Region's ports, freight terminals, and airports are key nodes in the broader transportation network that supports and connects businesses with markets across the GTHA, the province, and the country. The Region will work with all levels of government and other stakeholders to maintain and strengthen goods movement networks and policies.