

Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report

DATE: Wednesday, April 2, 2025

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: 2024 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING UPDATE

FROM:

Vince Musacchio, Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To celebrate the strides made by the City and its partners in 2024 towards building a multi-modal transportation system in Vaughan, including walking, riding bikes, using micromobility devices (e-bicycles and kick-style e-scooters), and driving. Also to highlight the efforts in advancing the overall transportation system in support of the 2022-2026 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan.

The 2024 Transportation Planning update represents the amalgamation of the annual reports for both the Active Transportation Program and the Vaughan Transportation Plan. It marks the fifth annual update for the Active Transportation Program since the 2020 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan update, and the second update following the completion of the 2023 Vaughan Transportation Plan. By merging these two transportation reports into a single, cohesive document, we aim to provide a more comprehensive perspective on transportation trends, challenges, and opportunities. This consolidation facilitates a seamless narrative that interconnects various facets of transportation, thereby enhancing cross-referencing and streamlining the review process. As a result, Council and the public may be better equipped to make informed decisions based on a thorough understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing the City's multi-modal transportation system.

Report Highlights

- The Vaughan Transportation Plan and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan work together to delineate comprehensive steps aimed at enhancing Vaughan's street and active transportation networks, advocating for superior public transit options, and advancing emerging modes of transportation.
- This 2024 Update marks the 5-year annual review of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan since its approval in 2020. This milestone highlights the continued commitment and progress in enhancing active transportation over the last few years and reflects the City's dedication to creating a safer, more accessible and sustainable network for all ages and abilities.
- Significant progress has been made to achieving the Mayor's Nine (9) Point Action Plan to Fight Traffic Gridlock. In 2025, updates include ongoing work for two additional east-west bridges over Highway 400, initiation of the widening of Highway 7 between Wigwoss Drive and Kipling Avenue, and anticipated Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) approval of the Individual Environmental Assessment (IEA) for Teston Road between Keele and Dufferin Streets.
- In 2024:
 - 2 km of new cycle tracks were constructed on New Westminster Drive and the construction began for the Jane Street (Active Transportation) Uptown Link from Portage Parkway to Major Mackenzie Drive, with anticipation completion in 2025.
 - Technical work for the McNaughton Road West Environmental Assessment and the Yonge-Steeles Corridor Collector Roads Environmental Assessment was completed. These two EAs improve and create important connections to support the existing Maple community, and the future Yonge-Steeles community. The Notice of Completion for these two studies is expected to be filed in mid-2025.
- In 2025:
 - Residents and visitors can expect the development of more cycle tracks, in-boulevard multi-use pathways and sidewalks and supportive programs for active transportation, including 3km of new multi-use pathway on Islington Avenue from Highway 7 to Kiloran Avenue, 2km of new cycle tracks as part of the second phase of the Jane Street Uptown Link between Major Mackenzie Drive to Teston Road and the Micromobility Pilot Launch in Spring 2025.
 - Environmental assessments for the Colossus Drive Extension over Highway 400 and the Highway 7 widening between Wigwoss Dr and Kipling Ave will commence.

Recommendation

1. That the 2024 accomplishments in advancing Vaughan's multi-modal transportation system, as outlined in this report, be received for information.

Background

The Service Excellence Strategic Plan has designated Transportation and Mobility as a strategic priority for the 2022-2026 Term of Council

To achieve the objectives outlined in this priority area, the Vaughan Transportation Plan and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (referred to now as Master Plans) work together to delineate comprehensive steps aimed at enhancing Vaughan's street and active transportation networks, advocating for superior public transit options, and advancing emerging modes of transportation, such as micromobility usage. Active transportation (AT) refers to the movement of people or goods powered by human activity whereas micromobility refers to lightweight electric-powered modes of travel.

The Master Plans work in alignment with other key city initiatives, including the MoveSmart Mobility Management Strategy. For more comprehensive look at the City's progress since the completion of the Master Plans, see previous updates to Council linked in the next section.

By 2051, Vaughan's population is anticipated to surpass 570,000, with over 350,000 people employed within the city. Currently, the majority of Vaughan residents travel by private vehicle, a preference rooted in the city's development, which has historically prioritized vehicular movement. Consequently, destinations such as workplaces, schools, grocery stores, and other amenities are often situated too far from most homes to be accessible by walking or cycling. Our urban layout also poses significant challenges for providing frequent and convenient public transit services. As a result, Vaughan experiences traffic congestion during peak hours, particularly on major roadways.

The forthcoming phase of growth in Vaughan necessitates innovative and diverse investments in transportation

Substantial investments are required in major transportation infrastructure, including new and enhanced streets and arterial roads, a comprehensive network of sidewalks and cycle tracks, and new and improved transit services, all of which contribute to an accessible and convenient transportation system. Additionally, modern life has

introduced new dynamics such as remote work, e-commerce, work-life balance adjustments, and the gig economy, which continue to reshape our travel patterns. The transportation system must cater to users of all ages and abilities, especially youth and older adults. Changing demographics will place unique demands on the transportation system, and safeguarding and enhancing mobility will require a broader range of options. Future investments must focus on managing congestion while simultaneously empowering mobility choices by maximizing available travel options. Both Master Plans outline the necessary steps to capitalize on available opportunities and tackle the challenges ahead.

This Transportation Programs Update report encapsulates the ongoing efforts to transform the transportation system into one that is high-quality, attractive, and offers sustainable mobility choices

To ensure Vaughan remains a world-class city and a preferred destination for new residents and businesses, it is imperative to develop a transportation system that is reliable, accessible, and seamless. The Master Plans aim to balance the transportation needs of all travel modes while supporting a flexible and fiscally sustainable strategy that can adapt to external factors such as shifting travel patterns, climate change impacts, economic conditions, and evolving provincial infrastructure investment priorities. To achieve this, staff employ a multi-modal approach encompassing the principles of Building Infrastructure, Empowering Choice, and Forward Thinking.

Refer to **Attachment 1: 2024 Vaughan Transportation Highlights**

Previous Reports/Authority

[2024 First Annual Update – 2023 Vaughan Transportation Plan](#) – Item 4, Report No. 10 of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on March 26, 2024.

[2024 Active Transportation Programs – Fourth Annual Update](#) – Item 5, Report No. 10 of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on March 26, 2024.

[2023 Vaughan Transportation Plan](#) – Item 2, Report No. 22, of the Committee of the Whole (Working Session), which was adopted, as amended, by the Council of the City of Vaughan on May 16, 2023.

[2023 Accommodating Micromobility \(E-Bikes and E-Scooters\) and Initiate a Shared Pilot](#) – Item 1, Report No. 35 of the Committee of the Whole (WS) adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on September 26, 2023.

[2023 Active Transportation Programs – Third Annual Update](#) – Item 6, Report No. 9 of the Committee of the Whole adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 22, 2023.

[Five Quick Wins to Address Member’s Resolution – Thinking Globally, Acting Locally in Vaughan](#) – Item 2, Report No. 38 of the Committee of the Whole which was adopted without amendment by Council of the City of Vaughan on November 29, 2022.

[Transportation and Infrastructure Task Force Findings and Recommendations Report](#) – Item 12, Report No. 24 of the Committee of the Whole adopted as by Council of the City of Vaughan on May 17, 2022.

[2022 Active Transportation Programs – Second Annual Update](#) – Item 6, Report No. 6 of the Committee of the Whole which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 15, 2022.

[2021 Active Transportation Programs – First Annual Update](#) – Item 10, Report No. 6 of the Committee of the Whole adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 17, 2021.

[Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update](#) – Item 10, Report No. 41 of the Committee of the Whole adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on December 17, 2019.

Analysis and Options

5-Year Review of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan has guided the City’s active transportation, trails and micromobility network since its adoption in 2020. This Master Plan laid the foundation for a more connected and pedestrian and bicycle-friendly City. This 2024 Update is the 5-year annual review of the Plan and is a significant milestone. This milestone highlights the ongoing commitment and progress in enhancing active transportation over the last few years and brings together the principles of Building Infrastructure, Empowering Choice, and Forward Thinking. Significant strides have been made in building infrastructure through standalone active transportation projects and

routine accommodations as well as empowering choice through policies to support safer and more accessible options for residents and visitors.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan identified approximately 250km of routes that would be prioritized as standalone active transportation projects to be in place by 2030. In the last five years, 24% of the network was successfully constructed and an additional 10% is currently under construction. 11% is under detailed design and 6% is under the functional design phase. In total, about 51% of the priority network is either complete or actively being developed, aligning with the anticipated progress targets. For more details on the progress of the priority network, please refer to **Attachment 2: 2025 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Progress Map**.

Transportation Programs Update

In April 2023, Vaughan Council endorsed Mayor Del Duca's Member's Resolution to Combat Traffic Gridlock. This comprehensive initiative includes a series of crucial infrastructure projects aimed at reducing traffic congestion across all wards. By 2025, significant progress has been made on all nine actions. Key highlights include ongoing work on two additional east-west bridges over Highway 400, the initiation of the widening of Highway 7 between Wigwoss Drive and Kipling Avenue. The draft IEA for Teston Road between Keele and Dufferin Streets was completed in late 2024 and is currently with MECP for review and approval. For a detailed status update on all nine projects, please see Attachment 1.

In addition to advancing the Mayor's Action Plan, staff continue to implement transportation projects under the three focus areas: Build Infrastructure, Empower Choice and Think Forward.

Build Infrastructure

Investing in accessible, safe and efficient infrastructure is key to offering residents, visitors and businesses more mobility choices. Ensuring that all users, whether they are walking, cycling, riding a bus or driving, can move around safely and efficiently is a cost-effective and environmentally friendly strategy to manage congestion and accommodate growth in the transportation system.

In 2024, Vaughan accelerated change for more sustainable travel through building infrastructure and completed the following achievements:

- Refer to **Attachment 3: 2025 Active Transportation Network Progress Map** and **Attachment 4: 2025 10-Year Roads Growth Capital Program Map**
- Active transportation improvements to New Westminster Drive from Clark Avenue to Bathurst Street were completed in 2024 with a \$250K contribution from the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program. Enhancements included 2 kilometres of new cycle tracks, a new signalized mid-block pedestrian crossing at St. Elizabeth Catholic High School, and upgrades to existing street lighting, transit stops, existing signalized intersections and mid-block crossings, and sidewalks and crossings to meet accessibility standards.
- Vaughan received a \$9.6M contribution from the Government of Canada's Active Transportation Fund and a \$3.2M commitment by York Region towards the Jane Street Uptown Link. Once complete, the Jane Street Uptown Link will include eight kilometres of new in-boulevard cycle tracks, four kilometres of new sidewalks and four kilometres of streetlight enhancements along Jane Street, from Highway 7 to Teston Road. The first phase of this project from Highway 7 to Major Mackenzie Drive started construction in June 2024.
- Through ongoing review of **43 Third-Party Projects**, Vaughan continues to work effectively with our partners at York Region, Ontario's Ministry of Transportation, Metrolinx and national railway carriers to advocate for enhanced transit and GO rail service and enable upgrades to essential links in the road network. Major Third-Party Projects which continue to be monitored include the Yonge North Subway Extension, the Teston Road Extension between Dufferin Street and Keele Street, and the proposed Highway 413.

An environmental assessment is a planning and decision-making process used to promote environmentally responsible decision-making. Recently, the Province has proposed significant changes to the Environmental Assessment Act in an effort to streamline and simplify the 50-year-old environmental assessment processes for what are considered "low-risk" municipal infrastructure projects. Under the proposed new regime, the City remains committed to ensuring effective consultation, design and completion of any environmental studies in order to support the construction of roads infrastructure.

Ongoing Class Environmental Assessments:

- McNaughton Road West

- Yonge-Steeles Corridor Collector Roads - *supports #7 of Mayor's 9-Point Action Plan*
 - Initiating Highway 7 widening between Wigwoss Drive and Kipling Avenue - *supports #1 of Mayor's 9-Point*
 - Initiating the Colossus Drive Extension over Highway 400 - *supports #5 of Mayor's 9-Point*
- The City of Vaughan has already taken active steps towards supporting the progressive transition towards electric vehicles by deploying six public electric vehicle chargers close to City buildings, including administrative buildings, community centre or the library. In addition, the City established a Workplace Charging Policy for its own employees, indicating guiding principles for employees wishing to take advantage of charging while at work. A strategy has been developed to best support equitable charging access for residents or visitors who do not currently have access to charging of their EV at home and establish a concrete action plan to set the course for deploying a successful public charging network.

Empower Choice

Transportation patterns are influenced by the built environment, land use, and historical travel behaviors. One of the primary strategies for realizing both Master Plan visions is to empower individuals to choose more sustainable travel options. Both Master Plans establish a comprehensive framework for strategies and programs designed to promote the adoption of sustainable modes of transportation. This not only reduces the necessity for expensive new road construction and expansions but also contributes to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2024, Vaughan accelerated change for more sustainable travel through empowering choice through the following achievements:

- In 2024, approximately 57 Public Service Announcements (PSAs), social media posts and news releases contained active transportation and micromobility messaging. Topics included Bike Month, school zone safety and etiquette for walking, cycling and using trails, sidewalk cycling, micromobility safety, and active school travel.
- In 2024, staff engaged with the community at all six Concerts in the Park, five Active School Travel events, including a Walk with the Mayor, and during Public Works Week and Take Your Kid to Work Day to provide education and receive

feedback on pedestrian, cycling and micromobility rules, regulations and road safety, how to share spaces and sidewalk cycling.

- Vaughan was awarded the Transportation Association of Canada's (TAC) 2024 Workforce Development Achievement Award for the Transportation Youth Ambassador Program. This program supports youth-focused engagement initiatives developed and delivered by young adults to their peers, showcasing innovation in program delivery and encouraging more young adults to enter the transportation sector. In 2024, five Transportation Youth Ambassadors were awarded certificates. Initiatives under this program are identified into the following two categories:
 - Peer to Peer Engagement for Youth Input: two focus groups gathering feedback on strategies for youth engagement, 143 surveys conducted to understand youth perceptions on micromobility and other emerging transportation modes, and the "Advise Your Council" series was developed to offer teachers a ready-to-use educational tool that brings municipal decisions into the classroom, while also functioning as a graded assignment.
 - Peer to Peer Outreach for Youth Education: four youth engagement games were developed (Jeopardy, What Would You Do, Blooket, and Escape Room) and presented to students at Emily Carr Secondary School, and Youth Ambassadors attended the Club Fair at Stephen Lewis Secondary School.
- Continued progress on the City's Mobility Action Plan (MAP). The City's MAP will develop smart solutions to address mobility challenges, such as accessibility, connectivity, and traffic congestion, for Vaughan residents. The MAP is key to implementing the recommendations of the Master Plans and includes a Communications and Outreach Strategy, with a focus on youth and older adults. A more comprehensive update on the MAP will be provided in the next year once the first phases of the MAP are complete.
- The Complete Streets Guide was endorsed by Council in January 2024. It is a design and implementation guideline that ensures a consistent approach to planning, designing, rehabilitating, operating, and maintaining Complete Streets, which will enable safe use of the street network for all users while also creating high quality public realm.
- An internal Sustainable Transportation Action Team (STAT) held its first meeting. The purpose of STAT is to lead, co-ordinate, promote, and communicate sustainable transportation activities across the City in a centralized and integrated manner. As a key recommendation of the 2023 VTP, STAT recognizes the importance of coordinating the City's action to build and manage a more sustainable transportation system. Topics to date include:

- Overcoming implementation barriers to Complete Streets
- Maintenance of Active Transportation facilities
- Development of Community Mobility Hub Guidelines

Think Forward

Innovative technologies, including automated, connected, electric, and shared vehicles, micromobility, and evolving smartphone applications, are revolutionizing the way travelers perceive and utilize roadways, public transit, and other transportation services. The Master Plans provide comprehensive policies and guidelines to ensure that Vaughan is well-equipped to leverage these emerging technologies. This strategic approach aims to expand travel options and optimize the use of both existing and new infrastructure, thereby maximizing value for all users. Additionally, it emphasizes proactive planning for future travel needs and readiness to capitalize on funding opportunities

In 2024, Vaughan accelerated change for more sustainable travel through thinking forward through the following achievements:

- The first demonstration projects for the Transportation Innovation Program (TIP) were deployed in 2024. The TIP is an initiative that position the city as a testbed for smart mobility innovations and progress to date includes:
 - 41 applications received
 - 7 demonstrations have been approved by the Review Committee
 - 5 demonstrations launched in Fall 2024
 - Technology Showcase to highlight projects in December 2024
 - Gold Winner at 2024 International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Awards
 - Community Economic Development Award from Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO)
- New development areas such as Yonge-Steeles, Weston/7 and Concord are planned to provide a balanced transportation system proving options for all modes of travel by implementing fine-grained street and active transportation networks. Staff are actively working with Policy Planning to ensure that strong policies are in place to tie development approvals with infrastructure milestones, thereby mandating that developers undertake essential improvements either prior to occupancy or concurrently with construction activities.

- To offset the financial impact of the transportation programs, the City continues to leverage grant opportunities and partnerships with other stakeholders and organizations. A summary of the funding received in 2024 and the funding partners involved is summarized in Table 1:

Table 1: Summary of Funding Partners in 2024

Project	Project Status	Funding Partner or Program	Funding Amount	Agreement Year
Jane Street Uptown Link – Sidewalk and Cycle Tracks	Construction – underway	York Region	\$3.2M	2024
Jane Street Uptown Link – Sidewalk and Cycle Tracks	Construction – underway	National Active Transportation Fund - Capital Stream	\$9.6M	2024
		TOTAL RECEIVED	\$12.8M	

Looking Ahead to 2025/2026

The year 2024 has been marked by significant change and disruption in our transportation planning and implementation practices. Amidst the uncertainty surrounding provincial legislation, efforts to position the City to accelerate housing, and geo-political issues that could have domestic repercussions, we have and continue to navigate a challenging landscape. The transportation planning work completed thus far, along with the proposals for 2025/2026, is designed to be future-ready while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to an evolving environment. The forthcoming plan has been developed to ensure that the Council can pivot effectively should unforeseen circumstances arise. Priority projects for 2025 include:

- Support the Development Charges By-Law Update
- Initiate the Central Vaughan Transportation Study
- Complete the Weston 7 Transportation Master Plan
- Initiate the Highway 7 Environmental Assessment
- Initiate the Colossus Extension Environmental Assessment
- Support the Yonge North Subway Extension
- Continued expansion of the City’s all-ages and abilities active transportation network

- Enhance the transportation education and outreach program with a focus on youth and older adults
- Initiate the Shared Micromobility Pilot Project
- Complete the first phase of the Transportation Innovation Program
- Finalize the Transportation Planning Data Management Strategy

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts as a result of the report. All initiatives described in the report have been or will need to be approved through the annual budget process.

Operational Impact

The successful execution of the transportation recommendations requires collaboration across city departments, with a particular emphasis on partnering with the MoveSmart program. Although these two program areas function independently, their synergy ensures that the City effectively addresses its strategic priorities in the realm of Transportation and Mobility for the 2022-2026 Term of Council.

As we advance through the implementation phase, ongoing consultation with internal stakeholders is vital. These stakeholders encompass diverse parties within the City, all contributing to the iterative process of shaping and refining the recommendations from the Master Plans. These departments include:

- Transportation and Fleet Management Services
- Development Engineering
- Policy Planning and Special Programs
- Infrastructure Delivery
- Development and Parks Planning
- Facilities and Parks Delivery
- Economic Development

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

Continued collaboration between City of Vaughan and York Region on active transportation and road improvements led to successes in enhancing mobility options within Vaughan

The implementation strategies of the Master Plans are consistent with the 2022 York Region Transportation Master Plan. Staff will continue to collaborate with York Region and York Region Transit to enable a seamless and connection transportation system for all users.

The City of Vaughan has continued to work closely with York Region on various initiatives, including the design and construction of sidewalks, cycle tracks, and grade-separated crossings as well as regional road widening, first/last mile connections to transit, and the development of regional-scale trails like the South York Greenway.

Conclusion

The City of Vaughan has made great advances in providing residents and visitors multi-modal transportation options, including extensive sidewalks, cycle tracks, multi-use pathways, and recreational trails. This network is continually expanding as the City evolves, ensuring Vaughan remains a world-class city and reflecting the city's dedication to awareness, safety, culture, infrastructure, and connectivity.

By enhancing all modes of transportation, the Master Plans balance the needs for users of all ages and abilities and ensure that recommendations work together to create a transportation system that is reliable and accessible while remaining flexible to external impacts.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, Vaughan Transportation Plan and the draft 10-Year Roads Growth Capital Program map serve as invaluable tools to building an interconnected city. They collectively steer us toward a sustainable transportation system, one that offers high-quality, attractive, competitive, and environmentally responsible mobility choices for every resident, business, and visitor in Vaughan.

For more information, please contact Selma Hubjer, Director, Infrastructure Planning and Corporate Asset Management, ext. 8674.

Attachments

1. 2024 Transportation Accomplishment Highlights, February 2025
2. 2025 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Progress Map, February 2025
3. 2025 Active Transportation Network Progress Map, February 2025
4. 2025 10-Year Roads Growth Capital Program Map, February 2025

Prepared by

Sandy Yang, Project Manager, Transportation, ext. 8569

Alicia Jakaitis, Program Manager, Transportation Planning & Research, ext. 8754

Dorothy Kowpak, Program Manager, Active and Sustainable Transportation, ext. 8812

Christopher Tam, Manager, Transportation Planning and Engineering, ext. 8702