

## King sets transportation policies in long-term planning and budgeting

By Mark PavilonsEditorLocal JournalismInitiative Reporter

The framework has come together for King's comprehensive transportation plan. Councillors received the revamped Transportation Master Plan, setting in motion a process that identifies local assets, and also shared infrastructure responsibilities with the Region. As government mandates change, the document also explores joint funding models, and assesses opportunities for road uploads where regional functions are evident. It's a fluid document, one that sets the stage for planning and investment over the short, medium, and long term. The update reflects new policies, best practices and trends since the previous plan (2020), and extends the planning horizon from 2031 to 2051. This plan, staff observed, is a "critical tool in guiding updates" to the Capital Plan and the 2026 Development Charges Bylaw. The TMP responds to significant growth forecasts, evolving travel patterns, and emerging priorities such as sustainability, safety, and multi-modal connectivity. The plan aligns with provincial and regional initiatives, including the development of Highway 413, and integrates strategies for roads, transit, and active transportation to support vibrant communities and improve quality of life. This update ensures that transportation planning remains proactive, fiscally responsible, and adaptable to future needs. Several delegates questioned certain aspects of the TMP as presented, worrying about long-term impacts. Many identical written submissions were received, all echoing the same sentiment of supporting "Scenario 5," which nixes using the 15th Sideroad as a form of bypass. They pointed to preserving the rural nature of King and not diverting truck traffic through the countryside. One resident, Kevin Talbot, spoke on behalf of more than 400 residents opposed to turning the 15th Sideroad into a "truck bypass." "We need planning that reflects King's identity - rural, green, close-knit, and proud. It's why people choose to live in King - in our villages, our hamlets, and across our rural countryside," he said. In reference to potential damaging effects to areas like Kingscross, Mary Muter, chair of the Kingscross Ratepayers Association said the KRA, too, continues to oppose the extension of the 15th concession from Keele to Jane Street which is described in the plan. She stressed we need to think seriously about what that would mean to all the wildlife living there. It is a now wildlife refuge for all the wildlife that have been forced out of the new development areas. Muter pointed out that 10 years ago, deer roamed through Kingscross on a regular basis, but not anymore. Development in the area would impact the private wells that are adjacent to the 15th easement on the north side of Kingsworth properties between Blueberry Lane and Watch Hill. Removing the peat soils and sand and replacing that with non-permeable soils will very likely deplete the underground aquifers and thus disturb the source of well water for Kingscross residents. She conceded there is some great work in the TMP on providing active transportation routes. These routes are not only good for individuals but are economic opportunities given that visitors on foot or bicycle visit local area businesses. Bruce Craig, on behalf of Concerned Citizens of King Township (CCKT), lauded the TMP planning process and the three well-organized Public Information Centres. There has been helpful public consultation, comments were recorded and it is clear that thoughtful attention has been given to public input. He said attention has been given to the valued rural countryside and agricultural lands in King, as future road improvements are considered. CCKT commended the consultants and Township staff for the extensive research and analysis of traffic flows present and future, opportunities to expand public transit in King along with active transportation (cycling, walking, etc.) and for sharing this information with the public. "We are encouraged to see the inclusion of and recommended improvements to the King-Vaughan Townline and Bathurst Street. Looking at the King-Vaughan Townline as a potential bypass route for King City makes a lot of sense. Highway 413, while clearly not popular, could provide an opportunity for helpful bypass routes. If the controversial highway is eventually constructed, a dedicated roadway with limited access running east from the proposed interchange with Hwy. 400 could connect to the King-Vaughan Townline and carry eastbound traffic all the way to Bathurst. This would likely relieve congestion at the interchange and on Hwy 400. The 413 along with an improved K-V Townline would also provide a future bypass route for Nobleton and for truck traffic," he said. Mayor Steve Pellegrini pointed out that nothing will happen until a full Environmental Assessment is done, should the 15th be considered for upgrading. He stressed that the Province changes the rules constantly. A new wrinkle has popped up in Peel Region, where the upper tier is considering downloading regional roads to the municipalities. That would impact local governments immensely. The TMP, he said, isn't cast in stone. It's the annual budgets that cement the policies. Councillor Jennifer Anstey echoed the sentiments, noting the TMP is a "living document" that changes over time. Reviews are done regularly and EAs take many years to complete, before any decisions are made. Constant planning changes from Queen's Park continue to impact local efforts. King's TMP was last updated in 2020 and provided a framework for

transportation planning up to 2031. Significant changes have occurred since the last plan, including updated provincial and regional policies, increased population and employment growth estimates, and the proposed Highway 413 corridor. These developments, combined with evolving travel patterns and community priorities, necessitated a comprehensive review and update of the TMP. Staff note the 2025 TMP update extends the planning horizon to 2051 and incorporates strategies to create a safe, sustainable, and multi-modal transportation network. It emphasizes active transportation, and road improvements while aligning with York Region and provincial initiatives. The update also reflects extensive public and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that recommendations support trips generated or ending in King and King Township's vision for vibrant communities. The TMP was developed through extensive public engagement, including three Public Information Centres (PICs) held across the Township. The TMP integrates with other municipal planning documents such as the Trails Master Plan and Employment Lands Strategy, ensuring alignment with broader planning objectives. King Township is forecasted to grow to 51,000 residents and 17,700 jobs by 2051, with growth concentrated in King City, Nobleton, and Schomberg. The TMP responds to the York Region Official Plan (2022) and King's 2051 Official Plan Review, ensuring alignment with long-term growth and infrastructure needs. The TMP sets priorities for road and active transportation projects to support growth to 2051. Improvements will be phased by growth areas to reduce costs and minimize disruption. The preferred network includes approximately 105.9 kilometres of road upgrades and 131 kilometres of new active transportation facilities. The TMP recommends working with York Region to upgrade key regional roads to improve traffic flow and reduce pressure on local streets. Upgrades should focus on corridors such as Highway 27, King Road, Weston Road, and Lloydtown/Aurora Road. In addition, King-Vaughan Road and Bathurst Street should be highlighted for future upgrades to strengthen regional connectivity and support goods movement. These improvements will help shift heavy truck and commuter traffic away from local municipal roads, improving safety and reducing congestion. The TMP promotes safe, connected walking and cycling routes in King City, Nobleton, and Schomberg. This includes filling sidewalk gaps near schools and transit stops, the recommendation to add cycling facilities where feasible, and applying traffic calming measures such as speed tables and bollards to improve safety for all road users. The plan also emphasizes encouraging and facilitating active transportation trips to King City GO Station wherever possible, supporting multimodal travel and reducing reliance on private vehicles. Staff noted that while this report does not carry direct financial implications, the TMP will inform future budgeting decisions and updates to the Development Charges By-law. It serves as a strategic framework to guide future transportation investments and policy decisions through 2051. While the plan outlines long-term capital needs and potential cost estimates for road, and active transportation improvements, these will be addressed through future budget processes, development charges, and external funding opportunities as individual projects advance.