

11.0 NEXT STEPS

Between the submission of the draft final report in January, 2006 and the final report in December, 2008, the Council for the Region of York adopted the recommendations as outlined herein, including the narrowing of lane widths and the introduction of landscaped medians.

However, in order to practically implement these recommendations, various changes in policy and/or procedure will be required, or further studied. Specifically, the following are required:

- Assessment of the Region's Roads Capital Program in view of:
 - The additional costs related to landscaped medians and exclusive bike lanes, such that projects may need to involve shorter segments of roadway, or further phasing.
 - The need for logical phasing of HOV/Transit lanes.
 - The need for phasing of bike lanes to create a logical network in accordance with the York Regional Bicycle Master Plan.
- Amendment to the access control policy as a result of the introduction of planted medians. This policy will need to balance the desired cross-section which includes medians, with access requirements for adjacent land uses, where access will be impacted by the introduction of the medians. Alternative means of achieving access will need to be addressed.
- Amendment to the Official Plan with respect to designated rights-of-way for Regional Streets. Currently the typical maximum Regional Street right-of-way is 36 metres. The study has identified the need for between 43 and 46 metre rights-of-way in order to address the various competing requirements. This has been suggested for protection in newly developing areas where land uses have not been set as yet. It is recognized, however, that special provisions need to be made in localized areas, for example where arterials pass through historic hamlets and/or where widenings would adversely impact these established communities.
- Development of a comprehensive Regional HOV strategy, recognizing that generally roadways should only be widened for purposes of creating high occupancy vehicle lanes, not to create additional road capacity for mixed traffic. This would result in the most effective use of the additional road capacity which is being created. The strategy needs to consider a number of factors including, but not restricted to:
 - Criteria for eligibility (e.g. 2 or 3 occupants per vehicle) and how this coordinates with the eligibility criteria of other jurisdictions. For example MTO requires a minimum of 2 persons per vehicle, whereas the City of Toronto requires 3 persons per vehicle as a minimum
 - Length of designated HOV lane for these to be effective in attracting users
 - Connectivity with HOV lanes under other jurisdictions (e.g. Provincial, City of Toronto).

- Development of a Regional HOV enforcement strategy, in view of the intent to create a network of HOV lanes in the Region of York.
- Review of pedestrians crossing requirements of arterial streets under the jurisdiction of the Region of York. Considerations include but are not limited to:
 - Methods of enhancing pedestrian safety
 - The need for pedestrian activated signals
 - Whether pedestrians will be allowed to cross at unprotected locations at their own risk (e.g. at breaks in landscaped medians, where the median provides a refuge area allowing them to cross half of the roadway at a time).
- Discussions with local municipalities regarding sidewalk design and implementation. Currently sidewalks adjacent to Regional Streets are under the jurisdiction of the local municipalities through which the Regional Streets pass. The intent as outlined herein is for all Regional streets to have sidewalks along both sides of the street, except in underdeveloped (rural) areas.
- Amendment to Regional design standards which would effectively mean that the design and posted speeds are the same in the urbanized parts of the Region, taking into consideration operations, safety and related factors. This is important from the perspective of implementing the recommended changes (e.g. length of tapers, lane widths, etc.).
- Development of street tree planting design guidelines and specifications. These specifications will include performance standards, critical soil volumes, quality and compaction of soil and other design factors which sustain street tree health.
- Development of design guidelines for the landscaped medians, taking into consideration the general land use categories that have been identified, sustainability, costs and related factors.
- Building on the design guidelines, the preparation of a catalogue of streetscape treatments that can be referenced when selecting elements for specific applications.