



Town of Newmarket  
395 Mulock Drive P.O. Box 328,  
Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 4X7

Email: [info@newmarket.ca](mailto:info@newmarket.ca) | Website: [newmarket.ca](http://newmarket.ca) | Phone: 905-895-5193

# Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

## Information Report to Council

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Department(s): Planning and Building Services

Author(s): Phoebe Chow, Senior Planner – Policy

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Province's latest transportation plan titled [Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#).

### Background

On March 10, 2022, the Province of Ontario released the [Connecting the GGH: A Transportation Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe](#) (the GGH Transportation Plan), which sets out a vision for a regional transportation network to 2051. The province has indicated that engagement for the GGH Transportation Plan began in 2017. This final GGH Transportation Plan was released as a final document and is therefore not open for public consultation.

Transportation is one of the key factors that is integral to community planning. The GGH Transportation Plan is intended to align with the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, and other land use planning documents in achieving the Province's vision in planning and managing growth in Ontario.

## Discussion

The [GGH Transportation Plan](#) sets out a mobility vision for Ontario and includes policies that fall under the following four themes:

1. Fighting gridlock and improving road performance
2. Getting people moving on a connected transit system
3. Supporting a more sustainable and resilient region
4. Efficiently moving goods

The [GGH Transportation Plan](#) also includes over 100 action items that need to be taken by the Province and its partners to implement the vision. The following subsections provide a high-level summary of a few actions that support the above noted four themes.

### **1. Fighting Gridlock and Improving Road Performance - New Infrastructures**

- Highway 413 – a new highway connecting Highways 401, 407 ETR, 410, 427 and 400;
- Bradford Bypass – a new connection between Highway 400 and Highway 404;
- Expand High Occupancy Vehicle lane on Highway 400 from Langstaff Road to Highway 9, and Highway 401 between Milton and Mississauga, and
- Develop transit-oriented communities with Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx

### **2. Getting People Moving on a Connected Transit System - New Rapid Transit Network and New Services**

- Transit network projects underway include: Eglinton Crosstown, Hurontario, Hamilton and Finch West light rail transit (LRT); Eglinton Crosstown West Extension to Pearson International Airport, the Ontario Line, Yonge North Subway Extension, and Scarborough Subway Extension; and two-way, all-day 15 minute services across the GO Rail network;
- Conceptual cross-regional rapid transit connections include: a new east-west line between Burlington and Oshawa that connects existing and proposed GO Rail, subway, LRT lines outside of Union Station; and a new transit loop that connects the Ontario Line to new major transit hubs including Pearson International Airport and Richmond Hill Centre;
- Work with municipal transit agencies to improve schedule and service integration and streamline fare structures to improve transit and the rider experience, and
- Prioritize active transportation and local transit improvements that connect the regional transit network.

### **3. Supporting a More Sustainable and Resilient Region – Lowering Green House Gas Emissions**

- Leverage electric, connected and automated vehicles, and other mobility technologies;
- Work with partner Ministries to develop a strategy to reduce emissions and support Made-in-Ontario vehicle manufacturing through the procurement and operation of low-carbon Ontario Government and Agency fleet vehicles, including exploring the use of alternative fuels, fuel additives and electric vehicles, and
- Establish guidance, standards and/or minimum targets to support the implementation of green infrastructure and low impact development approaches, such as green roofs, green pavements, bioswales (channels designed to concentrate and move stormwater runoff while removing debris and pollution) and low-carbon energy technologies in the delivery of transportation infrastructure.

### **4. Efficiently Moving Goods**

- Develop and implement GGH-wide standards, criteria and thresholds for strategic goods movement network;
- Reduce cross-border barriers for goods movement;
- Streamline inspection and administrative burdens on commercial vehicle operators, and
- Improve efficiency of urban freight delivery and reduce conflicts with other road users such as car drivers and pedestrians.

### **Impacts to Newmarket**

Planning staff, in consultation with Transportation Services staff, have identified the following impacts that the GGH Transportation Plan may have on the Town:

- The all-day 15 minute GO service will be beneficial to the Town by providing more frequent services to residents;
- The Yonge North Subway extension may cause a shift in traveling choice from driving to the Finch/Fairview subway stations to taking transit from Newmarket to the south;
- The Bradford Bypass is also expected to be a benefit to the Town - Town Transportation staff anticipate that this would significantly reduce east-west traffic in the Town. Mulock Drive and Davis Drive (and Green Lane) would experience a drop in traffic volumes thereby improving traffic flow. This should also help traffic associated with the Mulock Station Area Secondary Plan.

In reviewing the technical appendices of the GGH Transportation Plan, staff note that the Province divided the GGH into eight, relatively self-contained geographic areas (sheds) for the

purpose of evaluating infrastructure options. According to [Map A2 in Appendix D](#), Newmarket is part of the North shed for the purpose of analyzing infrastructure options. Staff question the rationale of including Newmarket (and Aurora) in the North shed given that many Newmarket residents commute south to the Central shed and the presence of existing (and planned) transit and transportation networks.

## **Next Steps for the Province**

The GGH Transportation Plan outlines next steps that the Province is to undertake. These include:

- Collaborate with Federal and Provincial infrastructure and service providers and agencies, Indigenous communities, railway companies, port and airport authorities, and border crossing agencies to implement the GGH Transportation Plan;
- Align the Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan with the GGH Transportation Plan, and
- Work with municipal transit service agencies to improve service integration and streamline fare structures.

## **Conclusion**

The [GGH Transportation Plan](#) will inform planning and program delivery for the Ministry of Transportation and Metrolinx for the next 30 years to improve the transportation system across Ontario.

## **Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages**

None

## **Consultation**

None

## **Human Resource Considerations**

None

## **Budget Impact**

None

## **Attachments**

None

## **Contact**

Phoebe Chow, Senior Planner – Policy, [pchow@newmarket.ca](mailto:pchow@newmarket.ca)

## **Approval**

Adrian Cammaert, Manager, Planning Services

Jason Unger, Director, Planning and Building Services

Peter Noehammer, Commissioner, Development & Infrastructure Services