



Transportation Master Plan

Community engagement
Round one Q&A results

Closed: This discussion has concluded.

Introduction

Through the Transportation Master Plan, we are planning for the future of all types of transportation in Guelph. A new era of transportation in Guelph is beginning. You can play a role in defining it.

We asked: What questions do you think this plan needs to answer in order to ensure the next 20 years of transportation can achieve that vision?

You can review the input and responses we received in 2019 below.

Engagement preamble

The second half of the 20th Century was the Automobile Era. Cities were built to meet the needs of the car. Streets were wide, parking was plentiful and free, and cities were developed to accommodate the car because travel by personal vehicle allowed us to go farther, faster.

But a new era of transportation is beginning, caused by growing awareness and impacts of climate change, new trends and technologies, shifts in how we live, work and shop, increasing congestion and persistent road safety concerns.

As a City, we need to plan ahead for these changes so that our community is prepared and can continue to thrive. Now is the time to explore how we can make Guelph move better in every way. We are exploring how to best shape the future of transportation infrastructure, technology and services in our city. We are looking at all the ways we move: walking, cycling, riding transit, driving, trucking and using trains.

The Community Plan provides a strong vision for moving around our city, and we are using that vision and our Official Plan to build the Transportation Master Plan.

Next, we need to hear from you.

Engagement results

We asked: What questions do you think this plan needs to answer in order to ensure the next 20 years of transportation can achieve that vision?

You replied:

1. The use of cars/dependency on them in urban areas is passé ... why is the city fixated on more downtown parking/parking garages?

Response: Hi, Nathan. The Transportation Master Plan is considering a future that emphasizes travel by bus, bike, walking, ridesharing and other modes more than we have in the past. We recognize that the world has changed and continues to change. The decision to invest in the downtown parking garages are based on a demonstrated need, and were supported by empirical data. As we look to the next 20 years, the Transportation Master Plan will help lay a foundation for a transition toward a less car-dependent downtown and surrounding city that will relieve those pressures for future parking expansions.

2. Is the City of Guelph considering light rail options along the Gordon Street corridor? There is a condo corridor planned for Clair-Maltby and a lot of condo intensification along the Gordon corridor that exists already. It is an opportunity to have land-use and transit developed together to support the anticipated increase of residents in this area. Surrounding municipalities such as Kitchener-Waterloo & Cambridge are making huge strides in light rail developments. Or even a rapid bus system like Davis Drive Rapidway in Newmarket would be a nice addition to the City. Is Guelph looking at ways to calm traffic instead of speeding it up? If so how? There are more arterial roads planned for the City but this does not mean they have to be highways (which many motorists currently treat them as). As an active transportation advocate I hope to see more action on safety considerations. Will Guelph be addressing images by select groups advertised on the buses? I am not going to say specifically - but most people know, and some refuse to ride on a transit system that supports certain views. Just curious if there will be a rebranding of Guelph transit.

Response: Hi BryanM! Thanks for these great questions. We have provided answers to each of your separate queries below.

- a) Is the City of Guelph considering light rail options along the Gordon Street corridor? There is a condo corridor planned for Clair-Maltby and a lot of condo intensification along the Gordon corridor that exists already. It is an opportunity to have land-use and transit developed together to support the anticipated increase of residents in this area. Surrounding municipalities such as Kitchener-Waterloo & Cambridge are making huge strides in light rail developments. Or even a rapid bus system like Davis Drive Rapidway in Newmarket would be a nice addition to the City.

Response: Transit is identified as a priority in the Community Plan and therefore is an important component of the Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The TMP will consider where it makes the most sense to prioritize

transit. Some of the considerations will include land use planning policies and trends. Road characteristics, such as available property, would also be considered, as well as expected traffic volumes. Gordon Street is a likely candidate for prioritizing transit infrastructure. The TMP will confirm that, but will not commit to what kind of transit vehicles, what routes need changing, or what frequency of service is required. Those details will come through a subsequent Transit Master Plan, currently anticipated to begin in 2020.

- b) Is Guelph looking at ways to calm traffic instead of speeding it up? If so how? There are more arterial roads planned for the City but this does not mean they have to be highways (which many motorists currently treat them as). As an active transportation advocate I hope to see more action on safety considerations.

Response: The TMP's vision is for a safe, equitable transportation system. Safety considerations will be embedded into the TMP through the policy recommendations and in the proposed infrastructure changes. The TMP will explore themes of Vision Zero, traffic calming, and Multimodal Levels of Service (MMLOS) to address safety for all road users equitably and affordably. MMLOS is an evolution of Level of Service (LOS), a traditional traffic engineering concept that evaluates streets based on delay and available capacity for cars. While LOS only considers inconvenience for cars, MMLOS considers the experience that the street provides to all of its users.

- c) Will Guelph be addressing images by select groups advertised on the buses? I am not going to say specifically - but most people know, and some refuse to ride on a transit system that supports certain views. Just curious if there will be a rebranding of Guelph transit.

Response: While bus advertising is out of the scope of the Transportation Master Plan, it is valuable feedback that we are sharing with Guelph Transit. For further information, please see the Council Approved [Advertising Acceptability Policy](#), dated October 03, 2016. This document governs all advertising within the city, not just on Guelph Transit vehicles.

3. What will the city do to protect cyclists on the roads?

Response: Thanks for the question Andrew. Safe transportation systems for all users is one of the core values of the Transportation Master Plan. Later this fall we will be creating a Complete Street Design Guide to update transportation design practices in Guelph. User safety, including cyclist safety, will be a key consideration in the recommended design practices.

4. How can we reduce the number of vehicles on our roads?

Response: This is a great question for the Transportation Master Plan to address, Guelphite55. Reducing vehicles is the direct result of making

alternatives attractive, accessible and affordable. The Transportation Master Plan will establish policies, guidelines, networks and programs to help guide our community toward a more balanced, multi-modal, safe and effective transportation network that serves both personal travel and goods movement.

It is worth noting that the City's Sustainable Transportation team is already engaged in supporting growth of sustainable transportation in Guelph.

5. If bus routes are being reconsidered, is it possible to have a bus go out closer to the Whitelaw road area? There are several people who walk that rd between 124 and Fife on a daily basis, with no sidewalk. It's very unsafe, especially in the winter months.

Response: Hi Rlk, thank you for this question. The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) will look at transit as part of the overall menu of transportation options in Guelph, and make recommendations about how to make the most of our transit services. Route change recommendations would be a level of detail addressed by a future Transit Master Plan. Guelph Transit will be starting an updated Transit Master Plan once the TMP is completed.

6. A major contributor to congestion downtown during peak hours are trains that shunt back and forth for 10-40 minutes at a time at paisley and edinborough. This blocks traffic on both roads for long stretches, including buses and commuters at the busiest times of the day (~9am, noon, ~5pm). Limiting, rerouting, or rescheduling this traffic could make a big impact in congestion. Will the city address the issues around this crossing & trainyard as part of the master plan?

Response: Hi JH, thanks for the question. This is a difficult one. The tracks and rail yard near the Paisley Road/ Edinburgh Road South intersection are owned by CN Rail and rail operations do impact the operation of Edinburgh Road South at various times of day. Rail schedules are in the control of CN and can change without much warning. We will engage with CN to get a clear understanding of their vision for the function of the rail line to 2041. We will review the assumptions for the capacity and operations of Edinburgh Road South in the municipal transportation system and make adjustments during the network planning phases of the study to reflect the impact of the rail operations.

More Questions:

7. Why are we converting all the roads from 4 lanes to single lanes of traffic? as in woolwich at Norfolk, woodlawn from the speed river up the hill to Victoria as examples. These are fairly major arteries and as you may classify these as calming measures, traffic is held up with vehicles unable to enter the roadway from side streets, driveways and business entries due to the long lanes of single vehicles all attempting to clear the intersection or what ever. this is almost becoming ridiculous. Guelph is no longer a small town and the rivers limit the routes around the city, we don't need single lanes for all the vehicles passing through.

Response: Hi Ed, thanks for your comment. The Vision for Transportation Master Plan includes a commitment to create a transportation system that is safe for all users. Speed management measures, such as traffic calming, are important tools for creating safe and complete streets for all users. The Transportation Master Plan will also consider the expected population and employment growth along with the road network we have, and will be identifying issues and opportunities to ensure the next 20 years maintain reasonable traffic flow for all types of traffic, including pedestrians, bikes, buses, trucks and cars.

8. Would like to know if any information sessions are planned for cyclists to learn about right of way with all the new bike lanes etc.

Response: Hi Rick, That is a great suggestion! The Transportation Master Plan will lay out high-level policies and recommendations for how and where we design cycling facilities, but the staff implementing the plan will be responsible for supporting that work with outreach and education campaigns. Currently, Sustainable Transportation staff develop these materials and promote them at local events, through various media channels, and by providing occasional bike riding training. Please visit guelph.ca/bike for more information!

9. People clearly need to be educated on how viable and required bike lanes are to a city structure and how study upon study shows density is what makes a city viable, long term, not "modern" urban spacing. Any plans for brochures, pamphlets, courses, ad campaigns, etc. to introduce more right leaning mindsets to the concept of city sustainability?

Response: Hi BikesRGood, thanks for your comment and question. The Community Plan tells us that our Guelph wants to get around more easily by more modes, including cycling, walking and public transit. The Transportation Master Plan will recommend ways to achieve this, both with our existing transportation system, and through policy change recommendations in how we build and grow in the future. The Transportation Master Plan will also feed into the Official Plan update, to help guide where density makes most sense (e.g. along identified transit priority corridors).

10. How can we make it easier for our commuters to get to and from the GO train (including the early trains)?

Response: Hi Nrichar, thank you for your question. Improved regional transit is one of the values in the Community Plan's vision for how we get around our community. These vision statements and values are the foundation of our Transportation Master Plan, and will result in recommended goals, objectives and targets for Transit to achieve over the next 20 years. The next Transit master plan will address the details of how.

11. How do we create real walkable neighbourhoods, where it's easier to walk, ride a bike and take public transit (over driving a car or taking a taxi)?

Response: Rodrigo, thank you for your question. The Community Plan's transportation vision states that "...active transportation routes help address the traffic congestion that can follow rapid growth", and also states "people feel safe [...] riding their bikes through all corners of our city." Further, it envisions a city where "Transit is a priority". These vision statements and values are the foundation of our Transportation Master Plan (TMP), and will guide policy and planning decisions that come out of the final TMP.

12. Why are bus stops so inconveniently placed? Only Stone Road Mall actually takes us to within reasonable walking distance to an actual destination, and the hospital. But groceries? Hardware store? Cinema? 300 meters from the door at best! In other cities, public transit takes us to where we are going, and in Canada, esp in winter, this is very important.

Response: Garym, thank you for sharing your feedback. The Official Plan policies in section 5.5.2 direct development and city building to be transit-supportive. Guelph Transit does its best to plan routes and stops as close to major destinations as possible: for example the Walmart Smart Centre has bus stops within the parking lot, and Route 16 drops passengers off right behind the Pergola Commons Cineplex. The Transportation Master Plan policy recommendations may include language to continue to support transit-oriented development. The next Transit Master Plan and the Zoning Bylaw are other tools to get more into the specifics of how to achieve that objective.

13. Are you going to have a cell phone number at bus stops to learn the time of the next bus?

Response: Thanks for your question! All bus stops currently have a phone number you can call to hear the time of the next bus arrival.

14. Are you going to install "PORTAGE" signs down the Speed and Eramosa rivers to aid paddlers avoid the dams and waterfalls?

Response: Hi, Hastings. Thanks for the suggestion! Water-based transportation is not within the scope of this study but is in scope for the Guelph Trail Master Plan Update project, which is currently underway. For further information please contact helen.white@guelph.ca.

15. Will the master plan take into account the climate crisis we are experiencing on a global level? Will options like roundabouts and other non-stop options be explored to limit the stop-and-go traffic? Will the master plan include how to mitigate extra traffic during the school months for students but also keep transportation accessible during the summer months? Will the City of Guelph offer accessible and affordable (or free) courses on bike maintenance so residents can feel safe and in control of their alternate transportation?

Response: Thank you for your questions! I will answer each of them here.

- a) Will the master plan take into account the climate crisis we are experiencing on a global level?

Response: The City of Guelph is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from our community. The Official Plan sets a target of 60% reduction by 2031 based on 2007 levels. The City has also adopted a Net Zero Carbon target for 2050. Both of these targets rely on substantial reductions from the transportation sector. The TMP will present recommendations and policies that move us toward achieving these targets.

- b) Will options like roundabouts and other non-stop options be explored to limit the stop-and-go traffic?

Response: Network operations includes considering road capacity, movement of modes, and intersection operations. This will be studied as part of the TMP and will result in recommendations to address safety, efficiency, and multi-modal levels of service. Roundabouts represent one solution to controlling the interaction of different modes at intersections. The TMP will review the hierarchy of streets, how they interact, and how different modes are served and prioritised via certain treatments and in certain contexts.

- c) Will the master plan include how to mitigate extra traffic during the school months for students but also keep transportation accessible during the summer months?

Response: The TMP will focus on the performance of the elements of the network during school months when these elements are at their busiest. Solutions will be focused on providing increased options for travel by all modes, which allow residents to change how they travel depending on their needs or time of year.

- d) Will the City of Guelph offer accessible and affordable (or free) courses on bike maintenance so residents can feel safe and in control of their alternate transportation?

Response: Please contact the project lead, Jennifer Juste to be directed to the appropriate staff person to answer this question in detail. While the City offers occasional cycling related courses, there are many community partners we work with that offer other programs that we can share with you as well.

16. How can we ensure sustainable and effective public transportation within the city when new subdivisions are still being built based on car use? How can we cost-effectively link Guelph with other urban centres in a way that doesn't add more than an hour of extra travel time to a location that is just one hour away. What alternatives are there to large urban transit busses especially in off-peak times? How can driverless options fit? What about hiring taxis as they do in some rural areas until newer options are available? How can we effectively manage alternatives to gas/diesel powered vehicles? (e.g. charging stations?) How can we effectively manage alternatives to owning personal vehicles to get around? (e.g. car sharing options for driven and autonomous vehicles,) How can we make greater use of roundabouts to maintain traffic flow like they do all over the place in England?

Response: Some great questions in here, BBB! Let me break them out.

- a) How can we ensure sustainable and effective public transportation within the city when new subdivisions are still being built based on car use?

Response: The City's Official Plan has been updated to direct new subdivision growth to be compact and to achieve densities that support walkable communities, cycling and transit and promote live/work opportunities. The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) will build on this direction by taking a multimodal integrated approach to transportation planning that recognizes connections with land use and design. This includes creating policies surrounding redefining the hierarchy of streets and how different modes are prioritised, with an emphasis on travel by sustainable modes (walking, cycling, and transit). The TMP will create tools that measure the performance of the intersections, streets, corridors, and networks differently than we have historically done and ensure that equitable, safe, and affordable transportation options exist for all.

- b) How can we cost-effectively link Guelph with other urban centres in a way that doesn't add more than an hour of extra travel time to a location that is just one hour away.

Response: Supporting trips that start or end outside of the City of Guelph is part of the modeling exercise of the TMP. Developing the TMP involves the neighbouring communities as stakeholders, as well as Metrolinx and the Ministry of Transportation. Final recommendations coming out of the TMP will be aligned with the community's vision for transportation (provided in the Official Plan and the Community Plan), and also be informed by provincial strategies and plans that affect travel beyond our boundaries.

- c) What alternatives are there to large urban transit busses especially in off-peak times? How can driverless options fit? What about hiring taxis as they do in some rural areas until newer options are available? How can we effectively manage alternatives to gas/diesel powered vehicles? (e.g. charging stations?)

Response: The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) includes 7 policy white papers (background research and recommendations) to help inform the final recommendations. Understanding future technology changes, shifts in market behaviour, and sociodemographics will be captured in these white papers and reflected through a number of policies and recommendations. Some of these recommendations will be used to inform the next Transit Master Plan, anticipated to begin in 2020.

- d) How can we effectively manage alternatives to owning personal vehicles to get around? (e.g., car sharing options for driven and autonomous vehicles)

Response: The TMP will recommend policies and projects that make alternatives to driving a car solo more attractive and available.

- e) How can we make greater use of roundabouts to maintain traffic flow like they do all over the place in England?

Response: Network operations includes considering road capacity, movement of modes, and intersection operations. This will be studied as part of the TMP and will result in recommendations to address safety, efficiency, and multi-modal levels of service. Roundabouts represent one solution to controlling the interaction of different modes at intersections. The TMP will review the hierarchy of streets, how they interact, and how different modes are served and prioritised via certain treatments and in certain contexts.

17. Why is Guelph not moving to using protected bike lanes in new developments and in all road work environments. Protected bike lanes increase ridership which should be our ultimate goal.

Response: Hi, Lorelei. This is a good question that others are likely to ask as well. Current road projects are following the guidance of the 2013 Cycling Master Plan (guelph.ca/bike) and the 2017 Active Transportation Network study (guelph.ca/atn). These studies are approved by Council and recommend the preferred design of cycling facilities in the roadway. However, staff continuously seek opportunities to exceed the design standards recommended in these plans according to North American best practices wherever possible.

The Transportation Master Plan will include policy goals and targets, including consideration of how we prioritize the movement of different modes of transportation in Guelph to be safe, sustainable, balanced, equitable and affordable. This may result in changes to how decisions are made on future road design projects.

For example, provision of All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling facilities that are attractive and safe for all users is context-sensitive and does not necessarily require physical separation of bikes and cars if other conditions can be met. Other interventions to reduce the number of vehicles on the road and slow the remaining vehicles can often create safe and attractive cycling facilities that will increase the number of people choosing to bike.

18. Given that Guelph's population is required to increase significantly by 2020 is it not appropriate to plan to add an additional access route to the 401? The location for the route in mind would be best suited in the Watson Road area.

Response: Yes, the population is expected to grow from 132,000 now, to approximately 190,000 by 2041. The Transportation Master Plan will review local and regional aspects of travel for Guelph residents, recognizing the important regional connections for employment and goods movement.

As a new connection to the 401 south of Watson Road falls outside of the city boundary, it is beyond the scope of the Transportation Master Plan. However, the TMP includes the neighbouring communities as stakeholders, as well as Metrolinx and the Ministry of Transportation. Final recommendations coming out of the TMP will be informed by regional and provincial strategies and plans that affect travel beyond our boundaries. These will form the basis for conversations surrounding future regional connections to major municipal and provincial facilities.

19. The most comprehensive study of bicycle and road safety to date out of University of Colorado shows that separated and protected bike lanes leads to fewer fatalities and better road-safety outcomes for all road users, not just people on bikes. As president of Guelph Coalition for Active Transportation, I am very interested in pursuing the best way forward for Guelph to get protected cycling infrastructure in areas where people go to, such as schools, shops, etc, in order to keep all road users as safe as possible. In your experience, what can we do to get this type of infrastructure sooner rather than later?

Response: Yvette, thank you for your question. The Community Plan's transportation vision states that "...active transportation routes help address the traffic congestion that can follow rapid growth", and also states "people feel safe [...] riding their bikes through all corners of our city." While the TMP won't provide a comprehensive update to the Cycling Master Plan, it will provide some guidance and policy direction to inform the next update to the Cycling Master Plan. This could include identifying priority corridors and appropriate road designs to support All-Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling. The implementation strategy in the TMP will give some direction to the timing and prioritization of projects as well.

20. We need more charging stations for electric vehicles. What will the city do to ensure that more are available? There are few options for public transportation to our neighboring cities: Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge to name a few. What can Guelph and the other municipalities do to enable accessible cross city transportation?

Response: This is a good question. The Community Plan's vision for transportation states "smart, clean technology is embedded in our infrastructure." The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) includes 7 policy white papers (background research and recommendations) to help inform the final recommendations. Understanding future technology changes, shifts in market behaviour, and sociodemographics will be captured in these white papers and reflected through a number of policies and recommendations.

The TMP includes the neighbouring communities as stakeholders, as well as Metrolinx and the Ministry of Transportation. Final recommendations coming out of the TMP will be informed by provincial strategies and plans that affect travel beyond our boundaries.

21. Since bicycle lanes have proven to be a complete waste of valuable traffic lanes, will they be eliminated from any future transportation plans?

Response: Hi, Rick. Thank you for sharing your point of view. Transportation must serve all road users and vehicle types safely and equitably. The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is taking a multimodal integrated approach to transportation planning. This will include revisiting how we classify our roads, what modes we prioritize and where, and how to design the roadways appropriately to achieve the TMP's vision and goals.

While the TMP won't provide an update to the Cycling Master Plan, it will provide some guidance and policy direction to inform the next update to the Cycling Master Plan. This could include identifying priority corridors and appropriate road designs to support All-Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling.

22. With the dramatic increase in the number of electric vehicles projected in the near future, what are the city's plans for charging stations throughout the city, but especially in the downtown core.

Response: Rick, this is definitely an important trend to be following. The Community Plan's vision for transportation states "smart, clean technology is embedded in our infrastructure." The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) includes 7 policy white papers (background research and recommendations) to help inform the final recommendations. Understanding future technology changes, shifts in market behaviour, and sociodemographics will be captured in these white papers and reflected through a number of policies and recommendations.

23. How do we use land use planning (zoning by-laws) as a tool to support our future transportation strategy?

Response: Hi, Brandon. Thank you for asking this important question. The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is one of the 5 servicing master plans to inform the "Municipal Comprehensive Review of the Official Plan". At this time, staff anticipates commencing a municipal comprehensive review of our Official Plan later in 2019. The next update is due in July 2022. The TMP is being developed now to inform the next Official Plan and ensure that our development, intensification, and transportation system work together.

A zoning bylaw is one tool that the City uses to implement the policy direction in the Official Plan. A zoning bylaw outlines specific uses of land and can also regulate many things including the number of parking spaces required for cars and bicycles. We are currently doing a comprehensive review of our 1995 Zoning Bylaw to bring it into conformity with our current Official Plan. Future updates to our zoning bylaw may be required to implement future Official Plans.

24. How can we remove congestion in the downtown during peak periods? How can we make it easier to get from one place to the other using mass transit within the city? How can we make connecting to near neighbour cities (Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge) faster and simpler?

Response: Great questions, James. The Community Plan's vision for transportation states that frequent and affordable transit with connections to neighbouring communities is a priority. This forms the basis for developing our strategies in the Transportation Master Plan (TMP).

Later this summer, the TMP will invite the public and other stakeholders to identify issues and challenges. The TMP will develop several alternative scenarios to model different approaches to addressing these challenges. Both of these steps will involve community engagement.

The TMP also includes the neighbouring communities as stakeholders, as well as Metrolinx and the Ministry of Transportation. Final recommendations coming out of the TMP will be informed by provincial strategies and plans that affect travel beyond our boundaries.

25. When will the city finally listen to the people about Guelph Transit. Our transit system in one word "sucks". Just over the last winter I have had to wait in bitter cold for a bus that is standing around with no driver in it at the University hub... waiting inside is not an option because the driver (route 17) is inside the UC and always arrives back at the bus late and lets those waiting around the bus in and then proceeds to drive like a maniac to get the bus back on schedule. (passengers are literally being tossed about in the bus). In the morning the 6:50 am Elmira/Fife stop of the route 18 bus is always 5-10 minutes early, he drives like mad until Stone Road where he stops at Tim Hortons for coffee. And if this bus is missed because of its early arrival, you have to wait more than half an hour for the next one.. our city is not that big that we need to have that long of wait times. These are just two examples of horrible transit planning for the city of Guelph for which we pay the same rate as convenient, bigger city, longer distance transit services. Passengers in Guelph travel on average maybe 4-5kms on a bus, making \$3 a little steep. People have been suggesting a grid system, and I think this should be looked at again... we don't have to congregate all the buses in the same place at a hub, why retrace the same roads with multiple buses when so many areas are barely covered with our routes? Let's fix the transit service in Guelph! Thanks, Frank

Response: Thank you, Frank. You raise some important issues about current Transit services. The Community Plan's vision for transportation states that frequent and affordable transit is a priority. As a result, the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) will make recommendations to inform the next Transit Master Plan. The Transit Master Plan is expected to begin following the approval of the TMP in 2020. Stay involved to follow how this question will be addressed throughout the project.

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