



MARKHAM TRANSPORTATION PLANNING STUDY 2002



ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMISSION
JUNE 2002

Traffic congestion is one of our most serious problems.

- **Gridlock negatively affects quality of life.**
Traffic congestion adds to the cost of transporting goods and materials, increases response time for emergency vehicles, and generates emissions that damage the environment and human health.
- **By 2021, Markham's residential population and employment will have almost doubled from 1991 levels.**
The resulting traffic volume will significantly exceed the capacity of already crowded roadways.
- **Travel patterns are changing.**
Although southbound travel continues to Toronto, northbound, eastbound and westbound traffic is steadily increasing due to significant growth throughout the GTA.
- **In North America, more money is spent to market the use of the private automobile than is spent to fund transit systems.**
Despite roadway congestion, the automobile remains the preferred mode of transportation for the majority of Markham's residents and employees.

The Markham Transportation Planning Study 2002 is a call to action!

- **MTPS-2002 was initiated in 1999 to address the issue of traffic congestion.**
The study builds upon an earlier report (MTPS-1994) to recommend a transportation infrastructure that will support growth during the next 20 years.
- **A transportation model was created to assess Markham's road network.**
The town was divided into a number of traffic zones, 1996 was chosen to represent base year conditions, and horizon years were set at 2003, 2006, 2011 and 2021. The following information was considered for each year:

Population and Employment Forecasts
Major Travel Patterns
Major Traffic Generators

Road Network
Modes of Travel
Traffic Volumes



Traffic congestion is inconvenient, inefficient and annoying. It generates emissions that harm the environment and human health.



- **The Town hosted events and held meetings in Markham's four communities to obtain public feedback about public transit.**

Responses confirmed that significantly improved transit facilities, routes and schedules will be required before public transit is considered a viable alternative to the automobile.

- **A transit modal split (usage of transit as a mode of travel) of 19% has been targeted for the year 2021.**

19% is the town-wide average. The current level of public transit usage is 10%. A 30% target has been set for areas with higher densities (i.e. Markham Centre and Highway 7).

- **MTPS-2002 focuses on short, medium and long-term goals.**

A 20-Year Action Plan will affect a shift from traditional automotive-based travel to rapid transit and other sustainable modes of transportation.

Markham's Four-Point Plan addresses and resolves key transportation issues.

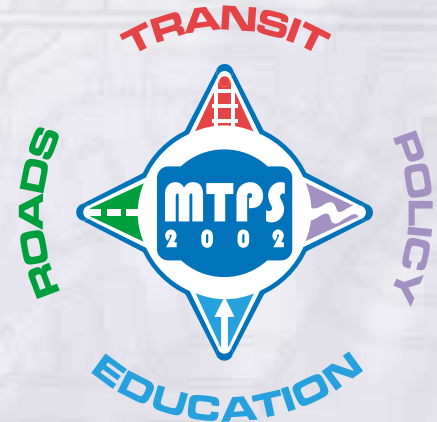
1. RAPID TRANSIT

- **Three Rapid Transit Corridors are planned for the Markham area.**

The **Yonge Street Corridor** will provide a direct link to the Finch Subway Station and facilitate travel to and from the northern municipalities in York Region.

The **Highway 7 Corridor** spans the entire town, connecting east to Durham and west to Richmond Hill. The West Section incorporates connections with the Yonge Street Corridor and GO Transit, and includes the business parks adjacent to Highway 404. The Central Section integrates the development of Markham Centre and rapid transit connections with the Warden Avenue Corridor. The East Section includes Markham-Stouffville Hospital, Markville Shopping Centre and new employment lands in the Cornell South development.

The **Warden Avenue Corridor** will provide a direct link to the new Don Mills Station (scheduled to open Fall 2002) on the Sheppard subway line (TTC).



Markham's Four-Point plan combines Rapid Transit, Road Network, Policy and Education initiatives



- ***Funding challenges are being addressed.***

Markham worked closely with Richmond Hill, Vaughan and the Region of York to launch a public-private partnership initiative in late 2001. The private-sector partner will provide expertise and a financial strategy to make rapid transit a reality. The municipalities will ensure that the public's long-term interests are served. A private-sector partner has been secured and an announcement is forthcoming.

- ***Regulatory approvals for transit corridors are being obtained through Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) studies.***

The terms of reference for the Yonge Street Corridor have already been submitted to the Ministry of the Environment. The Highway 7 Corridor EA is progressing and will be submitted later in 2002. The Warden Avenue Corridor EA will be initiated in 2002.

2. ROADS NETWORK

- ***The Road Improvement plan focuses on high-volume routes.***

Additional roads or road widenings are recommended only when they are required to support the transit network, or provide connectivity throughout Markham or to neighbouring municipalities.

- ***The efficiency of existing roadways will be improved.***

Traffic signal modifications, additional turn lanes, traffic calming initiatives and dedicated transit rights-of-way will increase the efficiency of existing roads.

- ***A modified 10-Year Capital Plan is being pursued with the Region of York.***

Although the Region's 10-Year Capital Plan for arterial roads in the Markham area will provide the necessary capacity to handle projected traffic volumes in 2011, some improvements will need to be advanced to meet interim needs. These improvements are primarily for roads that connect with or cross Highways 404 and 407.

- ***MTPS-2002 addresses environmental, heritage and new development issues.***

Special areas of concern include Main Street Markham, Victoria Square, Verclair Gate, Village Parkway, Sciberras Road and the east end of Markham. The potential impacts of a new Provincial plan to develop the Seaton Lands in Pickering, and a Federal initiative for a general aviation airport on lands that overlap the York-Durham boundary, will require further study.



3. POLICY INITIATIVES

- ***Amendments to the Official Plan are required.***

Lands will need to be acquired and protected for rapid transit corridors and new road links.

- ***Markham Centre will be a catalyst for urban developments that balance residential and employment uses.***

Markham Centre will provide enhanced opportunities for people to both live and work in Markham. Rapid transit will provide sufficient capacity and service frequency to accommodate transportation needs.

- ***New urban design guidelines will promote non-automotive modes of travel.***

The incorporation of convenient transit stops or stations within office and retail developments will promote increased transit use. Additional sidewalks, adequate lighting, bicycle paths and pedestrian trails will accommodate walking and biking in urban areas.

- ***A Parking Authority will be established.***

If prime land is allocated for parking lots, more automobile traffic will result. A Parking Authority, operated in conjunction with the municipality, will be used as a mechanism to optimize land development potential.

4. EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

- ***Information sessions, public relations and marketing initiatives will raise public awareness.***

Non-automotive modes of travel provide significant environmental and health-related benefits. These benefits must be clearly communicated to affect change.

- ***Travel demand management strategies will help to reduce traffic volumes.***

Partnerships with the business community will promote staggered business hours, carpooling, telecommuting and transit incentive programs to reduce congestion during peak periods.

- ***Transportation Management Associations will maintain a local focus.***

Markham plans to establish Transportation Management Associations comprising interested employers, institutions and residents to ensure that local transportation issues are addressed.

