



Report: P-14-011

## Region of Waterloo

### Planning, Housing and Community Services

#### Transportation Planning

---

**To:** Chair Jim Wideman and Members of the Planning and Works Committee

**Date:** January 28, 2014 **File Code:** D09-90

**Subject:** **Regional Transportation Master Plan – Progress Report**

---

#### Recommendation

For information.

#### Summary

The Region of Waterloo is already the fourth largest community in Ontario and the tenth largest community in Canada. Provincial forecasts continue to identify Waterloo Region as a major growth centre for the future, with an estimated population of 730,000 and an additional 80,000 jobs being anticipated by the year 2031. The Regional Official Plan (ROP), approved by Regional Council, establishes the vision and means of accommodating this growth, and is founded on limiting outward growth, higher densities of development, and the protection of agricultural lands and environmental systems. In order to accommodate growth and to achieve this vision, an effective supporting transportation system is essential.

The year 2014 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the Region's first transportation master plan (completed in 1999) that focused on investing in a variety of modes of transportation (i.e. private vehicles, public transit, walking and cycling). The previous transportation master plans of 1976 and 1986 were more focused on moving large volumes of private vehicles on Regional roads, compared to today's focus of moving people in a variety of ways.

In the year 2000, the Region of Waterloo created Grand River Transit, initially assuming fleet and facilities from the Cities of Cambridge and Kitchener and growing the system to its present form.

In 2010, the Regional Transportation Master Plan (RTMP) was completely revised and updated, and further refined to reflect the construction of Rapid Transit (ION), approved in 2011 and scheduled to be operational in 2017.

The purpose of this report is to provide highlights of transportation investment and the measurable results of that investment, focusing on the last fifteen years. Among those results are as follows:

- Grand River Transit annual ridership has already achieved the RTMP forecast for 2016, four years ahead of schedule, and is now 22 million;
- Current ridership on iXpress and Route 7 between Conestoga Mall and Fairview Park Mall is 20,000 rides per day, which is approaching the 2017 target ridership of 25,000 on the ION light rail;
- Since 2006, cycling lanes have nearly doubled to almost 300 km;
- Since 2004, almost \$250 million has been invested in expansion of the Regional road network;
- Since 2009, the Province has invested about \$150 million in Regional highways;
- The Transportation Management Association has been promoted to more than 8% of the Region-wide workforce, and in one year 5% of TMA-participating employees surveyed have shifted from driving alone to more sustainable modes of travel;
- All Grand River Transit buses are now fully accessible; and
- The EasyGo electronic traveller information system has increased to over 5 million uses annually, compared to less than 1 million in 2008.

This report will be posted on the Region's website as part of the Big Shift Toolbox, to help the community and prospective investors understand the Region's focus on transportation infrastructure that will sustain compact urban redevelopment.

## Report

### Overview

The Region of Waterloo is already the fourth largest community in Ontario and the tenth largest community in Canada. Provincial growth forecasts continue to identify Waterloo Region as a major growth centre for the future, with an estimated population of 730,000 and an additional 80,000 jobs being anticipated by the year 2031. The Region's approach to accommodating new growth is defined in the Regional Official Plan (ROP), approved by Council in 2009. It is founded on limiting outward expansion of new development, higher densities of development, and the protection of agricultural lands and sensitive environmental areas (e.g. areas of groundwater recharge and discharge, the source of about 80% of our water consumption). In short, new growth is to be accommodated in a more compact way, with a significant focus on new development within existing built-up areas and excellence in urban design. Over 50% of new residential development is already occurring in built-up areas, and higher densities of development that meet or exceed the Provincial Growth Plan are already being achieved.

The accommodation of growth in a more compact way is dependent on an effective supporting transportation system. The 2010 Regional Transportation Master Plan (RTMP), approved by Regional Council, identified a plan for moving people that shifted toward even greater investment in transit, cycling and walking. A key element of the RTMP is rapid transit, and the ION system that was approved in 2011 will move people between Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo beginning in 2017. Absent this strategy, the Region would be faced with having to construct 500 new lane kilometers of new roadways. This is not only a costly proposition, but it would also require major new land takings in a variety of neighbourhoods and communities throughout the Region.

### **Regional Transportation Master Plan**

The Regional Transportation Master Plan (RTMP) was approved by Regional Council in 2010 and provides strategic direction for planning, designing and building a regional transportation network that supports a compact urban form, vibrant urban centres, protects the environment and enhances the quality of life for citizens. It recognizes that the estimated 170,000 more people and 80,000 more jobs by 2031 need to be accommodated by the transportation system. The RTMP focuses on moving people instead of moving automobiles, and investments in public transit and active transportation are needed to avoid constructing 500 lane-kilometres of new roads.

The development of the RTMP reflected four major goals for the transportation system:

1. Optimize the system: Make the most of the existing transportation network and minimize the need for new infrastructure that does not promote the other goals. For example, optimize traffic signal timings instead of adding travel lanes.
2. Promote choice: Offer competitive alternatives for moving people and goods in an integrated and seamless manner, and reduce single occupant vehicle trips. For example, improve the public transit and active transportation networks.
3. Foster a strong economy: Provide a transportation system that supports the retention of existing businesses and attracts sustainable economic activity. For example, eliminate bottlenecks in road networks that delay trucks.
4. Support sustainable development: Encourage sustainable growth in both urban and rural areas, and reduce transportation contributions to climate change. For example, implement Rapid Transit and transit-supportive land uses and densities.

The RTMP provides a comprehensive planning framework for sustainable transportation in Waterloo Region, and presents an ambitious but realistic action plan. Rapid Transit within the Central Transit Corridor is the foundation of the RTMP, and the ION system will support the built-form objectives developed in the Provincial Growth Plan and in the ROP. An enhanced network of express and local bus routes integrated with the ION system and improvements to the active transportation network will further enhance transportation choice. Strategic road improvements will continue to be needed as well.

The following sections highlight a variety of Regional investments and the results of those investments.

## Grand River Transit

Public transit ridership is directly related to investments in service. While the Regional population continued to grow during the 1990s, cutbacks in service led to stagnant ridership. However, this trend reversed itself after Grand River Transit (GRT) was established in 1999 and investments in service were sustained (please see Attachment 1). The table below shows how GRT ridership growth has outpaced most other Canadian transit systems:

**Canadian Transit Ridership Growth 1999-2012**

Transit System	Ridership (millions)		Annual Growth Rate (%)
	1999	2012	
<b>Grand River Transit</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>6.5%</b>
Brampton	6.6	18.4	8.2%
Durham	5.7	10.3	4.7%
York	7.0	22.2	9.3%
Windsor	5.8	6.4	0.8%
Mississauga	23.3	34.8	3.1%
Ottawa	74.7	101.0	2.3%
Sudbury	3.0	4.4	3.0%
London	14.6	23.5	3.7%
Hamilton	18.3	21.8	1.4%
Thunder Bay	3.5	3.7	0.4%
Toronto	392.6	514.0	2.1%
Ontario average	589.3	821.8	2.6%
Canadian average	1,437.0	2,025.6	2.7%

The transit system is well positioned to support the introduction of ION rapid transit, which was approved in 2011 and will start providing light rail transit service in 2017. The projected year one daily ridership on the ION LRT is 25,000. Today, Route 7 and iXpress between Fairview Park Mall and Conestoga Mall, which would be replaced by LRT, already carry about 20,000 daily rides. The larger-capacity LRT vehicles operating in their own right-of-way will carry existing and future transit riders more efficiently, comfortably and reliably, and will also allow the redeployment of 19 buses and 50,000 service hours annually to improve the GRT network, such as by adding an iXpress route on Ottawa Street.

Waterloo Region residents have been very receptive to express bus service, with iXpress ridership quickly meeting or exceeding targets as shown in the table below. While iXpress 200 will be replaced by ION, iXpress 201 and 202 are key corridors that will be fully integrated with ION. The success of the iXpress corridors suggests that the regional transit network is evolving into an attractive transportation system, and this process will continue once ION is operational and additional iXpress corridors are implemented.

**iXpress Ridership (Target and Actual)**

Route	Average Daily Ridership	
	Target (Year)	Actual (Year)
iXpress 200	3,800 (2005)	3,200 (2005)
	5,000 (2007)	4,900 (2007)
		10,000 (2013)
iXpress 201 Fischer-Hallman	3,900 (2014)	3,600 (2013)
iXpress 202 University	2,600 (2016)	3,400 (2013)

Based on achieving peak hour transit mode share targets, the RTMP also established annual transit ridership targets. The RTMP 2016 annual ridership target of 20.2 million rides was achieved in 2012. GRT carried 22 million rides in 2013 and is on-track to achieve the 2021 RTMP target of 28 million by 2019 (please see Attachment 2).

Annual transit trips per capita has also been growing rapidly, as shown in Attachment 3. Since 2000, this number has grown from 26 to 49, and the transit system is well-positioned to meet the RTMP target of 79 annual transit trips per capita by 2034. This is a realistic target for the Region: Winnipeg (73 trips per capita) and Quebec City (83 trips per capita) both currently achieve similar annual riderships with similar service area populations, and neither have significant higher-order transit systems.

Public transit also plays an important role in accommodating inter-regional travel demand. GO Train service between Kitchener and Toronto started service in December 2011 with four trains per day. GO Bus service between the Region and Mississauga launched in October 2009, with about 350 riders per day, but has grown rapidly and by June 2012 carried more than 800 riders per day, with double this demand on Thursdays and Fridays. Additionally, while detailed ridership data is unavailable, Greyhound operates approximately 40 buses per day between Kitchener and Toronto.

Continued investment in public transit since 1999 has led to the following results:

- GRT ridership has increased from 9.5 million to 22 million;
- Revenue service hours have increased from 340,000 to 640,000 annually;
- The bus fleet has grown from 140 buses to 251 buses;
- The bus fleet has changed from 50% accessible to 100% accessible;
- All buses have automated audio and visual next bus stop announcements;
- MobilityPLUS ridership on conventional buses has increased from 45,000 in 2004 to more than 140,000 (more than 30% of total MobilityPLUS ridership);
- An additional 180 shelters and 490 concrete landing pads have been constructed;
- Existing passenger terminals at Conestoga Mall, Fairview Park Mall and Cambridge Centre have been expanded;
- New passenger terminals at Highland Hills Mall, Forest Glen Plaza, Sportsworld and The Boardwalk have been constructed;
- Since 2005, the UPass program has expanded from 10,000 to more than 40,000 students, and now generates about 6,500,000 annual trips;

- Annual fare increases and service improvements that increase ridership have combined to increase the cost-recovery ratio from 37.6 in 2010 to 40.6 in 2013;
- Since 2010, the net operating cost per rider has declined from \$2.11 to \$1.97;
- The EasyGo traveller information system has grown to over 5 million uses per year, up from less than 1 million in 2008; and
- Real-time passenger information displays at iXpress stations have grown from 25 displays in 2007 and will be 112 displays by early 2014.

### **Active Transportation (Walking and Cycling)**

Walking and cycling are also important modes of travel that support the policy direction of Places to Grow, the ROP and the RTMP. Region-wide, the goal is to increase the share of walking and cycling during the PM peak hour from 7.8% in 2006 to 12.0% in 2031. Within future high density growth nodes and transit station areas, transportation design choices will prioritize walking and cycling.

To achieve this, the RTMP recommended updating the Cycling Master Plan and adding a Pedestrian Master Plan to create an Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP). Walk Cycle Waterloo Region (the ATMP) aims to create a comprehensive network that promotes transportation choice and provides a comfortable experience for users of all ages and experience levels. Similar to building the public transit network, creating a comprehensive active transportation network will require sustained investment. For example, the Region is about halfway to its goal of ensuring all Regional roads in urban areas have sidewalks on both sides. A sustained commitment to funding the ATMP would enable this goal to be essentially completed within ten years.

Active transportation has seen measurable growth:

- A review of 2,600 turning movement counts completed since 2004 suggests that walking demand has been increasing by about 2% per year, and cycling demand by about 5% per year, while automobile demand has been increasing by about 0.5% per year;
- Since 2006, the cycling facilities on Regional roads (including on-road bike lanes, multi-use trails, shared lanes and paved shoulders) have nearly doubled from 149 km to 289 km; and
- Between 2001 and 2005, bike racks were added to all GRT buses.

### **Transportation Demand Management**

To complement the supply of transportation infrastructure, Transportation Demand Management (TDM) aims to reduce and optimize the demand on the transportation system. This is accomplished in a variety of ways, such as encouraging changes in mode choice, time of travel, need to travel or other behaviours. The Region's TDM program is called TravelWise and provides services such as online carpool matching software, discounted GRT Corporate Passes and an Emergency Ride Home service. The Region also invests in Grand River CarShare.

In 2012, the TravelWise program established a Transportation Management Association (TMA), which aims to connect employers interested in TDM initiatives and achieve meaningful, long-term changes to transportation behaviour. Current members of the TMA include the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, Blackberry, SunLife Financial and many other organizations.

TDM is another rapidly evolving aspect of Regional transportation:

- The Region has completed 4 individualised marketing campaigns since 2009 in various neighbourhoods around the Region;
- Grand River CarShare, started locally in 1998 with 1 car and 10 members, now has 23 vehicles and more than 600 members in the Region, and 14 vehicles and more than 400 members in Hamilton, St. Catharines, London and Guelph;
- The TMA has grown to 20 participating organizations representing over 23,000 employees, or about 8.2% of today's workforce; and
- In one year, TMA workplaces saw an average decrease of 5% in the portion of employees driving alone to work, and increases in cycling, walking, carpooling and public transit.

## **Regional Investment in Roads and Bridges**

Despite the significant investments described above, many Regional residents will continue to use private automobiles and many Regional businesses will continue to move goods by truck, so a well functioning system of roads will continue to be critical to the Regional economy. The RTMP includes strategic road improvements designed to accommodate increased travel demand in areas not well served by public transit. Future road improvements will also be implemented to improve traffic operations and remove bottlenecks.

Since 2004, the Region has completed 82 expansion projects on Regional roads and bridges, totalling an investment of \$247 million (please see Attachment 4), including:

- The Fairway Road bridge (\$50 million) has provided a new link across the Grand River;
- The Hespeler Road railway bridge (\$25 million) has improved safety and reduced delays for both drivers and trains;
- The Maple Grove Road widening and railway grade separation (\$18 million) has improved safety and reduced delays for both drivers and trains providing an important goods movement improvement for the East Side Lands;
- Ira Needles Boulevard (\$35 million) is a major north-south Regional road on the west side of Kitchener and Waterloo that provides access to The Boardwalk; and
- The Weber Street widening and railway bridge (ongoing, \$32 million to-date) will increase capacity, reduce delays and improve safety.

The Region continues to look for opportunities to improve the performance of Regional roads other than adding lanes. Modern roundabouts are increasingly being used as a means of improving traffic flow while reducing injury collisions at intersections. Regional

road corridors with traffic signals can be optimized to improve the progression of traffic, saving travel time at very low cost. Traffic signals can also be outfitted with accessibility improvements such as audible signals and pedestrian countdown timers to improve safety for all users.

Recent improvements on Regional roads include the following:

- Since 2010, 12 control area optimization studies have been completed, resulting in average travel time savings of 13.7% for vehicles;
- Since 2004, 19 roundabouts have been constructed;
- In the past five years, 66 signalized intersections have been outfitted with pedestrian countdown signals; and
- Since 2012, the Region has installed 17 accessible traffic signals and is replacing equipment at 42 locations to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

### **Provincial Investment in Roads**

Although the Region is generally self-contained, with about 90% of travel by Regional residents remaining within the Region, inter-regional travel on Provincial highways is still important to the Regional economy. Within the past five years, the Ministry of Transportation has widened Highway 8 south of Fairway Road (\$60 million) and will soon complete the widening of Highway 7/8 between Highway 8 and Fischer-Hallman Road (\$90 million). Major commitments have also been made to widen Highway 401 between Highway 8 and Hespeler Road and to construct the new Highway 7 between Kitchener and Guelph.

### **Community Consultation and Broader Collaboration**

The Region continues to improve the processes it uses to consult with stakeholders and collaborate with other levels of government. The public was extensively consulted on the RTMP itself, Rapid Transit and the ongoing ATMP. The Regional Transportation Corridor Design Guidelines, which establish preferred designs for different classifications of Regional road and aim to improve stakeholder expectations in advance of Regional road projects, were also completed and updated recently.

Inter-regional transportation projects involving other levels of government are also significant opportunities for improved collaboration. The Region has been working with the Cities of Brantford and Guelph, and Brant and Wellington Counties, on an inter-regional transportation planning initiative. Data collection has completed and a Terms of Reference is being drafted to continue this work.

Additionally, the Region recently committed to signing the Charter for the Western Golden Horseshoe Municipal Network. Along with the Regions of Halton, Niagara, and Peel, and the City of Hamilton, the Municipal Network aims to improve communications between municipalities and the Province on matters of inter-regional transportation and economic development.

This report will be posted on the Region's website as part of the Big Shift Toolbox, to help the community and prospective investors understand the Region's focus on transportation infrastructure that will sustain compact urban redevelopment.

### **Update on Key RTMP Action Items**

The RTMP identified key actions that would operationalize the implementation of the RTMP and contribute to achieving the 2031 transportation vision. Attachment 5 provides a general update on the action items.

### **Area Municipal Consultation/Coordination**

This report has been forwarded to all Area Municipalities, and Regional staff continue to work together to ensure that upper and lower tier initiatives are well coordinated. For example, area municipal Councillors and staff regularly participate on Regional project teams, such as:

- Annual transit service improvement plan committees;
- Transit supportive strategy for Cambridge;
- Parking coordination committee; and
- Regional road projects.

Area municipal and Regional collaboration on the above project teams effectively manages a range of community and technical issues that typically arise with transportation projects.

### **Corporate Strategic Plan**

The RTMP progress monitoring exercise described in this report contributes towards accomplishing the objectives of Focus Area #3 (Sustainable Transportation: Develop greater, more sustainable and safe transportation choices) of the "Region of Waterloo Strategic Focus 2011–2014".

### **Financial Implications**

This report was compiled by staff using ongoing data sources from Planning, Transportation, Ministry of Transportation, and the Area Municipalities. The RTMP implementation plan continues to be financed on an annual basis through the RTMP Reserve Fund, which is to be financed by an annual urban tax levy increase. Improvements to Regional roads continue to be funded through a combination of federal gas tax subsidies, Regional Development Charges and reserve funds financed through the urban tax levy.

### **Other Department Consultations/Concurrence**

Staff from Transportation and Environmental Services contributed in the preparation of this report.

### **Attachments**

Attachment 1 – Regional Public Transit Ridership, Service and Population

Attachment 2 – Regional Public Transit Ridership (Actual and Forecast)

Attachment 3 – Annual Regular Service Passengers/Capita

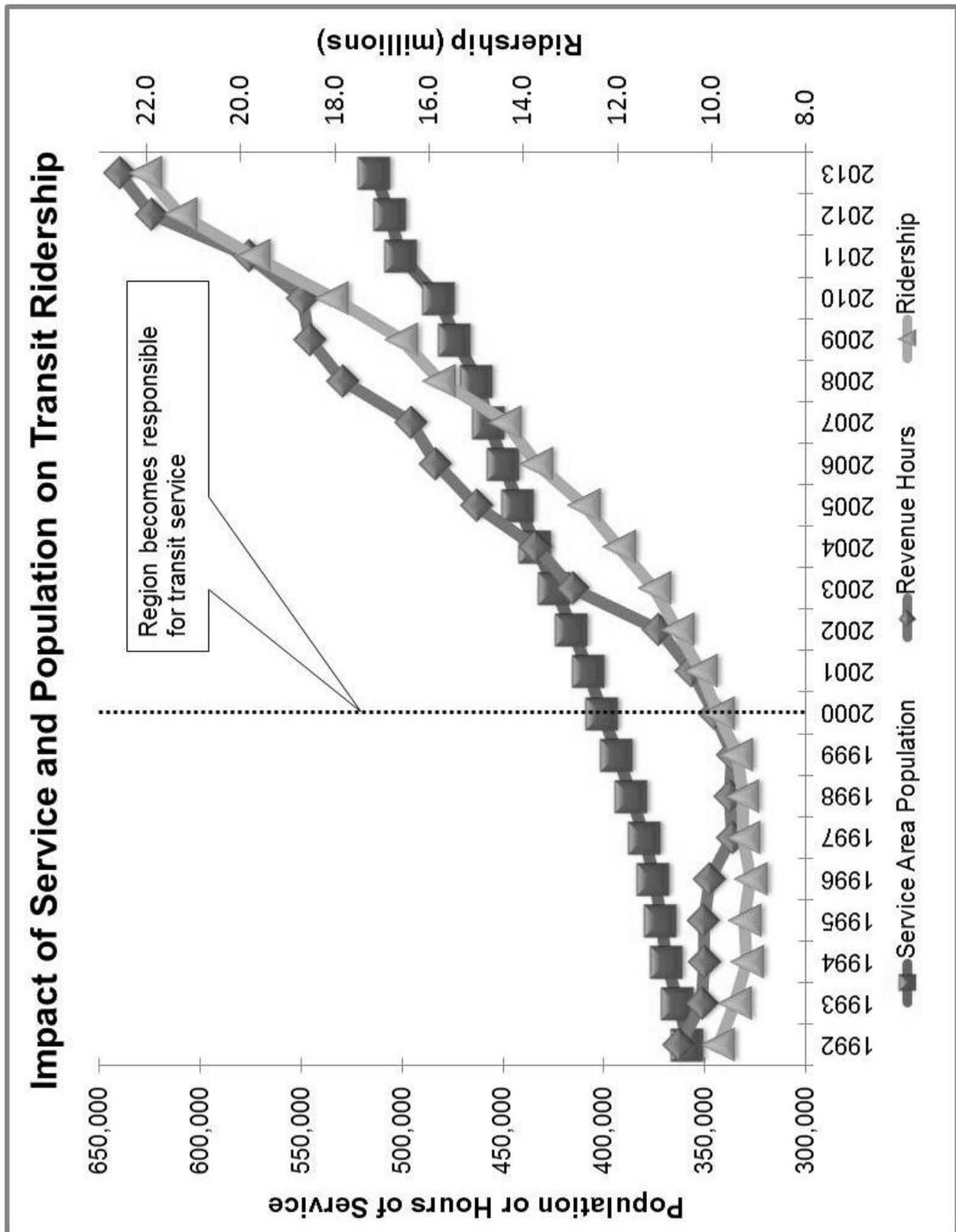
Attachment 4 – Investment in Regional Road Expansion Since 2004

Attachment 5 – Update on Key RTMP Actions

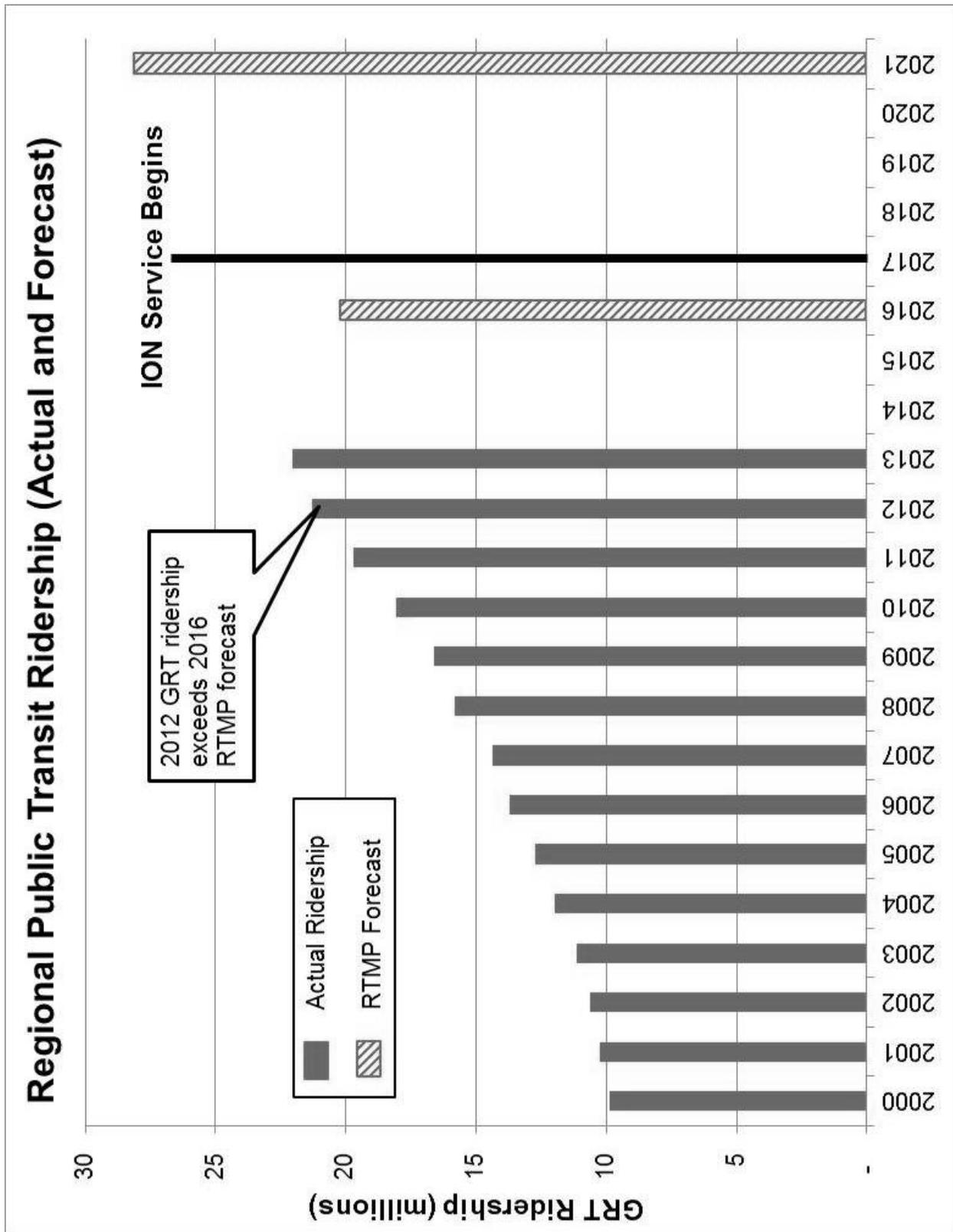
**Prepared By:** **Geoffrey Keyworth**, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer  
**John Cicuttin**, Acting Director, Transportation Planning

**Approved By:** **Rob Horne**, Commissioner, Planning, Housing and Community Services

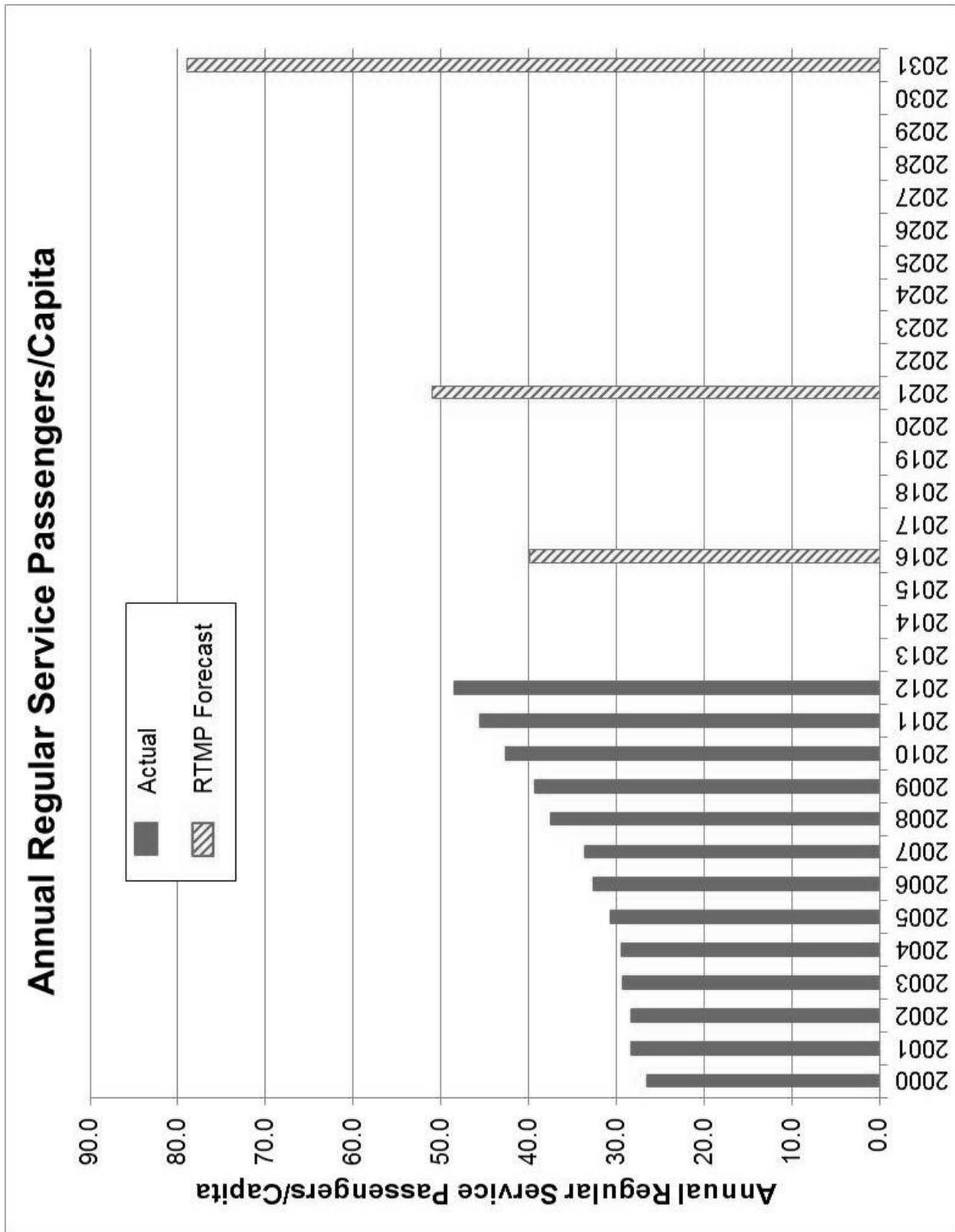
Attachment 1 – Regional Public Transit Ridership, Service and Population



Attachment 2 – Regional Public Transit Ridership (Actual and Forecast)



Attachment 3 – Annual Regular Service Passengers/Capita



**Attachment 4 – Investment in Regional Roads Since 2004**

**Regional Road Projects (2004 to 2013)**

Type of Project and Examples	Number of Projects	Total Cost To-date
<b>Addition of Left-turn and Right-turn lanes</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>\$6.4 M</b>
<b>Traffic Signal Installations</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>\$1.1 M</b>
<b>Intersection Improvements (Growth-Related)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>\$46.9 M</b>
Hespeler Road (north of Dundas Street) railway grade separation Sawmill Road and Arthur Street Fountain Street and Dickie Settlement Road Others		\$24.9 M \$2.1 M \$1.7 M \$18.2 M
<b>Road Widening</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$94.1 M</b>
Weber Street (College Street to Guelph Avenue - includes railway bridge) Townline Road (Can-Amara Parkway to Saginaw Parkway) Fischer-Hallman Road (Erb Street to Columbia Street) Homer Watson Boulevard (at Highway 401)		\$31.6 M \$8.8 M \$6.1 M \$8.8 M
Maple Grove Road (Cherry Blossom Road to Highway 8 - includes railway bridge) Others		\$18.2 M \$20.6 M
<b>System Expansion</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>\$98.4 M</b>
Fairway Road Extension (west of Zeller Drive to Fountain Street) Ira Needles Boulevard (Highway 7/8 to Erbville Road) Westmount Road (Old Post Road to Northfield Drive) Others		\$50.3 M \$34.7 M \$7.4 M \$5.9 M
<b>Total Expansion Projects</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>\$247.0 M</b>

Note: Rehabilitation and reconstruction projects (totalling more than \$280 M) are not incorporated above but have included:  
 Northumberland Street (Greenfield Road to Alps Road) \$0.4 M  
 Katherine Street (Tribe Road to Waterloo/Wellington Boundary) \$0.9 M  
 Manser Road/Ament Line (within the Town of Linwood) \$4.4 M  
 Snyders Road (Trussler Road to Notre Dame Drive) \$1.8 M

**Attachment 5 – Update on Key RTMP Action Items**

1. Create an Active Transportation Plan – The Region’s Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP), “Walk Cycle Waterloo Region” will be finalized and presented to Council in the new year. In 2014, an implementation plan will be developed to address the funding requirements for active transportation infrastructure and related program initiatives that have been identified in the plan.
2. Include TDM in the Transportation Impact Study Guidelines – The Transportation Impact Study guideline was amended so that a range of TDM measures would be considered during the development process which could also result in facilitating intensification through reduced parking requirements. Please see report P-13-088, September 10, 2013 “Proposed Revisions to the Regional Transportation Study Impact Guidelines”.
3. Incorporate RTMP Transit Initiatives in GRT Business Plan – Implementation of the approved 2011 – 2014 GRT Business Plan is well underway with major network and service level improvements including two iXpress lines.
4. Implement Smart Card Fare Payment System - A key initiative recommended in the RTMP was to implement a smart card fare payment technology. Recently, Council has given staff direction to acquire an electronic transit fare payment system through a Request for Proposal process. The RFP is expected to be issued early 2014.
5. Prepare 3-Year TravelWise Action Plan – The TravelWise 3-year TDM action plan was completed in 2011. Important results have been achieved including establishment of a growing transportation management association, progress on incorporating TDM measures in the development review process thereby potentially reducing auto use and parking requirements, thereby, facilitating intensification.
6. Study Commuter Parking Opportunities – The opportunity for park and ride and kiss and ride continues to be explored at different locations through out the region. In 2013, the Region partnered with MTO and Metrolinx to develop a combined car-pool and transit facility at Sportsworld Drive. This location provides excellent access to highways 8 and 401, GO bus service and GRT service including aBRT in 2014. Staff continue to explore park/kiss and ride options near rapid transit stations at Northfield and Fairview Park Mall. Commuter parking is available near the VIA station and will be provided at the future GO Train station near Greenhouse Road in Breslau.
7. Develop Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Strategic Plan – Staff have developed an ITS strategic plan which will be presented to Council in early 2014.
8. Establish Parking Coordination Committee – A Parking Coordinating Committee was established in 2011 with staff from the region and three urban area municipalities. This committee was instrumental in developing the TDM and parking management initiatives that were incorporated into the updated

- Transportation Impact Study. The committee is currently working on a parking policy for station areas to facilitate intensification.
9. Develop Goods Movement Study – The terms of reference for this study continue to be developed with anticipation of starting the study in 2014.
  10. Work with Province on Strategic Transportation Study for GTA West – Staff continue to collaborate with the MTO, City of Guelph, County of Wellington, City of Brantford, and County of Brant. A comprehensive data collection process has been completed and the scope and objectives of the study continue to be developed. It is expected this study will be initiated in 2014.
  11. Work with Province, Metrolinx/GO Transit, VIA on improved Interregional Transit Connections – Staff continue to advocate and discuss with Metrolinx for improved two-way GO Train service on the Kitchener line and extension of the Milton line service to Cambridge. Similarly, restoring recent VIA cuts has been requested of the federal government.
  12. Initiate the Environmental Assessment for improved connection to Highway 401 – Staff has forecasted travel demand and survey existing motorists. The need and justification for this project will be revisited with the RTMP update in 2015.
  13. Regular reports monitoring RTMP progress – Interim reports similar to this report and the 5 year RTMP update report will be submitted to Council.
  14. Financing opportunities/strategies to fund infrastructure – Council approved, subject to annual budget deliberations, an annual urban tax rate increase of 1.2 % in 2011 and 1.5% for the years 2012 to 2018, to implement rapid transit and to fund the capital and operating costs of GRT service improvements. Staff continue to monitor the status of the investment strategy developed by Metrolinx which includes numerous new revenue tools such as a regional fuel and gas tax or business parking levy.
  15. Pursue modification to the provincial Development Charges Act – Staff continue to work with the province for the amendment of the Development Charges Act so that development charge funding would be available for the rapid transit project.
  16. Incorporate policies into the Regional Official Plan (ROP) – The new ROP contains numerous policies regarding transit-supportive development, rapid transit and transportation demand management.
  17. Ongoing collaboration with Province and area municipalities on transportation issues – There are numerous avenues through which staff collaborate with the province and area municipal staff including regular meetings with MTO and Metrolinx/GO on highway projects, transportation studies and with area municipal staff through project teams such as for road improvement and TDM/parking management coordination.