

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA**

**REPORT NO. OI-2024-0007**

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF  
COUNCIL**

**May 29, 2024**

**SUBJECT: REQUESTED CHANGES TO THE OPERATION OF TOWN AND  
REGIONAL ROADS & HIGH STREET REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

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**1. RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That Council receive Report No. OI2024-0007 prepared by the Operations and Infrastructure Department regarding the Requested Changes to the Operation of Town and Regional Roads & High Street Redevelopment Update dated May 29, 2024;**
- 2. That, upon approval at Regional Council, the Town of Georgina assumes:**
  - a. Woodbine Avenue from Metro Road N. to Lake Drive**
  - b. Park Road from Black River Road to Hedge Road**
  - c. Old Homestead Road from Weir's Sideroad to Station Road;**
  - d. High Street, from Highway 48 to Dalton Road;**
- 3. That the Regional Municipality of York be requested to assume:**
  - a. McCowan Road from Ravenshoe Road to Baseline Road**
  - b. Weir's Sideroad from Old Homestead Road to Highway 48;**
- 4. That the Regional Municipality of York ensure the Traffic Signal Maintenance on High Street be performed by the preferred vendor procured by the Regional Municipality of York, at the cost of the Town of Georgina;**
- 5. That Council increase the design budget by \$340,000.00 for the Regional components of the High Street reconstruction project, to be recovered from York Region;**
- 6. That authority be granted to the Chief Administrative Officer to execute any and all necessary transfer agreements associated with these resolutions, and that all necessary bylaws be brought to Council to bring these recommendations into effect; and**
- 7. That the resolutions be circulated to the Regional Municipality of York.**

## **2. PURPOSE:**

To obtain Council approval to formally begin the process to transfer the ownership and operation of Town of Georgina roads to the Regional Municipality of York and *vice versa*. These transfers have been contemplated for some time (going back 20 years), and are important to move forward now as a result of the High Street reconstruction project moving forward.

## **3. BACKGROUND:**

From time to time, through growth and other means, the purpose and use of roads may naturally undergo modification to better suit the required service levels and/or local community fit. In these instances, and within the Region of York, the Regional Road Assumption Policy is used to identify criteria that can be used as justification for a road to be moved from a lower-tier municipality to an upper-tier municipality (such as a connecting link, or extension of an existing regional road), or vice versa, for roads requiring more local servicing (urban/intensified areas).

### **The Regional Road Assumption Policy**

Approved in 2014, and last updated in 2019, the Regional Road Assumption Policy is a guiding document to facilitate the transfer of roads between municipalities within Georgina. It includes various criteria required to be reviewed prior to suggesting a transfer. These criteria include alignment with official plans, transportation master plans, existing network (whether Town or Region benefits from continuity), as well as current condition, financial implications, and service levels. The policy is attached as Appendix 1.

### **Steps of a transfer of roads between Municipalities**

1. Local Council makes a recommendation to Regional Council.
2. Regional Staff qualify the transfer using the policy criteria via a report to Regional Council.
3. Regional Council then provides confirmation of the transfer.
4. Staff within the respective municipalities then complete the transfer (by-laws, transfer agreements) under the delegated approvals.

This process can be used both for “upload” proposals and “download” proposals. Assumption includes ownership transfer of all assets within the Right of Way and could include signs, culverts, roads, trees, etc.

### **Existing Council decisions**

Within the past 20 years, key resolutions were approved by Council with respect to transfer or service levels between the Region and the Town of Georgina on the proposed roads.

May 2, 2005: Council endorsed the transfer of Warden Avenue from the Town to the Region. There was also a suggestion to “upload” McCowan to the Region as soon as practical. Other roads including Dalton Road, Pepperlaw Road and High St. were reviewed but not transferred, primarily based upon winter maintenance

service levels. The Town has been providing winter maintenance services on High Street for 2 seasons without concern.

[February 3, 2021](#): Council authorized the Director of Operations and Infrastructure to execute current and future agreements regarding winter maintenance responsibilities on specific roads (those presented in this report included) as well as generic mutual aid support agreements across the Region.

[April 27, 2022](#): Council approved the Streetscape Design Manual and directed staff to initiate discussions with York Region on implementing the design standards on High Street, based upon the existing High Street resurfacing needs identified by York Region.

[November 30, 2022](#): Council approved business case 23-CI-OI-08 “Streetscape redevelopment detailed design High Street”

[November 8, 2023](#): Council received the draft budget under new Strong Mayor powers, which included business cases for water main design and water service replacement designs, both of which were approved by consent on December 8, 2023.

### Proposed Transfers

The proposed download, from York Region to the Town of Georgina:

Road	From	To	Lane KM
Woodbine Avenue	Metro Road	Lake Drive	0.5
High Street	Dalton Road	Highway 48	5.17
Park Rd	Black River Rd	Hedge Rd	3.25
Old Homestead Rd	Weir's Sideroad	Station Rd	3.3
			<b>12.22</b>

The proposed upload, from the Town of Georgina to York Region:

Road	From	To	Lane KM
McCowan Road	Ravenshoe Road	Baseline Road	18.40
Weir's Sideroad	Old Homestead	Highway 48	5.58
			<b>23.98</b>

It is mutually beneficial for the two municipalities to complete the transfer to meet the local and regional service levels, being; to ensure goods and services can move efficiently throughout the Region, while maintaining a consistent and local approach to right-of-way management where necessary. Woodbine Avenue, High Street, Park Road and Old Homestead Road no longer meet the Regional criteria of a Regional Road. McCowan Road and Weirs Sideroad now meet the Regional criteria. High Street is unique in that although it connects a regional road to provincial road, it does so through a densely populated commercial business improvement area, the Town's

Historic Downtown Sutton. Due to its 100% urban roadside environment, it is beneficial for the Town to accept and have full autonomy of reconstruction and design, as well as future operation for road closures etc.

It is the intent of both the Town of Georgina and York Region, that although the various transactions may be completed over the course of many years, that the proposed transfers are not separated (package deal).

### **The High Street streetscaping project to-date**

Initially, upon notification from the Region of a road rehabilitation project along High Street, the Town initiated a streetscape enhancement project for the Sutton BIA to leverage the Region's planned resurfacing project disruption and budget. Following this, the Town conditionally assessed the sewer mains and water mains to ensure that the surface-level works would not be impacted by short-term rehabilitation needs of the underground infrastructure. It was found the sewer main requires a spot repair, but the water main and water services should be replaced in their entirety. In parallel, the Region assessed its storm water system for the same purpose, and found it to require rehabilitation, being a replacement of half of the assets and a relining of the remaining half. This has changed the project from a surface-level "facelift", to a more in-depth reconstruction.

## **4. ANALYSIS:**

### **Policy Criteria**

The criteria outlined in the Regional Road Assumption Policy was assessed against each proposed road transfer and can be found in Appendix 3. Only one proposed transfer, being High Street, needs further explanation beyond the policy criteria, due to the Town's current reconstruction plans.

### **High Street Redevelopment**

High Street is poised for major redevelopment including new water mains and water service connections, new storm water main and storm water laterals, new road surface and new streetscaping within and in proximity to the Town's Sutton BIA. These upgrades will lay the foundation for historic downtown Sutton to be a notable destination and key economic driver for the Town. With its 100% urban roadside environment, low speed and local-commercial environment, it lends itself to be locally managed. Additionally, the Town would like full autonomy on the following key areas that are limited while under the Region's jurisdiction:

- character of the downtown and its environment
- its operational service levels both summer and winter
- its beautification
- ease of closures and permitting
- parking management
- traffic calming implementations
- active transportation network inclusion

The redevelopment project will be complete in 3 phases; Design, Servicing and Streetscaping. These phases begin with design in the second half of 2024, followed by on-site mobilization in the second half of 2025.

### **Winter Maintenance**

Winter maintenance operations of each of the proposed roads are often the most heavily debated topics during a proposed transfer. These concerns are alleviated as the Town and the Region perform winter maintenance operations on each others' highways over the past 3 seasons via a memorandum of understanding, excepting Weirs Sideroad and Old Homestead Road. Staff in both municipalities have no concerns over the mutual transition of winter maintenance on these remaining sections.

### **Traffic Controls**

There are limited traffic control devices within the proposed transfers. Stop control and speed control regulatory signage management across all of the proposed transfers provided no material impact for either the Region or the Town. Traffic calming policy and implementation would be better aligned should the transfer occur, whereby; local, low speed/low volume roads could receive local solutions to traffic calming, where they may not have been considered, or met criteria, under the jurisdiction of the Region.

One traffic signal intersection exists on High Street. Both Regional and Town staff have discussed a maintenance agreement whereby the Region will provide ongoing operation and maintenance under their existing contract, as the Town has no other signalized intersections (making it economically unfeasible to procure). It is the intent of the Town to pay for these services, in exchange for a net-lower number of lane kilometers being exchanged as part of this proposal.

### **Parking Control**

Parking control is a primary benefit of lower-tier municipalities having control of more local, urbanized sections of roads, as proposed in this transfer. Town parking control criteria differs from the Region's, and relies more heavily on items that are impacted locally, including emergency services, petition from fronting residents, and local network impacts not considered by a regional municipality.

### **General Service Levels**

Other than the services identified above, service levels on the proposed transfers are intended to remain the same, in alignment with Ontario Regulation 239/02 Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways. These include patrol frequency, sign repair and replacement, pothole management, shoulders etc.

### **Timing**

For Woodbine Avenue, Old Homestead Road, Weirs Sideroad, Park Road, and McCowan Road, the notification and transition process would occur upon consent from Regional Council. This would include public notification, direct mailers, and the necessary bylaw revisions (ex. Traffic by-law, Assumption etc). For High Street, the

transfer agreement is more complex given the outstanding asset upgrades required. As a result, the schedule for High Street may not align with the other transfers. It is the intent that, by the end of the reconstruction of High Street, the Town would have possession and assumption of the road.

### **Bridges**

The bridge over the Black River on High Street will have some maintenance rehabilitation work performed in the coming years. As this work has yet to be scoped, and the timing yet to be confirmed, the two municipalities have agreed the Region will undertake the next phase of the rehabilitation work in the life cycle of the bridge at its cost.

### **Development and Planning**

The Town's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law will need to be updated to properly account for and reference planned street widths and jurisdiction. Any existing development approvals with conditions tied to road widenings to one road authority or the other will need to be properly flagged, confirmed and reconciled as part of the clearance process. Any existing applications (e.g. SEAP) impacted by a transfer of road authority jurisdiction will need to be updated accordingly.

### **Future transfer considerations**

As outlined almost 20 years ago in a report to Council, Highway 404 is planned to be extended through Georgina. Should that plan come to fruition, sections of Glenwoods Avenue and Pollock Road between Woodbine Avenue and Warden Avenue will meet regional criteria as a key link to a provincial highway, and should be considered for transfer at that time.

## **5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

These recommendations align with **Delivering service excellence** as we look to proactively rehabilitate our underground infrastructure.

We intend to **Create a vibrant, healthy, and safe community for all** by continuing to deliver the public works services on the proposed transfers and by upgrading High Street with new streetscaping.

## **6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:**

### **Operating**

There is minimal net operating expenditure change to either municipality as it relates to the proposed transfer of operation of each road segment. Should the transaction be approved, any increase would be minor (<\$10,000.00) and would be included through the budget process for the given year. For example, the Town may need to slightly increase its sweeping length by 3.5km, and pay a small annual fee for signal maintenance, but is reducing its winter maintenance length through the overall transaction by 11.7km. These amounts will be further refined throughout the budget process for the year that the roads are transferred.

## Capital

Should Regional Council approve the transaction, an estimated \$3,430,000 previously allocated through Regional Transportation Asset Management for road surface and storm water management on High Street would be made available to the Town as the Region's contribution to the High Street reconstruction project. Immediate funding amounts of up to \$340,000.00 have been confirmed by the Region to be available to the Town in 2024 for design. The below breakdown shows the current approved design budget for all components:

Item	ToG Cost Share	York Region Cost Share	Notes
Design – Streetscaping	\$400,000		23-CI-OI-08
Design – Watermain/services	\$270,000		24-CI-WAT-02/ 24-CI-WAT-04
Design Storm Sewer		\$180,000	Regional AM transfer
Design - Road		\$160,000	Regional AM transfer
Subtotal	\$670,000	\$340,000	

The High Street reconstruction project construction budget will be brought forward through the 2025 budget. It is the intent to apply for the Region's Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program following design works during the spring intake period in 2025.

No other long-term capital reserves relating to the proposed asset transfer necessitate a further transaction between the two municipalities.

## Existing Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program grant

The existing approved grant of \$323,355.45 for the multi-use path improvements on the section of Old Homestead Road proposed to be transferred will remain available to the Town throughout and beyond the transition process.

## 7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

It is a requirement, and the intent, that the Town and Region notify properties directly fronting the proposed roads of the change of operation via direct mailer.

Further public consultation and information sessions will occur over the next 12 months as it relates to the High Street streetscaping, including regular meetings with the BIA.

## 8. CONCLUSION:

The proposed transfer of McCowan Road and High Street, and parts of Old Homestead Road, Woodbine Avenue, Park Road, and Weirs Sideroad align with the Regional Road Assumption Policy and reflect more operational alignment with each of the respective municipalities, being the Town of Georgina, and the Regional Municipality of York. These transactions will further allow the High Street

redevelopment project to proceed as planned, using Town design criteria for infrastructure and streetscape design, as well as Town policies on traffic calming and parking. Regular updates on this important project will be included in future Council meetings throughout the project.

### **APPROVALS**

Prepared and  
Recommended By: Michael Vos, Director, Operations and Infrastructure

Reviewed By: Rob Wheeler, Deputy CAO/ Treasurer

Approved By: Ryan Cronsberry, Chief Administrative Officer

### ***Attachments:***

- 1. The Regional Road Assumption Policy*
- 2. Proposed transfer summary*
- 3. Detailed policy criteria matrix, per proposed road transfer*