

MEDIA RELEASE
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Input In To City Transportation Plan Favours Less Dependence On Cars

October 10, 2008 - City Staff in conjunction with their consultant IBI Group/Stantec Consulting has reached the halfway point in preparing the first long range transportation master plan for Waterloo through to year 2031. Plans are now being developed for the City to better manage many parts of its transportation system by improving intersection controls such as using roundabouts, developing traffic calming initiatives and the expansion of a new bikeway and pedestrian trail system. Public consultation on these new transportation directions is being planned for November and the community is invited to take part.

Public transit and the arterial grid of big traffic carriers like King Street, Bridge Street, Westmount Road and Fisher-Hallman Road will continue to be the responsibility of Waterloo Region, with its own Regional Transportation Master Plan now being developed in parallel with the City's plan. The Region's transportation plan includes the introduction of new light rail or bus rapid transit service along a corridor extending eventually from north Waterloo to the Galt City Centre in Cambridge.

The Waterloo City Plan focuses on traffic movement throughout the rest of the City on minor arterial roads, collectors and local streets. One thing that the City plan has heard loud and clear from the public is that people are concerned about how traffic generated by continued City and Region growth will impact their neighbourhoods. Some residents want a more sustainable solution with fewer impacts on mobility and lifestyle in the City, but with more choices in how City residents travel.

So far, most public input to the City's plan favours less dependence on cars in Waterloo, and greater emphasis on transit, cycling and walking. Many think the solution is in spending more on cycling and walking infrastructure like more on-road bike lanes and walking trails. Others think the answer lies in ways to better manage how and when people travel that avoids longer rush hours and travel delays, for example by increasing long-term parking

rates and having more people living in higher density and mixed use inner-city neighbourhoods that are more transit, cycling and pedestrian friendly.

These expectations will require more investment in the Region's public transit system and the City's road network and cycling and trail facilities. Higher density developments will also be needed along major corridors, including the Region's rapid transit corridor and along major City streets as now seen along Columbia Street West.

This new emphasis away from growing auto use in the City means Waterloo will not build itself out of future transportation challenges with just more roads.

If the community, or media, is interested in learning more about the City's Transportation Master Plan, additional information is available on the website, www.waterloo.ca. Or, you're invited to contact:

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