

# Burlington Integrated Mobility Plan

## 2023

### Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Committee

Tuesday, October 31, 2023

Safe Streets Halton would like to express our overwhelming support for the Burlington Integrated Mobility Plan. It has been balanced by staff in a way where each part works in harmony, and is important for securing rights-of-way for transportation facilities. With this in mind, we ask that committee approve the plan quickly so staff can move forward with the recommended actions such as the creation of the Vision Zero Program and the Pedestrian Master Plan.

This plan is another step forward in creating a healthy, safe, and resilient community. It works in tandem with other work that this council has done to move us toward a fiscally and environmentally prudent future, where the automobile is only an option – not a must. Our dependence on automobiles has led to headaches regarding parking shortages, and struggles to protect the greenspace in our growing city. This is exemplified in the work being done on the former Robert Bateman school, where staff and council have been trying to find a way to accommodate travel demand without the removal of public space.

Returning to the content of the plan, there are a few items that the volunteers at Safe Streets Halton would like to bring to the attention of committee.

#### **Mode Share Targets**

While we are willing to accept these targets for this iteration of the IMP, we would be

remiss not to bring them up. It is our understanding that the current targets are set based on the city's current strategic plan, which looks towards 2041. With over 48% of residents working within the city of Burlington and a majority of non-work trips occurring within the municipality, there is a lot of transportation demand that we can shift towards sustainable modes without coordination with other municipalities.

In addition, the neighbourhood-based approach is a great way to prioritize and target investments in certain areas of our city. We would like to stress to committee that a 0% mode share does not mean that no one uses that mode of transportation. If we are to take the Orchard neighbourhood as an example, the reported mode share for cycling is 0%. However, you often do see people of all ages cycling, whether it be to school, to the neighbourhood restaurants to hang out with friends, or to the commercial plazas nearby.

With all this in mind, it is likely that the 2051 mode shares will surpass those set out in the city's strategic plan. We're happy to see that the mode share targets will regularly be updated over time.

In addition, we would like to see land use changes being brought forward that would help shift the mode share, through the creation of complete neighbourhoods. If we return to the Orchard, the neighbourhood was envisioned (via its secondary plan) to be a complete neighbourhood with shops inside of it, and frequent transit connections. This vision was never realized. We want Burlington to be a leading example in successfully shifting transportation habits.

### **People vs Auto Capacity**

The report makes mention of shifting focus to the transportation of people, versus the transportation of private single-occupancy vehicles. This is in recognition of the need to use more space-efficient, fiscally and environmentally friendly modes of transportation if we are to meet our goals as a city. With this in mind, it is important for Halton Region to work collaboratively with Burlington staff to implement what is set out in this plan.

We ask that council bring this local vision to the regional level and keep it in mind when assessing any regional road undertaking that is brought forward, and when speaking with staff concerning the regional transportation master plan. For example,

Appleby Line is set to be widened from 4-6 lanes with HOV or Bus Lanes as the newly added lanes. We would like to use Dundas Street as a cautionary tale.

The road was widened from 4-6 lanes, with the idea that the added lanes would be converted to either HOV or Bus Lanes. Oakville's former transit director asked Oakville council to advocate for those lanes to be converted before people came to expect it to remain as a general-use lane. At a quarterly board meeting, Metrolinx staff said that Halton needs to move forward with converting the lanes before travel behaviours return to normal. According to regional staff, there are currently no set plans to make this conversion, which runs contrary to the position taken in the IMP.

### **Vision Zero Program**

With so many of the deaths and injuries on our roads being preventable with improved road designs, we are happy to see the responsibilities of the program will include proactive identification of problems. When assessing solutions for identified problems, we ask that staff consider a tactical urbanism approach when implementation timelines might be long. This allows for staff to iterate on and try different solutions when making improvements to road safety. We also ask that staff regularly report to council on traffic incidents involving vulnerable road users, with details on what happened and possible solutions. City of Hamilton staff have agreed to do this for their council.

### **Budget and Resources**

In February of this year, we presented information to the budget committee regarding funding gaps in the Cycling Master Plan that amounted to an estimated \$24 million. When proposing programs similar to those laid out in this plan, it came to our attention that current staffing levels do not allow for the proactive approach to traffic safety that we advocate for. If the IMP is to be successful, the prioritized projects in the plan and the municipal budget must be synchronized.

In conclusion, we fully support the Integrated Mobility Plan as is, and look forward to the creation of the programs laid out in it.