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# Regional Transportation Plan Cycling Network Strategy



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**Top row left to right:** Rendering of Eglinton Connects (City of Toronto), Rendering of Hurontario LRT (Cities of Mississauga and Brampton – Region of Peel), photo of Cannon Cycle Track (City of Hamilton)

**Bottom row, left to right:** Queens Quay Revitalization (City of Toronto, VIVA BRT (Cities of Vaughan, Markham and Town of Richmond Hill - York Region)

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# Executive Summary

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## A Regional Cycling Network for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area

The Regional Cycling Network Strategy seeks to support existing municipal cycling plans by identifying corridors that are regionally significant for transportation cycling (also referred to as utilitarian or commuter cycling in this report). Infrastructure on these regionally significant corridors would help to link shorter local cycling network facilities across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).

Regional cycling facilities would represent the highest order within a functional network hierarchy for transportation cycling. Regionally significant cycling facilities are those that:

- Support cycling to rapid transit stations, or
- Cross municipal boundaries to link Urban Growth Centres, or
- Provide infrastructure that facilitates cycling for longer distances.

## Supporting Cycling to Rapid Transit Stations

An important function of the corridors identified in the Cycling Network Strategy is to facilitate cycling the “first-mile/last-mile” to and from rapid transit stations. Roadways that will be used to access GO stations, end of line subway stations and other Mobility Hub locations must be safe and comfortable for cycling in order for people to ride to them and on them.

The Regional Cycling Network Strategy identifies major arterial roads that can be used by persons wishing to cycle to transit. Recommendations from the Cycling Network Strategy will work together with recommendations from the GO Rail Station Access Plan to inform the updated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the GTHA.

## Linking Urban Growth Centres

Infrastructure that connects Urban Growth Centres needs to be direct in order to be a practical transportation option. In the GTHA, the provision of cycling infrastructure has historically been delivered by local levels of government. Local cycling plans have been primarily designed to support trips within each jurisdiction, not between jurisdictions, and are often fragmented.

The corridors identified in the Regional Cycling Network are continuous roadways that cross multiple jurisdictions. Connections between local networks that are currently discontinuous will better serve people living near jurisdictional boundaries. As many local plans include facilities to the edge of their borders, the Regional Cycling Network will help to coordinate infrastructure between municipalities by identifying priorities and optimal linkages.

## Facilitate Longer Trip Distances

Local networks will typically serve journeys by bicycle travelling shorter than 2km to 5km distances. The design of regional network facilities is to provide facilities that are continuous for distances between 5km and 30km. Longer continuous facilities minimize travel time and are easier to follow when travelling longer distances. They present a viable option for those wishing to undertake a trip completely by bike.

The analogy of a highway is helpful for understanding this concept. Just as highways provide direct links between cities (that minimize delays), regional cycling facilities similarly must function as direct links. The total journey for most trips that a cyclist will use will combine both local facilities and regional ones. Providing regional facilities will enhance the travel experience by providing high quality cycling infrastructure.