

CHAPTER 4 OUTREACH

By adopting the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan and its recommendations, York Region has the opportunity to create a more pedestrian and cycling friendly environment for all of its residents. Infrastructure such as sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, benches, pavement markings and sign treatments are all components of this Master Plan, and will assist in creating this supportive environment. However, facilities alone will not produce this walking and cycling friendly situation. York Region should expand upon its leadership role and work with local municipalities and other levels of government to develop and implement an expanded outreach program to help educate residents about the importance of improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, pedestrian and cycling safety, and to encourage residents to walk and cycle more often for both utilitarian and recreational purposes.

The framework set out in this chapter recommends the implementation of new programs and the continuation of existing initiatives in the areas of education, encouragement and promotion. These programs will support the many benefits of walking and cycling, and will help achieve the walking and cycling goals in York Region's Vision 2026, York Region's Official Plan, the Transportation Master Plan and this Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. A key objective of the outreach strategy in this Plan is to develop and enhance educational programs that are targeted to existing and future pedestrians and cyclists.

4.1 EDUCATION

Education is one of the most important components of this Plan. Pedestrian and cycling network users need to be educated to understand on and off-road operating procedures to support a safe and inviting environment for walking and cycling in the Region. The objectives for education in the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan are as follows:

- 4a: Educate pedestrians and cyclists on safe operating procedures on multi-use pathways and within road rights-of-way;
- 4b: Enhance and support walking and cycling advocacy, advisory and information groups and programs; and
- 4c: Adequately fund existing and proposed pedestrian and cycling programs developed by the Region or in partnership with other public and private sector partners.

The following subsections outline methods of achieving the overall objectives of education for the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

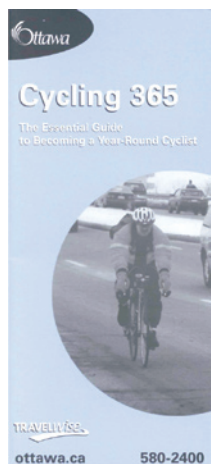
4.1.1 BICYCLE EDUCATION INFORMATION

Making cycling information readily available is a key educational strategy. The Region of York should consider the implementation of bicycle education programs and partner with other groups, local municipalities, and agencies to educate residents on walking and cycling. York Region could follow the example of Citizens for Safe Cycling (CfSC), a volunteer group in Ottawa, which in

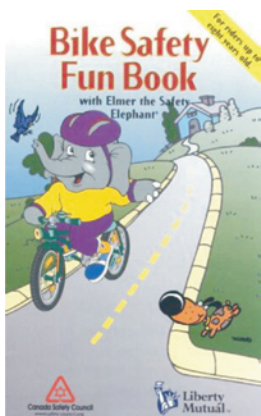
York Region has the opportunity to create a more pedestrian and cycling friendly environment for all of its residents.



Children should be taught safe cycling skills



Cycling 365



Bike Safety Fun Book with Elmer the Safety Elephant

past partnerships with the City, has produced a range of cycling brochures to educate citizens on safe operating procedures for both cyclists and non-cyclists. Examples of the brochures produced by the Citizens for Safe Cycling (CfSC) include:

- Better Bicycling – a newsletter published quarterly that features cycling news items, safety and comfort tips;
- Cycling 365, The Essential Guide to Becoming a Year-Round Cyclist – a pamphlet outlining the benefits, techniques and equipment needed for winter cycling; and
- You're Always Young Enough, The Essential Cycling Guide for Seniors – a pamphlet giving seniors information on why they should cycle, with tips and facts that clarify cycling myths.

Additional examples of cycling information pamphlets produced by other municipalities and agencies include:

- *Bike Safety Fun Book with Elmer the Safety Elephant* – this pamphlet published through the Canadian Safety Council and distributed through CfSC provides safety procedures for riders up to eight years old; and
- Durham Region Trails – a brochure produced by the Health Department's "Durham Lives!" campaign and Tourism Durham to promote hiking, cycling and cross-country skiing on the trails throughout that Region.

This educational material could be adapted for a nominal cost for use in York Region. Many of these publications have a host of contributing partners, including Healthy Living, Ministry of Transportation of Ontario, Transport Canada, Health Canada and the Canadian Safety Council, as well as private sector sponsors. This underscores the importance of cooperation and the need to share expertise and resources.

Websites managed by the Region, and copies of literature provided at libraries plus Regional and local civic centres, support the distribution of this information. However, effectiveness is limited to those who pick up the publications or visit the websites. The delivery of pedestrian and cycling information should be expanded to reach out to a wider range of residents by taking advantage of a variety of other media in a multi-faceted communications strategy.

York Region should work with the local media including newspapers, cable and radio stations to provide information on pedestrian and cycling events and the safety programs available, plus general safety tips. The Region should consider advertising on transit vehicles and bus shelters, distribute cycling information through pamphlets, and continue to promote walking, cycling and active transportation through the Community and Health Services Department. Mounting poster boards on Regional vehicles is an inexpensive way of displaying cycling and walking information. Many municipalities also distribute household information through the mail. These options could be used to achieve the widest distribution of cycling and pedestrian information to residents.

Proper signing to assist pedestrians and cyclists to navigate the Region's pedestrian and cycling system and make route choices is essential to encouraging more people to walk and cycle. It is recommended that the Region, working with local municipalities and conservation authorities, develop a network signing strategy. The objective of the strategy should be to establish an integrated way-finding system of signs to assist in navigation. The strategy could establish signing guidelines and a policy for providing route way-finding signs, directional/distance signs to key destinations/attractions as well as possibly the design and placement of

information signs regarding natural and/or cultural features on a particular route. All of this information could be linked to a network map published by the Region and possibly combined with local municipal network information to support use of the network and promote walking and cycling in York Region.

Information outlining the numerous benefits of cycling and walking can encourage the public to walk and cycle more often. The publications previously noted in this chapter identify health, environmental, economic, and community attributes of cycling. These benefits are an important educational and promotional element that should be developed and advertised both on their own and integrated within other existing Regional publications, reports and events. New opportunities to market the many benefits of cycling and walking are being provided through increasing public and private sector interest and new research directed at environmental, health and resource issues such as air quality, climate change, active living and use of fuel taxes.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-1 Develop and implement a communication strategy for the creation and distribution of cycling information.
- 4-2 Partner with local municipalities, agencies and other groups to educate residents on the benefits of cycling and walking.
- 4-3 Consider adapting existing material developed by other municipalities to educate users, rather than developing new original material at increased cost to York Region.
- 4-4 Ensure information is presented in a language and style appropriate for the age group being targeted, such as children and seniors.

- 4-5 Provide a wide range of cycling and walking information topics on the Region's website, including references to other cycling and walking websites.
- 4-6 Develop a way-finding and information signing strategy and supporting design guidelines and then install appropriate signing as facilities are implemented.

4.1.2 FUNDING AND DELIVERY OF BICYCLE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Funding bicycle and pedestrian education programs is an ever-increasing challenge due to limited resources and a heightened public concern over safety. The Region should seek new ways to develop and deliver bicycle and pedestrian safety education initiatives.

Some municipalities have established a public / private Bicycle Safety Partnership that attempts to promote fresh ideas and funding sources. A number of stakeholders, such as police, educators, insurance companies, bicycle manufacturers and health care professionals with a common interest in cycling safety, have been invited to work together to produce safety programs.

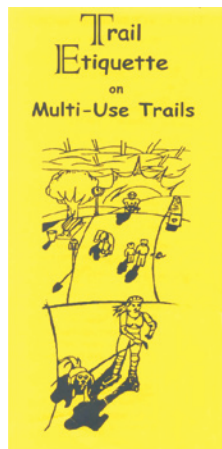
The Road and Trail Safety Ambassador Program is an initiative that has been active in Toronto since 1977. A similar program could be implemented in York Region. The program in Toronto uses a number of public / private supporters, which in the past have included Human Resources Development Canada, Ministry of Transportation, Friends of the Environment Foundation, Bell Mobility, Scotchlite and Mountain Equipment Co-op, to hire and train a number of "Ambassadors" for the cycling season. The Ambassadors provide training, which covers all aspects of safe and responsible road and trail use for cyclists as well as



CAN-BIKE



Advertisement for Bike to Work Week on a transit shelter in the City of Toronto



Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee's Trail Etiquette brochure

The safety of children is a specific concern. The Ontario Trauma Registry reports that children aged 5 to 14 are most likely to incur injuries while cycling.

pedestrians, in-line skaters and motorists. The Ambassadors have participated in the following four approaches to increase safety in a community:

- Community Events – addresses community needs for road and trail safety information;
- CAN-BIKE – provides a set of effective cycling courses designed for all ages and skill levels;
- O.A.S.I.S. (Off-road, Awareness, Safety, Information, Stop) – provides an off-road and environmental awareness program; and
- S.P.A.C.E. (Safety, Prevention, Awareness, Courtesy, Education) – offers a selective traffic education program for all road users.

Another innovative approach to bicycle safety delivery is the “Bike Bus Program”.¹ This idea is similar to a Library Bookmobile, where a mobile trailer, truck or bus could be stocked with bicycles, helmets and teaching materials and staffed by CAN-BIKE instructors and / or Safety Ambassadors. It is then available for community events, bicycle rodeos, staff training sessions and could work cooperatively with School Boards for student safety courses.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-7 Introduce a Road and Pathway Safety Ambassador Program similar to that initiated in the City of Toronto, which uses a number of public/private supporters to hire and train “Ambassadors” during the cycling season.

¹ 2001 Toronto Bike Plan

- 4-8 Support the implementation of programs similar to the “Bike Bus Program” to increase cycling awareness and education.
- 4-9 Allocate a portion of the Region’s programming investment to support pedestrian and cycling education programs.
- 4-10 Continue to administer a safe-cycling skills program for all ages such as the nationally accredited CAN-BIKE course.

4.1.3 FOCUSED SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

The reduction of cycling injuries and fatalities is an important goal of education initiatives. According to a study conducted by the Canadian Institute of Health Information, cycling puts more people in the hospital than any other summer activity in Ontario.² Dr. Jim Cairns, Ontario’s deputy chief coroner, and an avid cyclist, believes it is a matter of educating cyclists on how to ride properly and educating the public that a cyclist riding properly is entitled to ride on the road.³

The safety of children is a specific concern. The Ontario Trauma Registry reports that children aged 5 to 14 are most likely to incur injuries while cycling. Most of these incidents occur less than six blocks from home, and are the result of mid-block entry into a street, swerving into the path of a motor vehicle or another cyclist, and falls.

Safety is also a concern on multi-use trails, where cyclists, in-line skaters and pedestrians are all sharing space. In order to reduce collisions between various trail users, the Region should provide information on proper trail use and etiquette. This information could be provided through pamphlets, advertisements, on

² Cycling Most Risky Summer Fun, Toronto Star, August 12, 2004

³ Ibid.

information-posts and along routes. Information on safe operating procedures should be presented in a clear, attractive and easy-to-understand method. The publication *Trail Etiquette on Multi-Use Trails*, produced by the Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee, is one example of print media that can target all off-road trail users including cyclists, pedestrians and in-line skaters.

It is clear that safety education should be a priority and that more can be done to reduce cycling and pedestrian collisions, injuries and fatalities. Other jurisdictions in Canada have developed programs with delivery strategies to reduce common conflicts between cyclists and drivers. For example, other municipalities regularly fund and undertake campaigns to reach out to cyclists, pedestrians and the general public. Examples of some of these campaigns include:

- **Large truck campaign** – This initiative was in response to the 1998 Toronto Coroner's report on the high number of truck-related cycling fatalities. This campaign allowed the public to gain first-hand experience and learn about the various blind spots on large vehicles and how to safely operate around them;
- **Please walk your bike on sidewalks campaign** – cyclists are encouraged to walk their bikes on sidewalks through stickers placed on bike stands;
- **Right turns and bikes campaign** – outlines intersection strategies for cyclists and motorists to avoid common errors;
- **Pass bikes safely campaign** – focuses on drivers giving cyclists at least one metre of space when passing;

- **Bicycle helmet campaigns** – the importance of cycling helmets was emphasized at helmet-fitting kiosks and low cost helmet sale fairs; and
- **Watch for Bikes campaign** – in partnership with the Canadian Automobile Association and taxi companies clear stickers were provided for motor vehicle rear and/or side view mirrors displaying a message that reminds motorists to check for bikes before opening their vehicle doors; and
- **We're All Pedestrians** – is an advertising campaign developed by the City of Toronto to encourage both pedestrians and drivers to be careful on our roads. This campaign reinforces the theme that everyone needs to take care and be courteous as they make their way around the municipality. Posters are featured on transit shelters and other municipal street furniture.

York Region and its partners, including local municipalities, should consider adopting these types of targeted programs, and customize them for use in the Region.

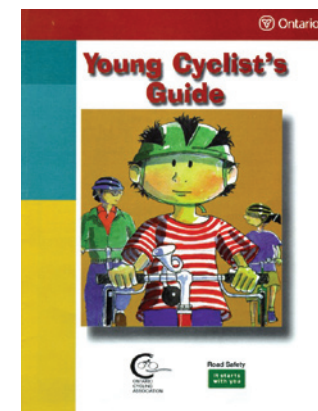
Recommended Actions:

- 4-11 Promote proper multi-use trail etiquette through education and the provision of clear signing and pavement markings on trails.
- 4-12 Revise existing safety campaigns to specifically target pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

4.1.4 RESPONSE PROCESS TO COLLISIONS

It is recommended that York Regional Police complete an annual review of cycling collision data and lead a multi-disciplinary team comprised of Regional staff and other agencies. This

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The Ministry of Transportation's Young Cyclist's Guide



MMM GROUP



MMM GROUP

Children enjoying cycling and walking



York Region's Community Safety Village

structure can provide a response process to bicycle incidents that would produce meaningful preventive measures to help avoid future incidents. The process would complement other injury prevention programs by responding to cycling collisions in a way that mitigates their contributing factors.

Three elements are critical to the success of the process. Accurate and comprehensive information from police reports, cyclists, pedestrians, hospitals and other sources is important to establish a meaningful set of base data. Cyclists and pedestrians should also be encouraged to report concerns about road safety and materials that should be provided to assist cyclists involved in collisions. This could be done partly through the proposed cycling resource and information page on the Region's website. The analysis of the data should be undertaken with the intent to identify improvements to infrastructure, education, enforcement or other related programs. Finally, implementation of the improvements must occur with information provided to cyclists and pedestrians.

The review would also serve as an information exchange and cooperative mechanism between groups to identify trends and safety solutions for cycling. Researchers estimate that more than 80% of bicycle crashes go unreported to police.⁴ Investigating officers could extend an extra effort to collect complete information from cyclists and motorists in collisions. This would impart the serious nature of the incident to all parties and would also assist in the accurate analysis of the data.

Cyclists and pedestrians also need clear information and direction on what to do when a collision occurs. Confusion may exist over

⁴ Stutts, J.C., and W. Hunter, 1998. Police Reporting of Pedestrians and Cyclists Treated In Hospital Emergency Rooms. Proceeds of the Transportation Research Board's 77th Annual Meeting on Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety, January 11-15, 1998.

where a cyclist or pedestrian should report a collision, or there may be difficulty dealing with insurance companies. The Region might consider providing a Question and Answer section on the cycling and pedestrian website to address this need.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-13 York Regional Police should establish a process to review cycling fatality and collision data on an on-going basis and recommend improvements relating to education, enforcement and infrastructure priorities to improve bike safety.
- 4-14 Ensure that the collision reporting process is clear by posting information on the Region's website.

4.1.5 CYCLING, WALKING AND CHILDREN

The mobility needs of children are often overlooked in transportation planning. Efforts should be undertaken to encourage children to use sustainable modes of transportation such as walking, cycling and public transit, and reduce their auto-dependency (through their parents) so they may be more inclined to do so when they are adults. The University of Winnipeg based Centre for Sustainable Transportation has recently studied these issues, and recently produced Child-and-Youth-Friendly Land Use Transport Planning Guidelines for Ontario. The Guidelines document provides reasons as to why land-use and transport planning should be made more child-and-youth-friendly, sets out 27 guidelines that could be applied in the course of a municipality or other agency becoming more child-and-youth-friendly, and provides a discussion of implementation issues.

The 27 Guidelines listed are divided into 6 categories. These guidelines are presented in **Table 4-1**.

TABLE 4-1: CHILD-AND-YOUTH-FRIENDLY LAND-USE AND TRANSPORT PLANNING GUIDELINES

CATEGORY	GUIDELINE
Putting children and youth first	
1.	In transport and land-use planning, the needs of children and youth should receive as much priority as the needs of people of other ages and the requirements of business
2.	Within each municipality designate a staff member (and perhaps also a council member) as responsible for bringing a children's perspective to transport and land-use planning issues
3.	As may be appropriate, establish or adapt one or more forums for children and youth to provide input as to the application of these guidelines
Providing for children and youth as pedestrians	
4.	Identify where children and youth want to go or need to go and, to the extent possible, provide ways of getting there by foot
5.	Explore pedestrian routes used or to be used by children to ensure that they are as usable by them as possible
6.	Explore pedestrian routes to be used by children to ensure that they are as safe for them as possible
7.	For younger children, arrange walking buses and other means of supervision
8.	Separate sidewalks used by children and youth from heavily trafficked roads, particularly where traffic moves slowly or vehicles are stationary with engines idling for long periods
9.	Ensure that sidewalks are always cleared of snow
Providing for children and youth as cyclists	
10.	For children and youth, ensure that destinations that cannot be a walk away are no more than a bicycle ride away
11.	For younger children, ensure that sidewalks are suitable for their tricycles and bicycles
12.	For destinations to be reached by bicycle, provide separate bicycle paths, and install bicycle lanes on regular roads only as a last resort
13.	Ensure that bicycle riders are well provided for at intersections and have sufficient priority for forward movement

The University of Winnipeg based Centre for Sustainable Transportation has recently studied these issues, and recently produced [Child-and-Youth-Friendly Land Use Transport Planning Guidelines for Ontario](#).

TABLE 4-1: CHILD-AND-YOUTH-FRIENDLY LAND-USE AND TRANSPORT PLANNING GUIDELINES

CATEGORY		GUIDELINE
14.		At destinations, provide secure, convenient bicycle parking
15.		Encourage the carriage of very young children by bicycle, in appropriate seats or attachments
Providing for children and youth as transit and school-bus users		
16.		Ensure that every part of a transit system is safe and welcoming to a child, and affordable
17.		Avoid transfers by routing vehicles where children want to and need to go; make transfers easy where necessary
18.		Keep fares for children low, so as to encourage their use of transit systems, with or without supervision
19.		Examine every aspect of the system from the perspective of a parent with a children in a stroller, and make adjustments to meet such a traveller's needs
20.		Reduce the time children spend in school buses to a maximum of no more than 40 minutes per day
Concerning children and youth in automobiles		
21.		Where destinations cannot be reached by foot, bicycle or transit, ensure nevertheless that they are as near as possible to reduce in-car time
22.		When children must travel in vehicles, act to avoid poor in-vehicle air quality
23.		Drive slowly, to be safe and to facilitate an interest in the passing show
Reducing transport's adverse impacts on children and youth		
24.		Take all possible steps to reduce amounts of road traffic generally
25.		In urban areas, post and enforce much lower speed limits
26.		Use low-emission rather than regular diesel vehicles for urban transit or, where possible, electric vehicles
27.		Where possible, encourage use of rail for freight, and use of electric vehicles, including hybrid vehicles, where road freight must be used

The key to marketing change is in the school system, and can be accomplished by involving parent councils in efforts to increase children's active transportation, educating developers, educating teachers and early childhood educators, and educating planning and engineering through workshops, newsletters and presentations.

The recommended Cycling Network and pedestrian system for York Region, as outlined in the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, has been developed with the needs of child cyclists and pedestrians as a key consideration. Programs such as the Community Safety Village, which is operated by the York Regional Police, are instrumental in educating children on the proper safety practices, and encourages children to feel comfortable using all types of cycling and pedestrian facilities.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-15 Expand education programs to encourage children to use sustainable modes of transportation, such as walking, cycling and public transit, and reduce their auto-dependency.
- 4-16 Continue to fund programs such as the Community Safety Village to educate children and parents on road safety practices including cycling and walking.

4.1.6 ACTIVE AND SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Active & Safe Routes to School is a program being undertaken in communities around the world. This initiative promotes the use of active and efficient transportation for the daily trip to school, such as walking and biking, while addressing health and traffic safety issues and taking action on air pollution and climate change. The Active & Safe Routes to School program

is currently being delivered by York Region's Community and Health Services Department and Planning and Development Services Department in partnership with the Green Communities Association, York Regional Police, York Region District School Board, York Catholic District School Board, the Town of Markham, the Town of Richmond Hill, the Town of Newmarket, and Windfall Ecology Centre.

4.1.7 ENFORCEMENT OBJECTIVES

Enforcement is key to pedestrian and cycling safety with the principle objective of reducing incidents causing property damage, injury and death. Enforcement should be applied to on and off-road segments of the proposed pedestrian and cycling network.

This can be accomplished through the following recommended actions.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-17 Continue to work with York Regional Police to provide patrols of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network to enforce proper operating rules to pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike.
- 4-18 Increase the number of officers using bicycles, and patrol trails as part of a community policing approach.
- 4-19 Include pedestrian and cycling safety material in training programs for driver examiners, police recruits, fleet/transit operators and other officials.
- 4-20 Request Provincial funding for pedestrian and bicycle safety and promotional programs to assist the Region in its efforts

People will only consider walking and cycling for recreational or utilitarian purposes if it is convenient, safe and comfortable.

to promote walking and cycling, and educate all road users with the objective of reducing cycling collisions.

4.2 ENCOURAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

The proper conditions and a suitable environment must be available to pedestrians and cyclists for them to feel comfortable using these travel modes. People will only consider walking and cycling for recreational or utilitarian purposes if it is convenient, safe and comfortable. The following objectives for encouragement are listed below:

- 4d: Make walking and cycling more convenient and accessible for York Region residents and visitors;
- 4e: Develop support services that help to make walking and cycling feasible modes of transportation for short distance trips in York Region; and
- 4f: Market and promote walking and cycling and the integration of these travel modes with public transit in York Region.

The following subsections outline methods of achieving the encouragement objectives for the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

4.2.1 PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

York Region initiated a Pedestrian and Cycling Public Advisory Committee (PAC) in 2006 to provide input to the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. The committee consists of public representatives from each local municipality as well as Regional staff, and is an excellent forum to provide advice and input to Regional staff on cycling and walking issues in the Region. The committee could issue reports to the Region's Planning, Transportation and Health and Social Services Committees, as

well as local City and Town Councils, and provide York Region residents with a forum and direct connection to influence municipal decision-makers on matters and issues that effect cycling.

Recommended Action:

- 4-21 The Public Advisory Committee should continue to provide comments and guidance throughout the implementation of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

4.2.2 END-OF-TRIP FACILITIES

The installation of showers and lockers at workplaces and educational institutions help to promote the use of the cycling network for utilitarian purposes. Lockers can be used to store personal belongings such as cycling accessories and a change of clothing. Businesses or institutions with employees who commute by bicycle, on foot, or by in-line skates should be encouraged to offer these facilities.

Cyclists need a secure location to store their bicycles at their destinations. Many existing developments – residential, commercial and industrial – are lacking bike lock-up facilities. Without proper bicycle lockers or bike racks, people are discouraged from cycling to and from these destinations. The provision of bicycle storage and parking facilities is an important element of the Master Plan.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-22 Encourage public and private sector land and building owners to provide “trip-end” facilities such as benches, shelters and secure parking for cyclists and pedestrians at major employment, educational, commercial and other nodes that people frequent throughout the Region.



Bicycle Racks in the Town of Markham

Employers across York Region should be motivated to encourage and support walking and cycling among their employees. The Region cannot do this alone, but it can show leadership and be a model for others to follow.

4-23 Encourage public and private sector land and building owners to adopt a requirement for the supply of bicycle lockers and/or bicycle racks for all new multi-unit residential building sites and retail/commercial centre sites.

4.2.3 LEADERSHIP BY EXAMPLE

Employers across York Region should be motivated to encourage and support walking and cycling among their employees. The Region cannot do this alone, but it can show leadership and be a model for others to follow.

A comprehensive approach should also be adopted that would ensure a more complete application of support facilities to encourage Regional and local municipal employees to cycle or walk to work where feasible. Some of these measures include:

- Encourage the private sector to partner with the Region and local municipalities to develop a Bikeshare program. This program can be convenient and economical for anyone who makes frequent trips around the Region. Members of Bikeshare can borrow a bike for up to three days. Bikeshare hubs are connected by an online database, which allows members to use any one of the numerous destinations or pick up points;
- Create an incentive program and develop contests for employees who cycle, walk or take transit to work, perhaps based around car-free commute days, Clean Air Day or Earth Week;
- Organize a bicycle mentoring program that allows employees who want to cycle to work to find a colleague with whom they can ride;

- Make CAN-BIKE courses available to all Regional and local municipal staff; and
- Incorporate trip end facilities within building lease negotiations.

The Canadian government has already taken steps to promote public transit use by introducing tax credits to transit users. Most recently, the government has announced a plan to provide tax credits to those who purchase more fuel-efficient automobiles.

York Region could consider supporting the concept of tax incentives by communicating this support through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Federal Government of Canada.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-24 Develop an approach that would encourage more Regional employees to cycle to work.
- 4-25 Support the concept of tax incentives to encourage cycling use in the Region.

4.2.4 INTERMODAL CONNECTIONS

The option of cycling must be convenient in order to attract potential cyclists. The implementation of cycling infrastructure can help to achieve this, since a lack of designated cycling facilities deters many would-be cyclists from riding. Many residents who might consider cycling to a destination will need to combine their cycling trip with another travel mode for the same trip. This is where intermodal connections become important. Intermodal connections are points throughout a network where various transportation modes connect and are convenient to transfer between modes. Intermodal connections in the Region

Intermodal connections are points throughout a network where various transportation modes connect and are convenient to transfer between modes.



A "Swerve" bicycle rack

DERO BIKE RACK COMPANY

Cycling maps are excellent promotional tools and are essential for informing individuals of travel choices and the opportunities for cycling.



City of Ottawa Cycling Map

include automobile-transit connections, such as Park and Rides, transit terminals and GO Stations.

Cycling/Pedestrian-Transit Connections

Cycling/Pedestrian-Transit connections are vital in order to increase bicycle use and walking, especially for utilitarian trips. Cycling-Transit connections allow cyclists to ride their bike to a transit stop or station, attach it to a bus-mounted bike rack, travel to their stop, disembark and continue on their bicycle or on foot to their final destination. These connections are important since many York Region residents do not live within a suitable cycling or walking distance to their place of work, but may be more inclined to cycle or walk part of the way if they can combine the trip with public transit. GO Transit currently allows riders to carry their bicycles on all off-peak GO Trains plus peak hour trains not operating in the peak direction. At present, bicycles cannot be carried on GO Buses and bike racks are not yet provided on York Region Transit vehicles although a pilot project is in the works. Riders are permitted to carry their bikes on YRT and Viva buses during off peak periods.

York Region Transit has adopted the “Swerve rack” as its standard bicycle rack for transit stops. The racks are being installed according to a colour scheme – blue for Viva stops, black for heritage areas and galvanized steel for other locations. The Swerve racks are intended to facilitate cycling-transit connections by providing a standardized and characteristic bike lockup location for cyclists accessing YRT and Viva services throughout York Region.

Methods of providing cycling-transit connections should include:

- The implementation of bike racks on YRT, Viva and GO Buses;
- The provision of “secure” bicycle parking at major transit stops, nodes and terminals; and
- Designated areas within transit vehicles, such as GO Trains, to store bicycles.

Investing in cycling and pedestrian infrastructure will also support public transit ridership. Combining cycling and pedestrian facilities with transit can also help to make virtually every major destination throughout the Region accessible by bicycle or on foot. It is recommended that the Region explore the option of providing bicycle racks on all Regional transit vehicles and expand the provision of secure bicycle parking at major transit stops and terminals. Examples of secure bicycle parking are provided in the Planning and Design Guidelines.

Automobile-Cycling Connections

Many recreational cyclists throughout Southern Ontario mount their bicycles onto their automobiles and drive to a destination where they embark on a recreational bike ride. Commuters, who work in urban centres where parking may be expensive or not readily available, could also adopt this practice. The provision of “Drive and Bike” lots along the periphery of central business districts and along major cycling routes which provide direct connections to major destinations could encourage residents to consider this combined travel mode more often.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-26 Contact GO Transit to investigate the feasibility of GO Transit implementing a bike racks on buses program on some of their fleet.

- 4-27 Improve the integration of cycling with transit by encouraging YRT and Viva to implement bicycle racks on buses program and improve bicycle parking and pedestrian and bicycle access at major transit stops, Viva stations and terminals.
- 4-28 Work with local municipalities to investigate the opportunity for “Drive and Bike” lots along the periphery of central business districts and along primary cycling routes.

4.2.5 CYCLING MAPS

Cycling maps are excellent promotional tools and are essential for informing individuals of travel choices and the opportunities for cycling. The Region should investigate what other jurisdictions have learned in developing similar maps. For example, the Regional Municipality of Niagara has recently produced a high quality and popular *Regional Niagara Bicycling Map*. This map represents a departure from the usual cycling map. In addition to illustrating existing network bike facilities, it shows roads that are bicycle friendly (paved and low traffic volume) with added features such as busy and gravel roads, grades, services and key attractions. The end result is a network of on and off-road routes and existing cycling facilities. It also provides users with information on other roads not part of the current network. With this type of information, cyclists of all ages, skill and comfort levels can choose their preferred route prior to embarking on their trip. Other cycling maps that could be used as a model for the development of York Region’s Cycling Map include the City of Toronto Cycling Map, and the City of Ottawa Cycling Map.

The Region, with assistance from its partners including a reconstituted Pedestrian and Cycling Public Advisory Committee, should aim to produce a user-friendly Regional Cycling Map by

2009 and update it every one to two years thereafter. The Region should consider offering these maps to the public at a nominal fee to generate revenue that can then be reinvested in future map editions and used to fund educational initiatives. The current City of Ottawa map has a suggested price of \$2.00 while Toronto provides maps free of charge.

Recommended Actions:

- 4-29 Investigate what other jurisdictions have learned in developing their own cycling maps.
- 4-30 Produce a user-friendly Regional Cycling Map by 2009 and update it every one to two years.
- 4-31 Provide pedestrian and cycling network maps at various public venues and update them every one to two years, highlighting new routes.

4.2.6 BICYCLE USER GROUPS

Bicycle User Groups, or BUGs, are another promotional initiative that can support and encourage utilitarian cycling. The development of BUGs has been successful in many municipalities and is recommended for York Region and its local municipalities.

A very good example of a BUG manual was produced by the Citizens for Safe Cycling (CfSC) in the City of Ottawa titled *BUGs at Work, A Bicycle User Group Guide* and was published in 2002. This guide is available on the CfSC website (www.safecycling.ca) and serves as an excellent resource to facilitate commuting by bike. The City of Toronto has also published a guide on how to establish a BUG and encourage people to participate.



York Regions Take a Hike Guide



Bicycle User Groups, or BUGs, are another promotional initiative that can support and encourage utilitarian cycling.

A Police Bicycle Patrol is an effective community-based policing initiative with environmental, economic and role model benefits.



'Share the Road' sign

TOWN OF MARKHAM

The Region should work with local municipalities, Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce and employers, and could build upon the Region's successful Smart Commute initiatives, to encourage the creation of BUGs. These useful workplace groups could be developed and organized with the assistance of Smart Commute to provide a network that would link one BUG to another.

The proposed Bicycle Users Group Network could eventually be established and linked through a web-based directory for formally registered BUGs, with communications provided through a bulletin board or "chat" network as well as print and personal communications. Programs sponsored by the Region and local municipalities could be phased in over a number of years after completing research and development of the concept, implementation and finally launching the network.

Recommended Action:

4-32 Work with local municipalities, Boards of Trade, and employers to encourage the creation of Bicycle User Groups. Smart Commute could assist with the development and organization of these workplace groups.

4.2.7 WORK WITH OTHERS

The Region will need the cooperation of outside agencies, volunteer groups and individuals to achieve the positive results expected from bicycle and pedestrian education, and to meet the targets set to increase the number of cycling and pedestrian trips as per the overall goal of this Plan. Preceding sections have established the need to work with partners that have similar mandates. This will help ensure consistent messages, avoid duplication and offer benefits from economies of scale.

All participants and partners are important and can bring helpful ideas and resources to the table. The Region should actively reach out and consult with internal and external organizations such as the York Regional Police, School Boards, the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario, Ministry of Health Promotion, Transport Canada, Canada Safety Council, and others to support a safe bicycle and pedestrian-friendly environment.

York Regional Police

As the Region implements more cycling initiatives in the future, Regional Police Services should be asked to expand their current efforts to educate and enforce safe cycling. York Regional Police are already active in promoting a safe walking and cycling community. Each district in York Region has a Community Oriented Response or "COR" unit. These units use officers on bicycles during the cycling season to undertake traffic enforcement, patrol major events and patrol parks at night along with local municipal by-law officers. This Unit completed 14,000 foot patrol hours, and 119 bike patrol days in the Region. There are also Street Beat officers that present safety information at secondary schools as part of an education program. York Regional Police also operate the Community Safety Village, where bicycle information sessions are geared towards younger children.

York Regional Police provide helpful information and links to existing programs on their website (www.police.york.on.ca). York Regional Police have initiated a program called "Safe Streets, Nice Neighbourhoods", designed to engage local municipalities to work together to make road safety a priority. They also operate the Save-A-Life Program, a road safety program with the objective of saving lives and improving the quality of life for citizens of York Region. The Save-A-Life Program consists of three key

components: Engineering, Enforcement and Education, with participation from a cross-functional team, ensuring innovative programs that are identifiable, reasonable and accountable.

York Regional Police offer Police and Community Education Seminars (P.A.C.E.S.), a community education program designed to foster strong community partnerships by providing the public a working knowledge of York Regional Police. The program is an opportunity for individuals to acquire knowledge on police practices and operations in York Region and to dialogue about important community safety issues. Bicycle safety is currently not included in the list of topics addressed by P.A.C.E.S., but it could be added in the future.

York Regional Police are also leading “Operation Cycle Smart”, a campaign developed in partnership with State Farm Insurance, the York Region District School Board, the York District Catholic School Board, York Region Community and Health and Emergency Services Departments and the Ministry of Transportation that focuses on promoting cycling safety to children.

Phase I of Operation Cycle Smart was launched on June 13, 2007. The initiative is designed to educate students, parents and the community about the importance of wearing a bicycle helmet and cycling safety. The launch included a DVD presentation by the York Regional Police Traffic Bureau and Video Services Unit that highlighted bicycle safety. It has since been distributed to students, parents and school staff for use as an educational tool along with an educational pamphlet.

Phase II of Operation Cycle Smart is a challenge to York Region high school students, as individuals or groups, to create a short public service message which encourages cyclists to Cycle Smart and to always use bicycle safety equipment. The message

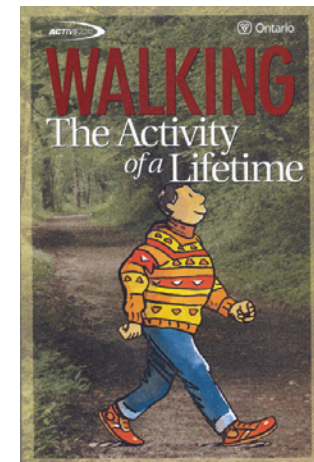
can be created in a format of the student's choice in print, audio or video. The winning student or group of students will receive a cash award. For first place the award is \$2,000, for second place the award is \$1,000 and \$500 will be awarded for a third-place finish. The money award is to be spent within the student's school to benefit students.

Police officers can aid in the instruction of safe cycling at special events. Annual safety blitzes are conducted for both cyclists and motorists to enforce operating rules. The competence and expertise of these officers are invaluable for cycling collision data collection, research and helping to set enforcement priorities. The York Regional Police should continue to be an active member in the development and delivery of cycling and pedestrian safety programs in the Region, and should be encouraged to expand their public outreach in these areas.

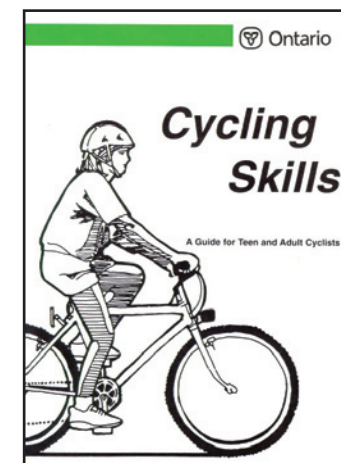
School Boards

School Boards can provide a mechanism to teach children about safe cycling as a basic life skill that is healthy and supports an environmentally friendly choice for mobility. Many children in York Region and across North America are driven to school. This is usually as a result of safety and security concerns for kids. However, students are then affected by traffic congestion near schools, which can reduce the opportunity for physical activity and reduce safety.

School boards should continue to encourage school principals to partner with the York Region Community and Health Services Department (Public Health Branch), the York Regional Police, and other organizations to provide elementary grade children with bicycle and walking tips, and support cycling and walking



The Ministry of Health Promotion's Walking Guide



MTO's Cycling Skills booklet

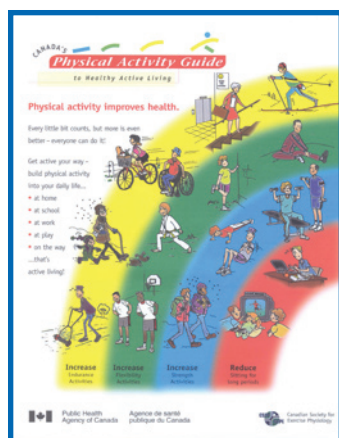
becoming a more integral part of life and school. Examples of these initiatives could include:

- Developing a plan to offer kids CAN-BIKE safety courses for school-aged children;
- Incorporating cycling into physical education curricula;
- Providing targeted safety material such as the requirement for bicycle helmets;
- Providing Parents Advisory Groups with bicycle safety training;
- Organizing a “safe bike to school” program; and
- Include school board participation on bike safety groups.

A Bike to School Program has the potential to provide multiple benefits and capitalize on a number of on-going initiatives. Benefits, such as environmental, health, learning, and congestion relief from this initiative could be realized from a Bike to School program customized for York Region students.

York Region Community and Health Services Department

York Region Public Health Branch serves residents of the Region by providing them with a variety of health promotion initiatives that encourage the adoption of health behaviours. The Healthy Lifestyles Division offers a number of best practice population health programs related to the prevention of chronic diseases and injuries for community members across the Region. The Active Communities Program provides consultation, education and support to community partners and members on best practice strategies that promote active transportation and disseminate messages on the health benefits of walking and cycling.



Canada's Physical Activity Guide promotes an active lifestyle

The Injury Prevention and Seniors Program of York Region Community and Health Services provides a collaborative and comprehensive approach to both pedestrian and cycling safety for children, teens and adults. A number of active community partnerships with York Regional Police (Cycle Smart), The Community Safety Village of York Region and Safe Kids Canada, provide messaging, community events and print materials to educate York Region residents on the proper use of helmets and safe cycling and walking practices. Curriculum resources such as THINK FIRST and RISKWATCH which feature bike and pedestrian safety are provided to York Region schools through the Healthy Schools program. A variety of written resources on cycling and pedestrian safety are also available for all ages.

The Healthy Lifestyles Division offers a number of fact sheets on bicycle safety, including:

- *Cycling safety* – pamphlet with information on helmet use, the Highway Traffic Act, and tips for safe riding
- *Parents – Did You Know? Biking and Child Carriers* – points to consider for parents using a child carrier with their bike
- *Parents – Did You Know? Bike Safety Information* – outlines general bike safety information including development of children (why they are more likely to be injured)
- *Parents – Did You Know? Bike Helmet Information* – includes tips on how to get a proper helmet fit and when to replace a helmet

The York Region Community and Health Services Department also offers a one-hour Bicycle Safety Workshop for elementary school students. These programs should continue, and should be distributed to more students throughout the Region. They

should also be taught in conjunction with additional programs, such as CAN-BIKE.

The Health Protection Division delivers the '20/20 The Way to Clean Air' program - a public education campaign that encourages individuals to reduce energy use by 20% at home and on the road. The campaign promotes walking, cycling and other modes of transportation that reduce emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases. Delivered by health units across the GTA, 20/20 reached approximately 12,000 households in 2006, achieving on average 2.6 tonnes of emission reductions.

Local Municipalities

The Region must work with local municipalities as municipal cycling plans are implemented. Not only is this important to ensure consistency in design as well as the provision of logical connections between systems, but this partnership is also important from an outreach point of view. Many of the recommended programs are best provided at a local municipal level. It is important that programs are coordinated between the Region and Local municipalities for the successful implementation of the PCMP.

Ministry of Transportation (MTO)

The Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) is the custodian of the Province's Bicycle Policy last updated in 1992, as well as the Draft Ontario Bikeways Planning and Design Guidelines (1996). MTO also administers the Highway Traffic Act (HTA), which legally identifies the bicycle as a vehicle, with cyclists having the same rights and duties on the road as motorists. The Provincial government, therefore, has great influence over the present status and future potential for cycling in the province.

The Ministry was urged by a 1998 Coroner's report to take the lead role in improving bicycle safety and encouraging greater use of bicycles. The establishment of an "expert review process" involving municipal and other stakeholders was proposed to recommend changes to the HTA and Municipal By-Laws to make them consistent, understandable and easier to enforce with respect to cycling. In addition, it was recommended that MTO provide additional cycling safety information and content in all driver-training handbooks. Driving examiners should also have practical training in safe cycling CAN-BIKE courses.

The Ministry should take the leadership role in facilitating the communication of information on cycling issues throughout the province. In order to resume this role, the Ministry needs to revisit its 1992 Bicycle Policy and update it as necessary to clarify its role to municipalities. Current policies, facility designs and safety information would all assist in creating a standardized approach that municipalities in the province could use as a guide. Municipalities that do not have the resources to do their own research would benefit from obtaining this information. A good example already being taken by the Ministry is the recently updated Cycling Skills booklet for teen and adult cyclists. The Ministry of Transportation also produces the Young Cyclist's Guide in cooperation with the Ontario Cycling Association. The Region of York should work with MTO as it proceeds with cycling initiatives and produces cycling information packages.

Ministry of Health Promotion

The Ministry of Health Promotion was created in 2005 with a mandate to help Ontarians lead healthier lives by delivering programs that promote healthy choices and healthy lifestyles. One of the Ministry's Sports and Recreation initiatives is the

The Ministry should take the leadership role in facilitating the communication of information on cycling issues throughout the province. In order to resume this role, the Ministry needs to revisit its 1992 Bicycle Policy and update it as necessary to clarify its role to municipalities.



Ontario Cycling Association

Ontario Trails Strategy, which provides a plan for developing and promoting a network of recreational-use trails throughout Ontario. York Region should work with the Ministry to collaborate on planning trail networks within York Region, and providing connections to other municipalities.

The Ministry of Health Promotion endorses Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living. This Guide promotes active transportation, such as walking and cycling, as part of healthy living. This physical activity reduces the risk of premature death, heart disease, obesity, high blood pressure and many other diseases and disorders. York Region should continue efforts to endorse walking and cycling as part of a healthy lifestyle in its promotional material.

Cycling Organizations

There are several cycling organizations in Ontario, such as the Cycle Ontario Alliance and the Ontario Cycling Association. York Region can use these organizations as resources for developing a strong outreach program for its residents. The Ontario Cycling Association, for example, offers a number of education programs to teach cycling safety, such as SPROCKIDS and CAN-BIKE. SPROCKIDS is a program that teaches students basic maintenance and care of their bikes, and provides guidance in safety, health, nutrition and fitness. It also provides a social network for children to come together and learn about cycling. This program is designed to be used in recreation centres, schools, and bicycle clubs. CAN-BIKE is a program customized for children, teens and adults. It is a safe cycling skills program, and has become the standard for bicycle education in Ontario. These programs should be offered as part of York Region's outreach initiatives.

Cycle Ontario Alliance

Recommended Actions:

- 4-33 Continue to work with Regional Police Services to further educate and enforce safe walking and cycling.
- 4-34 Continue to work with school boards to provide elementary grade children with bicycle information, and support the initiative to have cycling become an integral part of life and school.
- 4-35 Collaborate with local municipalities as municipal cycling plans are implemented.
- 4-36 Encourage the MTO to provide additional cycling safety information and content in all driver-training handbooks.
- 4-37 Promote walking and cycling as part of a healthy, active lifestyle.
- 4-38 Work with the Ministry of Health Promotion and the York Region Community and Services Department to improve conditions for walking and cycling in York Region.
- 4-39 Implement a Regional CAN-BIKE program.

4.2.8 TOURISM

Tourism is a huge economic engine, and cycling and hiking can play an important contributing role. York Region already has many kilometres of existing off-road trails, which could be promoted as destinations for cycling and hiking tourists. There is ample proof that cycling can attract tourists and provide an economic return on investments. Cycling is a major recreational activity in the United States, where people spend \$3.1 billion on cycling every year.⁵ Many jurisdictions actively market their cycling infrastructure and services as part of a tourism package including Toronto, Vancouver, Niagara Region and Quebec as

⁵ Mountain Bike, 2000

well as numerous American States such as Vermont, Maine and Wisconsin.

Velo Quebec includes a tour group that actively promotes cycling tourism in Quebec. A May 10, 2004 press release from Velo Quebec underlined the Quebec government's commitment to La Route Verte, which is nearing its 4,300 km planned length. Expenditures of \$7.5 million have been announced from that Province to support expansion and maintenance of this bicycle network. In 1988, it was estimated that \$88.5 million would be required to complete the network.⁶ Economic spin-offs of \$95 million per year are generated from La Route Verte Cycling Network, including \$15 million in provincial taxes.

Similarly, the Regional Municipality of Niagara and its tourism arm (the Niagara Economic Development Corporation), incorporates cycling into its tourism strategy. Cycling is seen as a popular and marketable activity that offers a pleasant way to see and experience the Region's attractions. It is also a means of enticing the "day-tripper" to spend additional time and money, which may include an overnight stay in the area. The 2003 Regional Niagara Bikeways Master Plan provides a 20-year blueprint to support cycling at a cost of \$70 million. It concludes that cycling tourism is, and will continue to be, a significant contributor to the Niagara Region economy. Direct expenditures from cycling tourists in Niagara Region were approximately \$164 million in 2002, or 12% of the total tourism expenditures. This is projected to grow to \$237 million or 13% of the total tourism expenditures over the next 20 years. The spin-offs created by these direct expenditures are significant. A total of 4,900 direct and indirect jobs in that Region in 2002 were due to the expenditures of cycling tourists. In 20 years, this number is projected to increase to approximately

7,000. *The Regional Niagara Bicycling Map* represents an initiative that combines cycling services and information with tourist attractions as a means of promoting cycling tourism.

Marketing York Region as a cycling and hiking destination will serve to complement the policies and strategic directions outlined in this Plan and encourage more cycling and walking in the Region. It will be important to attract pedestrian and cycling tourists and guide them to routes that will ensure a positive experience which results in good referrals and return visits. The target audience for cyclists should include recreational cycling, mountain biking and overnight tours. The marketing plan must reach out to cyclists and pedestrians of all skill levels and ages. Partnerships will also be critical in formulating a successful tourism program. The private sector should be encouraged to participate in the form of cycling and hiking tour operators, accommodation and service providers to help provide expertise and funding for a complete package of services for visitors. This will mean developing integrated bike route and transit connections. Good bicycle and pedestrian access to rail, bus and air terminals, and urging supportive accommodation policies on these modes is also important.

A plan to market cycling and hiking tourism should:

- Compile base data to quantify, characterize and monitor cycling tourists and to help identify appropriate marketing strategies;
- Generate interest in the cycling and hiking opportunities in York Region;
- Provide information about cycling and hiking services, clubs, organizations and resources to help tourists plan cycling vacations;

Marketing York Region as a cycling destination will serve to compliment the policies and strategic directions outlined in this Plan and encourage more cycling and walking in the Region.

⁶ La Route Verte Newsletter, June 1998

- Promote cycling and walking throughout the Region, and direct cyclists and pedestrians to areas where facilities result in a positive experience;
- Obtain private sector commitments and partnerships to invest in making York Region a tourist destination for active transportation; and
- Develop good inter-city cycling and pedestrian connections with Regional bicycle routes, sidewalks and trails, inter-city terminals and on-board accommodations for bicycles.

Recommended Action:

- 4-40 Work with local tourism industries, the private sector and other tourism stakeholders to promote York Region as a walking and cycling destination for tourists, visitors and vacationers, promoting the pedestrian and cycling-friendly nature of the Region with its many attractions, pedestrian and cycling facilities and support services as part of the Region's marketing plan.

4.3 MOVING FORWARD

The implementation of the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan should be supported by a comprehensive and proactive outreach program. The preceding sections of this chapter have emphasized the importance of York Region taking a leadership role in the development of such a program to educate residents, and to promote walking and cycling in the Region. To create a successful outreach program, York Region should continue to reach out to local municipalities and agencies to offer high quality outreach programs and services to York Region residents. This approach with York Region in a leadership role will provide the strongest means for information to be received.

The implementation of the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan should be supported by a comprehensive and proactive outreach program.



