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PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION 2011 PROGRESS REPORT

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated November 16, 2011, from the Acting Commissioner of Planning and Development Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional Clerk forward a copy of this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities and to Metrolinx.

2. PURPOSE

This report informs Council on the 2011 activities and initiatives towards implementation of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan and presents a proposed work plan for 2012.

3. BACKGROUND

Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan provides a framework for developing and encouraging active transportation modes

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan was endorsed by Regional Council in April 2008 and is intended to guide the Region as it works with local municipalities over the next 25 years and beyond to:

- Implement and operate a Region-wide pedestrian and cycling network.
- Promote safe cycling and educate residents and motorists in York Region about the benefits of increased active transportation and the responsibilities of facility users.

This is the third annual progress report on implementation of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

Active transportation modes are key components of the Regional Official Plan and Master Plans for progress towards sustainability

Through policies and programs in the Regional Official Plan, Transportation Master Plan Update and Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, York Region is supporting and

encouraging a change in personal travel choices and providing a range of alternate travel modes. The Region recognizes many benefits of alternative modes of transportation, including improved health of residents, improved air quality, a more efficient transportation network, and reduced dependence on the automobile. The promotion of alternative travel modes such as walking, transit and cycling will help York Region reach its sustainable transportation objectives.

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan provides guidance in connecting and integrating diverse pedestrian and cycling facilities between local and surrounding municipalities to help create a seamless and comprehensive pedestrian and cycling network.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Stakeholders are consulted through the Inter-Municipal Working Group meetings to share information and coordinate projects

Established in 2009, the Inter-Municipal Working Group consists of representatives from all nine local municipalities, York Region Police, York Region Public Health, York Region Transit, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, Transportation Services, Planning and Development Services and school boards. Its purpose is to coordinate and update group members on the active transportation projects and activities within the Region. One Inter-Municipal Working Group meeting was held in 2011, with on-going communication/information sharing throughout the year and sub-working groups contributing to various projects.

The Inter-Municipal Working Group meeting in 2011 covered information sharing and updates related to:

- Update on the Lake-to-Lake Cycling Route Design project by the Lake-to-Lake Technical Advisory Committee.
- Update on the development of a Regional Cycling Map.
- Update on the development of a York Region cycling website.
- Community outreach programs (CAN-BIKE).
- Local municipal initiatives on pedestrian and cycling programs for 2011 and 2012.
- The Region's 2011 roads capital projects and work plan related to active transportation.

The CAN-BIKE training program for elementary and high schools students continues to educate and promote cycling safety

In 2009, York Region received funding from the Ministry of Health Promotion to introduce the CAN-BIKE Program and Kids' CAN-BIKE Festival for elementary and high school students across the Region. CAN-BIKE is a nationally-recognized series of courses on all aspects of cycling safety. The Program includes the following objectives:

- Train 60 high school students as Junior Instructors.
- Deliver training to 2000 elementary school students.
- Document and report the results to the Ministry of Health Promotion.

In 2011, the following recruitment and activities were held as part of the CAN-BIKE program:

- 17 youth completed the Junior Instructor training program.
- 32 children participated in the day-long Kids BikeFest through the York Region Police Community Safety Village.
- 354 children participated in day-long events at 5 elementary schools in Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan.

This Program was to be completed in 2011. However, the Ministry has granted an extension of the Program to mid-2012 in order for the Region to try and reach its objectives. The Program is also being coordinated with local municipal and school board representatives to increase the level of potential outreach and participation.

First York Region cycling map completed and made available to the public in April, 2011

York Region also received a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion's Healthy Communities Fund to develop a Regional Cycling Map which was completed and has been made available to all York Region residents and visitors since April, 2011. The Cycling Map identifies existing Regional and local municipal facilities including bicycle lanes, signed bicycle routes, multi-use trails, and paved road shoulders.

The Cycling Map has been distributed throughout the Region including at municipal offices, public libraries, Chambers of Commerce, and Smart Commute associations. Printable versions of the complete York Region 2011 Cycling Map can be downloaded and printed in PDF format.

York Cycling website was launched with the first Regional cycling map

The York Cycling website (www.yorkcycling.ca) was launched with the cycling map in April, 2011 and it represents a comprehensive new resource for cycling information including updates on events, outreach programs, links to bike clubs and other cycling organizations, and safe cycling related topics. One of the highlights of the York Cycling website is a new interactive map that displays cycling lanes, trails, pathways and other cycling facilities across York Region.

The interactive cycling map in the website includes information to help with trip planning, including:

- Location and information related to different types of cycling facilities such as paved shoulders, bike-only lanes, multi-use trails, and “sharrows” (shared car and bike lanes).
- Locations of sports and leisure facilities across York Region.
- A terrain view, trip distance calculator, address-finding, zoom and print features.
- Transit links and stations.

The York Cycling website also includes information from York Regional Police, Public Health and Transportation Services. As such, maintaining this website is an on-going collaboration between various York Region Departments throughout the year.

Consultant selection process is underway for the Lake-to-Lake cycling route design study

A highlight of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan is a proposed cycling route that will stretch from the shores of Lake Simcoe to the shores of Lake Ontario, a distance of approximately 100 km in one direction. The Terms of Reference for a consultant assignment was developed and a Request for Proposals document was issued in September 2011. Proposals are currently being evaluated. The objectives of the study include selecting the alignment of the route and developing an implementation strategy. The project will be initiated by early 2012 and completed by the end of 2012.

Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program has allocated about \$2.3 million to local municipal projects

Since its launch in 2007, York Region has approved 13 projects and allocated approximately \$2.3 million to local municipalities for the implementation of cycling facilities through the Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program. The Region contributes up to 50% of the eligible construction cost of a selected project. Projects that were opened or substantially completed in 2011 include:

- Town of Newmarket – Extension of Tom Taylor Trail south from Bosworth Court to the north boundary of the Town of Aurora, connecting the Nokiidaa Trail, with a connection to the east side of Yonge Street north of Aurora boundary (approximately 1 km).
- Town of Aurora – Completion of the Nokiidaa Trail as a multi-use connection to the Town of Newmarket (Tom Taylor Trail) - approximately 675m.
- City of Vaughan – Completion of the William Granger Greenway trail connection under Rutherford Road and connect Rutherford Road to Boyd Conservation Area (approximately 600m).

- City of Vaughan – Implementation of the first phase of a signed bicycle route network of various local cycling routes in the City of Vaughan (approximately 31 km).
- Town of East Gwillimbury - Replacement of an existing informal single path trail system with a 3.0 metre wide crushed limestone path including the installation of trail signage (Green Lane to 2nd Concession).
- City of Vaughan – Implementation of the second phase of a signed bicycle route network through signage on local cycling routes within Vaughan.
- City of Vaughan – Implementation of phase 3 of bicycle route network and signage as part of Vaughan's Pedestrian and Bicycle 2011 Implementation Plan.

Detailed information on the recommended 2012 Municipal Partnership Program projects was the subject of an October 5, 2011 report to this Committee. Three projects were recommended and adopted by Regional Council. These projects are located in the Town of Markham, City of Vaughan and the Town of East Gwillimbury. The total Regional contribution to these projects is \$691,515.

Staff participation in conferences and discussions to share pedestrian and cycling experiences and best practices

Regional staff have participated and presented at various conferences and forums including the Transportation Association of Canada Conference on September 14, 2011. The Conference attracted about 900 participants including transportation professionals who shared experiences on road designs and elements that advance pedestrian and cycling facility understanding and safety.

Staff continue to participate in discussions with local municipalities, adjacent area municipalities, and other agencies in Canada to ensure:

- Seamless integration and consistency between York Region and other agencies in terms of cycling facilities and designs.
- Best practises and design solutions introduced into detailed designs of bike facilities during the road reconstruction process.

Cycling facilities are being incorporated into capital projects such as road widenings, reconstruction and resurfacing projects

Through road capital projects, cycling facilities are being implemented with guidance by the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. Various Branches in the Region play a role in ensuring that cycling facilities are considered in Regional initiatives such as the 10-Year Road Construction Program or Minor Roads Improvement Program. Bike lanes are

considered for urban cross-sections while paved shoulders with adequate width for cycling are considered for rural road cross-sections.

Table 1 summarizes the construction of partial paved road shoulders and shared lanes that have been completed or are under construction on Regional roads in 2011.

Table 1
Summary of 2011 Regional Roads Projects with Cycling Facilities

Project Name	From	To	Completion Date/Year	Type of Facility	Length of Facility
Kennedy Road	Bloomington Road	Mt. Albert Road	By the end of 2011	paved shoulders (Bloomington to Davis Dr.)	10.0 km
Woodbine Avenue By-Pass	Major Mackenzie Drive	Hydro Corridor (south of 19th Avenue)	Completed 2011	Multi-use Path Boulevard (Major Mackenzie Drive to Honda Boulevard)	3.6 km
Keele Street	at McNaughton Road	N/A	By the end of 2011	Bike Lanes (Keele Street north and south of McNaughton Road)	0.06 km
Gamble Road	Yonge Street	Bathurst Street	Completed 2011	Bike Lane	2.0 km
19th Avenue	Yonge Street	Linda Margaret Crescent	Completed 2011	Bike Lane	1.2 km
Woodbine Avenue	Ravenshoe Road	Morton Avenue	By the end of 2011	Bike Lane Paved Shoulder	7.26 km 1.88 km
Bowes Road	Keele Street	250 m westerly thereof	Completed 2011	Paved Shoulders	0.4 km
TOTAL LENGTH OF CAPITAL PROJECT BIKE FACILITIES					26.4 km

The Region's Transportation Demand Management initiatives also provided valuable opportunities to promote active transportation

As part of the development approvals process and consistent with the policies in the adopted Regional Official Plan to reduce the need for use of single-occupant vehicle travel, York Region has requested that Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans be included as part of, or in addition to, the Transportation Impact Studies that accompany development applications. Applicants are required to provide details on the TDM measures they will put in place to reduce single occupant vehicle trips and facilitate, among other alternatives, cycling and walking. Depending on the type of land use, these measures can include facilities such as secure bicycle parking, and pedestrian/cycling linkages. The Region is also working with developers and local municipalities to include enhanced trails and cycling routes to encourage walking and cycling as viable travel options within new developments.

In addition, Smart Commute continues to be a valuable partner, promoting cycling as an option for work trips. Smart Commute held Bike to Work Day on May 30, 2011. Cyclists participated in events across York Region with signature events in Newmarket and Richmond Hill, and numerous smaller events at Smart Commute workplaces, including York Region's Administrative Centre.

PROPOSED 2012 WORK PLAN

The proposed 2012 work plan outlined below includes carrying out the remaining 2011 initiated projects, completing safe cycling programs, and continuing to coordinate the implementation of cycling infrastructure in the Region.

CAN-BIKE training program and Kids CAN-BIKE Festival in partnership with local municipalities and school boards will be completed

Regional staff from Planning, Public Health, and York Region Police in coordination with local municipalities, and the school boards will continue to conduct the CAN-BIKE training program using previously obtained Provincial funding.

Using the CAN-BIKE course as the base, York Region's cycling safety program has two components:

1. Recruit and train high school students to become Junior CAN-BIKE instructors and, over time, encourage junior instructors to become fully-certified instructors. Interested students receive instructor training at no cost.
2. Provide safe cycling training to children in elementary schools in partnership with the York Region Public and Catholic School Boards.

The program will include a day-long BikeFest at the York Region Police Community Safety Village, open to all children in the Region ages 7-13. The program will be completed in 2012 and the project will be documented with a report to the Ministry of Health Promotion.

Lake to Lake Cycling Route Design project will define the route leading to implementation

The Lake-to-Lake Cycling Route Design project will be completed in three phases:

- Phase 1 – Identification and evaluation of potential routes and corridors, and assessment of the preferred route/corridor.
- Phase 2 – Preparation of conceptual/functional designs and costing for selection of a preferred design.
- Phase 3 – Development of an implementation strategy and reporting.

Project completion is anticipated by end of 2012. Stakeholder consultation will be a key factor in the successful planning and implementation of the Cycling Route. A Technical Advisory Committee consisting of representatives from local municipalities along with Regional staff will be involved. Other stakeholders are also being considered in the consultation program.

Staff will report back on the progress of the Lake-to-Lake Cycling Route Design project in a separate Committee report in 2012.

An update of the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan will be initiated in 2012

York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (2008) was not intended to be a static document. The timing and details related to implementation, particularly the location of recommended routes and pedestrian and cycling facility types should evolve through community consultation and technical review when appropriate. Normally, review and updates of Master Plans follow a 5 year cycle.

In 2012, staff will prepare the Terms of Reference to initiate an update to the policies and the recommendations of the pedestrian and cycling network.

Staff to review and update, if necessary, the Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program Policy and eligibility criteria

The Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Policy provides guidance for the evaluation of pedestrian and cycling project applications from the local municipalities and stakeholder groups for York Region's funding contribution. This policy allows the

Region to provide up to 50% funding to local municipalities and stakeholder groups for qualifying pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that support a regional scale network.

Regional staff will review and update the policy including the eligibility criteria and elements to be funded by the Region as part of the Pedestrian and Cycling Municipal Partnership Program.

Ongoing traffic safety education will be promoted including knowledge and skill-based learning

The Region has commenced implementation of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure such as sidewalks, trails, various on- and off-street bike facilities including pavement markings and sign treatments. However, facilities alone will not create a safe environment for its users. Education and outreach are some of the most important components of a safe walking and cycling environment. Pedestrians and cyclists need to be better educated to understand on and off-road operating procedures to support a safe and inviting environment for walking and cycling in the Region. The safety education programs can be multi-faceted and include a variety of agencies and organizations for optimal delivery. Regional staff will coordinate between various departments and agencies including Traffic Management, York Region Police, York Region District School Board, York Catholic School Board and local municipalities to educate pedestrians and cyclists on safe operating procedures on bike paths and interacting with vehicular traffic at intersections.

Regional Staff is a part of Ontario Traffic Council Committee Panel to develop the Ontario Bicycle Facilities Manual

In March 2011, the Ontario Traffic Council initiated a project to develop the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 18 - Bicycle Facilities. The Manual will be a primary reference document used by engineers, planners and designers throughout Ontario. It will contain information on legal requirements, standards, best practises, procedures, guidelines and recommendations for the justification, planning and operation of bicycle facilities and control measures.

Regional staff will continue to actively participate and assist in providing input and information to develop various components of this manual.

Link to key Council-approved plans

This report supports the 2011 to 2015 Strategic Plan in the priority area of *Continue to deliver and sustain critical infrastructure*. Implementation of the pedestrian/cycling facilities and initiatives meet the objectives of providing improved mobility for users on Regional transportation corridors while delivering environmentally-sustainable infrastructure. This report also supports the Regional Official Plan policies and

objectives to reduce dependency on single-occupant vehicle travel and providing alternative and sustainable modes of transportation.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All proposed activities are included in the proposed Planning and Development Services 2012 budget.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

All of the pedestrian/cycling initiatives highlighted in this report benefit the residents of York Region. Projects are coordinated and consulted with local municipal staff to ensure that there is consistency and integration of facilities between municipalities. The Inter-Municipal Working Group and Municipal Partnership Program are key mechanisms to assist in the implementation of local municipal pedestrian and cycling projects.

7. CONCLUSION

York Region is progressively shifting to sustainable travel modes such as public transit, carpooling, walking and cycling. The implementation of the 2011 work plan included several cycling safety programs and initiatives such as the CAN-BIKE training, development of the first Regional Cycling Map and York Region cycling website.

The proposed 2012 Work Plan continues the coordination of community outreach programs/initiatives and cycling facility implementation with the Transportation Services Department, York Region Rapid Transit Corp., York Regional Police, Public Health, local municipalities, and other agencies. Projects such as the CAN-BIKE training program, update of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan and other projects will be the focus of the 2012 work plan. However, the 2012 key initiative will be the completion of Lake-to-Lake Cycling Route Design Project.

For more information on this report, please contact Richard Hui, Manager, Transportation Planning at 905-830-4444, Ext. 1578.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.