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PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING MASTER PLAN STUDY UPDATE

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated June 5, 2007, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services and General Manager, Roads:

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Regional Clerk forward a copy of this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities in York Region, Conservation Authorities, Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Association, York District School Board, York Catholic District School Board and Rouge Park Alliance for comments on the draft pedestrian and cycling networks and components of the Master Plan, and upon receipt to report back to Council in the Fall of 2007 on the draft Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the status of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

The Regional Municipality of York is committed, through policies in both the Regional Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan, to improving public travel mode choices and providing a range of accessible transportation options for all users. The benefits include improved health of residents, cleaner air, a more efficient transportation network and reduced dependence on the automobile. It is only through the promotion of alternate forms of active travel modes such as walking, transit and cycling that the Region will reach its sustainable transportation objectives. The development of a Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan is a key step in steering the Region's growth over the next two decades and beyond.

Phases within the Master Plan Study

The work program of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan is divided into the following study phases:

- Phase 1 - Vision and Goals and Objectives (completed).
- Phase 2 - Development of the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (ongoing).
- Phase 3 - Implementation Strategy (ongoing).
- Phase 4 - Finalize draft Master Plan document (preliminary document received).

On March 23, 2006, Regional Council adopted recommendations contained in Clause No. 7, Report No. 3 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee authorizing the award of a contract to Marshall Macklin Monaghan to conduct the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan study.

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan study is being conducted under the umbrella of Planning for Tomorrow Growth Management and in the context of the new Provincial policies and legislations.

Committees Have Been Established

The Regional Steering Committee (RSC) chaired by the Region's Project Coordinator provides overall study direction and seek input from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Public Advisory Committee (PAC). The steering committee is comprised of Regional staff from the Transportation and Works (Roads and Transit), Police, Health Services, Planning, and the Finance Departments.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of local municipal staff, school board officials and conservation authorities has been established. This committee has been consulted at strategic milestones. The next TAC meeting (meeting #3) has been scheduled for June 13, 2007 where the preliminary draft Master Plan will be presented for review and comments.

The Public Advisory Committee (PAC) comprised of York Region residents, local municipal Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory members and representatives from other key stakeholder groups was formally established with the selection of a Chair on November 30, 2006. The PAC will meet three times per year and provide strategic input and direction at key milestones. The next PAC meeting has been scheduled for June 14, 2007 where staff will present the draft Pedestrian and Cycling networks and programming components of the draft Master Plan for committee review and comments.

Public Consultation Process Undertaken To Date

The first of a series of Public Consultation Centres (PCC#1) were held on May 30 and 31, 2006. The Study's first Public Consultation meetings attracted about 70 members of the public who had the opportunity to make comments and identify issues that should be considered in the Region's Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan Study. Display boards illustrating highlights of the Phase 1 component of the study, in addition to displays on health and community benefits were presented for public commenting and review.

In addition to the first PCC, an Active Transportation workshop was held on June 27, 2006. The purpose of the Active Transportation Workshop was to encourage stakeholder participation and seek input on how the Region could improve conditions for walking, cycling and other active transportation modes. This workshop also provided preliminary

analysis of public survey information involving walking and cycling which was subsequently made available on the Regional website.

A second PCC (PCC#2) held on October 2 and 4, 2006 presented to the public candidate pedestrian and cycling route networks, summary of findings from PCC#1 and route selection and evaluation criteria. The Study's second Public Consultation meetings attracted about 40 members of the public.

Additional information on the details of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan can be found via the "Planning for Tomorrow" web site under "Infrastructure Master Plans".

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

4.1 Preliminary Draft Pedestrian and Cycling Networks

The proposed preliminary draft cycling network identified in *Council Attachment 1* consists of three facility types (multi-use trails, on-street paved shoulder/bike lanes and signed only routes), each with its own set of minimum design standards that should guide their implementation. Detailed recommended design practices and suggested guidelines for each facility type will be documented in the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan Planning and Design Guidelines that are currently under internal staff review. This information provides necessary context to proceed with the Municipal Partnership Program.

The proposed preliminary draft pedestrian system identified in *Council Attachment 2* consists primarily of sidewalks on Regional roads that span and connect local municipalities. The pedestrian component of the plan focuses on identifying missing sidewalk links on Regional roads in urban areas and identifies pedestrian zones. The draft Master plan will include a series of recommendations that propose that the Region, working with the local municipalities and developers, adopt pedestrian friendly urban design and streetscaping practices and encourage built forms and subdivision designs that support walking for both utilitarian and recreational purposes.

Upon adoption of this report, the preliminary pedestrian and cycling networks will be made available for public review and comments.

4.2 Highlights of the Preliminary Draft Master Plan

York's Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan project consultant has recently submitted the preliminary draft Master Plan document to staff for internal review.

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan is a long term (25 year) strategy that consists of three implementation phases. The first two phases (0-5 years and 5-10 years) form a recommended 10-year Implementation Plan, and include both infrastructure and program initiatives and associated costs. The 10-year Plan is intended to coincide with the Region's 10-year Capital Roads Programs, and be updated accordingly. The third phase

forms the longer term strategy (year 10 to 25). It will be recommended that the overall master plan be updated every five years.

The following is a highlight of the preliminary draft Master Plan:

- More people will walk and cycle more often if better pedestrian and cycling facilities were offered.
- Integrating walking and cycling infrastructure with transit stops and stations.
- Plan identifies transportation, economic, environmental and social benefit with improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in York Region.
- Mix of on-road and off-road facilities has been identified (*see Council Attachment 1*).
- 10-year implementation plan
- Preliminary cost estimate to implement the ten year plan is approximately \$30-\$40 million.
- Outreach programs.
- Adding key missing sidewalk links on Regional roads.
- Coordinating sidewalk construction with local municipalities to improve sidewalks in Regional Centres, urban areas and within pedestrian zones (*see Council Attachment 2*).
- Planning and Design Guidelines resource material.
- Facilities and infrastructure to support and connect to public transit.
- Includes a set of performance measures.
- Incorporate the master plan in future Development Charges By-law review.
- Includes bike rack installation at YRT stops.
- Bike carrier on transit vehicle program. The new regulation under the Ontario Public Vehicles Act (PVA) allow transit vehicles which cross municipal boundaries to carry bike racks.
- Establish a Regional Pedestrian and Cycling Coordinator.
- Municipal Partnership Program to implement pedestrian and cycling facilities.

Staff will review the costs estimates in more detail and revise the plan as required pending further consultation on the draft Master Plan with the key stakeholders.

4.3 Proposed Natural Heritage Trails Concept Study

The Region's proposed Natural Heritage Trails Concept Study will complement the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan study focus is mainly on the provision of on-street and off-street pedestrian and cycling infrastructure within the Regional Road allowance and within the context of commuter cycling and walking. The Trails study is intended to link existing natural heritage features as well as to explore opportunities to provide new trails in the natural heritage area as a way to provide a connection for residents and visitors to York Region's natural heritage features. It should be noted that linkages between natural heritage trails and connections from neighbouring residential communities to these trail systems may have street element requirements.

The Natural Heritage Trials Concept Study is anticipated to be completed in the fall of 2007, which is within proposed timeline of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan study.

4.4 Next Steps

Subsequent to the adoption in principle of this report by Council, staff will continue to consult with the various key stakeholders on the preliminary draft pedestrian and cycling networks and components of the preliminary draft Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan. The draft Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan will then be presented to Committee and Council in the fall of 2007 for adoption in principle. Upon adoption of the draft Master Plan by Council, staff will proceed with the third and final series of public consultation centres in the fall of 2007. Staff will report back to Council in late 2007 or early 2008 on the final Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

4.5 Relationship to Vision 2026

The Vision 2026 goals include a vibrant economy, managed and balanced growth and responding to the needs of our residents and engaging communities. Pedestrian and Cycling programs will impact positively on these goals by providing improved accessibility and active travel options for workers and residents of the Region. These programs will also promote physical, social and emotional well-being by encouraging the adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviour. Associated with the provision of alternative transportation options will be improvement in the natural environment due to reductions in green house gas emissions and air pollutants from transportation sources. The development of a Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan is one step in steering the Region's growth over the next two decades and beyond, with a focus on improving both the pedestrian and cycling environment that supports and promotes alternative modes of transportation and results in a more liveable community.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Pending comments from stakeholders on the preliminary draft Master Plan, staff will report back to Council in September 2007 on the detailed cost of the proposed plan.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan will respond to the need to promote health and wellness of residents, develop policies, guidelines and standards at the Regional level. The Region will take a leadership role to support local municipal efforts for the provision of cycling and pedestrian facilities and related infrastructure.

Although most of the local municipal plans provide policies, guidelines and design standards and implementation measures for the development of both on and off-road local cycling networks, they do not address the need for an integrated network throughout

the Region. There are locations where expansion of the local system could facilitate network connectivity and consistency and help increase the level of walking and cycling in the Region. As such, the Region is looking towards the development of a comprehensive Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, which would improve the coordination of Regional and local municipal cycling and pedestrian initiatives.

7. CONCLUSION

Upon adoption in principle of this report by Council, the preliminary pedestrian and cycling networks will be made available for stakeholder and Public review.

Staff will report back to Council in the fall of 2007, with the draft Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan for adoption in principle.

It is only through the promotion of alternate travel modes such as walking, transit and cycling that the Region will reach its sustainable transportation objectives.

For more information on this report please contact Eric Gupta, Senior Transportation Specialist, Infrastructure Planning at 905-830-4444 ext. 5146 or eric.gupta@york.ca.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)