

TOWN OF RICHMOND HILL

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

December 7, 2009

SREPW.09.036

Engineering & Public Works
Transportation, Environmental & Development Engineering

**SUBJECT: Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan, November 2009
(SREPW.09.036)**

PURPOSE:

To request endorsement of the findings of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (PCMP) dated November 2009.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- a) That the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (PCMP) dated November 2009 carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class Assessment of Master Plan as outlined in SREPW.09.036 be approved in principle.
- b) That a Notice of Study Completion of the Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (PCMP) dated November 2009 be placed in the local newspaper and following a 30 day public review period, if no major concerns are received, that the study be adopted.
- c) That staff proceed with the design and implementation of Phase I consisting of approximately 75 km of signed bike routes, approximately 57 km of signed bike routes with/without shoulder edge lines, and approximately 13 km of bike lanes as outlined in staff report SEPW.09.036 as funded by the Infrastructure Stimulus Funds program.
- d) That staff report back on a capital implementation plan for the elements in the PCMP, as part of the 10 year capital program.

Contact: George Flint, Ext. 2455

Submitted by:

Italo Brutto, P. Eng.
Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works

Approved by:

M. Joan Anderton
Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND:

One of the fundamental recommendations of the Town's approved Transportation Master Plan was to develop a Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (PCMP) in order to establish a safe, convenient, continuous and connected pedestrian and cycling system within the Town. In August 2008, the MMM Group was retained to undertake the study in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment for Master Plans and the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan (2007).

The objective of the PCMP Study was to develop a plan consisting of short and long-term actions to establish and support an enhanced level of walking and cycling. The plan recognizes cycling and walking as viable modes of transportation, and will facilitate commuting as well as for leisure and recreational opportunities. The PCMP is consistent with the overall goal of complete communities and in particular the Official Plan guiding principles related to connectivity and mobility, such as plan for transit and pedestrian oriented development; promote connectivity, mobility and accessibility within and between neighbourhoods, employment areas, parks and open spaces.

The PCMP builds on the approved York Region PCMP and is consistent with the recommendations of Metrolinx; Regional Transportation Plan: Big Move #4, "Complete walking and cycling networks with bike-sharing programs."

The study approach included the following six phases:

Phase I – Public Input and Consultation - Richmond Hill residents and stakeholders were engaged exhaustively through a variety of methods including:

- Internal Technical Advisory Committee (iTAC) made up of staff from Engineering and Public Works, Parks, Recreation & Culture, Planning & Development, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer;
- External Technical Advisory Committee (eTAC) made up of staff from York Region (Transit, Public Health; Planning and Infrastructure), Metrolinx, Ministry of Transportation, Go Transit, Town of Markham, Town of Aurora, City of Vaughan; and Toronto & Region Conservation Authority;
- Mandatory Public Information Centres (PIC's),
- Newsletters, an online web-based survey; and written submissions.

The overwhelming response to staff presentations was positive and supportive.

Phase II- Vision, Goals and Objectives - The following vision evolved from the consultation process:

"The Town of Richmond Hill is a pedestrian and cycling supportive community that embraces the "complete streets" concept by encouraging both utilitarian and recreational travel by walking, cycling and using public transit through a safe and desirable Town-wide network of on-road and off-road pedestrian and cycling facilities. Pedestrians and cyclists are encouraged to leave their cars at home and commute to

work, school and other destinations by active modes, while visitors come to enjoy the healthy lifestyle and attractions along the trail systems."

Phase III - Inventory and Existing Conditions, Analysis and Summary – Key policies were summarized, including a benchmarking review comparing Richmond Hill to a sample of other municipalities including and examination of innovative and best practices.

Phase IV - Options and Conceptual Designs – Route selection/evaluation criteria were developed. Pedestrian improvements and cycling network maps were created and candidate routes were investigated in the field.

Phase V - Policies and Guidelines; Marketing, Education and Promotion Programs –This involved draft Official Plan policies to support walking and cycling, guidelines for the planning, design and operation of pedestrian and cycling facilities, plus a strategy for encouraging people to walk and cycle more often.

Phase VI – Recommended PCMP Network and Implementation Strategy – The strategy identifies costs and priorities; and recommends performance measures taking into consideration:

- The needs of a range of users (i.e. recreation and utilitarian/commuter), age and skill levels.
- Connectivity, considering linkages with public transit, crossings of major barriers, adjacent streetscape and land uses.
- Flexibility to evolve as required, as a signed route on a roadway can convert to bike lane in the future.

Cycling Network

The cycling network consists of on-road bike lanes, paved shoulder bikeways, signed only bike routes and multi-use trails. The network includes 249 kilometres of new on-road cycling facilities and 22 kilometres of new multi-use trails in boulevards and in parks/greenways/ hydro corridors.

Pedestrian Network

The pedestrian network consists of sidewalks on one side only of local streets and on both sides of collector roads and Regional Roads. Pedestrian can also use multi-use trails which are shared with various other trail users. Over 89 kilometres of new sidewalks are proposed over the long term. The pedestrian network builds on the Town's current Sidewalk and Road Reconstruction programs.

Implementation Plan

Implementation is expected to be accomplished through a phased approach.

Short-term actions include adoption of the PCMP in principle. The key policies and network would form a schedule in the next update to the Official Plan. In addition, Phase 1, approximately 75 km of signed bike routes, 57 km of signed bike routes with/without shoulder edge lines and 13 km of bike lanes would be constructed (priority will be given to industrial park and business park collector roads) .

The long term action is to develop a yearly capital implementation plan for sidewalks, upgrading multi-use trails, and new construction of multi-use trails that would form part of the existing 10 year capital program. Specific projects identified as part of the longer term strategy will be assessed through an annual Town staff review process that will have regard to available funding, ability to be implemented as part of other road and infrastructure projects and municipal priorities as determined by Council. Once a project is identified for implementation it would then need to be integrated into the Town's scheduled capital works program and submitted to Council for funding approval.

In addition Engineering and Public Works staff along with Parks and Recreation and Culture is working together to ensure that the PCMP and Way finding Trails Plan are coordinated.

Resident Input EA Process and Approval

As part of the public consultation process a web based survey was developed. Some key findings were that 96% either strongly agreed that cycling and walking should be a key part of a comprehensive transportation strategy for the Town. When asked to rank top improvements that might encourage them to walk or bike more often: the top 3 reasons listed were more bike lanes or paved shoulders (on-street) and more bike and pedestrian trails (off-road).

Some residents did express concerns about bike lanes on residential roads and the Town potentially restricting parking in front of their house. Staff are not recommending prohibiting parking on residential streets; as only signed bike routes; signed bike routes with or without edge lines, are recommended and do not require prohibiting parking. Bike lanes are recommended on collector roads in the industrial and business parks and will require parking prohibitions. The following table identifies the impact of the various types of cycling facilities on the street.

IMPACT ON STREET						
Facility Type	Visual	Parking Prohibition	Painted Line	Bike Symbol	Sign	Community Benefit
Signed only Route	Minor	No	No	No	Yes every 400m	Yes
Signed Route only with/without edge lines	Minor	No	Yes	No	Yes every 400m	Yes
Bike Lane	Minor	Required	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The PCMP Study was designed to "mirror" Phase 1 and 2 of the Class EA consultation process, and the stakeholders had several occasions to review the study. As set out in Appendix 1 of the MEA Class EA report "**Construction or operation of sidewalks or bicycle paths or bicycle lanes within existing rights-of-way**" is deemed to be pre-approved. Although no Class EA process is required for these types of projects, staff encourages comprehensive consultation with the public. The MEA Class EA document also states that:

- The purpose of Schedule A+ is to ensure some type of public notification for certain projects that are pre-approved under the Municipal Class EA. It is appropriate to inform the public of municipal infrastructure project(s) being constructed or implemented in their area however; there would be no ability for the public to request a Part II Order. If the public has any comments, they should be directed to the municipal council where they would be more appropriately addressed.
- Schedule A+ activities may have been previously approved by council through annual budgets or specific mandates. Advising the public of the project implementation is a means to inform the public of what is to be undertaken in their local area. The public retains the opportunity to comment to municipal council. Given that these projects are pre-approved, there is no appeal to MOE on these projects.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Phase 1, of the Implementation Plan is estimated to cost of \$1,031,435 which is presently funded by the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund programme.

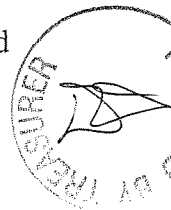
RELATIONSHIP TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan aligns with the goals of stronger connections, better choice and wise management of resources by implementing the following strategies:

- Remove barriers to effective participation for all people in the community.
- Strengthen connections to transit from other modes of transportation.
- Develop connections for people to access local amenities by means other than by car.
- Designate and construct trails throughout the Town that build on and connect existing trail systems.
- Improve the function of buildings, streets and neighbourhoods.
- Construct and promote safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Increase awareness of the Town's recreational offerings, pedestrian trails and cycling networks.
- Convenient and flexible opportunities to access facilities, programs and services.

CONCLUSION:

The Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan has been completed in accordance with the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment. Infrastructure Stimulus Funds are allocated for the design and



construction of multi-use trails as recommended in the PCMP. Specific projects will be assessed through an annual staff review process that will have regard to available funding, ability to be implemented as part of other road and infrastructure projects and municipal priorities as determined by Council. The plan recognizes cycling and walking as viable modes of transportation, and will facilitate their use as a feasible means of commuting as well as for leisure and recreational opportunities. The PCMP builds on the approved York Region PCMP and is consistent with the recommendations of Metrolinx; Regional Transportation Plan.

Attached: Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan Study Report – Draft November 2009