

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) - MARCH 20, 2007

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Planning, the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works and the Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Finance and Corporate Services recommend:

- 1) That Council receive and approve in principle the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan prepared by Marshall Macklin Monaghan;
- 2) That the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan be considered as part of the approval process of development applications;
- 3) That a Terms of Reference be prepared by the Commissioners of Engineering and Public Works, Community Services, and Finance and Corporate Services, and co-ordinated by the Commissioner of Planning to study and review costing, funding and implementation of the programs and facilities proposed in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and brought back to a future meeting of Committee of the Whole;
- 4) That an amount not to exceed \$35,000 be added to the 2007 Capital Budget to undertake this additional work and that this request be referred to the Budget Committee for consideration; and
- 5) That the City request confirmation from the Region of York on the Region's commitment to funding for pedestrian and cycling facilities within Regional right-of-ways and any other options and programs being developed for the implementation of Regional Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

Economic Impact

In order for the Plan to succeed, the additional funds will need to be allocated to the Engineering and Public Works, Parks Development, Parks and Forestry Operations and the Recreation and Culture Departments. Funds will be required for both infrastructure (i.e. bicycle lanes and pedestrian pathways) program purposes (i.e. outreach, education and maps) and maintenance.

The cost to fully implement the network and programs presented in the Plan is estimated at 62.5 million dollars over 20 years. Of this amount it is anticipated that the full cost will not exclusively be borne by the City, but shared with private developers and the Region. The Plan identifies potential sources of additional funding from the provincial and federal governments. The City will need to address prioritization of the proposed programs when assessing available funding. Therefore, a detailed review of costing, funding and implementation of programs will need to be undertaken. Additional funds will be required to undertake this review in accordance with an approved Terms of Reference. Depending on the costs and available funding it may be necessary to modify the plan.

Communications Plan

During the preparation of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan an extensive public communication process was undertaken. This included a dedicated web site, mailings and public meetings. In order for the Plan to be successful, there will be a requirement

for the creation of an outreach program in the form of activities, maps and other forms of communication.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline the findings and recommendations contained within the proposed Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and the Technical Appendix: Planning and Design Guidelines and associated Appendices and request Council's approval of these documents.

Background - Analysis and Options

Background

At the March 27, 2000 meeting of the Committee of the Whole, a report was presented that identified the existing policy framework for the development of a City-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. This report contained a resolution of Council directing the then Urban Design and Environment Department and the Engineering Department to prepare a Terms of Reference for the study.

A Terms of Reference was prepared and Marshall Macklin Monaghan (MMM) was awarded the contract in July of 2002.

Planning Framework

Within the Vaughan Planning Area there are nine major community Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) that provide direction with respect to the development of the City (OPAs 210, 240, 350, 450, 500, 600, 601, 650 and 651). Within these OPAs there are explicit and supportive policy references to the undertaking, completing and implementing of a pedestrian and bicycle master plan. In addition to explicit references to a pedestrian and bicycle master plan, there are policies that convey the desire of the City to promote development that is both pedestrian and bicycle friendly and develop an integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The proposed Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan is consistent with the existing implicit and explicit Official Plan (Amendment) policies and clarifies the location and standards to which the required infrastructure should be constructed. As the proposed Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan will implement existing policies, no further amendments to the various community amendments to the Vaughan Planning Area Official Plan (noted above) are required at this time. However, as it is the intent of the City of Vaughan to review the Official Plan for the Vaughan Planning Area in a comprehensive manner, the inclusion of specific policies and background information that are consistent with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan should be included in this review.

Analysis and Options

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (Attachment 1) consists of two primary volumes, two supporting appendices and five maps. The primary documents are the "City of Vaughan Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan" and the "Technical Appendix: Planning and Design Guidelines". The supporting documents are "Appendix A: Public and Stakeholder Consultation" and "Appendix B: Route Selection Criteria". The supporting maps (Map 4 Pedestrian and Bicycle Network: Facility Types and Map 5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Network: Implementing Priorities) are the key elements of the plan as they show the location of proposed routes and required infrastructure and identify the timeframes in which implementation should occur.

Summary of Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

The findings and recommendations contained within the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan are based upon Appendices A and B and the consultant's experience in preparing this type of document for other municipalities.

Chapter 1 "Introduction" of the Plan introduces the concept of a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan for the City of Vaughan, outlines the context of the Plan and articulates the proposed Vision for the City. The Vision for the development of pedestrian and cycling facilities as expressed in Section 1.3 of the Plan is:

"to develop a comprehensive and connected network of clearly signed pedestrian and cycling facilities comprising off-road multi-use pathways, on-road bike lanes and routes, boulevard pathways and sidewalks that will help to facilitate walking and cycling in the City for leisure and commuting purposes."

In order to implement this Vision the report outlines current conditions in the City, describes the benefits of promoting walking and cycling. These benefits are further described in the context of previous City initiatives and initiatives proposed within the Plan. The Plan is expected to be completed within a 20 year timeframe.

Chapter 2 "Context" of the Plan outlines the benefits of having a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle network within the City, provides an overview of previous City initiatives and policies, outlines items contained within the study and establishes and reports on the findings from the public consultation process. As the success of this Plan is contingent on the use of the proposed facilities by the public, the public consultation process and key findings are discussed elsewhere in this report.

Chapter 3 "Direction" establishes the Goals and Objectives of the Plan and helps to establish the policy framework that will be developed in subsequent chapters. The primary goal of the Plan is to build upon and enhance existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the City of Vaughan. This chapter establishes the strategy for how the implementation of the Goals and Objectives will be carried out through programs proposed in Chapters 4 through 6.

Chapter 4 "Network" establishes the specific goals and objectives required to create a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle network in the City. This chapter establishes a hierarchy of trails and pathways within the network, describes the proposed classes of trails and pathways within the network and outlines how the proposed and future routes were chosen. Maps are provided that show the proposed network and facilities and outline an implementation strategy. The network presented on Map 3 (Attachment 2) is divided into four primary classes. These classes are: Multi-use Recreation or Boulevard Pathway, Bike Lane / Paved Shoulder / Sidewalk, Bicycle Signed Route / Sidewalk and Trail Facility. The map provides a brief description of the trail characteristics and the location of the routes. Map 4 (Attachment 3) outlines a framework for implementing the Plan by proposing a phasing strategy. The phasing strategy considers existing routes, existing roads and facilities and then adds longer term plans based on expected road construction and proposed facilities. As proposed, the network will consist of approximately 613 km of on and off-road pedestrian and/or cycling routes.

Chapter 5 "Pedestrian Environment" outlines the existing pedestrian environment and provides strategies and programs that the City should implement in order to improve the pedestrian environment. The key to creating a pedestrian environment is establishing a network of sidewalks and trails that the public want to use. To accomplish this, the trails and sidewalks must be located in convenient locations, provide route choices and provide

opportunities for the public to experience interesting landscapes (either natural or man made).

Chapter 6 “Outreach” outlines the programs the City should develop in order to achieve the maximum usage of the proposed pedestrian and bicycle network. This chapter includes sections on education, encouragement and promotion and enforcement. Education programs could consist of the City’s use of cycling programs such as CAN-BIKE and Sprockids. Materials for these programs have been developed and are available from the Ontario Cycling Association. In addition to existing programs, the Region and Province are in the process of developing programs and funding opportunities to promote health and active living. It is recommended that Community Services should investigate the opportunity to develop programs associated with this funding.

Chapter 7 “Implementation” refines existing goals and objectives into short and long term programs, provides a framework for measuring the success of the Plan.

Public Consultation

As previously noted, in order for this Plan to succeed the residents and people who work in Vaughan need to embrace the Plan and use the network being proposed. In order to fully understand the wants and desires of the community public consultation process was undertaken.

Public consultation was done in a number of ways. These included open houses, use of the internet and a dedicated website (<http://www.vaughanhikenbike.com/>) user surveys, field surveys and interviews and circulation of the Plan and Design Guidelines to interested community groups and agencies. The comments received were used to develop routes and strategies for the promotion of pedestrian and bicycle activities within the context of the Plan and Design Guidelines.

Based on the public consultation the following were the top 5 suggested improvements for walking in the City of Vaughan:

1. More destinations to walk to;
2. Separate paths for cyclists, skaters and pedestrians;
3. Reduction in automobile speeds;
4. More interesting places to see en-route; and
5. More benches.

Based on the public consultation the following were the top 5 suggested improvements for cycling in Vaughan:

1. Repair potholes and broken pavement on roads;
2. Provide on-street bike lanes;
3. Provide wider paths on trails off-road;
4. Improve signage; and
5. Provide bike racks at key public transit stops and destinations.

Responses to these and other suggestions were considered during the preparation of the Plan and Technical Appendix of the Plan. A summary of the comments received are contained within Appendix A of the Plan.

Recognizing the need for the City’s pedestrian and bicycle network to connect with the networks in neighbouring municipalities, King, Markham, Brampton, Richmond Hill and Toronto were all consulted and circulated drafts of the Plan and their input was

considered during the preparation of the selection of routes within the Plan. Furthermore, the draft Plan has been used in the preparation of the York Region Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan Study, that is currently underway. The consultant indicates that the Region is highly supportive of the proposed Plan and network.

Based on the Vision, suggestions and comments received from the public, related agencies and various City Departments, the Plan provides a framework to create a Pedestrian and Cycling Network. It focuses on creating a pleasant pedestrian environment, outlines an education and outreach strategy and provides an implementation guide, including costs and timelines for completion.

Technical Appendix: Planning and Design Guidelines

In order for the network proposed in the Plan to be implemented, a technical document that outlines design standards and associated rationale for these standards was prepared. These standards have been reviewed and generally accepted by both the Engineering and Public Works and Community Services Departments. As these standards are primarily operational in nature, the Engineering and Community Services Departments need to review the proposed Design Standards and incorporate these standards into existing City programs.

In order to monitor the implementation of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, the Commissioners both of Engineering and Public Works and Community Services should report to a future Committee of the Whole meeting on the status of the design standards and their use of the standards.

It is understood that as the Technical Appendix is operational in nature, revisions and changes are likely to occur over time based on local experience and changes to Engineering and Parks standards.

Implementation

The effective implementation of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan requires the participation of the following Departments: Finance; Engineering Services; Development Transportation Engineering; Public Works; Parks Development, Recreation and Culture; Development Planning; and Policy Planning. The Finance Department will assess funding opportunities through sources such as Development Charges, grants from other levels of government and taxation. The Engineering and Public Works Departments will be responsible for providing and maintaining the infrastructure proposed in the Plan in the form of bike lanes, multi-use trails and sidewalks. Parks Development will be responsible for the planning of paths and multi-use trails in parks and Recreation and Culture will be responsible for developing and implementing the suggested education and other public awareness programs. The Development Planning Department will ensure that adequate lands are available and the design of subdivisions incorporates the routes and associated standards established in the Plan. The Policy Planning Department will need to incorporate the routes and standards into Block Plans as well as other studies they undertake.

It is anticipated that the full cost of implementing the pedestrian and cycling network and programs (maps, outreach, etc.) of approximately 62.5 million over 20 years, will be partly secured through the development process partly shared with the Region and partially funded through taxation. If the City's entire share was to be funded from DC's there would still be the requirement for 10% co-funding, however, given the master plan will require retro-fits within existing areas it is anticipated that some amount, beyond the 10% will be required from taxation. The Plan identifies potential sources of funding from both the provincial and federal governments. Since the Region's share is so significant it is

recommended that the City request confirmation from the Region of York on their commitment to funding for pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the Regional right-of-ways and any other options and programs identified in the Region's Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan.

Prioritization of the programs and facilities and a detailed review of the cost estimates and funding sources associated with implementing the proposed programs and required infrastructure improvements will need to be addressed. Therefore, it is recommended that the Commissioners of Engineering and Public Works, Community Services, and Finance prepare a Terms of Reference to be co-ordinated by the Commissioner of Planning and identify a funding amount required for a consultant to undertake this work.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

The approval of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Technical Appendix is consistent with Vaughan Vision 2007. Specifically, Section 3.2.5 of Vaughan Vision 2007 states it is the City's intention to "Develop and implement bicycle and pedestrian networks."

This report is consistent with policies previously established by Council. Additional resources will be required to be allocated in order to implement the Plan to its fullest potential.

Regional Implications

The Region is currently undertaking a region wide Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan Study. The Region's Plan considers and recommends routes and facilities based on items presented in the various municipalities' Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans, including Vaughan's draft Plan. The Study portion of the Master Plan is ongoing at the Region and is expected to be completed in 2007. Section 7.5.1 of the Region's Study indicates that they intend to develop "Regional and local capital works coordination-Partnerships" in order to aid municipalities in the development of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and routes.

A substantial portion of the proposed pedestrian and bicycle route falls within the rights of way of Regional roads. Based on the contents of the Region's Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan Study and Report No. 8 of the Planning and Economic Development Committee to Regional Council October 19, 2006, (Item 7 Pedestrian And Cycling Master Plan Study Municipal Partnership Program), clarification of the Region's commitment and intent to fund infrastructure and programs is required.

Conclusion

The information contained within the City of Vaughan Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan has been reviewed by various City Departments, external agencies and the public. Based on this information the following conclusions support a recommendation to adopt in principle the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan as City policy and instruct all City Departments to review their programming and design standards in order to operationalize the Plan.

The Policy Planning Department has reviewed the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and has determined that the existing policy framework in the major community official plan amendments is adequate to support the approval of the Plan without requiring further amendments to the Vaughan Planning Area Official Plan, as amended. Notwithstanding the existing policy framework in the existing Vaughan Planning Area Official Plan, when

undertaking a review of this and when a final Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan is adopted, policies should be integrated into the Official Plan to ensure its implementation.

The preparation of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and the “Technical Appendix: Planning and Design Guidelines” was a joint initiative of the Planning, Engineering Services and Development/Transportation Engineering, and Parks Development Departments. In order for the standards presented in the Appendix to be incorporated into the City’s existing design standards a comprehensive review of City’s design standards for parks, trails, roads, sidewalks and other public works within road right-of-ways will be required.

As the Region has yet to identify the type of programs or amount of money available to the City to implement facilities within the Regional right-of-ways, clarification should be requested. The City should also seek out potential partners and other programs that may aid in the delivery of programs or development of the recommended infrastructure.

Next steps include a review of costs, funding and staffing strategies and a review of design standards to implement the programs and facilities proposed in the Plan.

Attachments

1. City of Vaughan Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan - Members of Council ONLY
2. Map 4 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Network: Facility Types- Members of Council ONLY
3. Map 5 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Network: Implementation Priorities - Members of Council ONLY

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