

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Transportation Services
October 14, 2021

Report of the Commissioner of Transportation Services

Municipal Streetscape and Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Programs Annual Update

1. Recommendation

The Regional Clerk forward this report to the local municipalities, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

2. Summary

This report updates Council on the projects approved for funding through the 2021 Capital Budget and provides highlights on the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program (Municipal Streetscape Program) and Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program (Pedestrian and Cycling Program).

Key Points:

- The Municipal Streetscape Program and the Pedestrian and Cycling Program benefit local municipalities and other Regional stakeholders by assisting in advancing projects identified by local municipalities through cost-sharing of infrastructure that supports walking, cycling, safe and vibrant communities.
- The Commissioner of Transportation Services has delegated authority to approve projects funded through the Council-approved policies.
- Successful applications must meet the criteria outlined in the respective policies and highlight how the projects will help contribute to Regional objectives.
- Funding is allocated annually with \$1,000,000 to the Municipal Streetscape Program and \$500,000 to the Pedestrian and Cycling Program.
- The Town of East Gwillimbury, the City of Markham, the City of Vaughan and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority received funding as part of the 2021 budget.

3. Background

The Partnership Programs provide cost-sharing opportunities for infrastructure projects identified by local municipalities

The Region commits \$1,000,000 annually to the Municipal Streetscape Program and \$500,000 to the Pedestrian and Cycling Program. The funding is approved through the annual capital budget.

Since the program launch in 2006/2007, 37 projects have been provided funding through the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program with a Regional contribution of \$10,698,226 and 45 projects through the Pedestrian and Cycling Program with a Regional contribution of \$7,475,650.

The projects are locally-initiated and delivered but must meet Regional priorities to enhance the streetscape of road corridors or build out the Region's pedestrian and cycling network. A full list of projects for each of the programs that have been implemented across the Region are shown in Attachments 1 and 2.

Applications for the Municipal Streetscape Program and Pedestrian Cycling Program must demonstrate the contribution and support of Regional objectives

To be considered for funding, successful applications must demonstrate how local projects align with broader Regional objectives. Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program objectives aim to promote pedestrian-friendly design, attractive streetscapes and must connect into major transportation infrastructure. Pedestrian Cycling Partnership Program objectives include reducing single occupancy vehicle use, improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and enhancing mobility and connections to major transportation infrastructure.

Projects are eligible for funding at 50% of eligible project costs if they are completed with a Region Capital Project, and 33% of funding for eligible costs on projects that demonstrate significant benefit to the community.

All applications that receive funding through the Programs are required to submit a signed maintenance agreement to ensure clear ownership so that any enhanced infrastructure delivered through these Programs is appropriately maintained.

The Commissioner of Transportation Services has delegated authority to approve successful applications and allocate funding

Applications for funding under the Programs are vetted through the Streetscape and Pedestrian Cycling Review Committee, which recommends projects for consideration, based on the eligibility criteria outlined in the Municipal Streetscape Program and Pedestrian and Cycling Program policies.

The Commissioner has final approval to allocate funding on all partnership program projects and reports on the status of the programs annually.

4. Analysis

Continuing to support the build out of the Region’s active transportation network promotes non-auto modes of transportation and reduces the strain on the Regional road network during rush hours. Elevated streetscaping design promotes more attractive and pedestrian-friendly right-of ways.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, increased use of the public road network through walking and cycling has elevated the importance of these investments in our Regional corridors to create active and more enjoyable streetscapes for all modes of transportation.

Under the Municipal Streetscape Program for 2021, five applications were received and approved for funding

Each of the five submitted applications for the Municipal Streetscaping Program were approved for funding as part of the 2021 capital budget. Funding was granted to four projects in the City of Vaughan and one in the Town of East Gwillimbury, as they best demonstrated alignment with Regional objectives (see Attachment 1).

Table 1
Municipal Streetscaping Program 2021 Allocation

Municipality	Project Name	Project Cost	Regional Contribution
City of Vaughan	Major Mackenzie Drive (Highway 400-Jane Street)	\$506,848	\$253,414
City of Vaughan	Highway 7 (Edgeley-Applewood)	\$294,647	97,234
City of Vaughan	Major Mackenzie Drive and Civic Centre Drive	\$461,565	152,317
City of Vaughan	Major Mackenzie Drive and Station Street (Maple GO)	\$734,414	242,357
Town of East Gwillimbury	Leslie Street and Mount Albert Road (East and West Sides)	\$227,535	65,668
Total Regional contribution			\$810,990

The Major Mackenzie Drive (Highway 400-Jane Street) project in the City of Vaughan received \$253,414 for two bermed and planted landscape gateway features with integrated seating and a unit paved plaza along Major Mackenzie Drive, Amusement Way and Jane Street. The project is integrated with York Region's road widening project and complements the Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital streetscape on the north side of Major Mackenzie Drive.

Highway 7 (Edgeley-Applewood) project in the City of Vaughan received \$97,234 for an enhanced unit paver pedestrian walkway integrated into the Highway 7 rapidway project to encourage active transportation along this major transit arterial.

The Major Mackenzie Drive and Civic Centre Drive project in the City of Vaughan received \$152,317 for a streetscape design including planters faced in the same stone as the Civic Centre with large planted street trees and colourful understorey planting. This project was coordinated with the Region's intersection improvement project.

The Major Mackenzie Drive and Station Street project in the City of Vaughan received \$242,357, building on past streetscaping investment along Major Mackenzie Drive. This partnership focuses on supporting the City in creating an accessible access to Maple GO Station. Streetscape enhancements included new planting and cost-sharing on the part of the accessible ramp that is within the Regional right-of-way.

The Leslie Street and Mount Albert Road (east and west sides) project in the Town of East Gwillimbury received \$65,668 for a gateway design in the community of Sharon. Streetscape enhancements include masonry natural stone walls, fencing, planting, decorative paving, wayfinding signage and a custom-designed town clock. These enhancements will set the tone for the rest of the vision for the Civic Centre Precinct.

Through the programs, local municipalities and Regional stakeholders leverage cost-sharing opportunities for streetscaping enhancements and active transportation connections that meet Regional objectives. Partnering with local municipalities and Regional stakeholders, these partnerships allow for a more seamless and integrative approach to enhancing the Regional road network.

Under the Pedestrian and Cycling Program for 2021, six application were received and three were approved for funding

A total of six applications were submitted for Pedestrian and Cycling Program funding in 2020. Funding was granted to three, City of Markham, Toronto Region and Conservation Authority and Town of East Gwillimbury (see Attachment 2), as they best demonstrated alignment with Regional objectives.

Table 2
Pedestrian and Cycling Program 2021 Allocation

Municipality	Project Name	Project Cost	Regional Contribution
City of Markham	Rouge Valley Trail Connections	\$450,000	\$148,500
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority	The Lake to Lake Route Phase 5	\$488,757	96,288
Town of East Gwillimbury	Holland River Bridge and Lake to Lake Connection	\$1,621,752	255,212
Total Regional contribution			\$500,000

The City of Markham received \$148,500 for two trail connections, providing a link from Highway 7 and Main Street Unionville and Kennedy Road and Austin Drive into the highly-used Rouge Valley Trail.

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority received \$96,288 to construct Phase 5 of part of the Lake to Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail within the Oak Ridges Corridor Conservation Reserve in the City of Richmond Hill, which provides connection to Stouffville Road. Previously, it received \$65,000 towards this project as part of the 2016 Pedestrian and Cycling Program. The total Regional contribution for this project is \$161,288.

The Town of East Gwillimbury received \$255,212 to construct the Holland River Bridge over environmentally sensitive lands between Oriole Drive and Doane Road. The project was approved for an additional contribution through the Pedestrian and Cycling Capital Budget for a total of \$535,178 due to the critical link the bridge provides to the Region's Lake to Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail alignment.

5. Financial

The Municipal Streetscape Program and Pedestrian Cycling Program are funded through 90% development charges and 10% tax levy. The funding for these programs is reviewed annually through the Region's budget process.

In years when total budget for the programs is not spent, funds are re-allocated to other Transportation Services growth-related roads projects. Approved funding is to be spent within a three-year period, or applicants are required to re-apply to ensure program funding is maximized and timely project implementation is achieved.

6. Local Impact

Both programs create opportunities for collaborative partnerships between the Region and local municipalities to deliver a common goal. The programs cost share on projects that enhance community aesthetics and help create safer, more enjoyable spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.

A positive outcome from the COVID-19 pandemic is an increase in citizens walking and cycling across the Region. Citizen feedback to date through the Transportation Master Plan Update includes a desire for more active and sustainable transportation infrastructure.

7. Conclusion

The Municipal Streetscape and Pedestrian and Cycling Programs are a collaboration opportunity between the Region, local municipalities and other stakeholders to improve community aesthetics and accessibility for pedestrian and cyclist within the Region's right-of-way.

Applications are required to meet the criteria included in the associated policies and demonstrate how a project will support the Region's objectives including creating connections to the Region's transportation systems and/or destinations. The Commissioner of Transportation Services has delegated authority to approve projects funded based on the Council-approved policies.

Staff will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and policies to ensure successful implementation of infrastructure delivered through these partnership programs.

A copy of this report to be forwarded by the Regional Clerk to the local municipalities, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

For more information on this report, please contact Brian Titherington, Director, Transportation Infrastructure Planning at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75901. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.



Recommended by:

Ann-Marie Carroll
Acting Commissioner of Transportation Services



Approved for Submission:

Bruce Macgregor
Chief Administrative Officer

September 23, 2021

Attachments (2)

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