

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Transportation Services
November 7, 2019

Report of the Commissioner of Transportation Services

Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program and Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program Policy Updates

1. Recommendations

1. Council approve policy updates to the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program and the Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program, as shown in Attachments 1 and 2.
2. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to the Clerks of the local municipalities.

2. Summary

This report seeks Council approval on policy updates to the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program (MSPP) and Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program (PCPP).

Key Points:

- Since the inception of the MSPP and PCPP, all local municipalities have successfully leveraged the programs to implement infrastructure to meet the unique needs of each community
- The policy updates ensure the limited program funding is fully used each year and operational commitments are understood so that new infrastructure is maintained
- Local municipalities were consulted and their input has been integrated into the policy updates

3. Background

Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program was approved by Council in 2006

In 2006, Council approved the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program and has committed \$1 M annually to support locally-initiated streetscape design enhancements within the Region's right-of way through cost sharing.

This cost-sharing program provides local municipalities with partnership funding that supports the Region's priorities for vibrant and healthy communities.

Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program was approved by Council in 2007

In 2007 Council approved the Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program and committed \$500K annually to support locally-initiated active transportation projects on road and in boulevard through cost-sharing.

This cost-sharing program provides local municipalities and conservation authorities with partnership funding that support the Region's priorities for active transportation, forming part of the Regional walking and cycling network.

York Region has seen a positive transformation of its transportation network through both partnership programs over the past decade

Since the inception of both programs, there has been a total partnership investment by the local municipalities and York Region of over \$24M in streetscape projects (Regional contribution of \$10.6M) and \$10.35M in active transportation projects (Regional contribution of \$4.2M).

Collaboration with the nine local municipalities and conservation authorities is helping to shift our transportation network to one that better promotes active transportation with streets that reflect communities and are attractive.

4. Analysis

Ongoing review and update of the policies is required to ensure the programs continue to meet the needs of partners

To further improve project quality, administration, financial accountability and ongoing maintenance responsibility, there is again a need to update the policies. The program policies were last updated in 2012. The following updates were reviewed with local municipal partners at the 2019 Annual Municipal Workshop:

- Implementation of firmer deadlines to ensure equal opportunity to all applicants and sufficient time for evaluation of submissions by the applicable review teams and Commissioner of Transportation Services.
- Provision of a letter of commitment for future maintenance requirements at the Preliminary Design Submission stage to acknowledge that the local municipality is required to submit a signed Maintenance Agreement at the final design submission stage.
- To ensure limited program funding is maximized and project implementation occurs in a timely manner, approved funding is to be spent within a three-year period. Projects

extending beyond this time frame will be encouraged to resubmit with updated information.

York Region consulted with local municipalities at the 2019 Annual Municipal Workshop for feedback on proposed policy updates

In early 2019, local municipal staff was consulted on the proposed updates. Administrative refinements were included based on feedback received, including signed maintenance agreements being submitted at the final design submission stage and flexibility provided to local municipalities should the construction delay occur as a result of a Regional construction project. Regional staff committed to continue to collaborate with the local municipalities, should exceptional circumstances arise.

Clear process, communication and collaboration ensure the continued success of these funding partnerships

Since 2012, over 70% of funding applications have been submitted late. In the spirit of partnership and to encourage best use of the limited program funding, York Region accepted late applications. However, this resulted in extremely compressed review and evaluation timelines that impacted the approval schedule and annual reporting to Council.

To support successful project implementation and timely expenditure of approved funding, the policy has been updated with clear requirements and milestones to ensure adherence to a defined process schedule and an acknowledgement for future maintenance of the completed project in advance of project approval. Applicants will be encouraged to submit partnership applications for the following year should deadlines not be met.

Approved projects are required to be constructed within three years

Streetscape and active transportation facilities are typically constructed during the final phases of a road construction project. Any road construction or related delays can impact the delivery schedule for partnership projects, construction and invoicing, which create challenges for the management of annual cash flows for the programs.

Despite some construction delays of up to five years, the approved funding for both programs has been honoured to date. However, this impacts the effective management of cash flows, which have annual limits. In the updated policies, approved applicants who are unable to use the funds in a three-year period, will be encouraged to re-submit their application for future consideration.

The local municipalities have acknowledged that a three-year period for construction is reasonable for most projects. For projects where Regional road construction or related delays will impact delivery, staff will continue to collaborate with the local municipalities to provide flexibility.

Acknowledgement of future maintenance obligations will be part of the application process and a condition of funding approval

A maintenance commitment has been a condition for funding approval for both programs since policy adoption. Over the past few years, it has been a challenge to obtain signed Maintenance Agreements.

As part of the preliminary design submission, a letter of commitment for future maintenance obligations will be required. The applicant will be required to submit a signed maintenance agreement with the final design submission in order to receive the approved funding.

Signed Maintenance Agreements are a foundation for the success of these partnerships. The updated policies will ensure these agreements are in place prior to approving funding.

5. Financial

The MSPP and PCPP are funded through the Capital Plan and reviewed annually through the Region's budget process. There are no financial implications as a result of these policy updates.

6. Local Impact

Since the inception of the MSPP and PCPP, the local municipalities have all successfully leveraged the programs to implement infrastructure that meets the unique needs of each community. These infrastructure partnerships also benefit York Region's overall transportation network.

The local municipalities have all been consulted regarding the proposed policy updates and their input has been integrated.

Enhanced streetscape design helps to create attractive communities, encourage social interaction, support the local economy, reflect the local character in our various neighbourhoods and elevate York Region's civic image. Active transportation provides sustainable travel options that are supportive of a Region that is becoming increasingly urbanized. The two partnership programs play an important role in achieving York Region's overall transportation network and city-building objectives.

7. Conclusion

Staff is seeking Council approval on the policy updates outlined in this report to the Municipal Streetscape Partnership Program and Pedestrian and Cycling Partnership Program.

The Region supports partnerships with the local municipalities by contributing funding towards their projects to improve local communities. These policy updates will improve the

administration, financial accountability and successful implementation of the infrastructure delivered through these partnership programs.

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

Recommended by: **Paul Jankowski**
Commissioner of Transportation Services

Approved for Submission: **Bruce Macgregor**
Chief Administrative Officer

October 25, 2019
Attachments (2)
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