



Report to: Development Service Committee

Meeting Date: February 7, 2022

SUBJECT: Revised John Street Multi-Use Path Implementation Strategy (Wards 1 & 8)

PREPARED BY: Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation, Ext. 4838
Alain Cachola, Senior Manager, Infrastructure & Capital Works, Ext. 2711

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the report entitled “ Revised John Street Multi-Use Path Implementation Strategy (Wards 1 & 8)” be received; and
- 2) That Council endorse the revised implementation strategy for the John Street Multi-Use Path project and the revised scope for the project as outlined in Attachment “B”; and
- 3) That Council direct staff to issue the construction tender and delegate authority to the Chief Administrative Officer to award the construction contract for the implementation of the revised John Street Multi-Use Path project; and further
- 4) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

This report provides an update on the John Street Multi-Use Path (MUP) project and recommends a revised implementation strategy that involves prioritizing the eastern segment for construction.

BACKGROUND:

A cycling facility on John Street and Esna Park Drive, from Bayview Avenue to Rodick Road, was proposed in the 2010 Cycling Master Plan. The originally proposed John Street MUP project would connect to the future MUP on Bayview Avenue, providing a connective network to the Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario Walking & Cycling Route (Lake-to-Lake Route) along the Leslie Street corridor and to the existing bicycle lanes on Rodick Road. It would also provide better access and connectivity to public amenities along the John Street corridor, including:

- the Thornhill Community Centre;
- Bayview Fairways Public School;
- R.J. Clatworthy Arena;
- Bishops Cross Park; and
- several other neighbourhood parks.

Attachment ‘A’ provides a network view of the originally proposed John Street project.

This 4.7 km cycling facility was prioritized for early implementation in the 2010 Cycling Master Plan's 5-Year Implementation Plan, and in the 2021 Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP), as it provides a direct and critical cycling link to the rest of the City of Markham cycling network from the Thornhill community that it currently lacks.

In 2017, the John Street cycling facility was defined as an MUP on the north boulevard of John Street and Esna Park Drive through a feasibility study, as this design presented the fewest conflicts with utilities, slopes, available right-of-way, and transit stops. Subsequently, the preliminary design for the MUP was completed in 2018 and detailed design completed in early 2020.

Other improvements include AODA and streetlight enhancements

From the outset of the John Street project, improvements to the service road intersection on John Street just east of the CN rail corridor to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements was included in the project scope. The proposed improvements include accessible pedestrian signal stations, tactile sidewalk ramps, and adjustments to sidewalk/crosswalk alignments.

Another City infrastructure improvement within the limits of the originally proposed John Street project is the streetlight improvements along John Street from Aileen Road to Leslie Street, identified separately. This section of John Street currently does not have adequate streetlighting, and as part of the MUP design, a new set of streetlights are required to meet streetlighting standards. The construction budget for the originally proposed John Street project was approved for 2019.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted and delayed the construction phase of the project

As is typically done in capital projects, some pre-construction work was completed in 2020, including relocations of Alectra utility poles and Bell pedestals following completion of the detailed design.

The construction tender for the project was issued in March 2020 and closed in April 2020. However, award of the project to the lowest bidder was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and was one of several capital projects within the Engineering Department that were deferred in 2020.

Provincial funding is available for the project

In 2018, an application to the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Ontario Municipal Commuter Cycling (OMCC) funding program was successful and a grant of \$990,497, which has since grown to over \$1M with interest, was received for this John Street project. Municipalities receiving funding through the OMCC program are required to contribute at least 20% of funding toward the selected eligible project.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Provincial funding from the OMCC program originally required project completion by end of 2020. Recognizing the disruption to capital construction projects caused by the

pandemic, staff have consulted with MTO and an extension was granted to achieve substantial project completion by the end of 2022.

Given the current timeline, implementation of the original scope of the project would most likely extend beyond the end of 2022.

In order to meet the 2022 project completion deadline of the OMCC program, staff propose reducing the original project scope, prioritizing the eastern segment of the John Street MUP project from the Lake-to-Lake Route (Leslie Street) to Rodick Road.

This proposed revised scope for the John Street MUP project is 2.4 km in length and will achieve the objective of connecting Thornhill residents to the Lake-to-Lake Route, R.J. Clatworthy Arena, Bishops Cross Park, the existing bike lanes on Rodick Road and other neighbourhood parks. Attachment 'B' provides the network context of this proposed project.

The cycling facility for the remaining 2.3 km western segment of the originally proposed John Street MUP project, from Bayview Avenue to Leslie Street, remains within the Active Transportation Master Plan as a critical segment of the Markham cycling network. However, the type of cycling facility and priority for this segment will be reviewed as part of the ATMP implementation plan, which will be brought to DSC later in 2022.

Given the 2022 OMCC deadline for Program Grant applicability for this project, staff are recommending that a reduced scope for the John Street MUP project, as outlined in Attachment "B", be endorsed by Council so that the necessary tasks to implement the revised John Street MUP project can be carried out to meet the required deadlines.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The construction budgets for the original scope (Bayview Avenue to Rodick Road) for the MUP and streetlight enhancement were approved in 2019.

The design consultant has prepared an updated cost estimate for the reduced scope of work (Leslie Street to Rodick Road), which has increased since the 2020 tender low bid results, due to the following factors and conditions:

- **Economies of Scale** – the original project was a larger scope and as such would carry a lower unit rate for higher tender quantities. Also there are ancillary costs related to the project that would have been spread over the entire length of the original project, that is now being considered for the revised scope of work.
- **COVID-19 impacts** – due to the on-going pandemic, the tender rates have increased to account for health and safety requirements, material availability and delivery, etc. The pandemic has created supply chain issues that have affected material costs.
- **Inflation** – the original tender was issued in 2020. Therefore the tender unit rates were updated to reflect current estimated unit rates for 2022.

The approved original total budget allocation for the John Street MUP project of approximately \$5.72M is available to tender the reduced section of the John Street MUP

project. Any remaining funds in the account will be returned to the original funding source upon award.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The John Street MUP project is part of the 2010 Cycling Master Plan and is also aligned with the 2021 Active Transportation Master Plan. It is consistent with the policies of the City Official Plan and the Safe & Sustainable Community goal of the Building Markham's Future Together (BMFT) Strategic Plan, by improving and making active transportation an attractive and sustainable mobility option. Strategic Action #3.1.5 of the BMFT which states "Implement Active Transportation Master Plan and first and last mile solutions."

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Frank Clarizio, P.Eng.
Director of Engineering

Arvin Prasad, MPA, RPP, MCIP
Commissioner of Development Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 'A': Original John Street cycling project map

Attachment 'B': Proposed revised John Street MUP project scope