



CYCLING AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024

ZOOM MEETING MINUTES

7:00 – 9:00 PM

Citizen Members:

Peter Miasek, Chair
Steve Glassman, Co-Vice Chair
Andrew Dang, Co-Vice Chair
Amit Arora
Brenda Kazan
Cliff Chan, MEAC
Daniel Yeung
David Mok
Doug Wolfe
Joseph Lisi
Joska Zerczi
Councillor Reid McAlpine
Councillor Ritch Lau

Agency:

Alex Heung, Markham Cycles (CICS)
Diana Kakamousias, York Region Transportation
Reena Mistry, YRDSB
PC Patricia Graham, YRP
Sergeant Shawna Leitch, YRP
Sonia Sanita, York Region Public Health

Staff:

Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation
Fion Ho, TDM Coordinator, Transportation
John Britto, Committee Secretary (PT)

Regrets:

Anthony Ko, Citizen Member
Wincy Tsang, Smart Commute

The Cycling & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CPAC) convened at 7:05 PM on February 22, 2024, with Peter Miasek presiding as Chair.

1. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

2. APPROVAL/MODIFICATIONS TO AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

**Moved by Steve Glassman
seconded by Councillor Reid McAlpine**

That the Minutes of the official November 16, 2023, CPAC meeting be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

Moved by Steve Glassman
Seconded by Andrew Dang

That the Minutes of the unofficial January 18, 2024, CPAC meeting be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

4. PERTINENT INFORMATION FROM GUEST SPEAKERS

There were no guest speakers.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING

5.1 Membership Status

Fion Ho, TDM Coordinator, Transportation provided an update on the current membership status and advised that there are some new members who have been appointed in 2024, including new representatives from the York Regional Police. Total member count is 20.

Responding to a question from Steve Glassman about voting membership, Peter Miasek, Chair advised that according to the CPAC Terms of Reference, all 21 members, including Agency Members are voting members of the CPAC.

Responding to a further question from Steve, about representatives from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility, Peter Miasek, Chair advised that a representative from the Accessibility Committee will also be a voting member on the CPAC. *(Note – on February 26 – Kim Adeney was appointed the rep from the ACA)*

6. STANDING ITEMS & ONGOING PROJECTS

6.1 City's Ongoing AT Project Updates

Fion Ho provided an update on the following City's Active Transportation projects:

Markham Centre Trail:

Staff are currently working on Phase 3 (Verdale to Warden) of the study; the detailed design of this segment is completed and is pending TRCA approval. Construction is anticipated to begin this summer. Staff is also undertaking an overall Master Plan study as part of the Markham Centre Trail network. A report was presented to Council in November 2023, and an environmental study is currently being reviewed by the Indigenous community, and staff is working to address some of the comments received. The final ESR will be available in a few weeks.

A detail design RFP for Phase 4 (Apple Creek) of this project is scheduled to be issued in Q2 of 2024.

Responding to a question from Peter Miasek, Chair with respect to lack of access to the river i.e., the trail being away from the river, and the lack of amenities along the trail, Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation advised that considering that these trails are being planned through environmentally sensitive lands, staff need to abide by provincial legislation with respect to protection of these sensitive lands. As such, staff are limited in terms of encroachment and the physical condition of these lands. Staff need to locate stable lands to place the trails.

Responding to a suggestion from Councillor Reid McAlpine with respect to lookout points at a few key spots along the trail, Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation advised that staff will consider such types of opportunities in the detail design of Phase 4 (Apple Creek).

Rouge Valley Trail:

Fion Ho, TDM Coordinator, Transportation advised that 60% of the detailed design of Phase 4B (Treeline Crt to DCP) of this project is complete and it is anticipated that the remaining 40% is likely to be completed this year. On completion of the detailed design, construction will likely begin in 2025, subject to property requirements for this stretch of the trail.

Detailed design of the upgrades to the Rouge Valley Trail consisting of the Hwy 7 & Main St. Unionville Underpass, and the extension to Bullock Drive along Hwy 7 are 60% complete and construction work is anticipated to begin in 2025. Construction work on the improvements to Kennedy Road and Austin Drive was completed late last year.

Victoria Square Boulevard:

Phase 1 detailed design of the utility relocation is partially complete and construction tender is anticipated by the spring of 2024, with a projected completion by 2025 / 2026.

Phase 2 utility relocation is currently underway, and the detailed design work is 30% complete.

Apple Creek Boulevard Road Safety Improvements:

Public consultation on this project was held in September 2023, and internal consultation with Senior Management is anticipated to be completed by Q2 2024. Detailed design is anticipated to be completed this year and construction is scheduled for 2025, subject to budget approval.

Traffic Calming on Carlton Road (between Kennedy and McCowan Roads) and Main Street Markham (between Bullock Dr and 16th Ave):

The first PIC was held in Jan/Feb this year with presentation of three concept designs. The second PIC is planned to be held end April this year when refined preferred options will be presented. Detailed design is scheduled to be completed this year and construction is expected to begin in 2025, subject to budget approval. Additional information is available at www.yourvoicemarkham.ca.

Councillor Reid McAlpine advised that the Apple Creek and Carlton Road traffic calming projects have been very controversial among a certain segment of the community, who have made very vociferous comments about these two projects. He further advised that he has received long emails from residents, particularly about the Carlton Road traffic calming project, and Councillor Lau has also received similar feedback about the Apple Creek traffic calming project.

Councillor McAlpine suggested that the CPAC should take a close look at all these three projects and share their comments, especially with respect to cyclists and pedestrians' safety. He further suggested that comments be made on www.yourvoicemarkham.ca and also the various social media platforms.

Responding to a question from Reena Mistry, about whether any materials on these projects, especially the Carlton Road traffic calming project was circulated to the York Region District School Board, Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation advised that the YRDSB, as a Stakeholder, should have received notification of these projects. Loy agreed to send Reena the contact who would have received this notification.

Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation advised that the focus of these traffic calming projects is to address safety concerns brought to staff attention over many years of complaints or through staff's analysis through the traffic safety audit that was done in 2022.

Peter Miasek, Chair advised that he spoke with the Mayor on these issues and he took some comfort that this is a low cost pilot, and no major movement of curbs, sewers, etc. is anticipated. He further advised that CPAC's position on these projects will be based on the safety aspect as well.

Responding to a request from David Mok with respect to a list of social media platforms where CPAC members can make their comments on these traffic calming projects, Councillor Reid McAlpine advised that there are numerous good platforms. One of the biggest is the Next-Door App.

Responding to a suggestion from Steve Glassman, Co-Vice Chair, with respect to a draft motion on the various Traffic Calming projects, Peter Miasek, Chair advised that a draft motion could be prepared by the Road Safety Subcommittee for review at the March unofficial meeting of CPAC.

City-wide Parking Strategy:

A Special Development Services Committee meeting was held on February 12, 2024, and a report will be provided to Council in Q2 2024, with additional public consultation to follow. A detailed report will be provided to Council in Q3 2024 with feedback received.

Markham Transportation Master Plan (MTMP):

Staff is currently reviewing several proposals to select and retain a consultant for the MTMP. It is anticipated that the MTMP study will commence by April/May this year with a tentative completion in Q1 of 2026.

Cycling & Trail Map Update:

A digital version of the recently revised Cycling & Trail Map is now available for download on the City's website. Printed copies of the Map will also be available for distribution closer to spring this year, and can be picked up at city events, select community centres, Smart Commute and Markham Cycles. Staff is currently working with IT Services to update the interactive mapping on navigateMarkham.

Responding to a question from Peter Miasek, Chair with respect to his suggested edits to the Cycling Map, Fion Ho, TDM Coordinator, Transportation confirmed that all revisions suggested by Peter have been incorporated in the latest version of the Map. With respect to the online version of the Map, Fion advised that she will check and confirm whether the online version of the Map has the latest revisions.

6.2 School Programs & Pilots

No updates

6.3 Reports to Council

No updates

6.4 EA Updates

No updates

6.5 Markham Cycling Day

Fion Ho, TDM Coordinator, Transportation advised that Markham Cycling Day is scheduled to be held on Sunday, June 9, 2024, from the Aviva Parking Lot in Markham Centre. Staff is currently seeking sponsors for the event. Volunteers willing to be part of the event planning committee should contact Fion Ho, TDM Coordinator, Transportation.

6.6 York Region Projects

Diana Kakamousias, Program Manager, Sustainable Transportation & Urban Design, Public Works, York Region provided updates on some capital projects

Kennedy Road (Major Mackenzie Drive to Elgin Mills):

The Environmental Assessment for this project is now complete and a consultant has recently been obtained for the detailed design assignment for the portion of the project between YMCA Blvd and Highway 7. As part of the detailed design recommendations, a separated cycle track and sidewalk is proposed for both sides

of the road, which is part of the 10-year capital plan, with an anticipated start of construction in 2028.

16th Avenue (from Leslie to Kennedy):

As part of the 10-year capital plan, this project is divided into two segments from Leslie to Warden and from Warden to Kennedy. The design for the segment from Leslie to Warden is currently 60%-90% complete with construction anticipated to start in 2025. The design for the segment from Warden to Kennedy is currently 60% complete with construction anticipated to start in 2028.

The facility type on 16th Avenue is quite constrained in the ROW so MUPs are being designed for part of 16th Avenue. Further details from the Capital Planning and Delivery Group at York Region will soon be provided to the CPAC's Road Widening Sub-committee.

Update on the South-York Greenway

This is a 60 km East-West Transportation network route that spans from the eastern and western limits of York Region through the cities of Vaughan, Richmond Hill and Markham. Within the City of Markham, two portions of the South-York Greenway are currently going through a detailed design phase which is currently 60% complete. There are two portions that are essentially looking to connect the existing Rouge Valley Trails all the way to the Rouge National Urban Park, one is to the north of the 407 and the other is south of the 407. Of note this year is that two intersections that will form part of the South-York Greenway along Donald Cousens Parkway will move to the construction phase comprising improvements to the existing infrastructure at Donald Cousens Parkway and 14th Avenue, and Donald Cousens Parkway and Copper Creek. These improvements include AODA upgrades and cross ride enhancements to facilitate cyclist movements through the intersections. Construction work on these two projects is scheduled to begin in spring 2024 and will go through the end of the year.

Two on-purpose projects at 14th Avenue (Warden to McCowan) and Don Mills (Steeles to John St.).

Diana advised that York Region is looking to advance the standalone Active Transportation program, which is specifically active transportation projects that are outside of the 10-year capital plan which will involve filling in the missing links throughout York Region. There are 7 projects as part of this assignment, two of which are within the City of Markham. The detailed design is currently in its preliminary phase when the consultant is reviewing the road allowance to better understand what retrofits could be possible for this project. York Region's Capital Delivery team will then engage with CPAC to seek feedback into the design where possible.

Peter Miasek, Chair advised that if any member needs additional information on York Region's AT projects, that can be provided by Diana Kakamousias, Program Manager, Sustainable Transportation & Urban Design, Public Works, York Region.

6.7 Subcommittee Updates

Winter Pedestrian Subcommittee

No update.

Innovation Subcommittee - Micromobility

This subcommittee has dealt with micromobility, however, not much is happening in Markham on this project. There is a possibility of a pilot test in Markham Centre through funding from the provincial government. Peter Miasek, Chair advised that York Region has legalized the use of eScooters since the past three or four years and it would be interesting to receive feedback from the Region on this. Diana Kakamousias had advised him that no negative feedback has been received by the Region since the legalization of the use of eScooters. No data on collisions from York Regional Police has been received so far. MTO has since updated their classification to include eBikes and eScooters, so it is anticipated that more data on collisions could be expected in the future. York's eScooter Coordinating Committee does not exist any longer, but an Active Transportation Working Group has been formed and eScooters has been a topic of conversation with updates shared regularly.

Peter Miasek, Chair advised that the City of Vaughan has moved forward on exploring micromobility options in the city. A white paper was completed, and in October 2023, Council approved the use of eScooters in city owned bike lanes, cycle tracks and multiuse pathways (MUPs).

Responding to a question from Amit Arora on whether accessibility options are considered as part of micromobility pilot projects, Diana Kakamousias, Program Manager, Sustainable Transportation & Urban Design, Public Works, York Region advised that micromobility pilot projects are done on unidirectional cycle tracks which only typically permit cyclists, eBikes, eScooters, etc. Prior to the pilot, York Region did engage with York Region's Accessibility Committee. Diana further advised that in terms of the cycle tracks there isn't too many concerns because the track is separated from existing sidewalks. She advised that she is aware that the City of Vaughan consulted with their Accessibility Advisory Committee with respect to their upcoming pilot project for permitting eScooters.

Responding to a question from Councillor Reid McAlpine on the definition of an eScooter or an eBike, Diana Kakamousias, Program Manager, Sustainable Transportation & Urban Design, Public Works, York Region advised that when York Region's policy was updated, By-laws to include the definition was also part of the Council report with photos of what a typical eScooter or eBike looked like. Diana further advised that the City of Vaughan also undertook a similar exercise. It is challenging to understand the differences between these types of vehicles when new types of vehicles come into the market, and to differentiate between what is approved and what is not. York Region can only update their By-laws based on relevant information provided by the MTO.

Responding to a further question from Councillor McAlpine on whether the Region is in consultation with the province on refining these policies, Diana advised that York Region has notified the province of their opting into the pilot project. She further advised that the Region has access to information from other municipalities on their opting into the pilot project, as well as the ability to comment and share feedback on the existing pilot. The MTO is also looking into updating their definitions of eScooters and eBikes to create two different types of classifications for these vehicles and recommend their permitted uses.

Responding to a question from Cliff Chan with respect to how often the Region reviews current policies and considers updates regarding the use of eBikes and eScooters considering that this is an emerging technology, Diana advised that there are groups at the Region that are consistently reviewing new and emerging technologies, and engage as much as possible in discussions with MTO to keep up to date with their announcements of new regulations around these vehicles.

Peter Miasek, Chair advised that the CPAC is looking forward to receiving an update from the City of Markham sometime in the next month because the RFP for this pilot in Markham Centre would be due in February.

Bike Parking Subcommittee

No update

Protected Intersections Subcommittee

Peter Miasek, Chair advised that the Road Widening Subcommittee is the new name for the old, protected intersections subcommittee.

Jane's Walk

Steve Glassman, Co-Vice Chair advised that a small subcommittee has been formed to organize the Jane's Walk in Thornhill on Saturday, May 4, 2024. Tentative Jane's Walk will be organized in Unionville and elsewhere, as well.

Road Safety subcommittee

Steve Glassman, Co-Vice Chair advised that this subcommittee has a great interest in how York Region proceeds with the York Region Traveller Safety Plan branding issue. The subcommittee is likely to meet soon to discuss motions on traffic calming on Carlton and Apple Creek, etc.

Peter Miasek, Chair spoke on the Hwy 407 Fatality, as well as media reports in mid-January this year about data gaps involving a huge underreporting of cyclists and pedestrian incidents on Toronto streets. He advised that he has sent these reports to York Region and the City of Markham. Apparently, there is a comparison between hospital data and police data, wherein the hospital data shows ten times more reporting of cyclist injuries and two times more reporting of pedestrian injuries versus police data.

Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation advised that York Region has started collecting slip and fall data from the various local municipalities in the Region.

Responding to a question from Peter Miasek, Chair about the Traveller Safety Plan presentation to York Region's Committee of the Whole, Diana Kakamousias, Program Manager, Sustainable Transportation & Urban Design, Public Works, York Region advised that the presentation is tentatively scheduled for March this year. She further advised that the branding has been updated to Vision Zero Traveller Safety Plan.

6.8 Road Safety

Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation provided an update on the City of Markham's Road Safety Plan. The City is in the process of hiring a consultant to assist staff in completing the study. The RFP was released in January and the project is expected to start by April/May this year, with a tentative completion date of mid-2025.

Loy further advised that following Nelson Costa's Traveller Safety Plan presentation to York Region Committee of the Whole in March, he will be invited to make the same presentation to Markham City Council in early April this year as a start to Markham's Road Safety Plan Development project.

6.9 Markham Cycles

Alex Heung, Centre for Immigrant and Community Services (CICS) advised that since Markham Cycles was taken over by CICS from January 2024, all existing Markham Cycles staff have been retained by CICS on a full-time basis starting from April 1, 2024. All current programs and activities of Markham Cycles will continue with CICS. As well, CICS is looking to acquire further funding to enable enhancing further programs, as promised in the agreement with the City of Markham.

Annual programs and activities planning is progressing well since January this year. It is anticipated that the advisory committee will meet in April this year. Interested CPAC members are encouraged to contact Alex for further information.

Alex further advised that CICS has been working with the York Region District School Board on road and bike safety programs, more details of which will be shared soon.

Alex advised that 12 abandoned bikes were collected from a condo building in the City of Markham. CICS will be participating in CPAC's Markham Cycling Day program. CICS completes 15 years in the City of Markham. A cycling event to celebrate this milestone will be organized, ore details will be shared soon.

6.10 2024 Budget for AT related items & CPAC Budget

No discuss was held on this item.

6.11 E-bike / E-scooter (Micro Mobility Framework)

This item was considered as Item 6.7 Innovation Subcommittee.

6.12 Discussion Topics for 2024

No update

7. INFO ITEM/NEW BUSINESS/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

7.1 Letter to Parachute – Hwy 407 Fatality

Loy Cheah, Senior Manager, Transportation advised that York Region (Nelson Costa) has not received any updates from York Regional Police on the Warden/ Hwy 407 fatality in June, 2021.

Responding to a question from Peter Miasek, Chair, on the amount of time it is taking York Regional Police to share information / updates on that fatality with CPAC, PC Patricia Graham, suggested that if details could be shared with her and Sargeant Leitch, they could bring back some information/updates on the matter. Peter agreed to email them with details about the incident that occurred in June of 2021.

Peter Miasek, Chair read out a draft letter that he has prepared on behalf of CPAC to Parachute, CAA and CARSP. The letter discusses fundamental issues with MTO design standards for urban interchanges and the absence of triggers as to when to modify interchanges. The letter also suggests that CPAC would like to reach out to the Ontario Traffic Council to encourage them to initiate a review of urban interchange designs, with the ultimate goal of informing MTO. The letter seeks support from competent safety-oriented organizations.

Councillor Reid McAlpine suggested that this letter be addressed by name individually to the head of each identified organization.

Peter further advised that the idea was to wait until some information/update on the 2021 fatal incident was received from the YRP.

Amit Arora advised that the CARSP Board was reluctant to get involved in this matter. They are willing to provide resources, but they are not willing to make suggestions to MTO.

Steve Glassman, Co-Vice Chair suggested a modification in a statement in the letter to read: "We know there have been similar incidents across Ontario and Canada".

Peter suggested that this letter be kept in abeyance till some feedback / update is received by PC Graham or her colleague in the YRP.

Amit Arora suggested that this letter be sent to safety organizations that are Ontario based rather than national organizations for whom incidents in Ontario may not be of importance.

Councillor Reid McAlpine suggested that if the letter was sent to the head of the organization, there would be more chances of a favourable response.

8. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Next formal meeting May 16 – likely hybrid with possible social event prior to meeting. Next informal meeting March 21.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Cycling & Pedestrian Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:45 P.M.