



The Plan supports the non-auto-based initiatives outlined in the Markham Transportation Planning Study (MTPS-2002).



The Plan builds upon the Town-Wide Bicycle System Study developed in 1998.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In response to the growing popularity of cycling both as a recreational activity and a mode of transportation for short distance trips, the Town of Markham has developed a Cycling Master Plan. This Plan builds upon the Town-Wide Bicycle System Study developed in 1998 and the Phase I Bikeway Implementation Strategy developed for the Town of Markham in 2004. It will also support the non-auto-based initiatives outlined in the Markham Transportation Planning Study (MTPS-2002).

Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited was retained by the Town of Markham to assist Town staff in the development of this Plan. The Plan recommends a strategy for addressing cycling in Markham for the next 15 years and beyond. It presents a truly Town-wide approach to serving and fostering cycling in Markham, and clearly lays out a path the Town can follow toward achieving its goal of providing an integrated cycling network that is a key component of the local transportation and recreational system.

1.1 Study Purpose

The purpose of the Cycling Master Plan is to guide the Town in the development of a Town-wide on and off-road cycling network, and to build upon the Phase I Bikeway Implementation Strategy completed for the Town in 2004. The main objective is to develop a more comprehensive on and off-road cycling network that connects the urban and rural areas of the Town of Markham while also providing connections to adjacent municipalities.

This plan will build upon the Phase I work, which established a neighbourhood-level network of on-road signed-only cycling routes, and will focus on developing short and long-term implementation strategies for Phase II.

1.2 Vision and Goals

The Cycling Master Plan is based on the Town of Markham's vision for a future in which more Markham residents are encouraged to cycle, and cycle more often, especially those who are interested but find cycling inconvenient or unsafe. Its foundation is the image of a Town where more residents cycle for utilitarian and recreational purposes, particularly for short trips.

In moving toward making this vision a reality, the goal is to develop a comprehensive and connected network of clearly signed cycling facilities throughout the Town of Markham. This second phase of the strategy builds upon the “neighbourhood network” established in Phase I by developing an expanded route network, supporting and promoting cycling in Markham, and laying out a clear implementation strategy.

The Cycling Master Plan has been developed based on the study goals of developing short-term and long-term priorities and a comprehensive phasing plan. Consistent with this plan, another goal is to develop and document a clear implementation strategy that will provide the Town with the tools necessary to implement the strategy.

1.3 Study Approach

The Cycling Master Plan actually consists of two phases, the first having been developed in 2004 and implemented in 2006 and early 2007. The second phase commenced in 2006 and is documented in this study report.

1.3.1 Phase I – Neighbourhood Bike Route Network

Phase I of the study established the neighbourhood bike route network by identifying, evaluating, groundproofing and selecting cycling routes and suitable facility types. The facility options considered included bike lanes and signed routes connecting with existing off-road multi-use paths wherever possible. This phase of the study identified the short-term elements of the Plan.

Through this, a neighbourhood network plan was developed and implemented to form a basic network of on-road neighbourhood cycling facilities linking urban areas within Markham. The majority of these routes are signed-only, and include several loop opportunities so that both recreational and utilitarian cyclists would be encouraged to use these new facilities. Refer to the Phase I report for a detailed discussion of this Phase.

1.3.2 Phase II – Town-Wide Cycling Plan

The approach for Phase 2 of the Plan was to develop an ultimate Town-wide cycling plan based on the Town-Wide Bicycle System Study (1998), and to build upon the neighbourhood network established in Phase I. This ultimate plan was divided into two phases: short term initiatives, to be implemented



Phase I of the study established the neighbourhood bike route network.



Where Are We Now in the Study?



The approach to developing the Plan included several key steps.

over 1 to 10 years; and long-term initiatives, with implementation expected beyond 10 years. The approach to developing the Plan included:

- A review of the alternative network facility types;
- Public consultation for input on the cycling network, preferred facility types, and issues of concern to the general public and cycling enthusiasts;
- The development of the ultimate cycling network, based on a review of existing conditions, major attractions and destinations, and barriers to cycling, as well as investigation and evaluation of candidate routes;
- A review of potential outreach initiatives to complement the cycling network by means of education, encouragement, promotion, enforcement, and the continued involvement of the Town of Markham's Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CPAC); and
- The development of a thorough implementation strategy, including a discussion of network priorities, phasing, monitoring, costing, and funding strategies.

1.4 Public and Stakeholder Consultation

In an effort to understand existing attitudes towards cycling in Markham and the preferences of residents, it was important in the development of this Plan to engage the public and obtain their input. A Notice of Commencement of the study was published in the *Markham Economist & Sun* and posted on the Town's website. A subsequent announcement in both the local newspapers and Town website – in conjunction with a general media advisory and notices to ratepayer associations, cycling groups, youth groups, neighbouring municipalities, and appropriate Town Committees – advertised the Public Open House of June 29, 2006, which was held at the Markham Civic Centre. Members of CPAC were encouraged to promote this event among their personal and professional networks, and the Markham Board of Trade was involved in publicizing the meeting as well.



The Public Open House was held June 29, 2006 at the Markham Civic Centre.

The Open House included the presentation of background information on the Phase I neighbourhood bike route network. Maps of candidate cycling routes were presented, flip charts were used to facilitate discussions and record ideas and input, and comment sheets were distributed for feedback on suggested

routes and general remarks. This drop-in session was administered by Town staff and members of the study team, and provided an opportunity for the distribution of general information and promotional materials on cycling and other forms of active transportation in Markham. The meeting was well attended by a diverse range of Markham residents and cycling enthusiasts who provided a variety of opinions and ideas. The comments, suggestions, and concerns voiced by the public at this meeting were thoroughly documented, and contact information was collected in order to keep residents informed and involved as the study proceeded. Public comments were subsequently reviewed at various stages as the study progressed in order to ensure their consideration in developing the Cycling Master Plan. The Open House public notice, display boards, comment sheets and summary of comments received are included in **Appendix A** of this report.

In addition to the public meeting, extensive consultations were held with CPAC, which was formed as an outcome of the recommendations from the Phase I study. This committee acted as a diverse, reliable and accessible resource for public input on the proposed cycling network. CPAC also afforded the study team the opportunity for ongoing “back-and-forth” discussions that can be challenging to coordinate with the general public. The ongoing role of CPAC in implementing the future of the proposed cycling network in Markham is discussed in Section 3.4.

1.5 Plan Overview

The chapters outlined in this report follow a clear and concise structure that lays out the steps taken to develop this master plan, and the recommended steps that the Town of Markham should follow when implementing it.

Chapter 2.0 reviews the process followed in developing the cycling network, including consideration of different facility types, the approach to defining and evaluating candidate cycling routes, and the ultimate proposed cycling network.

Chapter 3.0 lists the objectives for an Outreach program, and presents various initiatives that could be pursued in order to educate, enforce and promote more cycling in the Town of Markham.

Chapter 4.0 defines the proposed strategy through which the Cycling Master Plan infrastructure and supporting policies will be implemented, including the Plan’s estimated cost. This chapter outlines a clear and feasible strategy for



The meeting was well attended by a diverse range of Markham residents and cycling enthusiasts bringing a variety of opinions and ideas.



implementing the recommendations of the Cycling Master Plan by defining a recommended process, management structure and set of steps considered necessary to implement the Plan.

The Technical Appendix, the Planning and Design Guidelines, is provided under separate cover, and is intended to aid Town staff in implementing the Cycling Master Plan. The Planning and Design Guidelines focus on specific cycling design features that should be considered when implementing the Plan. Some of the fundamental elements of the Technical Appendix are also introduced in Section 2.1 of the main report.