

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



11.4.

Date: June 26, 2020	Originator's files:
To: Mayor and Members of Council	
From: Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, Commissioner of Transportation and Works	Meeting date: July 8, 2020

Subject

The City of Mississauga's Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework

Recommendations

1. That the report entitled "The City of Mississauga's Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework", dated June 26, 2020 from the Commissioner of Transportation and Works be endorsed;
2. That the Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework be funded by:
 - (i) Establishing a new project, PN 20192 – Active Transportation COVID-19 Projects, with a gross budget and net budget of \$1,300,000, and that funding of \$830,000 be allocated from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund (Account No. 35182) and that funding of \$470,000 be allocated from the DCA Roads and Related Infrastructure Reserve Fund (Account No.31335);
 - (ii) That funding of \$830,000 be transferred from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund (Account No. 35182) to PN 20192 – Active Transportation COVID-19 Projects;
 - (iii) That funding of \$470,000 be transferred from the DCA Roads and Related Infrastructure Reserve Fund (Account No.31335) to PN 20192 – Active Transportation COVID-19 Projects;
 - (iv) Council express its intent to fund PN 20192 – Active Transportation COVID-19 Projects to the extent allowable from current and future development charges; and
3. That all necessary by-laws be enacted.

Report Highlights

- The Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework recommends adding 17.9 kilometres (11.1 miles) of new on-road bicycle lanes and separated bicycle lanes in locations across the City, to rapidly improve the active transportation network in 2020. This

represents a 30% increase in the amount of on-road bicycle lanes in the City.

- Criteria for selecting locations include high population density, personal vehicle ownership per household, workplace destinations with lower commute distances, and potential increased risk of COVID exposure.
- The Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework includes Bike Lane Installations, Quiet Streets, and Road Closures.
- During and after the COVID-19 Recovery period, residents will require additional safe and comfortable active transportation options to ensure their continued mobility and safety.

Background

The Cycling Master Plan was endorsed by Council in 2018. The Master Plan calls for 897 kilometres (557 miles) of cycling infrastructure to be built out in its entirety in 27 years with an average annual investment endorsed by Council of \$5.2 Million. The ultimate network includes a mixture of on-road and off-road infrastructure designed to create a safe, connected, convenient and comfortable experience that helps residents to feel confident using a bicycle for transportation.

During and after the COVID-19 Recovery period, residents will require additional safe and comfortable active transportation options to ensure their continued mobility and safety.

In addition to the critical Public Health considerations, several key City strategic initiatives support the rapid expansion of active transportation options, including the Climate Change Action Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and Vision Zero.

Present Status

The City's cycling network has grown annually; in 2019 the City added 15 kilometres (9.3 miles) of new or improved infrastructure between Transportation and Works projects and Community Services projects. As well, the City's sidewalk network continues to grow through various means; the Sidewalk Infill program, for example, added 1.8 kilometres (1.1 miles) of new sidewalk on existing roads in 2019. The 2020 Cycling and Sidewalk capital programs are underway with contracts either tendered or awarded. The cycling program includes multi-use trails on Mavis Road, Eglinton Avenue West and Derry Road (funded by the Region of Peel). The sidewalk program includes segments on Terry Fox Way, Century Avenue and others.

In response to the need for physical distancing for residents, staff implemented temporary active transportation lanes for walking and cycling between April and June 2020 using signage and temporary construction barrels in the following locations:

- King Street from Camilla Drive to Confederation Parkway, Ward 7;
- Glen Erin Drive from Britannia Road to Meadowvale Town Centre Circle, Ward 9;
- Living Arts Drive from Square One Drive to Prince of Wales Drive, Ward 4;

- City Centre Drive east of Confederation Parkway, Ward 4;
- Prince of Wales Drive from Confederation Parkway to Duke of York Boulevard, Ward 4;
- Burnhamthorpe Road West from Confederation Parkway to Kariya Drive, Ward 7; and
- Thomas Street from Winston Churchill Boulevard to Erin Mills Parkway, Ward 9.

This report represents the next phase of the City's Active Transportation COVID-19 response, which shifts the focus away from providing additional space for physical distancing, towards providing expanded transportation options for residents. This next phase of the response will recommend long-term rather than temporary installations.

Comments

Transportation options have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In Mississauga:

- traffic volumes on local roads were down approximately 30-50% but are showing signs of returning to normal levels;
- the use of rideshare services (Uber/Lyft) were down approximately 80% during the peak of the economic shutdown;
- transit ridership was down as much as 78% but in recent weeks is rebounding, and;
- transit capacity was reduced to facilitate physical distancing; however, MiWay has made wearing non-medical face masks or face coverings mandatory and relaxing physical distancing requirements.

Meanwhile, cycling in communities across eastern Canada has increased over 60% compared to this time last year (Eco-Counter, May 2020).

The City's Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework will be multi-faceted and will leverage existing City active transportation networks and the temporary active transportation facilities that have already been implemented.

Prioritizing Improvements

Guidance on the priorities for where to implement active transportation network improvements are based on data from Peel Public Health and the City's Long Range Transportation Planning teams.

Peel Public Health produced maps showing the geographic distribution of COVID-19 cases based on place of residence. Recognizing that people work, play and socialize outside of their immediate neighbourhood, these maps do not reflect where the illness was acquired and therefore are not indicative of risk. What the maps do demonstrate is that COVID-19 is across Peel, and there is community spread. Although these maps do not reflect where illness was acquired, there are particular areas of the City where there have been higher case rates. These areas may therefore require additional supports, either to maintain physical distancing or for transportation options. The following website link is provided as reference.

(<https://www.peelregion.ca/health/professionals/pdfs/COVID-19/epi-update-20-29-05.pdf>)

Other data considered as part of this prioritization which aligns with the findings from Peel Public Health includes:

- Population density per hectare – higher density areas will need both more space for physical distancing and more transportation options in these geographic areas (Appendix 1);
- Personal vehicle ownership per household – households with fewer cars require additional transportation options (Appendix 2); and
- Workplace destinations with commute distances under 10 kilometres (6.2 miles) – this suggests that many commutes in these areas can feasibly be completed by bicycle if safe and comfortable infrastructure is provided (Appendix 3).

Finally, there is value in focusing on network connections and network completeness, where there are opportunities to add critical links in the network.

Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework

The Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework consists of the following elements:

(i) Bike Lane Installations

The installation of 17.9 kilometres (11.1 miles) of separated bicycle lanes will provide improved active transportation options for residents and are intended to be installed in the immediate term, with installations completed before the end of 2020. This represents a 30% increase in the amount of on-road bicycle lanes in the City. For example, on 4-lane roads, the separated bicycle lanes would be created by converting the curb lane through the installation of flexible bollards and a painted buffer, as illustrated in Figure 1, below.

The total budget requirement to implement the identified cycling infrastructure is \$1,300,000, including fees and contingencies. A preliminary list and map of projects recommended for rapid installation can be found in Appendix 4.

Several of the identified cycling projects are currently in the preliminary or detailed design stage which will be accelerated and installed quickly using relatively simple materials. Additional locations have been identified that meet objectives based on the prioritization rationale described above. Staff will review locations with the local Ward Councillors prior to implementation.

Temporary lanes are not recommended to be converted to long-term installations where there is: a) existing cycling infrastructure already present, or b) where construction (Region or City) is expected to begin this year. For some of these projects, “interim” cycling infrastructure will be installed in the immediate term to help create more transportation options while the ultimate design is finalized.

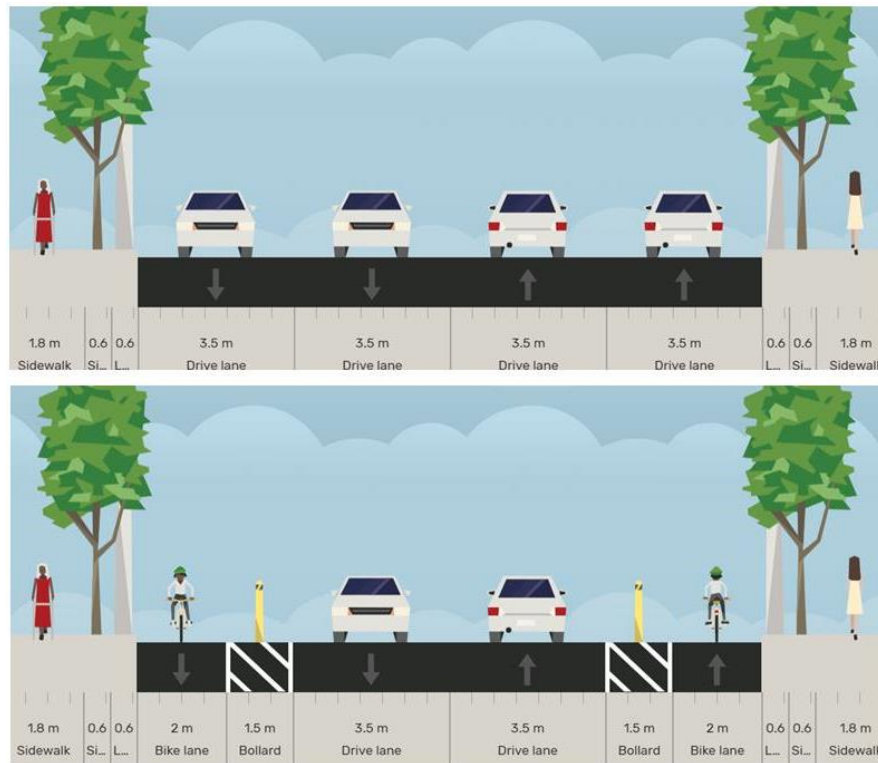


Figure 1: Example of a Separated Bike Lane with a painted hatched buffer and flexible bollards created by converting the curb lane of a four-lane road

(ii) Quiet Streets

Quiet Streets are roads that restrict or limit through-traffic to create more space and comfort for active transportation. Quiet Streets are temporary, short-term installations that may be intended to help facilitate physical distancing and that may also be recommended in locations that help facilitate important active transportation network connections. Candidate locations would currently fall outside of the scope of the City's existing Traffic Calming program. The program for Quiet Streets will be developed in greater detail with formal guidelines forthcoming in the coming weeks. The Ward Councillor will be consulted prior to the implementation of any Quiet Streets within their Ward. Figure 2, below, is a photograph of the signage and barriers used in a temporary Quiet Street installation in the City of Toronto.



Figure 2: Example of a temporary Quiet Street installation in the City of Toronto

(iii) Road Closures

Certain areas of the City continue to see crowding of pedestrians, particularly on weekends, such as Port Credit and other areas along Lake Ontario. The City has limited means or resources to prevent people from gathering in these popular areas. Weekend road closures can provide additional space to facilitate physical distancing. The City should be cautious about how or whether to communicate any such closures, to avoid creating an additional “draw” for people to visit these spaces. The Ward Councillor will be consulted prior to the implementation of any road closures.

Supporting MiWay

As MiWay services will continue to operate under the requirements of physical distancing during the COVID Recovery period, the Active Transportation Framework is intended to support and complement MiWay services by providing safe alternative modes of travel.

Potential Impact on MiWay Operations

Cycling and pedestrian facility designs will follow similar principles as implemented on temporary active transportation lanes to date. In these designs, buses merge into the bike lanes to access stops at the curb, for accessible loading and unloading of passengers. These mixing zones are common features of conventional painted bike lanes; however, when considering separated bike lanes, merging across the bike lane and leaving the through general traffic lane creates a potential safety concern and delays for MiWay buses merging back into traffic. There are other more preferred options for bus stop / bike lane interaction zones which staff will continue to integrate into the ultimate design for cycling infrastructure to the extent feasible and practical. In the interim, any short-term projects proposed on busier MiWay corridors with high service frequency will be given careful consideration prior to recommending their installation.

Additional Considerations

There are additional considerations when implementing the recommended framework, to coordinate with other City initiatives, enhance infrastructure, and engage communities. Such considerations include but are not limited to the following:

- Working with local communities and organizations to identify additional needs;
- Rapid expansion of bicycle parking supply on City-owned lands (municipal right-of-way, City facilities);
- Coordinating with the Region of Peel to align strategic infrastructure improvements in response to this framework;
- Coordinating with Cultural Districts and Restaurant Patio programs;
- Understanding the importance of curbside management and the needs of local businesses;
- Incorporating elements of Tactical Urbanism, recognizing that additional elements introduce additional costs, both capital and operating, which may involve multiple departments – planters, for example, require ongoing watering and maintenance from Parks, Forestry and Environment; and
- Coordinating with Transportation Demand Management staff to expand work-from-home options for City staff.

Implementation Considerations

In order to implement the identified installation opportunities in a timely manner, other previously identified projects in the Roads Service Area 2020 work plan may have to be reprioritized. In particular, work typically completed by the City's pavement marking contract may need to be delayed in favour of these projects. Every effort will be made to ensure that critical work is still completed in a timely manner.

Impact on Road Operations – Winter and Spring Maintenance Activities

The installation of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure will have operational impacts. Projects that provide physical separation through the use of flexible bollards or precast curbs will require dedicated winter maintenance operations. Additional budget and resources will be required to keep this infrastructure functional throughout the year. Final costs will be determined as project designs are finalized; however, additional and dedicated equipment, and additional operational activities will be required. This will include small tractor sized equipment with plow, salter, broom and water tank attachments to provide both winter and spring maintenance. Winter maintenance will also need to be augmented by the removal of snow windrows alongside the bollards/curbs as well as the road curb to provide drainage of snow melt and rain to the catchbasins with the use of backhoes/front end loaders and dump trucks. Proper traffic control measures will also need to be in place during the snow removal operations.

Communications

The communications strategy for the framework will focus on informing residents of new long-term walking and cycling options in their areas, highlight the improvements to the City-wide network, and promote cycling and walking as viable transportation options. In contrast, the

communications strategy for the temporary active transportation lanes was limited, since the focus was on providing local physical distancing measures as opposed to a transportation focus.

In addition to informing residents of the new active transportation options, staff will develop and distribute educational materials and messaging to educate drivers about the new lanes and how to safely drive while considering vulnerable road users, to encourage safe use of walking and cycling lanes by pedestrians and cyclists, and to encourage general good walking and cycling behaviours, in particular when sharing space such as on multi-use trails.

Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee

A draft of this report was provided by email to members of the Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee. The preliminary concept for the City's Active Transportation Framework was also discussed with some members during a WebEx meeting in late May. The Committee has provided the following comments:

- General support for the proposed bike lane additions;
- Temporary measures are helpful for physical distancing;
- Provide connections for post-secondary students;
- Coordinate with the Region of Peel for important connections (e.g. connecting Malton), and;
- Suggestion to include additional bicycle safety messaging and campaigns.

Strategic Plan

The Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework aligns with the *Move* pillar in the City's Strategic Plan. In addition to the Cycling Master Plan, it also aligns with other key City strategies:

- The City's COVID-19 Recovery Framework (received by Council at its meeting on May 13, 2020) – The overall recovery framework supports a robust transportation network including a specific focus on the expanded role of active transportation (walking and cycling); the framework also articulates the opportunity to “build back better”, to identify and implement improvements such as enhanced active transportation infrastructure;
- Vision Zero – The City's commitment to Vision Zero necessarily includes a focus on providing safe and comfortable infrastructure for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists; and
- Climate Change Action Plan – Enhanced active transportation infrastructure supports the long-term goals of the CCAP, to achieve goals for mode split and the co-benefits of active transportation (improved air quality, improved health outcomes, etc.).

Financial Impact

Capital Costs

The total estimated budget requirement to implement the Active Transportation COVID-19 Recovery Framework in 2020 is \$1,300,000. No new funding is being used to fund the projects identified in the Framework. Funding in the amount of \$1,300,000 is being brought forward from the 2021 Capital Plan to fund these projects.

It is recommended that budget for these installations be made available by creating a new project, PN20192 – Active Transportation COVID-19 Projects, with a gross and net budget of \$1,300,000, and that funding of \$830,000 be allocated from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund (Account No. 35182), and that funding of \$470,000 be allocated from the DCA Roads and Related Infrastructure Reserve Fund (Account No.31335).

Operating Costs

Staff estimated that the annual cost for winter maintenance will be \$500,000, and that the cost for street sweeping will be \$100,000. In 2020 the cost for winter maintenance will be \$167,000 from November to December and street sweeping will be \$33,000 and these costs will be an operating budget variance.

The 2021 operating budget for winter maintenance will be increased by \$500,000 in cost centre 24229 – account 715638 and for street sweeping \$100,000 in cost centre 24301 – account 715636.

Conclusion

Active Transportation will take on a critical role in the City's COVID-19 Recovery Framework. By implementing the identified projects in the immediate to short term, residents will have better transportation options and be better able to practice physical distancing while moving safely and comfortably around the City.

Attachments

Appendix 1 – Population Density

Appendix 2 – Percentage of Households with One Car or Fewer

Appendix 3 – Work Commute Trips under 10 km in Distance

Appendix 4 – Active Transportation 2020 Installations



Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, Commissioner of Transportation and Works

Prepared by: Matthew Sweet, Manager, Active Transportation