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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2020-INFO-49
Date: May 22, 2020

Subject:

Durham Regional Cycling Plan (RCP) Update – Project Status Summary

Recommendation:

Receive for Information

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the status of the Regional Cycling Plan (RCP) Update, including a summary of the initial municipal stakeholder feedback, and results from the Phase 1 online engagement survey.

2. Background

2.1 On October 23, 2019, Council approved the contract award for consulting services for the RCP Update to WSP Canada Group Ltd ([2019-P-43](#)). The RCP Update was launched in December 2019, and is being undertaken in three phases, as summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: RCP Update Project Phases

RCP Update	Timeframe	Project Phase Objectives
Phase 1	Winter/Spring 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background review of Regional and local area municipal cycling, and active transportation policies. 2. Document key best practices and approaches. 3. Engage with Regional staff and municipal stakeholders. 4. Map existing and proposed cycling routes and facilities. 5. Obtain public feedback on the components of the existing and future cycling network. 6. Document Phase 1 outcomes.
Phase 2	Summer/Fall 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Synthesize stakeholder data from survey, interviews and other data sources. 2. Update the Region's cycling network. 3. Develop strategies to guide implementation. 4. Identify bicycle infrastructure improvements with a focus on Regional corridors. 5. Develop Cycling Implementation Plan. 6. Develop Cycling Financial Plan. 7. Municipal and stakeholder outreach to review and confirm the network and strategies. 8. Public consultation sessions online and at community events (subject to COVID-19 restrictions). 9. Document Phase 2 outcomes.
Phase 3	Winter 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Combine information from Phases One and Two together to develop the draft RCP Update. 2. Present draft RCP Update to Committee of the Whole. 3. Finalize RCP Update.

3. Phase One Summary

- 3.1 A best practice review of cycling plans and active transportation master plans (ATMPs) from nine comparable municipalities was completed to understand elements that have led them to successfully implement cycling infrastructure. A survey of municipal staff was also completed.
- 3.2 On March 26, 2020, the project team hosted an online workshop. Over 30 stakeholders attended with representation from all area municipalities, local conservation authorities (TRCA, CLOCA), school boards, and other key partners (Parks Canada, Waterfront Regeneration Trust, Metrolinx, MTO). Durham Regional staff (Works, Health, Finance, DRPS) also participated.

- 3.3 The workshop obtained feedback on the vision and objectives of the RCP Update and identified some major challenges, barriers and opportunities to achieve a safe, connected and implementable cycling network. Some of workshop take-aways included the following:
- a. There is a need to develop an integrated, accessible, connected and safe active transportation network;
 - b. There is a need to enhance cycling connectivity and address areas of conflict, by leveraging work completed by area municipalities;
 - c. Emphasis should be placed on achieving active transportation connection(s) between municipalities;
 - d. There are opportunities for significant regional and provincial trails and route systems; and
 - e. There is a need for a systematic approach for addressing intersection treatments, data collection, cost-sharing among upper and lower tier municipalities, funding sources, and micro-mobility.

- 3.4 On March 26, 2020, an online engagement survey was launched using a dedicated [project webpage](#). The online engagement survey enabled participants to:
- a. Rank a preliminary list of cycling priorities;
 - b. Use an interactive map to identify barriers and opportunities to cycling, highlight popular routes and destinations, and insert other suggestions to improve the cycling network; and
 - c. Rate their level of comfort using various types of cycling infrastructure as well as respond to types of promotional activities and events.

A summary of the project, stakeholder and survey participant feedback is provided within Attachment #1.

- 3.5 To-date, survey participants have shared 677 comments and have recorded 841 favourite routes, barriers, and missing links (e.g. missing signage, connections and unsafe routes). Some findings from the survey are as follows:
- a. The top five cycling priorities are: enhance safety, increase connectivity, focus on user needs, build healthy communities and improve signage;
 - b. Many participants expressed a strong desire for more separated bike lanes, separating cyclists and pedestrians on in-boulevard pathways, keeping vehicles and debris out of bike lanes and urban shoulders, and more signage in highly visible areas;

- c. In terms of rural cycling facilities, participants rated several design options, and the results demonstrate a concern for vehicles parked on shoulders, preferences for wider paved shoulders, and more and visible signage;
- d. There is support for monitored bike parking at events, and very strong interest in group rides and touring information along tourist routes and the waterfront.

3.6 Information collected through the survey will be used to: inform refinements to existing cycling infrastructure; identify new routes and facilities in urban and rural areas; inform cycling education and promotional activities; and, inform a phasing and implementation plan for the proposed network.

Policy and Guidelines Review

3.7 The project team is also conducting a review of cycling and active transportation policies, standards and guidelines at the National, Provincial, Regional and local levels that have been developed since 2012. An in-depth evaluation of existing Regional policies and practices will also be undertaken, and areas of improvement will be identified.

3.8 The RCP Update will apply the guidelines of Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 18 (OTM Book 18), which is a widely used and accepted resource in the Province of Ontario that helps transportation practitioners provide practical guidance on the planning, design and operation of cycling infrastructure. It is currently being updated to reflect current trends in the design and selection of cycling facilities.

4. Conclusion and Next Steps

4.1 The RCP Update is an important Regional plan that will encourage more people to use active and sustainable transportation modes, and will guide the development more cycling infrastructure, policies and programs across the Region.

4.2 In keeping with social distancing restrictions due to COVID-19, more opportunities for online engagement will be undertaken for the duration of this project.

5. Attachments

Attachment #1: RCP Update and Survey Results Summary

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP
Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development



Durham Region

2020 Regional Cycling Plan Update (RCPU)

Planning & Economic Development Committee
Attachment #1: RCP Update and Survey Results Summary
June 2, 2020



1

2020 Regional Cycling Plan Update Background





Background

- + **The Durham Regional Cycling Plan Update (RCPU) was launched in December 2019 and is set to conclude at the end of 2020.**
- + **The RCPU will allow the Region to:**
 - + **Address issues raised in the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) related to cycling (e.g., gaps in the cycling network, coordination of funding and implementation of cycling infrastructure etc.)**
 - + **Provide the Region's key stakeholders and members of the public with an opportunity to ensure we are addressing the needs of residents by making cycling a safe and viable form of transportation.**
 - + **Ensure that new design standards and are incorporated into the new RCP.**



2020 RCPU Phasing



WINTER / SPRING 2020



Phase 1

Background Review

Establish an understanding of cycling conditions in the Region and best practices from other municipalities.



SUMMER / FALL 2020



Phase 2

Program Update

Update the Region's cycling network and develop strategies to guide overall implementation of the plan.



WINTER 2020



Phase 3

Finalize the Study

Develop a report to summarize the recommendations and present to Council.



Project Goals

The 2020 RCPUC is meant to reflect five regional goals that have emerged since 2012:



Support strategic directions at the regional level



Integrating new cycling trends and lessons learned



Establishing support for coordination between upper and lower tier



Alignment with accepted design guidelines and standards



Establishing public buy-in to determine local priorities and needs

2

Phase 1 Best Practices Review





Overview of Best Practices Review

- + **A best practices review is underway.**
- + **The purpose of the best practices review is to understand the elements of other cycling and active transportation plans that have led to the successful implementation of cycling infrastructure.**
- + **Cycling and active transportation plans from nine comparable municipalities have been reviewed, including York Region, Peel Region, City of Edmonton and the City of Surrey.**
- + **The results of the scan will be summarized in Technical Memo #1, due in early June 2020.**

3

Phase 1 Municipal Stakeholder Workshop





Online Workshop Overview

Workshop date: March 26th, 2020

Objectives

1

Provide introduction to and background on the RCPU project and process

2

Engage with attendees to review and gather input on:

- i. RCPU vision and objectives;
- ii. Cycling challenges, barriers and opportunities in Durham Region; and
- iii. Cycling trends, tools and topics for consideration as part of the RCPU.

Audiences

- + Durham Region
- + Local municipalities
- + Durham Region Police
- + School boards
- + Post-secondary institutions
- + Student Transportation Services of Central Ontario
- + Ministry of Transportation Ontario
- + Metrolinx
- + Ontario Trails Council
- + Transportation Options
- + Ontario Cycling Association
- + Waterfront Regeneration Trust

32

Attendees



Discussion Summary

Key takeaways include:

- + **Develop an integrated, accessible, connected and safe active transportation network;**
- + **Enhance cycling connectivity and address areas of conflict by leveraging work completed by local municipalities;**
- + **Achieve active transportation connection(s) between municipalities;**
- + **Develop opportunities of regional and provincial significant trail and route systems; and**
- + **Examine topics that address intersection treatments, data collection, cost-sharing among upper and lower tier municipalities, funding sources, and micro-mobility.**

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Phase 1 Online Survey





Online Survey Introduction

- + A survey was launched March 26th using the MetroQuest online survey tool.
- + MetroQuest is an online interactive engagement tool that allows the public to provide input through a series of tailored and targeted activities. The activities included:
 - + Identifying priorities for the RCPU based on new and emerging trends.
 - + Identifying opportunities for network improvements and identifying critical components of the cycling network.
 - + Identifying design preferences related to cycling infrastructure.



MetroQuest Engagement Tool



Getting Started

WELCOME

Durham Regional Cycling Plan Update 2020

We are updating our Regional Cycling Plan to reflect new trends, build upon existing facilities and identify new programs for cyclists of all ages and abilities. We want your input to help shape the plan!

Begin



2

RANKING

3

MAPPING

4

SETTING PREFERENCES

5

WRAP-UP

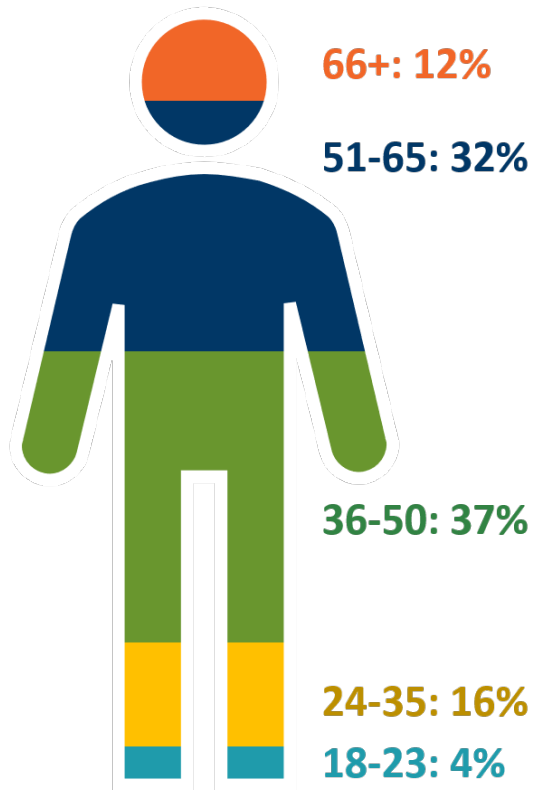
Disclaimer: Personal information captured in this survey is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001 for the purposes of this study. Your responses will not be distributed to any external sources and will only be used by the study team.



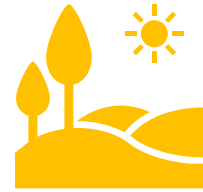


Participant Demographic Overview

Age



Cycling Purpose:



68%
recreation



18%
errands



10%
commute to
work



4%
commute to
school

Information will be used to generate a “profile” for those who provided their input and to better understand how best to reach out to a wider range of individuals going forward.



Participant Overview Continued








**place
of
residence:**

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| + 15% Ajax | + 4% Scugog |
| + 1% Brock | + 3% Uxbridge |
| + 13% Clarington | + 27% Whitby |
| + 25% Oshawa | + 7% Outside
Durham Region |
| + 6% Pickering | |

**cycling
frequency:**



- | |
|---|
|  51% a few times / week |
|  20% a few times / month |
|  16% everyday |
|  12% a few times / year |
|  2% never |



Survey Results - Markers

Participants used markers to identify locations on the map based on their personal experience. The information gathered through this exercise will be used to inform the identification of the priority cycling network including route alignment and more complex areas for improvement.

169

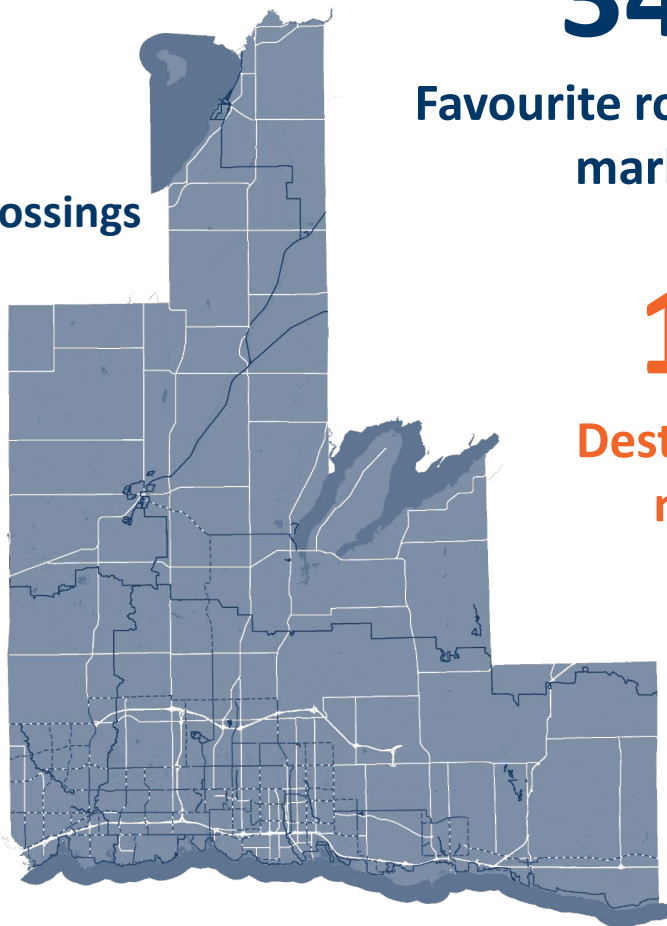
Barrier markers

- + Dangerous highway crossings
- + Unsafe intersections
- + Poor road conditions

282

Missing link markers

- + Missing signage
- + Missing connections to existing routes
- + Unsafe routes



346

Favourite route markers

- + Routes that are safe, comfortable, and connected
- + Waterfront Trail
- + Paved / designated biking areas

133

Destination markers

- + The waterfront
- + Community centres & schools
- + Restaurants
- + Active destinations

118

Other comment markers

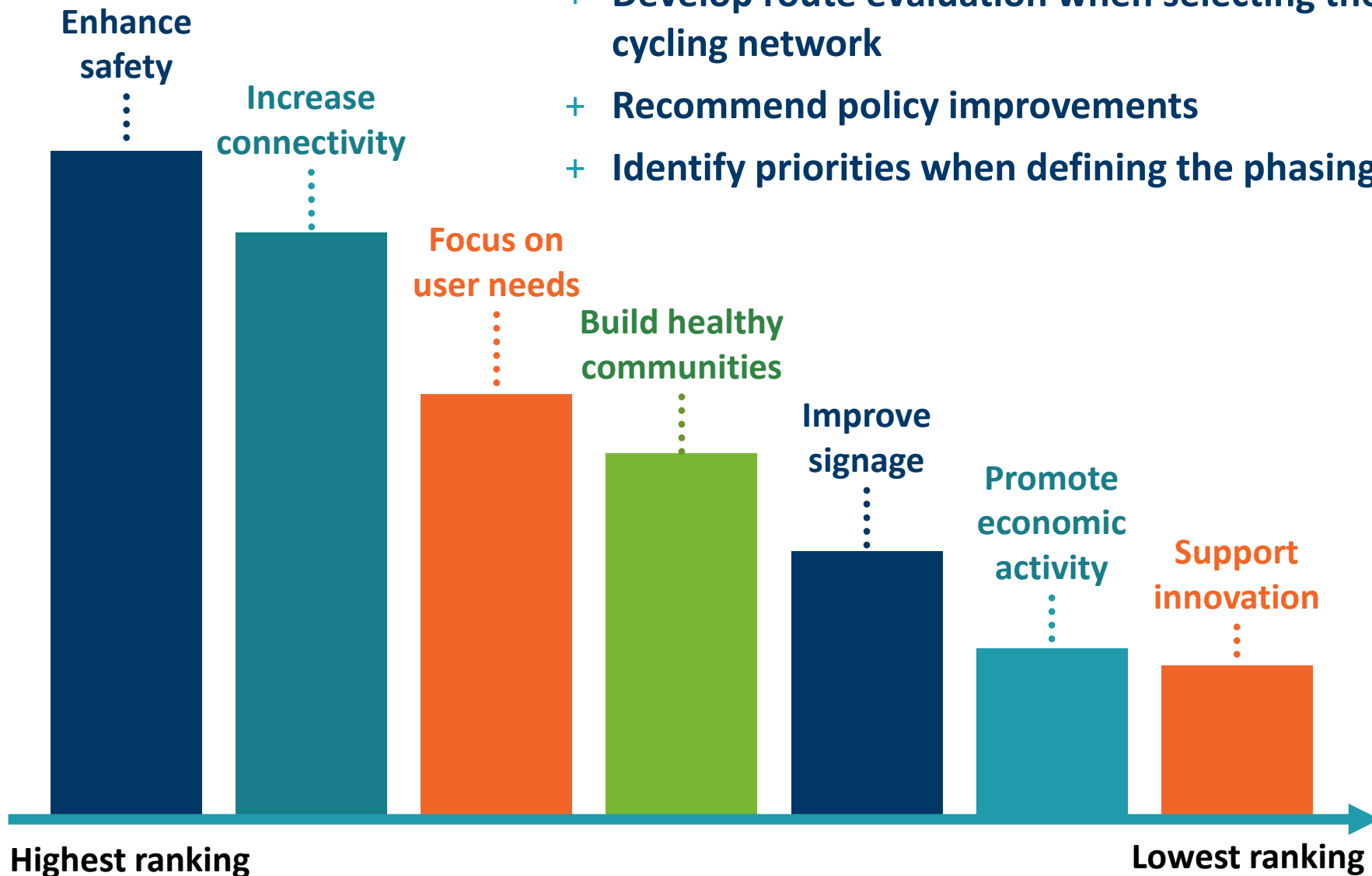
- + Construction / projects underway
- + High traffic volume areas
- + Route suggestions



Survey Results - Priorities

The responses will be used to inform the following:

- + Develop route evaluation when selecting the priority cycling network
- + Recommend policy improvements
- + Identify priorities when defining the phasing plan





Survey Results – Rural Facility Preferences

Facilities in Rural Areas – Average Rating



Signed bicycle route

Paved shoulder

Buffered paved shoulder

Off-road trail

Neutral

Like

Like

Strongly like

81
comments






Comments included:

- + Concern regarding vehicles parking on the shoulder
- + Separate cyclists and pedestrians on off-road multi-use trails
- + Preference for wider paved shoulders
- + Design for & place signs in high visibility areas



Survey Results – Cycling Events and Promotion

Events & Promotions – Average Rating

				
“How-to” Classes	Group Rides	Bike Valet	Cycling Events	Touring Routes
Neutral	Like	Like	Strongly Like	Strongly Like

49
comments

Comments included:

- + Interest in taking bike repair ‘how to’ classes
- + Desire for more affordable cycling events
- + Touring routes along tourist areas & waterfront



Online Survey

Information collected through the survey will be used to:

- + Refine existing cycling infrastructure**
- + Identify preferred facilities for new route alternatives in urban and rural areas**
- + Inform Durham Region cycling education and promotional activities, and**
- + Establish priorities when developing a phasing plan for the proposed network**

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Forthcoming Work





Forthcoming Guidelines

- + The RCPM will be one of the first plans in the Province to apply the updated Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 18 guidelines.
 - + OTM Book 18 is a widely used and accepted resource by transportation planners and practitioners across the Province of Ontario
 - + It provides guidance on the planning design and operation of cycling facilities
 - + It is being updated to reflect new trends and changes to cycling facilities including both the design and selection process



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Conclusion and Next Steps





Conclusion and Next Steps

- + The RCPU is an important Regional sustainable plan to encourage more people to use active transportation modes and to assist and guide the development of more cycling infrastructure, policies and programs across Durham.
- + Phase 2 work has already begun.
- + The project team has modified its community outreach and engagement approach to include online engagement tools and platforms in order to engage a large and diverse audience while social distancing is still in effect. Once restrictions are limited, there will need to be additional considerations for in-person events.

