

City adopts future-ready Transportation Master Plan

April 13, 2021 — Be it the advent of self-driving vehicles, or a shift toward greener active transportation, City streets, trails and sidewalks will be ready for the future of transportation.

On Monday, City Council approved the adoption of a new Transportation Master Plan. The document is the product of extensive public consultation — including technical workshops, in-person open houses and online information sessions — and study that first began in 2017. The TMP will provide a roadmap for the development of new transportation infrastructure and redevelopment for decades to come, with an eye towards meeting changing transportation needs; increased active transportation; public transit use; and changing technologies.

“We’re taking a user-focussed approach to the future of transportation in our city, the TMP ensures we are ready for shifting needs and modes of transportation while delivering on long-term goals of community resilience, growth, health, and environmental sustainability,” said Manager of Transportation Services Brian Applebee.

To do that the plan takes a complete street approach, creating space for not just traditional car-based traffic, but transportation avenues for active transportation such as cycling and pedestrians. The plan puts pedestrians first as the City works to create walkable, sustainable neighbourhoods. It’s a lens through which new transportation corridors can be designed and existing street redevelopment can deliver on the goals of:

- Support for the local economy and tourism initiatives
- Opportunities for passive physical activity
- Development of vibrant communities through integrated transportation and land-use planning
- Increase efficiency for existing rights of way
- Access and mobility for individuals of all ages and abilities
- Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions
- Balancing multiple modes of transportation
- Improved road safety

“The traditional ways in which we view transportation are changing, here in the city, the region, and the province. From the ground floor we need to be looking at the transportation network from the outside in, meaning focusing on the most vulnerable of users first before the vehicular modes,” said Applebee, adding, “balancing the needs of sustainable transportation modes, while also accommodating the cars, trucks and buses

that drive commerce and business, is at the core of the complete streets approach, an approach that will leave our transportation system ready for the future.”

Several areas of the plan were modified Monday night. Revisions include the removal of a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment that would allow for a potential roadway from Scott Street to YMCA Drive through John Page Park.

“Council took a transformational step in addressing climate change with its approval of the Transportation Master Plan,” said Mayor Walter Sendzik. “The last plan of this nature was developed 55 years ago. This new plan will guide future Councils and staff on how we build a city that is less dependant on cars and more focused on all kinds of movement abilities from pedestrians to cycling to enhanced transit. Compliments to City staff for getting this long overdue strategic plan completed.”

Development of the plan was funded in part by the Federal Gas Tax Fund (FGTF). The Federal Gas Tax Fund is a permanent and stable source of funding for municipal infrastructure. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario delivers the Fund directly to Ontario’s municipalities, except Toronto, twice a year, on a per capita basis. Learn more about the FGTF in Ontario at www.gastaxatwork.ca.

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