

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2013

Item 22, Report No. 14, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on April 23, 2013.

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**VAUGHAN CYCLING FORUM FEEDBACK
CITY-WIDE**

The Committee of the Whole recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, dated April 9, 2013:

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Engineering and Public Works, in consultation with the Commissioner of Community Services, recommends that this report be received for information purposes.

Contribution to Sustainability

The Vaughan Cycling Forum was organized to facilitate discussions with residents that have an interest in cycling. Discussions include the City's cycling needs and how to promote cycling. The meeting provides valuable input for staff developing Vaughan's cycling strategies. Increased cycling in the City will reduce automobile dependency, traffic congestion and transportation related greenhouse gas emissions. As such, the Vaughan Cycling Forum supports many of the goals and objectives of Green Directions Vaughan, in particular Objectives 3.1 and 3.3:

Objective 3.1 *To develop and sustain a network of sidewalks, paths and trails that supports all modes of non-vehicular transportation*

Objective 3.3 *Reduce single occupant vehicle (SOV) trips by supporting active transportation, car pooling and public transit*

Economic Impact

The nominal cost associated with organizing and facilitating the Vaughan Cycling Forum, and future meetings of the forum, can be accommodated within the current Capital Budget.

Communications Plan

Staff will communicate future Vaughan Cycling Forum meeting dates through invitation of past participants, advertisements in local newspapers, posters and on the City's website.

Stakeholder consultation on the proposed cycle facilities will consist of Public Open Houses. Notification of the public meetings will be advertised in local newspapers, posted on the City's website, and notices will be distributed to residents in the surrounding area. Staff will also use social media to promote consultation.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of feedback from the second meeting of the Vaughan Cycling Forum held on March 18, 2013.

Background - Analysis and Options

On April 11, 2012, City of Vaughan staff hosted and facilitated the inaugural meeting of the Vaughan Cycling Forum (VCF), with participation from York Region. Vaughan residents and cycling enthusiasts were invited to learn about what is to come for Vaughan cyclists and provide input into future cycling initiatives in the City. Due to the success of the VCF and the demand for continued opportunities to provide comments, Council directed staff to continue to hold up to three forums per year.

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Approximately 30 people attended the second Vaughan Cycling Forum meeting held on March 18, 2013, which focused on the City's cycling needs

About 30 people attended the VCF meeting, including residents from across the City and neighbouring municipalities, cycling club members, York Region District School Board, Smart Commute North Toronto Vaughan, and York Region staff.

Staff presented various cycling initiatives being carried out by the City, York Region, and other municipalities that support Bicycle Friendly Communities. This included a discussion on the key elements of cycling strategies (i.e., Cycling Facilities, Education, Encouragement, and Evaluation). Staff also reviewed the various types of cyclists, and the cycling needs for each type of cyclist in Vaughan. For the remainder of the meeting, VCF participants were split into breakout groups to discuss the cycling needs of various communities of Vaughan, including Maple, Woodbridge/Kleinburg and Thornhill.

The Vaughan Cycling Forum provided valuable feedback on the needs of Vaughan cyclists

VCF participants were invited to engage in open dialogue and encouraged to share their comments about cycling needs and suggestions to promote cycling. The following is a summary of the key comments and suggestions raised by VCF participants.

Cycling Facilities

- Desire for a connected cycle routes, including east-west connections and cycle facilities on Regional Roads
- Link cycling and transit routes, including connections to future subway stations
- Need safe cycling facilities to increase ridership (e.g., bike lanes, cycle tracks, paved shoulders, 'Share the Road' signs, and pathways)
- Need cycle parking at transit stops (e.g. bike lockers at major transit stops)

Education

- Suggest working with schools to encourage active transportation
- Youth under-represented at VCF meetings

Encouragement

- Motivate cyclists to increase ridership
- Suggest City-wide cycling events and community-driven cycling events (e.g. street closures for cycling, Bike to School Day)
- School traffic congestion is a problem; need to encourage active transportation
- Encourage cyclists to use bells

Evaluation and Planning

- Land use and transportation planning is key to smart growth and establishing a bicycle-friendly community
- Suggest online surveys

In addition, a full summary of the comments made during the VCF meeting is included on Attachment No. 1 to this report.

In summary, staff heard both cycle facilities and 'Encouragement' initiatives such as cycling events, should be short-term priorities for the City. Staff is currently progressing initiatives in each of these areas to encourage cycling, including stakeholder consultation on the proposed cycle facilities and the promotion of the GTHA Bike Month in June 2013.

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Stakeholder consultation on cycle facilities will be held in Spring 2013

As per City of Vaughan Council Resolution of June 26, 2012, staff is scheduling the stakeholder consultation for the approved cycle facilities in three corridors to provide connections to the existing cycle network:

- Corridor 1 – Napa Valley Avenue (Ward 2 – Woodbridge West)
- Corridor 2 – McNaughton Road East, Peter Rupert Avenue, Confederation Parkway, Staffern Drive and North Rivermede Road (Ward 4 – Concord/Thornhill North, Ward 1 – Maple/Kleinburg)
- Corridor 3 – New Westminster Drive (Ward 5 – Thornhill)

Staff will also consult on the proposed cycle network refinements in Blocks 11, 12 and 18 as part of consultation on Corridor 2. The proposed refinements would improve the cycle network and better serve the community.

Stakeholder consultation will include Public Open Houses in Spring/Summer 2013 to develop cycle facilities and cycle network refinements that fit their physical setting, while maintaining safety and mobility. Staff will report back to Council on recommended cycle facilities together with implementation plans.

Staff will be promoting the GTHA Bike Month 2013

Bike Month is historically a Toronto-based program. Building on the success of Bike Month, Smart Commute (a program of Metrolinx) is now expanding Bike Month to GTHA municipalities as part of a pilot.

Bike Month is a community-driven program that encourages and celebrates cycling. It kicks off on the last Monday in May with Bike to Work Day, an event that encourages people to ride their bicycles to work. The month continues with a diverse collection of events organized by community members and organizations. Events in previous years have included rides, guided tours by bike, festivals, breakfast for cyclists, art shows and film screenings.

Bike Month 2013 program includes a comprehensive promotional campaign, a GTHA-wide Bike to Work Day and a 'call to action' to log onto the Bike Month page to learn more about cycling, sign the Bike Month pledge, and find local events and cycling workshops.

To participate in Bike Month 2013, individuals or organizations can create or host a cycling event, lead a ride, and/or incorporate cycling into an event they are already holding. All events can be posted to the online event calendar at BikeMonth2013.ca.

The Bike Month 2013 calendar of events will include City and Regional events

Staff in several departments will be participating in Bike Month 2013, including the following events:

- "Wheeling Wednesday" Bike to School Day
- Bartley Smith Greenway Trail Bike Ride

Staff will also be working with the Region of York to promote the following events in Vaughan:

- Bike to Work Day
- Safe cycling workshop

Vaughan cycling community expressed interest in organizing cycling events

VCF participants also suggested a City-wide cycling day event. These events could be

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community based for cyclists new and old to make connections and get the information they need to pursue cycling in Vaughan. Vaughan “BikeFest” could be a weekend event located in a City park. The following is a list of potential activities that could be organized for such an event:

- BMX show
- Free bike tune-ups
- Guided bike ride
- Helmet safety information
- Bike road safety course
- Bike demonstrations
- Cycling Club and Bike Shop information
- Prize draw

If the Vaughan cycling community wishes to pursue a “BikeFest” event this summer, City staff will work with Vaughan cyclists, VCF participants, bike shops, cycle clubs and teams, and business associations to facilitate the event. Staff will report back to Council if a financial or services in kind contribution to such an event is requested.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

In consideration of Vaughan Vision 2020, this report relates to the following Strategic Initiatives:

1. The pursuit of excellence in service delivery
2. Enhancing and ensuring community safety, health and wellness
3. Planning and managing growth and economic vitality

The report is therefore consistent with the priorities previously set by Council. The necessary resources to hold regular VCF meetings have also been allocated and approved.

Regional Implications

Region of York staff participated at the VCF meeting. A copy of this report and attachments will be forwarded to the Region for information.

Conclusion

City staff held a meeting of the Vaughan Cycling Forum on March 18, 2013. VCF participants were invited to engage in open dialogue and encouraged to share their comments about cycling needs and suggestions to promote cycling. The meeting provided valuable feedback, including the need for cycle facilities and events to promote cycling in Vaughan.

As such, staff will be consulting stakeholders on the proposed cycle facilities in spring/summer 2013, assist in promoting the GTHA Bike Month 2013, and pursue a “BikeFest” event this summer.

Attachments

1. Summary of Vaughan Cycling Forum Discussion

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(A copy of the attachments referred to in the foregoing have been forwarded to each Member of Council and a copy thereof is also on file in the office of the City Clerk.)