
Plan for Growth Next Steps – BRT/Transit Plan and Downtown All Ages and Abilities Cycling Network

Recommendation

That the Administration be directed to prepare the necessary decision reports to confirm general locations and characteristics of the Bus Rapid Transit network, including runningways, and the Downtown All Ages and Abilities Cycling Network.

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an outline of the implementation strategy for the BRT/Transit Plan and Downtown All Ages and Abilities (AAA) Cycling Network, and identify the proposed next steps for each project.

Report Highlights

1. Outstanding components of the BRT/Transit Plan include completion of the functional plan, detailed design and station design, transit system plan and implementation plan, to be followed by detailed construction planning.
2. The current phase of the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF) program, which provides a share of funding to the BRT/Transit Plan, has been extended by the Federal Government to allow eligible expenditures up to and including March 31, 2020.
3. For the proposed AAA cycling network streets, the next steps would be preparing standard and functional drawings, phasing plan, and planning level cost estimates.
4. Before the Administration is able to proceed to more detailed levels of design on the BRT or AAA projects, both require final confirmation of the network, and in the case of the BRT, the ultimate presence of dedicated transit lanes (runningways).

Strategic Goal(s)

The Growth Plan supports the City's Strategic Goals of Asset and Financial Sustainability, Sustainable Growth, and Moving Around. The Growth Plan will also assist in meeting the Strategic Goal of Environmental Leadership by enhancing the range of sustainable choices for Moving Around and providing a new model for growth that more effectively utilizes infrastructure.

Background

During its November 20, 2017 meeting, City Council resolved, in part:

“That the preferred configuration and conceptual network for the Bus Rapid Transit system, as outlined in the report of the General Manager, Community Services Department dated November 6, 2017, be approved as the basis for further engagement and design.”

In November 2017, City Council received a report on the evaluation results of the Protected Bike Lane Demonstration Project and an outline of recommended next steps for the provision of the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling network in the Downtown. At that meeting the following was resolved:

1. That a provision for protected bike lanes be included in the Downtown All Ages and Abilities cycling network;
2. That the Administration develop a Downtown All Ages and Abilities cycling network (including protected bike lanes) in concert with other downtown policy and planning initiatives in 2018; and
3. That the existing protected bike lanes on 23rd Street (from Spadina Crescent to Idylwyld Drive) and 4th Avenue (from 20th Street to 24th Street) be retained until the Downtown All Ages and Abilities cycling network is presented to City Council.

Report

BRT/Transit Plan Next Steps

Where possible, functional planning for the BRT system is currently underway and detailed design has proceeded based on the relative level of certainty about route location and infrastructure needs. Along corridors where uncertainty remains about the route location and presence and configuration of dedicated transit lanes, detailed design has been postponed pending final confirmation.

Following the confirmation of locations and configurations, functional planning and detailed design will be completed to a near “tender-ready” state including options for construction phasing. This means that, subject to a completed implementation plan, construction plan, a procurement strategy, and the necessary funding and approvals, the City will be in a position to go to market for initial phases of the BRT project.

The Administration is developing the terms for a “post-implementation monitoring framework” for the BRT project to ensure the system outcomes are clearly defined and provide confidence to stakeholders that the City will monitor and address any emergent issues in a timely manner.

Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF)

The BRT / Transit Project is 50% funded through the Government of Canada’s (Canada) PTIF, under the Infrastructure Canada Program. As a result, the project is subject to reporting and eligibility rules as laid out in a Contribution Agreement between

the City and the Province of Saskatchewan, which administers PTIF in Saskatchewan on behalf of Canada. At the time of previous reports, the eligibility requirements under PTIF required 80 percent of project work to be completed by March 31, 2018 with the remaining to be spent by March 31, 2019. At the time of the November 20, 2017 report to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation, the BRT/Transit Plan project schedule was based on this timeline.

In December of 2017, Canada revised the eligibility requirements for PTIF-funded projects to allow work in the current phase to extend to March 31, 2020. This means that the BRT/Transit Plan is now subject to this new eligibility deadline. While the Administration does not recommend delaying completion of this phase of the project to 2020, the extended deadline has added the flexibility to undertake additional stakeholder engagement.

Phase 2 of the Investing in Canada Program is expected to be rolled out for projects as early as 2019. The Administration is targeting completion of the current phase of BRT/transit planning and design in order to be prepared for this funding roll-out and for initiation of early construction works for phases of the BRT in the 2019 or 2020 construction seasons, subject to approvals and funding.

Downtown AAA Cycling Network Next Steps

The next step is to undertake functional planning for each street proposed for the Downtown AAA cycling network. City Council confirmation of the proposed Downtown AAA cycling network is required before detailed work on the items below can proceed. Components of the functional planning work include:

- Standard drawings for intersection treatments, delineation treatments, signage, line markings, landscape features, accessible parking, and transit stops;
- Engineering reports;
- Functional drawings for 19th Street, 23rd Street, and 4th Avenue; and
- Planning level cost estimates and anticipated phasing for 19th Street, 23rd Street, and 4th Avenue.

Planning level cost estimates and phasing will be included as part of the Active Transportation Implementation Plan to be provided for City Council's information later in 2018 or early 2019.

Confirmation of Network/Configuration for BRT and Downtown AAA Cycling Network

In order to ensure timely progress on each of these initiatives, both will require final confirmation of the network, and for the BRT – of the long-term presence of dedicated transit lanes on portions of identified streets. Ideally, this confirmation should precede any detailed planning or design in the affected locations to avoid waste and possible future re-work should the network or configuration change.

In order to obtain the necessary confirmation, the Administration proposes to prepare a report that will make final recommendations regarding the following:

1. For the BRT:
 - a. Network routing overall, including red, green, and blue lines and terminus points;
 - b. Network routing through Nutana and Downtown; and
 - c. Long-term presence of dedicated transit lanes.
2. For the Downtown AAA cycling network, the network for AAA cycling facilities.

Public and/or Stakeholder Involvement

Public and stakeholder involvement to date has been addressed in a preceding report.

As planning and design proceeds, and as detailed implementation plans are developed, the Administration will work closely with stakeholders and members of the public to incorporate their input into detailed design and to ensure the implementation and phasing plans mitigate the impacts of construction.

Communication Plan

The Administration has developed a comprehensive communication and engagement plan for the Growth Plan implementation initiatives, including the BRT/Transit Plan Implementation project.

The plan identifies numerous opportunities to communicate project progress with the public through the project website, engage page, news releases, press conferences, monthly Plan for Growth newsletters, and a range of social media and public space communication channels. Also, each component of the Growth Plan has identified stakeholder and public engagement touchpoints.

As the projects proceed to more detailed design and construction phases, additional targeted communication plans will be developed and carried out to address specific communication needs.

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no policy, financial, environmental, privacy or CPTED implications of considerations. No options to the recommendation have been considered.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

If the recommendation of this report is approved, the Administration will prepare decision reports for the BRT/Transit Plan and Downtown AAA Cycling Network Plan to confirm the network and configuration, likely by the 3rd quarter of 2018.

If additional technical analysis or stakeholder engagement is requested for the current phases of the projects, these reports could be prepared by the end of 2018.

Public Notice

Public Notice pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

Report Approval

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