

Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan

Community Engagement Final Report

April 2016

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Executive Summary.....	3
3. Timeline & Milestones	4
4. Initial public engagement: Issues Identification & Gap Analysis	4
5. Final Public Engagement: Draft Master Plan Input.....	6
6. Outcomes.....	8

1. Introduction

The City of Kelowna's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan identifies infrastructure, planning and policy requirements to promote and facilitate walking and cycling throughout the community.

There are currently 400 kilometres of sidewalks, 300 kilometres of bike lanes and 35 kilometres of shared-use pathways throughout the City.

Over the past decade, the City has seen a gradual increase in pedestrian and cycling mode share. This increase has been most pronounced in the urban core area, where the percentage of individuals who walk or cycle has moved up from 8.9 per cent in 2007 to 13 per cent in 2013.

The goals of the Master Plan are to increase year-round walking and cycling so that within 20 years 25 per cent of all trips less than five kilometers in length are made by walking or cycling as well as to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety so that collisions with motor vehicles is reduced by 50 per cent.

Through a comprehensive, two-phase engagement process, the City sought to inform, consult and involve the community in order to construct a Master Plan that best identifies current gaps and opportunities for creating an interconnected active transportation network.

2. Executive Summary

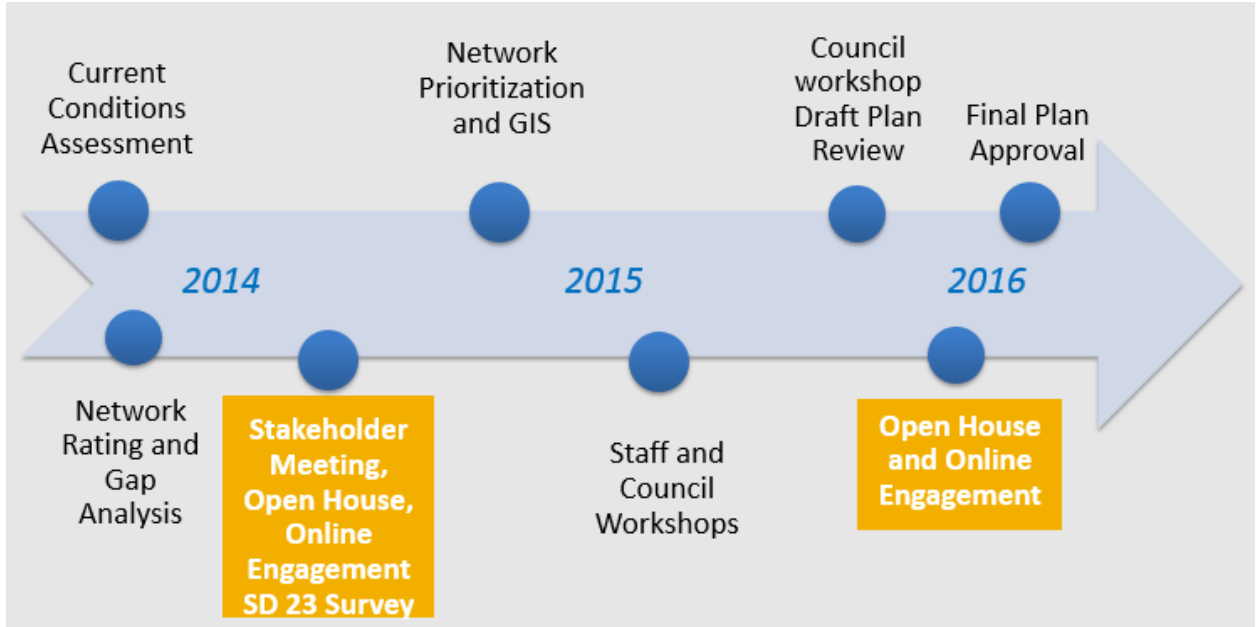
To ensure the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan was well-informed, shaped in part by public input, and that the plan would meet the needs of residents, the City offered a variety of opportunities throughout the project to engage the public and gather their feedback.

In accordance with the guiding principles defined in Council's Engage Policy, engagement outreach was done twice during the project. Initial consultation was done near the onset of the project to gather input for the Plan, and final engagement at the end of the project was done to ensure the draft Plan reflected the communities' desires.

Initial consultation from nearly 250 surveys, 12 stakeholders, 14 administrators, and over 200 open house attendees provided support for the Plan goals; helped develop project prioritization criteria; identified priority network routes and gaps; and identified issues the Plan should address including safety, connectivity and barriers to cycling. This information was used to help draft the active transportation network and Plan.

During the final engagement, the community could comment on the Plan they helped shape. Feedback from the more than 500 surveys and over 260 open house participants during the final consultation showed that the draft Plan would encourage nearly three quarters of respondents to walk more and 83 per cent to bike more. While the majority of respondents expressed support for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, feedback on possible plan improvements was reviewed and considered for inclusion in the final version of the Plan.

3. Timeline & Milestones



4. Initial public engagement: Issues Identification & Gap Analysis

The purpose of the initial Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan engagement process was to gather feedback from the community on barriers, issues and gaps for active transportation in Kelowna. The goals of the initial engagement were to inform, consult and involve the community in developing a draft Master Plan for the future of pedestrian and cycling networks in the City. A variety of tactics were utilized to gather community input including:

- Outreach through City communication channels (e-Subscribe, social media, PSA's, stakeholder networks)
- School District 23 survey (Summer/Fall 2014)
- Interactive stakeholder workshop (September 2014)
- Online engagement (getinvolved.kelowna.ca)
- Online public survey
- Open house at Orchard Park Mall (October 2014)

Outreach through City communication channels

A designated project website was established: kelowna.ca/onthemove to house information and links to the online survey and interactive maps via Mind Mixer at getinvolved.kelowna.ca.

The City promoted the open house, online survey and getinvolved.kelowna.ca through a variety of platforms including media releases, newspaper advertisements, e-bulletins and social media including facebook and twitter.

School District 23 survey

Increasing the number of students who actively commute to school can reduce motor vehicle trips, reduce emissions and develop life-long habits. Recognizing this, a survey was sent to 25 principals and administrators working for School District 23 during the summer/fall 2014. The purpose of the survey was to gather information on the existing knowledge of Safe Routes to School strategies, infrastructure concerns that impede students for walking and cycling to school, students' primary means of transportation, and educational programming designed to encourage walking or cycling to school.

Garnering survey responses was hampered due to the BC teachers' strike and in the end fourteen responses were received (56% of public schools). Highlights from these responses include:

- Majority of schools surveyed are not familiar with Safe Routes to School initiatives.
- Common deterrents for students walking/cycling to school include - more convenient for parents to drive; live too far away / takes too long; safety concerns; parents don't want child walking/cycling along; and intersections are dangerous to cross.
- Infrastructure barriers include - high speed/high volume streets; intersections without crosswalks; streets without bike paths/lanes; streets without sidewalks; and hilly streets.

Feedback from this survey was used to help develop the network.

Interactive stakeholder workshop

Sixteen individuals, representing 11 stakeholder organizations were invited to attend an interactive session on September 23, 2014 at the Bohemian Café in Kelowna. Stakeholders represented included: Kelowna Area Cycling Coalition (KACC), Okanagan College, Community Action Toward Children's Health (CATCH), School District 23, Interior Health, Kelowna Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Kelowna Association, Worman, Urban Development Institute & Canadian Home Builders' Association, Central Okanagan, and UBC Okanagan. The goal of the event was to introduce the project, raise awareness of its intended outcomes, and receive insight from the community through discussions and questions.

The main themes that emerged from the discussions were the importance of connectivity with schools, support for routes along major streets (Springfield, Ethel, Burtch, Dilworth, Benvoulin), and prioritizing the bottleneck section around Orchard Park Mall with improvements to infrastructure. Stakeholders were also encouraged to complete the online engagement and survey and distribute it throughout their networks.

Information gathered at this session was used to help build the network as well as develop prioritization criteria.

Online engagement (getinvolved.kelowna.ca)

The City's Mind Mixer online engagement web platform (getinvolved.kelowna.ca) utilized interactive maps to gather public input on network gaps and primary route priorities. In addition, getinvolved.kelowna.ca provided direct link to an online survey (see below for more information).

Overall, more than 1,500 individuals viewed the maps, and 489 people had some interactions with the maps or left comments. The feedback provided basis for determining the pedestrian and bicycle network.

Better facilities and options to UBC was the most frequently mentioned area on the first interactive map, routes that should make up Kelowna's active transportation primary network. Lakeshore was a very close second for most mentions and support, followed by Ethel Street. Improved facilities from

the upper Mission through to downtown is also highly supported. Connecting existing routes and pathways was also frequently mentioned.

Connections to UBC was also mentioned most frequently on the second interactive map, cycling route and network links that are missing. The next highest mention was a link somewhere in the shopping area near Orchard Park and along Dilworth.

Online public survey

An online survey was used to seek initial input from the community regarding the proposed Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

The survey asked respondents to identify their current walking and cycling activity and barriers to pursuing those activities in Kelowna. Respondents were also provided an opportunity to identify gaps in the network or recommend locations for new or enhanced routes. Further, participants could share their comments related to walking and cycling in the city.

Through promotion via the City's communication channels and engagement events, the survey generated 243 responses.

Overall, the common survey themes were:

- Safety;
- Lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities; and
- Building a comprehensive active transportation network.
- Keeping sidewalks/bike paths clean and swept

Commonly mentioned routes or road that needed upgraded facilities and infrastructure for walking and cycling included:

- Travelling to UBC Okanagan (cycling)
- Lakeshore Rd corridor (both walking and cycling)
- Crossing Highway 97 and travelling around the shopping area around Orchard Park

Open house at Orchard Park Mall

A nine-hour public open house was held on Saturday, October 18, 2014 to inform the community and allow people to provide input. The event was promoted through the City's communications channels, as well as through stakeholder outreach.

Over 200 individuals attended the event at Orchard Park Mall. Community members were invited to speak with project representatives to ask questions and share insights. Information cards were distributed at this event to encourage citizens to visit the website, complete an online engagement survey and use the interactive maps. Several individuals completed hard copy surveys and these results were combined with the online survey results.

Feedback from the open house was compiled and considered for input into the report.

5. Final Public Engagement: Draft Master Plan Input

The goal of final engagement process was to seek input from the community on the draft Master Plan.

The City informed and consulted with the public about the draft Master plan. Feedback on analysis and alternative decisions were obtained during this phase and were considered for incorporation into the final Master Plan.

Engagement tactics utilized during this phase included:

- Outreach through City Communication Channels (e-Subscribe, social media, PSA's, stakeholder networks)
- Online survey (January 20 - February 7)
- Online engagement (getinvolved.kelowna.ca)
- Open houses (Parkinson Recreation Center, January 30 and Okanagan College, February 4)
- Stakeholder input

Outreach through City communication channels

The website, kelowna.ca/onthemove, was used to promote the draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan as well as a series of maps outlining the existing and future pedestrian and cycling networks. The website also provide a link to the online survey and information for those wanting to attend either of the 2 open houses.

A variety of platforms were also used to promote the online surveys, open house and getinvolved.kelowna.ca through a variety of platforms including media releases, which generated several news stories promoting the draft Plan and promoting the online survey and open houses, newspaper advertisements, e-bulletins and social media.

Facebook and Twitter were the primary social media platforms used to promote the 2016 engagement survey. These efforts resulted in 53 survey responses. However, more respondents likely reached the survey via social media due to the website link being shared on the City's e-bulletins which were then shared on social media channels as those results would be accounted for under the website responses.

Online survey

An online survey provided a platform for community members to share their feedback on the draft Master Plan. The survey was available from January 20 - February 7, 2016 and garnered over 500 responses, 12 per cent of which were from people who were involved in the initial consultation.

The majority of survey respondents expressed support for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. Nearly three quarters of respondents said the plan would encourage them to walk more, while 83 per cent would be encouraged to bike more. Furthermore, 83 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the plan's prioritization criteria for implementing future sidewalk and cycling projects.

In order to encourage more walking and cycling, survey respondents were also asked to provide input on education and support. Pathway signage, driver and cyclist education, route maintenance and infrastructure improvements were common themes among the responses.

Areas for plan improvement were also identified through the survey. Respondents expressed a need for a stronger focus on safety, increased education for cyclists and drivers, a shorter implementation time frame and cost considerations. Many also stated that connectivity to schools, such as UBCO, and gap closures should be given high priority.

Online engagement (getinvolved.kelowna.ca)

Concurrently with the online survey, a topic was opened on the City's Mind Mixer site, getinvolved.kelowna.ca. The main purpose of this topic was to drive this online community to the survey and provide an opportunity for comments.

Overall, there were 212 views of this discussion topic and 12 interactions. 113 survey responses were acquired through the getinvolved.kelowna.ca channel.

Open houses (Parkinson Recreation Centre and Okanagan College)

During the final engagement phase of the Master Plan development, the City held two public open houses in 2016 to inform and involve the community in the process. The purpose of these events was to gather feedback from the community on the draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan network and recommendations, as well as to increase the public's awareness of the Plan.

The first open house was held at the Parkinson Recreation Centre on January 30 and welcomed 170 attendees. Ninety-two individuals attended the second open house on February 4 at Okanagan College.

Safety and education of all users, including motorists, was a recurring theme at both open houses. Concerns over cost, including taxation impact, and length of implementation time were also noted. Community members suggested building pathways and cycle tracks only instead of full road reconstruction projects; and providing paved shoulder bike lanes on Glenmore road. There were also many inquiries about specific local road sidewalks in neighbourhoods not shown on the plan due to lower priority.

From the completed exit surveys at the open houses, it was found that:

- 98 per cent of respondents found the information helped them understand the scope of the project
- 95 per cent of respondents reported the information was presented in an understandable format
- 89 per cent of respondents agreed the material presented enough information for them to provide an informed opinion on the nature of the project

6. Outcomes

The feedback from initial consultation was used to develop draft the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. Public input was used to inform project prioritization criteria, develop active transportation network and ensure that safety was addressed throughout the Plan.

During the final engagement, the majority of respondents expressed support for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan they helped shape. The comments for suggested improvements were reviewed and considered for inclusion to help refine the overall Plan and active transportation network.

During the final engagement, several suggestions for additions or changes to the network were received and added to the network including:

- Sidewalks added as a medium priority to Graham Street to address safety concerns around the Martin Community Centre.
- Bike lanes added to Mail Road in which addresses comments about connecting Dilworth to UBCO and to connect Valley Road North community with Orchard Park.

- Shared path added on Casorso Road between Gordon Drive and Mission Creek Greenway to address concerns with more connectivity to the Greenway.
- Buffered bike lanes on Leckie Road to address concerns of connecting Rutland to Rails with Trails and safety issues around Orchard Park at Dilworth.
- Active transportation corridors on Leon Avenue from Abbott Street to Ethel and Lawrence Avenue from Ethel to Parkinson Recreation Center (PRC) to provide connection from City Park to PRC.

Further, during final consultation, many Kelowna residents shared their feedback and recommendations on how safety could be increased through infrastructure enhancements. These concerns were addressed by:

- One suggestion cited Vancouver's use of secondary roads designated as priority bikeways where vehicular traffic flow is reduced and vehicle speed limits are posted at 30km. Based on this recommendation, the plan was amended to read that further expansion of the network will be feasible by including low volume, low-speed local roads as supporting cycling corridors and that this will be identified as part of the overall Transportation Master Plan. Further, a section on shared traffic lanes (sharrows) was added and guidelines on when these facilities should be used.
- A section on buffered bicycle lanes enhanced with physical separations such as flexible bollards, curbs or medians was added to the plan after a resident requested more white barrier poles, such as the ones near Gordon and Springfield.
- A cyclist highlighted the hazards associated with cycle tracks, including too many transitions on and off the tracks and over driveways. In this case, the plan was adjusted so that street level cycle tracks are recommended over raised ones to better accommodate all types of cyclists and improve comfort and safety.
- Intersections geared to pedestrians and cyclists were also emphasized in the comments. In particular, one commenter asked for left-turn infrastructure for bikes along the primary network in the form of bike boxes or a bike-only turn signals. The plan addressed this comment by adding that various left-turn specific treatments for cyclists will be formally incorporated and future work will look at intersections.
- One resident asked how accessible the walking paths would be for seniors, wheelchairs, walkers and the visually impaired. The document was revised to include that safety and accessibility needs of the vulnerable road users including seniors, wheelchairs, walkers and visually impaired pedestrians needs to be further addressed during the road design standards update.

Many comments were received in relation to maintenance of the active transportation network, in particular to snow and ice control and street sweeping. These concerns were addressed by making the recommendation in the Plan to update Council Policy 332: Snow and Ice Control, to prioritize active transportation routes for Snow and Ice control as well as a recommendation to work to establish priority cycling routes for street sweeping taking into account operational conditions.

Finally, many comments were received that wished "to speed up the implementation" of the Plan. Several revisions were made to the Plan to address this including "exploring new cost-effective infrastructure designs to ease funding challenges and accelerate the Plan's implementation" as well identifying "low-volume, low-speed local roads" for expansion of the network in the Transportation Master Plan.