



A strategic framework is needed to develop, manage and deliver cycling programming and outreach support services in the Town of Markham.

3.0 OUTREACH

Cycling infrastructure such as bike lanes, signed routes, multi-use trails and bike racks are all important components of a cycling plan, but facilities alone will not produce and support a successful cycling community. A strategic framework is needed to develop, manage and deliver cycling programming and outreach support services in the Town of Markham. The proposed framework described in this chapter suggests the outline for the implementation of new programs and the continuation of existing cycling initiatives in the areas of education, encouragement, promotion and enforcement.

3.1 Education

Education can have a positive influence on the behaviour and attitudes of cyclists, motorists and the general public to produce safer conditions for all, and provide incentives to encourage more cycling. A key objective of the Town of Markham's Cycling Master Plan is to develop and enhance education programs that are targeted to existing and potential cyclists. A successful cycling network is one that is actively and properly used. People of all ages and abilities should be educated and encouraged to use Markham's cycling network for both recreational and commuting purposes. Implementing educational programs will improve cycling skills and raise public awareness of the benefits of cycling.








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3.1.1 Components of an Education Program






Education programs delivered in Markham should address three specific components to cycling education:

1. Develop safe cycling skills in children;
2. Teach adult cyclists their rights and responsibilities; and
3. Teach motorists how to more effectively share the road with cyclists.

Children can be effectively taught safe cycling skills through the school system. School boards with assistance from Town staff, York Region Police and York Region Public Health, should be encouraged to facilitate CAN-BIKE or similar courses that deliver messages such as:

-  *Wear a helmet*, since it reduces the risk of serious head injury by 85%;
-  *Obey all traffic laws*, since cyclists have the same responsibilities and consequences as motorists;
-  *Look both ways before crossing the street*;
-  *Always ride with the flow of traffic*;
-  *Be predictable* by signaling your intentions;
-  *Be visible* by wearing bright or reflective clothing, and always use a front and rear light at night; and
-  Very young children should always ride with experienced supervision.

The second component of educating cyclists is to focus on adults. Adult cyclists have a variety of skill and comfort levels. Some adults are comfortable riding on busy streets and mixing with traffic, while others prefer quieter streets or off-road trails. There are also adults who ride only a few times a year – for recreational, work and commuting purposes. Therefore, educational efforts must be tailored to match the requirements of each group. Markham should take advantage of its existing programs, committees and publications, and integrate CAN-BIKE or similar programs that deliver the following messages:

-  *Obey all traffic laws*, since disobeying traffic regulations gives cyclists a bad reputation, is potentially dangerous, and may result in a ticket under the *Highway Traffic Act*;
-  *Be alert* for other users, motorists and potential road hazards such as potholes and loose gravel;
-  *Always ride where motorists and others expect to see cyclists*;
-  *Be predictable* by signaling your intentions, never weaving in and out of traffic, and staying approximately 1 metre away from the curb;
-  *Be visible* by wearing bright or reflective clothing and always using a front and rear light at night; and

CAN-BIKE

CAN-BIKE is a series of cycling education courses for cyclists of all ages and abilities. Using classroom and on-road sessions, the course teaches cyclists how to make appropriate decisions in traffic and how to handle their bike in emergency situations.



All motorists should be taught good driving practices and information about cycling behaviour to improve safety.

🚲 *Stay off sidewalks* since bicycles ridden by adults in Ontario are legally classified as vehicles and should be operated as such.

The third component of education is to teach and inform motorists, to give them a broad awareness and respect for cyclists. Many motorists are already cyclists and can be encouraged to ride more often. All motorists should be taught good driving practices and information about cycling behaviour to improve safety.

As with education programs for adult cyclists, Markham should take advantage of its existing programs, committees and publications to deliver the following message to motorists:

🚲 *Obey all traffic laws*, since a minor collision between a motor vehicle and a cyclist could result in a serious injury to the cyclist;

🚲 *Be alert* for cyclists, for sudden changes in their behaviour, and at intersections;

🚲 *Be patient*, since cyclists have a right to travel on every road except expressways. Aggressive driving creates an unnecessary atmosphere of hostility;

🚲 *Be predictable* by signaling your turns;

🚲 *Do not sound your horn unless absolutely necessary*, since cyclists can readily see and hear motor vehicles; and

🚲 *Follow and pass at a safe distance* so cyclists can react safely to hazards that motorists may not see.

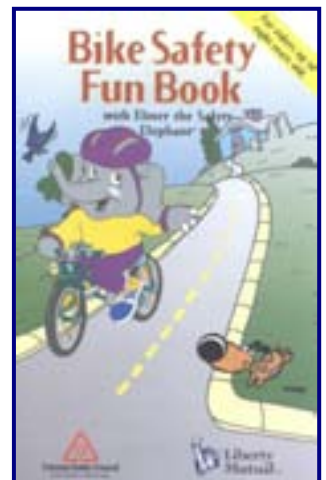
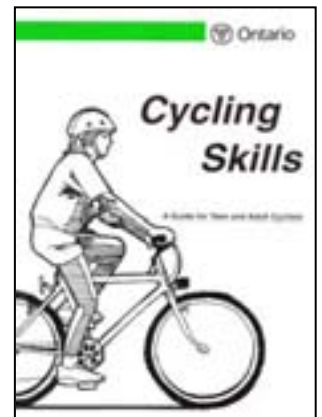
3.1.2 Distributing Bicycle Education Information

Information on cycling education could be provided to residents, employees and visitors to Markham through the following methods:

🚲 The Town’s website (www.markham.ca), providing a wide range of cycling information topics and references to other cycling-related websites;






- 🚲 The implementation of bicycle-education programs through partnerships between the Town and Region of York, agencies, and other groups to educate Markham residents on cycling in general; and
- 🚲 The production of a wide range of cycling pamphlets and brochures to inform and educate citizens on safe operating procedures for both cyclists and non-cyclists alike. Examples of the brochures produced by the Ottawa-based Citizens for Safe Cycling (CfSC) and other municipalities throughout Ontario include:
 - *Better Bicycling* – a newsletter published quarterly by CfCS that features cycling news items, safety and comfort tips;
 - *Cycling 365, The Essential Guide to Becoming a Year-Round Cyclist* – a pamphlet outlining the benefits, techniques and equipment needed for winter cycling;
 - *You're Always Young Enough, The Essential Cycling Guide for Seniors* – a pamphlet giving seniors information on why they should cycle, with tips and facts that clarify cycling myths;
 - *Cycling Skills* – a pamphlet published by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation that provides safety information for teen and adult cyclists;
 - *Bike Safety Fun Book with Elmer the Safety Elephant* – this pamphlet published through the Canadian Safety Council provides safety procedures for riders up to eight years old; and
 - *Trail Etiquette on Multi-use Trails* – a pamphlet produced by the Region of Niagara Bicycling Committee directed to all off-road trail users, including cyclists, walkers and in-line skaters.
 - *Durham Region Trails* – a brochure produced by the Health Department's "Durham Lives!" campaign and Tourism Durham to promote hiking, cycling and cross-country skiing.





The delivery of cycling information should be expanded to a wider range of residents by using a variety of other media in a multi-faceted communications strategy.

This list of educational material could be adapted for the Town of Markham. The use of websites managed by the Town, and hard copy availability at libraries and the Civic Centre support the distribution of this information. However, effectiveness is limited to those who pick up the publications or actually visit the websites. The delivery of cycling information should be expanded to a wider range of residents by using a variety of other media in a communications strategy that has support from a stable level of funding. The following methods should be considered for the distribution of cycling related information:

-  Expanding on the Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee website by adding links and other cycling information.
-  Working with the Markham Board of Trade and local media such as newspapers, cable TV and radio stations to provide information on cycling events and the safety programs available, plus general safety tips.
-  Advertisements on Town-owned vehicles and the distribution of cycling information through pamphlets as well as promotion through mail and television media.

Education Recommendations:

- *Target programs for specific groups, such as children and adults, and ensure information is written in a language and style appropriate for the age group being targeted;*
- *Develop public-private sector relationships to provide services that enhance the safety of cycling facilities and cyclists;*
- *Continue to research and develop education and promotional materials regarding the benefits of cycling, and incorporate or reference this information in publications, reports and events.*
- *Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy for the distribution of cycling information using a wide variety of media; and*



- *Update the Town’s website (Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee website) to include information on cycling, and provide links to websites with additional cycling information.*

3.2 Encouragement & Promotion

In order to encourage new cyclists and to have existing cyclists bike more often, a strong and focused range of programs aimed at encouraging and promoting cycling, as well as a supporting marketing strategy and convenient infrastructure, is required. One of the objectives of this Plan is to change the attitudes and behaviours of residents, employees and visitors within the Town of Markham, resulting in a higher number of people of all ages that cycle, and a greater frequency of cycling trips.

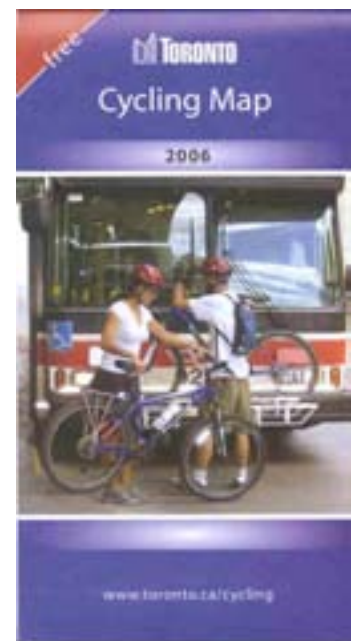
Promotion initiatives should be focused on encouraging residents to cycle more often for recreational, health and utilitarian purposes. Active involvement from the Town’s Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CPAC) has been ongoing, and is recommended for future promotional campaigns for cycling.

3.2.1 Cycling Maps

Cycling Maps, such as Markham’s current Pathways Map, inform cyclists on travel choices and opportunities. These maps should illustrate the facility type along each cycling route, other bicycle-friendly roads (paved and low traffic) and key attractions. Markham should develop a cycling map and update it every one to two years as new cycling facilities are introduced.

The following map and brochure produced and distributed by CPAC as part of the Phase I launch is an excellent example. This map and brochure could be updated and utilized as part of promotional efforts for Phase II of the Cycling Master Plan.

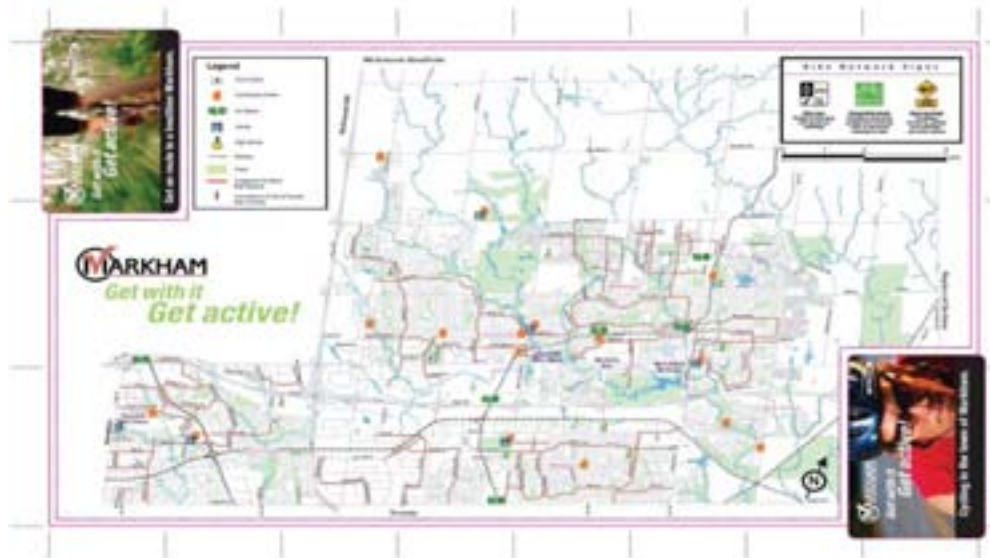
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City of Toronto Cycling Map



The map and brochure produced by CPAC as part of the Phase I launch is an excellent example.



Sides 1 and 2

Markham Bike Map (2007)



3.2.2 Intermodal Connections

The implementation of cycling infrastructure can help increase the number of cyclists in Markham, since a lack of designated cycling facilities deters many potential cyclists from riding. Residents who might consider cycling part of the way to a destination sometimes need to combine their cycling trip with another travel mode for the same trip. This is where intermodal connections become important. Intermodal connections are points where two or more modes of travel connect. Examples include automobile-transit connections (such as “Park ‘n Ride” lots), cycling-transit connections (through the provision of bicycle parking at transit stations and terminals), and pedestrian-cycling connections (through the provision of bicycle parking at places of employment or other destinations).

Cycling-Transit Connections

Cycling-Transit connections complement increased bicycle use, especially for utilitarian trips. Cycling-Transit connections involve cyclists riding their bikes to a transit stop or station. At the connection point, they park their bike and take public transit or they carry their bike onto the transit vehicle, or attach it to a bus-mounted bike rack, travel to their stop, disembark and continue on their bicycle to their final destination. These connections are important since many Markham residents do not live within a suitable cycling distance to their place of work, but may be more inclined to cycle part of the way if they can combine the trip with public transit.

GO Transit currently allows riders to carry their bicycles on all off-peak GO Trains and peak hour trains not operating in the peak direction. At present, bicycles cannot be carried on GO Buses. York Region Transit (YRT) and VIVA do not allow bicycles on their buses during peak periods, and do not currently equip their fleet with bike racks. We understand YRT has developed a pilot bike rack project, and should be implementing it in 2007 or 2008.

Automobile-Cycling Connections

Many recreational cyclists throughout Southern Ontario mount their bicycles onto their automobiles and drive to a destination where they embark on a

Intermodal connections are points throughout a network where various transportation modes connect and are convenient to transfer between modes.

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Expanding the utilitarian cycling base will be a key component to reaching future cycling targets and should complement transit use as well.

A comprehensive approach should be put in place to encourage municipal employees to cycle to work.



recreational bike ride. There is no reason why this practice should only be limited to recreational cyclists. The same concept could be provided for utilitarian cyclists, especially commuters, who work in downtown urban centres where parking may be expensive or not readily available. The provision of “Drive & Bike” lots along the periphery of central business districts or along major cycling routes which provide direct connections to major destinations, could encourage residents to consider this combined travel mode more often.

3.2.3 Leadership

Employers in Markham should be motivated to encourage and support cycling among their employees. Expanding the utilitarian cycling base will be a key component to reaching future cycling targets and should complement transit use as well. The Town can show leadership and set an example for others to follow.

A Pollution Probe Survey in 2001 provided information on the number of employers in the United States and Canada that have included bicycle-support initiatives and programs to encourage more employees to ride their bicycles to work and decrease the use of single-occupant motor vehicles for work related trips.¹ Initiatives included bike racks, showers, lockers, cycling subsidies and transportation allowances. As well as fighting congestion, these programs reduced expenses, increased workplace morale and were considered a valuable employee recruiting and retention tool.

A comprehensive approach should be put in place to encourage municipal employees to cycle to work. Some of these measures include:

-  Continue to offer a pool of bicycles for use by municipal staff on business trips, rather than motor vehicles;
-  Encourage the private sector to partner with the Town to develop a Bikeshare program. This program would be convenient and economical

¹ Pollution Probe, North American Workplace-based Trip Reduction Programs, November 2001.

for anyone who makes frequent trips around Markham. Members of Bikeshare can typically borrow a bike for up to three days. Bikeshare hubs are connected by an online database, which can allow members to use any one of the numerous destinations or pick up points;

- 🚲 Provide a form of compensation to municipal staff who use their own bikes for work purposes, similar to the compensation offered to staff for the use of their motor vehicles;
- 🚲 Create an incentive program and develop contests for employees who cycle to work, perhaps based around car-free commuter days;
- 🚲 Organize a bicycle mentoring program that allows employees who want to cycle to work to find a colleague with whom they can share the ride;
- 🚲 Make CAN-BIKE courses available to all Town staff to maximize their exposure safe cycling skills when commuting to work and using a bicycle for municipal business;
- 🚲 Ensure bicycle access to all Town-owned buildings by conducting an inventory of trip-end facilities available at these buildings, then create a prioritized schedule to install expanded or new facilities; and
- 🚲 Incorporate trip-end facilities within building lease negotiations.

3.2.4 Special Events

Special cycling events are also currently held in numerous cities and regions throughout Ontario, including the Town of Markham. The Commuter Challenge is offered at many places of employment throughout Ontario. This initiative challenges people to leave their cars at home for a week, and to find alternate modes of transportation to and from work, including by bicycle.

Other promotional cycling events include the very popular National Capital Commission's Sunday Bikedays in the City of Ottawa. Montreal and Toronto also host special events, including the Tour de l'Île de Montreal and Ride for Heart, which attract over 40,000 and 12,000 cyclists respectively. The Toronto Ride for Heart is a fundraising event for the Heart and Stroke

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It is important to promote the expansion of cycling to off-season time periods and provide year round activities.

Foundation (\$2.1 million in 2004) and is staged as the grand finale to Toronto’s Bike Week in early June each year. The Town of Markham should consider hosting an annual “cycling event”. Municipal staff, Markham Board of Trade and other partners could work together to develop and host this annual activity.

Cycling is predominately viewed by many as a warm weather activity. It is important to promote the expansion of cycling to off-season time periods and provide year round activities. Early spring, late fall and winter cycling events and promotional items will attract cyclists to these “shoulder” seasons and demonstrate the feasibility and fun that cycling can provide on a year-round basis.

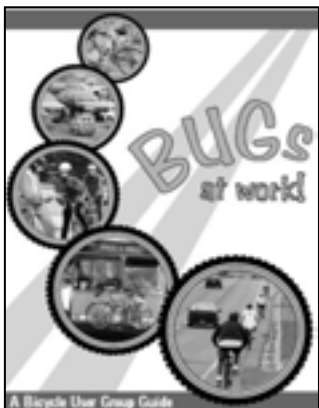
3.2.5 Bicycle User Groups

Bicycle User Groups, or BUGs, are another promotional initiative to support and encourage utilitarian cycling to places of employment. The development of BUGs has proven successful in the cities of Toronto and Ottawa, and is recommended for Markham as well.

A BUG manual was produced by the Citizens for Safe Cycling (CfSC) in the City of Ottawa titled *BUGs at Work, A Bicycle User Group Guide* and was published in 2002. This guide is available on the CfSC website and serves as an excellent resource to facilitate commuting by bike. A similar guidebook is available for the City of Toronto.

Markham should work with the Markham Board of Trade and with employers to encourage the creation of BUGs. These useful workplace groups could be developed and organized to provide a network that would link one BUG to another. These groups could share ideas to increase cycling trips. Opportunities would be available for partnerships to support common problem resolution and to share resources such as those relating to the provision of trip-end facilities.

The proposed Bicycle Users Group Network could eventually be established and linked through a web-based directory for formally registered BUGs, with communications provided through a bulletin board or “chat” network as well as print and personal communications. This program could be phased in over



a number of years after completing research and development of the concept, implementation and finally launching the network.

3.2.6 Funding

The Town of Markham should continue to identify in its annual budget funding to implement cycling infrastructure and programming. It should also continue to investigate partnership opportunities with York Region, other municipalities, provincial agencies, and other groups to fund the promotion of cycling in Markham.

Encouragement and Promotion Recommendations:

- *Produce a Town of Markham Cycling Map, and ensure it is updated regularly;*
- *Encourage residents to combine cycling with other modes of travel as part of the same trip;*
- *Encourage York Region Transit (YRT) to equip their fleet with bike racks;*
- *Consider providing “Drive & Bike” lots along the periphery of central business districts and along major cycling routes to provide direct connections to major destinations;*
- *Require employers to provide trip-end facilities such as secure parking, showers and lockers;*
- *Develop a comprehensive approach to encourage municipal employees to cycle to work;*
- *Encourage local employers to create Bicycle User Groups and a BUGs network to link one group to another; and*
- *Regularly allocate a portion of Markham’s annual budget to support cycling infrastructure and programs.*

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Enforcement should be applied to all road and pathway users, not only cyclists, since motorists and pedestrians should be aware of proper operating procedures in the vicinity of cyclists.

3.3 Enforcement

Enforcement is key to cycling safety, with the principal objective of reducing incidents causing property damage, injury and death. It is important to note that enforcement should be applied to all road and pathway users, not only cyclists, since motorists and pedestrians should be aware of proper operating procedures in the vicinity of cyclists.

Enforcement would require the participation of York Regional Police Services. The Police are already active in educating and enforcing cycling safety in Markham. As with each district within York Region, Markham has a Community Oriented Response or “COR” Unit. These units use officers on bicycles during the cycling season to undertake traffic enforcement, patrol special events, and patrol parks at night alongside municipal by-law officers. There are also Street Beat officers, teaching safety information to secondary school students in the Town. York Regional Police Services also offer safety information on their website (www.police.york.on.ca).

To strengthen the effectiveness of enforcement in Markham, the Town, in association with York Regional Police Services, should consider the following:

-  The creation of cycling patrols and safety blitzes along cycling routes and pathways enforcing safe operating procedures for both cyclists and other road and pathway users;
-  The collection of accurate cycling collision data in an effort to help identify any potential problem areas as well as safety and enforcement priorities; and
-  The development of materials to inform cyclists about the steps they should take if they are involved in a collision.

It is important that police officers receive instruction in the proper training of cyclists and cyclists’ rights, and understand the operating characteristics of bicycles to better identify causal factors when investigating cycling collisions. Once trained, officers can aid in the instruction of safe cycling at special

events. The York Regional Police should continue to be an active member in the development and delivery of cycling safety programs in the Region.

Enforcement Recommendations:

- *Continue to enlist the services of York Regional Police to educate local residents on bicycle safety;*
- *Continue to conduct cycling patrols and safety blitzes.*
- *Encourage York Regional Police to analyze Markham's cycling collision data and develop materials to make collision reporting easier for cyclists.*

3.4 The Role of the Markham Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CPAC)

It is important that cycling representatives be engaged in decision-making and have a strong voice within local government through a committee structure system. This provides a community outreach mechanism to various cycling interests and an opportunity to work together within the system to identify issues and resolve problems. This type of advisory committee has been successfully established in jurisdictions throughout Ontario including the Regions of Halton, Waterloo and Niagara, and the Cities of Burlington, Windsor and Toronto, and more recently in the Town of Markham.

In 2005, the Town of Markham established its own advisory committee in the form of the Cycling and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (CPAC), with a mandate to represent the interests of cyclists and pedestrians. CPAC brings these issues to the attention of the appropriate Town staff and committees. This format allows cyclists and pedestrians to have a voice in decision-making, and provides a means to reach out to Markham residents. CPAC also advises Town staff and Council on the development and delivery of cycling and pedestrian policies and programs in Markham.

CPAC was heavily involved with the launch of Phase I of the Cycling Master Plan in 2007 through its Promotion and Education Subcommittee. This committee coordinated promotion through the Town's website, local

The Committee's importance in the role in providing a voice to cyclists in Markham cannot be too strongly emphasized.



newspapers and television channels, and display boards, posters and pamphlets for use at public meetings and events. Promotional materials for Phase I focussed on the need and justification for the initiative, the actions being taken, the reasons why the Town supports the initiative, how it will be implemented, and other information useful to cyclists in Markham. The key element among these materials was the cycling network map with supplementary information on facility types, signage, etiquette and general guidelines, shown in Section 3.2.1.

CPAC has also been a key partner in the development of Phase II of the Cycling Master Plan.

The Town of Markham should continue to work with and support CPAC in outreach initiatives to support the Cycling Master Plan as well as pedestrian and pathway interests. The Committee's importance in the role of providing a voice to cyclists and pedestrians in Markham cannot be too strongly emphasized. CPAC has made valuable contributions to the development of the Cycling Master Plan in its current form, and will continue to be an important resource as the Plan is implemented and continues to evolve.

CPAC Recommendation:

- *Continue to work with and support CPAC.*

3.5 Moving Forward

As the Town of Markham moves forward with the implementation of the Markham Cycling Master Plan, it should continue to develop and deliver a comprehensive outreach strategy that focuses on educating residents on cycling safety, and promotes cycling within the Town. The recommendations outlined in this Chapter should be considered as integral to the Town's formal outreach plan.

As the Town of Markham moves forward with the implementation of the Markham Cycling Master Plan, it should continue to develop and deliver a comprehensive outreach strategy that focuses on educating residents on cycling safety, and promotes cycling within the Town.