



Staff Report for Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date of Meeting: February 5, 2025

Report Number: SRCM.25.05

Department: Office of the City Manager
Division: Strategy and Transformation

Subject: **SRCM.25.05 - Active Transportation Fund - Grant Application**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval of the City's contribution should our application for funding from the Active Transportation Fund be successful.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That staff report SRCM.25.05 be received;
- b) That the City's submission of an application to the Active Transportation Fund as outlined in SRCM.25.05 be endorsed; and
- c) That should the City's Active Transportation Fund grant application be successful, Council approve:
 - i) An up to \$4,140,800 budget increase to the existing Active Transportation - Bantry Avenue and Briggs Avenue project for the expanded scope of the road reconstruction and boulevard extension on part of Bantry Avenue, as outlined in SRCM.25.05, with approximately \$3,977,640 to be funded from the Active Transportation Fund, and the remaining City portion to be funded from appropriate funding sources as determined by the Treasurer, including Development Charges, Transportation Network R&R, and Water Quality Protection reserve funds.

Contact Person(s):

- Stephanie Graham, Coordinator, Strategy and Government Relations
- Krysten Bates, Coordinator, Strategy and Government Relations
- Luis Dejesus, Manager Capital Infrastructure Programming and Project Management Office
- Ilan Treiger, Financial Management Advisor
- Lise Conde, Manager, Strategy and Government Relations
- Anthony Iannucci, Director, Transformation & Strategic Planning

Page 2

Report Approval:

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

Page 3

Key Messages:

- In December of 2024, the Federal Government announced a second intake for the Active Transportation Fund (ATF) which supports the development and enhancement of active transportation networks to provide Canadians the opportunity to safely and affordably reach destinations.
- The Active Transportation Fund provides up to 60% of eligible project costs for capital projects with a total value of up to \$50 million.
- The City is preparing an application for the Bantry Avenue and Briggs Avenue Cycling Enhancement Project which will formalize cycling infrastructure previously implemented on Bantry Avenue as a traffic calming measure and will seek further opportunities to enhance the safety of people cycling on Bantry Avenue extending to Briggs Avenue.
- Should the City's Active Transportation Fund grant application be successful, an increase of \$4,140,800 to the budget of Active Transportation - Bantry Avenue and Briggs Avenue project is required, with approximately \$3,977,640 or 60% to be funded from the Active Transportation Fund, and the remaining City portion to be funded from appropriate funding sources as determined by the Treasurer, including Development Charges, Transportation Network R&R, Water Quality Protection reserve fund.

Background:

Active Transportation Fund – Intake 2

In December 2024, the Federal Ministry of Housing, Infrastructure and Communities announced that there would be a second intake of the Active Transportation Fund (ATF) Program. The Active Transportation Fund supports the development and enhancement of active transportation networks to provide Canadians with the opportunity to safely and affordably reach destinations by active modes of transportation. Funding will be provided for capital projects that involve new construction or enhancement of existing infrastructure encouraging travel by active methods, including sidewalks, multi-use paths and bike lanes. This intake is being launched as part of the broader Canada Public Transit Fund.

Funding applications must be submitted by the deadline on February 26, 2025. The ATF will fund 60% of eligible project costs for capital projects with a total value of up to \$50 million.

Active Transportation Fund – Intake 1

Richmond Hill was successful with an application for funding during the first intake of this program, receiving \$3.18 million to support the construction of the David Dunlap Observatory Park Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge and Recreation Trail. This project is currently underway with anticipated completion in 2026.

Page 4

Discussion:

Project Scope and Potential Funding

Staff have reviewed potential eligible projects in consultation with multiple City departments. Based on the feedback received, staff have identified the Bantry Avenue and Briggs Avenue Cyclist Enhancement Project as the project that best aligns with the fund's criteria and objectives.

The project will formalize and improve cycling and pedestrian infrastructure previously implemented on Bantry Avenue as a traffic calming measure and will seek further opportunities to enhance the safety of people cycling on Bantry Avenue extending to Briggs Avenue. Construction for the project is planned from 2027 to Q1 2030 and will consist of two phases. Phase 1 of construction will take place from Yonge Street to Red Maple Road and will enhance the separated bike lanes on both sides of the road. This phase is being prioritized to accommodate anticipated plans for the Yonge North Subway Extension. Phase 2 will take place from Red Maple Road to Silver Linden Drive and includes the installation of on-boulevard cycle tracks as well as Briggs Avenue from Bayview Avenue to the Beaver Woodland South Trail. This expanded and renewed cycling infrastructure will provide first and last kilometer connections to existing and planned infrastructure including higher order transit, residential and business areas, supporting growth by providing residents with a greater range of mobility options to get around the City.

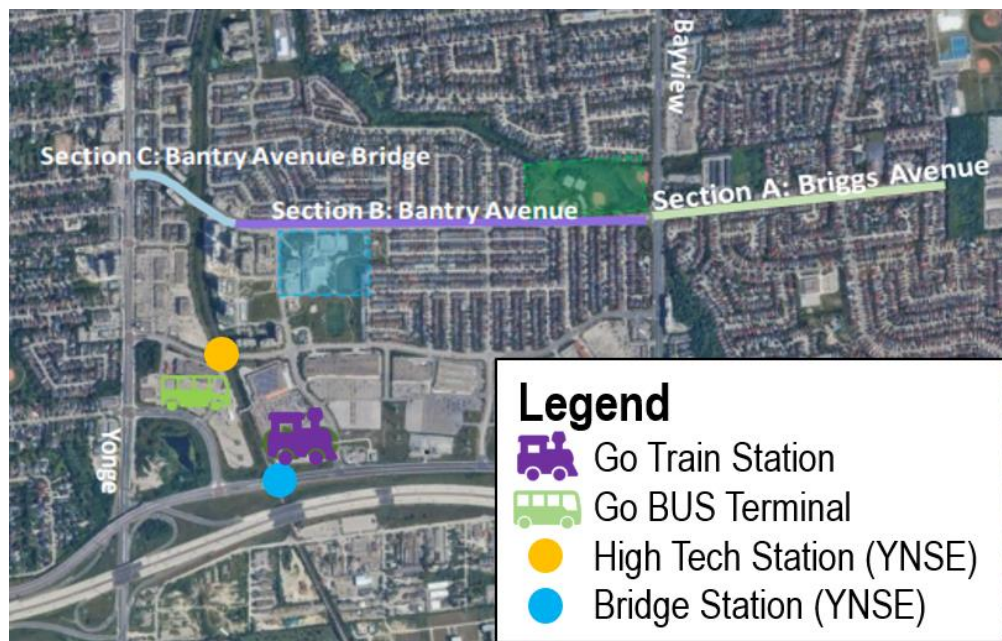


Figure 1: Map of the area of project.

This project aligns strongly with several of the City's key plans and strategies, most notably the City's Transportation Master Plan (TMP) update (2023), which guides planning and prioritizes future improvements to the City's road, walking, and cycling networks. Appendix D of the TMP specifically plans for a comprehensive and well-

Page 5

connected walking and cycling network in Richmond Hill, including the planned buffered bike lanes in the Bantry area to be delivered as part of this project. It also emphasizes the need to improve first and last kilometer connectivity to transit by enhancing the City's walking and cycling infrastructure to ensure safety, comfort, and accessibility for individuals of all ages and abilities.

In addition, this project aligns closely with the City's Official Plan, which includes principles and policies focused on fostering improved connectivity and mobility in the transportation system to improve pedestrian and vehicular movement, such as encouraging multi-modal systems with priority given to sustainable transportation modes and creating a network of pedestrian and cycling facilities that foster active transportation. Additionally, the Richmond Hill Centre (RHC) Secondary Plan identifies development principles that envision the RHC as "a place for people to walk, bike, and take transit" – with aspirations to prioritize active transportation and transit use and for the RHC to have the most fine-grained and connected network of streets and pedestrian and cycling routes in the city.

Finally, both the City's Environment Strategy (ES) Update and Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) include themes and actions aimed at prioritizing improvements to the City's active transportation network as proposed through this project (see ES action 2.4 and CEEP theme and sub-target #1). Alignment between this project and the Strategic Plan is outlined in "Relationship to the Strategic Plan 2024-2027" section below.

Next Steps

While Council endorsement is not an explicit requirement of the application, in submitting an application to the ATF, the City is committing to securing the necessary capital funding to proceed if the project is approved for Federal funding. As such, staff are seeking advanced Council endorsement of the submission of an application to this fund in tandem with the financial commitment outlined in this report. This approach ensures the City is positioned to submit the application as soon as is possible, with a secured commitment to fund the City's portion of the work should the application be approved.

This project has already been identified in the Transportation Master Plan and the Development Charges Background Study, requiring development charges and City funding. This grant will reduce the overall financial impact to the City. Having this work 60% funded by a grant makes it especially advantageous for the City and taxpayers to approve the remaining 40% commitment outside of the normal capital budget process, which is why this is being brought forward to Council for consideration.

If the City is not successful with the grant, this work will proceed through regular approvals to move forward in capital planning. There is already approved funding for design in the 2025 capital budget and construction is identified in the forecast for 2027.

Page 6

Due to the technical nature of the funding program criteria, the specific scope of the project that will be included in the application is in the process of being refined.

Financial Implications:

In support of enabling and accelerating the delivery of active transportation in our City, and to best meet the Active Transportation Fund requirements, additional design and construction work must be completed to accommodate the expanded scope of the road reconstruction and boulevard extension on part of Bantry Avenue. In response to the ATF funding opportunity, staff have prepared an updated project budget.

Council has already approved \$2.49M in the 2025 Capital Budget. Contingent upon a successful ATF grant application, staff recommend that Council approve a further budget of up to \$4,140,800 towards the design and construction of eligible project costs. This approval is requested in advance of the typical annual capital budget process. If successful, the potential ATF funding will be approximately \$3,977,640.

Consistent with the phasing of the construction and the ultimate delivery of the project funding requirements will be provided in phases. As noted above, Phase I of the construction is planned from 2027 to Q1 of 2028. It is anticipated that no further funding is required for the completion of Phase I of the construction from the initial budget of the project.

Phase II of the construction will take place from Q1 of 2028 to Q1 of 2030 and would require additional funding of \$4,140,800 as noted in the table below. The budget requested in advance of the 2026 Budget process is higher due to the expanded scope of work as well as updated cost estimates. The overall increase of the estimated project costs is in large due to the 715 meters of road reconstruction required for the boulevard extension on Bantry Avenue from Red Maple to Silver Linden, which was not considered in the initial scope of the project.

The table below sets out the total estimated project budget, identifying the potential ATF funding amount and the residual City funding contribution required that will be submitted in the ATF grant fund application.

Additional Budget Requested in Advance of the Budget Process

Cost Category	2025 Approved Budget	Additional Budget Requested	Total Project Budget	Potential ATF Funding Amount	City Funding Contribution
Design	\$324,600	\$458,400	\$783,000	\$469,800	\$313,200
Construction	\$2,164,000	\$3,682,400	\$5,846,400	\$3,507,840	\$2,338,560
Total	\$2,488,600	\$4,140,800	\$6,629,400	\$3,977,640	\$2,651,760

In order to submit an application for funding to the ATF grant program, Richmond Hill must commit the City portion of the project costs. Staff are requesting that Council approve the following capital funding sources contingent on a successful Active Transportation Fund grant application:

- Design budget of \$783,000 represents \$458,400 increase to the existing capital budget (2025) to complete design works, with approximately \$469,800 of this amount to be funded from the Active Transportation Fund, and the remaining City portion to be funded from appropriate funding sources as determined by the Treasurer, including Development Charges reserve funds, Transportation Network R&R reserve fund, Water Quality Protection reserve fund.
- Construction budget of \$5,846,400 represents \$3,682,400 increase to the existing capital budget (2025) to complete Phases I and II, with approximately \$3,507,840 of this amount to be funded from Active Transportation Fund, and the remaining City portion to be funded from appropriate funding sources as determined by the Treasurer, including Development Charges reserve funds, Transportation Network R&R reserve fund, Water Quality Protection reserve fund.

Importantly, this approval is contingent on Richmond Hill being awarded ATF grant funding. In the event that the grant application is unsuccessful, no funds will be advanced and capital budget allocations for this project will be requested through the normal capital budget process.

Relationship to Strategic Plan 2024-2027:

This project aligns with multiple actions within Pillar 1 (Building a Livable, Sustainable Community), Priority 1: Manage growth in a way that enables choice and connection for the city, its residents and businesses now and in the future. The active transportation infrastructure improvements proposed through this project will help improve mobility and

Page 8

accessibility, enhance user safety, promote active and sustainable travel, address traffic congestion, and improve community connectivity.

Pursuing grant funding such as the ATF also supports financial sustainability in line with Pillar 3 (Strengthening Our Foundations), Priority 1: Make decisions that are evidence based and data driven to enable the City's long term financial sustainability, as well as social, environmental and economic sustainability.

Page 9

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCM.25.05 - Active Transportation Fund Grant Application.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jan 29, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Lise Conde - Jan 29, 2025 - 8:43 AM

Gigi Li - Jan 29, 2025 - 10:35 AM

Anthony Iannucci - Jan 29, 2025 - 11:22 AM

Darlene Joslin - Jan 29, 2025 - 11:37 AM