

NO: R118

COUNCIL DATE: June 14, 2021

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **June 9, 2021**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering**

FILE: **8630-40**

SUBJECT: **Surrey Transportation Plan “Big Vision, Bold Moves” Public Engagement**

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information;
2. Approve the Surrey Transportation Plan’s strategic goals of “Big Vision, Bold Moves”, as described in this report; and
3. Authorize staff to proceed with Phase 3 engagement.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to provide Council with an update on the Surrey Transportation Plan (“STP”), seek approval on the STP’s draft “Big Vision, Bold Moves”, and to authorize staff to proceed with Phase 3 engagement (feedback on STP Vision and Bold Moves), as generally outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, staff began the process of updating the STP. The need for a new and updated plan was in part a response to the many changes over the past 12 years: a renewed emphasis on road safety; new innovations in technology; the evolution of Surrey’s densities and urban form as a prominent new urban centre; and changes to the transportation network, demographics, and population growth.

Five foundational pillars were approved by Council to guide the STP and respond to Surrey’s unique context:

1. Grow the Transportation Network;
2. Prioritize Vision Zero Surrey;
3. Tackle the Climate Crisis;
4. Innovate through Technology and New Mobility; and
5. Balance Equity.

Four engagement phases were approved by Council to guide the STP and ensure it reflects the community's values. The timeline of these phases is outlined below:

- Phase 1 Sharing Information: August – October 2020
- Phase 2 Understanding Community Values: October – November 2020
- Phase 3 Feedback on STP Vision and Bold Moves: June – July 2021
- Phase 4 Refinement and Confirmation: November – December 2021

Phase 2 of the Engagement Process “Understanding Community Values” was completed in November 2020. Over 4,000 community members participated in Phase 2 engagement and four main themes consistently emerged from their feedback:

1. Safety motivates transportation choices;
2. Land use shapes transportation outcomes;
3. Local connected active transportation networks are needed; and
4. There is a strong desire to walk, cycle and take transit more.

DISCUSSION

Big Vision, Bold Moves.

The findings and themes from the Phase 2 “Understanding Community Values” engagement has directly informed the development of a draft vision statement and strategic goals. In recognition of the scale of change that has already occurred in Surrey and the Transportation industry, as well as the change that needs to occur to support the five pillars, the Vision Statement and strategic goals are called “Big Vision, Bold Moves” and outlined below.

Big Vision

The vision statement represents where the City wants to be with the future of transportation in Surrey. It is based on the five pillars and feedback from Phase 2 Engagement on understanding community values.

Connecting a million people and places with safe, convenient, and green transportation choices for all.

This future vision directly supports the City's overall vision for “A Thriving, Green, Inclusive City”, as established by the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0.

Bold Moves

The Bold Moves are the strategic goals of the plan. They link the Five Pillars (as core values) and the Big Vision with the ultimate 10-Year Action Plans that will be developed later in Phase 4. The Bold Moves were guided by the community values staff heard from Phase 2 Engagement, and respond to Surrey's unique context:

1. *Safety First:* Value Human life above all else in the transportation network by building streets that prioritize safety over the movement of vehicles.

Staff heard that safety is the number one barrier to people walking, cycling, and taking transit more. This Bold Move strengthens the work already being done through Vision Zero Surrey and will leverage the Safe Mobility Plan to create safer streets for everyone to move.

2. *Support 15 Minute Neighbourhoods:* Complete the walk and bike networks for all Surrey residents who live or will live within an easy walk or roll to access daily needs such as grocery stores, daycare, schools, parks, and transit, as a result neighbourhood in Surrey are connected within.

Staff heard that most people want to walk more but destinations are not close at hand. This Bold Move supports the concept of a 15 Minute Neighbourhoods where daily needs, such as grocery stores, daycare, schools, parks, and transit access, are an easy 15-minute walk or bike away. By reducing the number of trips by private automobiles, this Bold Move will support the City's Climate Crisis Action Plan and create more livable and accessible neighbourhoods.

3. *Connect communities with Rapid Transit:* Build a Rapid Transit Network that supports and connects all of Surrey's Town Centres. As a result, almost everyone in Surrey is within a 15-minute transit ride to critical amenities (e.g., recreation centres, post-secondary, etc.) and within a 30-minute transit ride to anywhere in Surrey.

Staff heard that there is a desire to take transit more but the existing rapid transit system does not allow for easy travel within Surrey. This Bold Move proposes to connect all of Surrey's Town Centres with rapid transit through various transit technologies.

4. *Invest in Green Transportation Choices:* Increase and prioritize investment in walking, cycling and transit before personal vehicles.

Staff heard that many people do not have safe and complete active transportation networks in their local neighbourhoods. This Bold Move prioritizes investing on improving and completing sidewalks, bike paths, and transit lanes. It is a strategic goal that supports existing Town Centres, growth in new Neighbourhood Concept Plan areas, and the 15-minute neighbourhood concept.

These four Bold Moves directly address the five pillars and deliver a new transportation plan that improves safety, tackles the climate crisis, and better connects people and places and with the Big Vision will define the future of transportation in Surrey.

Phase 3 Engagement – Big Vision, Bold Moves

Subject to Council approval, Phase 3 will launch on June 15, 2021, and staff will be engaging the community and stakeholders to receive feedback and build consensus on the draft Vision and the four Bold Moves in alignment with the City's forthcoming Public Engagement Strategy and Toolkit. Engagement is anticipated to conclude July 30, 2021.

Engagement techniques during this phase have been revised to accommodate current Provincial COVID-19 restrictions on in-person engagement activities. Conventional engagement will move primarily online, leading with a survey that will launch on June 15, 2021. The online survey will focus on the level of support for the “Big Vision, Bold Moves” and be supported by a series of informational videos that address and explain the Big Vision and each Bold Move so that participants can have sufficient knowledge to provide meaningful feedback.

Additional engagement involves key stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and online meetings and also includes techniques to gather input and feedback, particularly reaching the seldom heard groups. This will include methods used in Phase 2, such as the Community Ambassador Program, targeted stakeholder interviews, and key stakeholder focus groups, as well as piloting promotion to youth through online advertisement. Depending on meeting the Province’s Restart Plan Step 3 Organized Gatherings, some select community stakeholder meetings may be done in-person.

Next Steps

The results of Phase 3 engagement will be reported back to Council in Fall 2021. These results will then be used to support development of 10-year actions plans, targets, a decision-making framework, and final draft plan. This next round of work in Phase 4 is expected to be completed by the end of 2021, with the final round of engagement to begin in early 2022 to confirm the draft STP.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Development of a new plan supports the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0. The STP will relate to the Sustainability Charter 2.0 themes of Built Environment and Neighbourhoods, Economic Prosperity and Livelihoods, Infrastructure, and Inclusion. Specifically, the update supports the following Desired Outcomes ("DO"):

- Neighbourhoods and Urban Design DO2: Surrey is well-connected within the city and to the rest of the region by fast and efficient public transit and active transportation infrastructure for all ages and abilities;
- Economy DO6: Efficient land use and well-managed transportation infrastructure are in place to attract businesses and support a thriving economy;
- Transportation DO11: An integrated and multi-modal transportation network offers affordable, convenient, accessible, and safe transportation choices within the community and to regional destinations;
- Transportation DO12: Surrey residents of all ages and abilities have access to active transportation options, enabling them to participate fully in society without the use of a private automobile; and
- Community Pride and Engagement DO21: All residents have opportunities to be meaningfully engaged in civic issues and to contribute to community life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the feedback heard in the STP Phase 2 “Understanding Community Values” and the five foundational pillars of the STP, staff have developed a “Big Vision, Bold Moves”. The next phase of engagement will seek feedback and consensus on the “Big Vision, Bold Moves”, as outlined in this report. Staff will bring forward a Corporate Report for Council in Fall 2021 to report on what was heard in Phase 3 of engagement.

This significant phase of engagement will inform the development of 10-Year Action Plans, targets, and ultimately deliver of the draft plan in Phase 4.

Scott Neuman, P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering

RV/BH/cc

Appendix “I” - Corporate Report No. R056; 2021

[https://surreybc.sharepoint.com/sites/ENG.Administration/WP_Docs/2021/Admin/CR/Surrey Transportation Plan, “Big Vision. Bold Moves” Public Engagement/VL2 Surrey Transportation Plan Big Vision. Bold Moves Public Engagement.docx](https://surreybc.sharepoint.com/sites/ENG.Administration/WP_Docs/2021/Admin/CR/Surrey%20Transportation%20Plan,%20%22Big%20Vision,%20Bold%20Moves%22%20Public%20Engagement/VL2%20Surrey%20Transportation%20Plan%20Big%20Vision,%20Bold%20Moves%20Public%20Engagement.docx)

CORPORATE REPORT

NO: **R056**

COUNCIL DATE: **MARCH 8, 2021**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **March 4, 2021**

FROM: **General Manager, Engineering**

FILE: **8630-40**

SUBJECT: **Surrey Transportation Plan: Phase 2 Understanding Community Values**

RECOMMENDATION

The Engineering Department recommends that Council receive this report for information.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to provide an overview of the findings of the Surrey Transportation Plan ("STP") Phase 2 "Understanding Community Values" Engagement process, which took place from October 13 to November 27, 2020.

BACKGROUND

In 2019, staff commenced with the development of an update to the 2008 Transportation Strategic Plan. The need for a new and updated plan was in part a response to many changes over the past 12 years: a renewed emphasis of the value of human life; new technology; the evolution of Surrey's densities and urban form as a prominent new urban centre; and changes to the transportation network, demographics, and population growth.

Five foundational pillars were approved by Council to guide the STP and respond to Surrey's unique context:

1. Grow the Transportation Network: Surrey will become a vibrant urban centre of 1 million people.
2. Prioritize Vision Zero Surrey: Human life is valued above all else in the City's transportation network.
3. Tackle the Climate Crisis: Tackling the climate crisis requires decisive action on how we get around.
4. Innovate through Technology and New Mobility: Connected, autonomous, shared, and electric mobility options are available.
5. Balance Equity: All members of the community should benefit from and have equitable access to the transportation network.

Four engagement phases were approved by Council to guide the STP and ensure it reflects the community's values. Updated dates for those phases, taking into account COVID-19 protocols, are outlined below:

- Phase 1 Sharing Information: August – October 2020
- Phase 2 Understanding Community Values: October – November 2020
- Phase 3 Feedback on Key Approaches: May – June 2021
- Phase 4 Refinement and Confirmation: September – October 2021

Phase 1 of the Engagement Process “Sharing Information” began in August 2020 with the launch of the STP webpage at <https://www.surrey.ca/transportationplan>, supported by a video, infographic, social media ads and digital kiosk ads at transit stations. Phase 2 “Understanding Community Values” ran from October 13 to November 27, 2020, as outlined in this report.

DISCUSSION

The objective of the Phase 2 “Understanding Community Values” process was to involve residents, businesses, and stakeholders in:

1. Identifying transportation realities including what is working well today and what could be improved at a community level: and
2. Mapping community values and key interests to inform the development of the new STP.

Promoting Participation – Communication Approach and Results

The overall goal and objectives for communication is to promote participation and engagement and ensure residents, businesses and stakeholders are aware of the process and opportunities to participate and understand how their feedback will be used. In addition, the approach utilizes the support of stakeholders and partners to promote the engagement process and expand the reach of awareness.

Prominent placing on the City website resulted in over 8,300 page views. A social media campaign provided a reach to over 700,000 users that resulted in over 20,000 STP engagements via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and over 4,000 click through links to content. 32,000 STP content views were achieved through City distributed newsletters.

Typical paid advertising methods were used which included radio and newspaper ads in the local English and ethnic media, Pattison digital ads, transit shelter, bus, and SkyTrain station ads. Additionally, a stakeholder panel of over 230 community organizations assisted the City in reaching Surrey citizens and business and community groups from various backgrounds and neighbourhoods, including those seldom heard or hardly reached. To provide further outreach to the seldom heard outreach was done with the Surrey Food Bank and Surrey Online Youth Council.

What Did We Hear? - Engagement Results

Survey Findings

A summary of the survey responses is available in the attached Appendix "I".

Top 4 Themes

The four themes below emerged consistently across all community engagement approaches including the survey and from what staff heard directly from the community during in-person events:

1. **Safety motivates transportation choices:** Safety is a key priority for all members of the public when making decisions regarding modal choice. The survey shows that safety is the largest barrier to people walking, cycling and taking transit. Over 90% of respondents rated safety as important or very important.
2. **There is a strong desire to walk, cycle and take transit more:** Feedback from the in-person engagement mirrored the survey findings which showed that 95% of respondents want to walk more, 70% want to cycle more, and 89% want to take transit more than they do today.
3. **Local connected transportation networks are needed:** An overarching priority is to first focus on completing safe, connected networks that work for everyday transportation within and between Surrey neighbourhoods. Convenience is an important influence in choice – safe, direct connections for alternatives need to improve relative to driving.
4. **Land use shapes transportation outcomes:** There is a high degree of consensus that linking land use and transportation planning is critical to getting the STP right. Having jobs, services, and amenities closer to where people live (within a short walk or cycle) will serve multiple objectives. For example, it will reduce both congestion and Green House Gases, as well as improve health.

The full findings including all ten themes can be found online in the Surrey Transportation Plan Phase 2: Engagement Summary (https://www.surrey.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/SurreyTransportationPlan_EngagementSummary2020.pdf).

General Themes

Generally, frequency of travel mode results were consistent with Census and TransLink Trip Diary results. Convenience, speed, and cost were among the most frequent reasons for choosing a transportation mode. Respondents rated the current safety, connectivity, and maintenance as being slightly above average for most modes of transportation with connectivity of transit, and connectivity and maintenance of bike routes and walking receiving below average scores. Local road maintenance shared the lowest score with bike routes (collector roads), while streetlights had the highest maintenance score.

Over half of respondents rated Safe, Predictable, Direct, and Convenient transportation as very important to them; however, there was a significant gap between the importance rating and the satisfaction of how Surrey is addressing what is important indicating that there is considerable work to be done. Over 80% of respondents agree with the statement of wanting Surrey to have a reputation as an innovative leader investing in a safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation system.

Getting Feedback – Engagement Outreach

Over 4,000 community members participated in engagement and were involved in providing direct feedback through the five key methods outlined in the table below.

Method	Approximate Participation
Key Stakeholder Interviews	8
Focus Groups (Eight)	350
Virtual Open Houses (Two)	45
Online Public Survey	3,567
In-person Community Ambassador Survey	400

Focus Groups

Eight virtual focus groups were held with two lead by the engagement consultant and the remaining by City Staff. Focus groups included the following stakeholders.

- Community Associations;
- Surrey Board of Trade and Business Improvement Associations;
- Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee;
- Measuring Up Committee;
- Seniors;
- Youth;
- Academic and Institutional; and
- Seldom Heard.

Virtual Open House

Two virtual open house sessions were hosted (November 12 and November 17, 2020) to provide an opportunity for staff to answer questions and receive feedback directly through breakout (small group) sessions. Over 360 views were made to the event page, with 102 registrants. While only 45 attended, the format and feedback were well received by attendees.

Online Public Survey

The survey focused on the lived experience of participants travelling in Surrey to identify stakeholder values and what barriers and opportunities the new STP needs to address. The online survey was launched on October 13, 2020 and closed on November 27, 2020. Participants provided input on:

1. What mode they most use today and why;
2. The safety, connectivity and maintenance of the transportation network modes;
3. Their satisfaction and importance with various components of the transportation system; and
4. Barriers to walking, cycling and taking transit.

The campaign drew 3,567 completions of the survey.

Community Ambassador Survey

The STP engagement process partnered with the Planning & Development Department to undertake a joint a Housing and Transportation Needs survey. An innovative approach was used to reach out to seldom heard communities using Community Ambassadors. Working with a local social service agency, members of specific communities (renters, recent immigrants, lower income, etc.) were hired to promote this joint housing-transportation survey. The survey was also translated into Punjabi and Arabic and 400 additional surveys were completed.

Who Did We Hear From?

Detailed demographic information was provided from the on-line survey. Out of the 3,567 total respondents, 94% live in Surrey, 33% work in Surrey, and 240 respondents were business owners. All Surrey communities and all age groups were well represented, with some challenge in reaching those 19 and under. Improving outreach to this age group will be a particular focus in future phases. A complete summary of the demographics including a map of respondents' household locations is contained in the survey results report on the City's website (https://www.surrey.ca/sites/default/files/media/documents/SurreyTransportationPlan_SurveyResults2020.pdf).

For walking, cycling, and public transit, participants were asked if they want to increase their travel by this mode and what the barriers were to making these changes. Very few respondents indicated that they do not want to walk (5%), cycle (30%), or take transit (11%) more than they do today. This is very positive and indicates that if barriers can be addressed, a significant number of people are likely to walk, and cycle beyond recreational purposes and use transit more often. These results compare favourably with other North America studies on attitudes toward sustainable transportation modes. The Community Ambassador Survey results were similar to the general population with additional economic barriers including not owning a bicycle and affordability of transit fares.

Next Steps – Embedding Community Values into the STP

The findings and themes from the Phase 2 “Understanding Community Values” engagement will inform and be the foundation of the draft key principles and long-range vision of the STP developed in Phase 3 over the next two months. The next report to Council will launch Phase 3 public engagement “Feedback on Draft Elements” in late Spring of 2021.

The final phase of work will involve incorporating all the feedback into a draft plan for a final round of public engagement in early Fall 2021. It is expected that a new Surrey Transportation Plan will be brought forward for approval by Council by the end of 2021.



SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The engagement goals and phases for the STP support the objectives of the City’s Sustainability Charter 2.0. In particular, the engagement goals and phases relate to the Sustainability Charter 2.0 theme of Inclusion. Specifically, the STP update supports the following Desired Outcomes (“DO”):

- Age-Friendly Community DO18: Children and youth have opportunities for engagement, leadership and having a voice in their community; and
- Community Pride and Engagement DO21: All residents have opportunities to be meaningfully engaged in civic issues and to contribute to community life.

CONCLUSION

The STP engagement process has just completed Phase 2, “Understanding Community Values”. While COVID-19 limited the type of engagements, a successful communication campaign and variety of engagement options including on-line survey, focus groups and virtual open houses resulted in over 4,000 residents, businesses, and stakeholders providing feedback. Participants heard from a diversity of the community on how transportation impacts their lived experience in Surrey and what values should shape the future.

This important feedback will shape the long-range vision and key principles that will “Connect People + Places” through 2050 and beyond. Staff will bring forward a Corporate Report in late Spring 2021 to launch Phase 3 public engagement “Feedback on Key Approaches” on the long-range vision required to support the five pillars.



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Appendix “I” – Surrey Transportation Plan Phase 2 Summary of Survey Results

https://surreybc.sharepoint.com/sites/eng.administration/wp_docs/2021/admin/cr/vl2_surrey_transportation_plan_phase_2_engagement_findings.docx
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Note: Appendix available upon request