

# Report to Regional Board

**Date:** July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**To:** Brian Reardon, CAO

**From:** R. Villarreal, STPCO Administrator

**Subject:** Draft Regional Transportation Plan, Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan and Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT the Board receives, for information, the report from STPCO dated July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 with respect to the Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and its sub-components: The Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan (RBTMP) and the Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy (RDMS).

## **Purpose:**

To provide the Board with an update on STPCO activities and provide an overview of the Draft Regional Transportation Plan and its sub-components: The Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan and Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy.

## **Background:**

The Sustainable Transportation Partnership of the Central Okanagan (STPCO) is a formal partnership of Westbank First Nation, the City of Kelowna, the City of West Kelowna, the District of Lake Country, the District of Peachland, and the Regional District of Central Okanagan. The STPCO coordinates the regional delivery of sustainable transportation programs and projects in support of common regional policy, plans and interests (economic, social and environmental), including the delivery of the Regional Transportation Plan. The STPCO also provides a formal forum for discussion amongst elected officials, senior and technical staff, as well as stakeholders and the general public.

The STPCO Work Plan is divided into the three areas of Strategic Partnerships with Senior Government, Transit Program and Delivery, and Regional Transportation Planning. This report provides an update on activities in the Regional Transportation Planning work area, including presentation of the Draft Regional Transportation Plan and its sub-components: The Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan and the Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy.

Local and Global Context: Several global trends are shaping urban and regional transportation, as a result the RTP and its sub-components have been developed to be resilient and adaptable to these changing trends on the horizon. Examples include the COVID-19 pandemic, the global climate crisis, and rapid transportation technology change:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic has evolved rapidly and changed the way people travel, with rapid increases in teleworking and decreases in transit ridership experienced in the short-term. While the situation is uncertain and changing daily, it is important not to lose sight of the mid and long term. The RTP is a long-range plan designed to establish the vision for regional transportation over the next 20 years and beyond. While the impacts and economic recovery from COVID-19 may delay growth in the next few years, the long-term transportation vision established by the RTP is still anticipated to be relevant in 2040. In addition, it is hoped that the RTP can provide a roadmap for investment in the Central Okanagan that will be an important part of economic recovery over the next few years.
- **Climate Change:** Transportation is typically responsible for the largest share of metropolitan greenhouse gas emissions, and this is also true in Kelowna where 55% of climate warming gases come from the transportation sector alone. The RTP recognizes the urgency of the global climate crisis and provides recommendations that will help to better connect our region, while reducing automobile dependence and improving the quality, convenience and reliability of more sustainable and affordable transportation modes, such as bicycling, walking, transit and small electric vehicles. This will be critical to help protect the Central Okanagan's environment and high quality of life for future generations to come.
- **Technology and our Changing Future:** For the first time in nearly a century, transformative innovations are coming to the transportation sector. New technologies that are making transportation more connected, automated, shared and electric are reshaping how people get around and making owning a car less of a requirement. The RTP has been developed with these rapid changes in mind, and includes recommendations designed to take advantage of new mobility options, such as ride-hailing, bike share and car share that can help provide new mobility options to residents and extend the reach of transit. The Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy component of the RTP provides a toolkit of policy options for Central Okanagan governments to help embrace the benefits of transportation technology change, while incorporating lessons learned from other communities around the world to help mitigate impacts.

#### **Discussion:**

Development of the Central Okanagan's first Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was initiated in early 2018. The need for the plan arose out of recognition that transportation directly impacts many of the areas important to Central Okanagan communities, including economic competitiveness, air quality, climate change, goods movement, social equity, emergency response, public health and quality of life. With the regional population expected to grow by nearly 40% in the next 20 years, the STPCO partners decided to work collaboratively to ensure that the transportation choices we make as a region today help strengthen our region's future economic competitiveness and quality of life.

After more than two years of technical studies (including the Okanagan Gateway Transportation Study), consultation, and unprecedented region-wide partnership and collaboration, the Draft Regional Transportation Plan and its sub-components, the Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan and Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy, are ready for presentation to the STPCO Councils and RDCO Board. The draft plans can be viewed on the Smart Trips website at the following links:

- **Draft Regional Transportation Plan:**  
[https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional\\_Transportation\\_Plan\\_DRAFT.pdf](https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional_Transportation_Plan_DRAFT.pdf)

- **Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan:**  
[https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional\\_Bicycling\\_Trails\\_Master\\_Plan\\_DRAFT.pdf](https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional_Bicycling_Trails_Master_Plan_DRAFT.pdf)
- **Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy:**  
[https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional\\_Disruptive\\_Mobility\\_Strategy\\_DRAFT.pdf](https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional_Disruptive_Mobility_Strategy_DRAFT.pdf)

**Draft Regional Transportation Plan:** The Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) identifies transportation projects and priorities that will help build and maintain a healthy, thriving and connected future for the Central Okanagan region. This long-range, high-level plan establishes a framework of priorities over the next 20 years to help communities plan and seek funding collaboratively, as a unified region.

The RTP sets the direction for Central Okanagan governments to work together to prepare for future population growth, help people of all ages and abilities get around, reduce the growth of traffic congestion and greenhouse gases, and help the region's economic recovery post COVID-19. The plan contains interconnected recommendations for projects, programs and policies that will help connect people and places across the region. The recommendations are designed to work together to help improve the movement of people and goods, achieve fast and reliable transit, and help create a region where more people can choose sustainable and affordable transportation options.

The RTP reflects the interests and values the project team heard from people across the region. The plan development included multiple workshops with the STPCO Planning and Technical Committee, the Local Government Advisory Board, and presentations to the STPCO Councils and RDCO Board at key milestones throughout the planning process (representing over 30 presentations to date). Additionally, the plan reflects multiple public consultation touchpoints with residents and stakeholders across the Central Okanagan, from Peachland to Lake Country, since spring 2018.

Moving forward, the plan will help Central Okanagan governments collaborate to seek funding for transportation investments that benefit the entire region. Recommendations that involve the highway and that require further study will be analyzed further as part of the next phase of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Central Okanagan Planning Study.

**Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan:** The Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan (RBTMP) updates the 2012 Regional Active Transportation Master Plan. In the years since the 2012 Plan was created, many connections have been completed, additional active transportation plans have been developed and provincial and federal design guidance updated. The RBTMP reflects those changes, and along with the RTP, will help focus investments in regional bicycling and trail networks. The regional bicycling and trails network presented in the RBTMP provides safe and convenient travel options, connecting regionally significant destinations across the Central Okanagan. When complete, the proposed network will provide 134 km of fully separated facilities (e.g., such as multi-use pathways, bike paths, and protected bicycle lanes) and 62 km of shared facilities that are appropriate for those more comfortable riding beside motor vehicle traffic. A total of 81 km of new bicycling and trail infrastructure is recommended, along with 25 km of facilities that should be upgraded.

Implementation of the plan will be delivered in coordination with the RTP, and will require ongoing regional coordination and collaboration. Additionally, leadership at the local and regional level will be necessary to champion projects within each jurisdiction.

**Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy (RDMS):** “Disruptive mobility” refers to changes in transportation technologies that will fundamentally change how people get around in the future. These changes are making transportation more connected, automated, shared, and electric. These changes have the potential to benefit the region, though negative impacts that work against current policy directions are possible as well. By proactively preparing for the changes coming our way, Central Okanagan governments can work together and help influence the Province to harness the benefits of new transportation technologies, while protecting our regional economic competitiveness and quality of life.

The Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy (RDMS) has been designed as a toolkit for Central Okanagan governments to help prepare for technology change in transportation. It is a resource guide that will help each jurisdiction identify the strategies and tactics best suited for their community. It is recommended that each jurisdiction collaborate with community, nonprofit, and business leaders, to carefully consider a range of practical and efficient solutions to the challenges and opportunities presented by rapidly changing mobility technologies.

**Okanagan Gateway Transportation Study:** The Okanagan Gateway Transportation Study (OGTS) is a partnership of the Kelowna International Airport (YLW), City of Kelowna, the University of British Columbia - Okanagan (UBCO) and the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (BC MoTI). It is a 20 year plan that defines future projects, programs and policies to strengthen the economy, quality of life and further the OGTS partners’ commitment to climate action in the region by improving connections to the Kelowna International Airport and the University of British Columbia Okanagan. While recommendations from the OGTS have been coordinated with and incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan, the final OGTS report is still being finalized and is anticipated for release later in summer 2020.

#### **Conclusion:**

The three draft regional plans are being presented to each of the STPCO partner Councils and the RDCO Board through June and July. Following the presentations, public engagement activities (anticipated in July/August) will provide members of the public and stakeholders with the chance to review the draft plans and provide feedback. Public engagement activities are being designed to focus on digital and on-line platforms to follow the advice of the Provincial Health Officer in regards to COVID-19. Once the public engagement period closes, the plans will be updated and refined. Final versions of the plans will be presented to each of the STPCO Councils and the RDCO Board for endorsement, anticipated in fall 2020.

#### Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Draft Regional Transportation Plan:  
[https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional Transportation Plan DRAFT.pdf](https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional%20Transportation%20Plan%20DRAFT.pdf)
- Attachment 2: Draft Regional Bicycling and Trails Master Plan:  
[https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional Bicycling Trails Master Plan DRAFT.pdf](https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional%20Bicycling%20Trails%20Master%20Plan%20DRAFT.pdf)
- Attachment 3: Draft Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy:  
[https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional Disruptive Mobility Strategy DRAFT.pdf](https://www.smarttrips.ca/sites/files/6/docs/related/Regional%20Disruptive%20Mobility%20Strategy%20DRAFT.pdf)
- Attachment 4: Draft Regional Transportation Plan Presentation