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The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Committee of the Whole
From: Commissioner of Works, Commissioner of Finance and Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development
Report: #2026-COW-11
Date: March 11, 2026

Subject:

Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines

Recommendation:

That the Committee of the Whole recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That the Bicycle Parking Guidelines, provided as Attachment 1 to this report, be endorsed; and
 - B) That the Bicycle Parking Guidelines actions be considered along with all other priorities through future annual Regional Business Plans and Budget processes.
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Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that Committee endorse the Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines (Attachment 1), which has been prepared through review and engagement with area municipalities and other stakeholders. The Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines (“the Guidelines”) was initiated in June 2025 to:
 - a. Improve the quality, accessibility, and availability of short- and long-term bicycle parking across Durham Region.
 - b. Support the 2021 Regional Cycling Plan (RCP) by enhancing end-of-trip comfort, encouraging cycling for all ages and abilities, and promoting use of the Primary Cycling Network (PCN).
 - c. Offer clear guidance on the design, location, and management of bicycle parking, particularly at key public destinations such as community centres,

libraries, parks, transit hubs and stops, downtowns, and schools including post-secondary institutions.

- d. Serve as a resource for Regional and area municipal staff, the development industry, and community partners to ensure a consistent, connected and bike-friendly region.

2. Background

2.1 The development of the Guidelines was first identified through the RCP, which was updated and approved by Council in 2021, to support a greater shift towards a more cycling-friendly culture.

2.2 To help advance the development of the Guidelines, the Region received funding through the Federal Active Transportation Fund (ATF). This funding enabled the Region to retain a consultant, WSP Canada, to assist in the completion of the Guidelines.

2.3 The Guidelines respond to several Regional needs and priorities including:

- a. **Support Regional Policy Goals:** The Guidelines align with recommendations identified in the 2021 RCP, which called for the development of the Guidelines to support a greater shift toward a more cycling-friendly transportation network.
- b. **Address Current Gaps and inconsistency:** Bicycle parking across Durham Region often varies in quality and placement, with inconsistent design, limited long-term parking options, and inadequate integration into development processes, creating barriers for cyclists and discouraging regular cycling.
- c. **Promote Mode Shift:** Many short trips under five kilometres can be made by bicycle, yet car dependency in Durham remains high. Improving bicycle parking availability and quality encourages residents and visitors to cycle, reducing vehicle reliance, congestion, and emissions while improving quality of life.
- d. **Guide Municipal Action:** The Guidelines provide clear, data-driven recommendations to help area municipalities select appropriate parking types and apply best practices for design and maintenance

3. Engagement

3.1 The engagement process sought input from residents, regional and area municipal staff, advocacy groups, Indigenous organizations, local businesses, agencies,

schools and advisory committees. Activities focused on sharing information, gathering local insights, and understanding community concerns related to bicycle parking to ensure the guideline reflects the diverse needs of the community.

3.2 A comprehensive approach to engagement was applied throughout all stages of the Guidelines' development. Between July and October 2025, a series of 14 engagement activities were conducted in coordination with Regional staff. Over 1,100 community members and partners were reached through the various activities, as well as more than 23,000 online impressions for the project were achieved. Engagement activities included:

- a. Developing a project webpage on the Your Durham platform.
- b. Conducting an online survey via the Your Durham platform.
- c. Undertaking Indigenous outreach in coordination with the Region's Manager of Indigenous Relations.
- d. Holding two Regional staff workshops, and two area municipal and partner agency workshops.
- e. Conducting four listening sessions with key groups (Durham Region Cycling Coalition, Accessibility advocates, Ontario Tech University, and Bicycle Friendly Businesses and Smart Commute Businesses).
- f. Hosting a Public Information Centre (PIC) at Iroquois Park Sports Centre.
- g. Presenting the project at the Region's Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Durham Active Transportation Advisory Committee.

4. Overview of the Bicycle Parking Guidelines

4.1 The Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines (Attachment #1), and appendices (Attachments #2 and #3) provide guidance on bicycle parking elements and features including: the design and siting of bicycle parking facilities, supplemental elements to enhance user experience and accessibility, operations and maintenance requirements, and frameworks for prioritization, planning and implementation.

4.2 The Guidelines provide recommended actions to assist the Region and its partners, comprising of area municipalities, agencies, the development industry, and commercial, industrial and multi-unit residential landowners, in designing, locating and managing bicycle parking. While developed as a Regional resource, the Guidelines are designed to support consistency and coordination across municipalities, particularly for public sites such as community centres, libraries, parks, transit hubs and stops, and post-secondary institutions.

4.3 The following sections provide a high-level overview of the key elements provided in the core chapters of the Guidelines. These include:

a. Existing Conditions and Best Practices

- Overview of policies and plans that influence bicycle parking in Durham Region.
- Review of existing bicycle parking infrastructure including types of racks, site locations and ease of access across Durham Region, collected by WSP during their field visits.
- Summary of key themes and insights on current bicycle parking received through the public survey and engagement activities.
- List of key characteristics that contribute to high-quality bicycle parking from best practices across Canada.

b. Design and Siting of Bicycle Parking Facilities

- Detailed overview of bicycle parking facility types used for both short-term and long-term parking.
- Considerations for emerging modes, such as e-bikes, cargo bikes, adaptive cycles and privately owned e-scooters.
- Site planning and placement guidelines for bicycle parking facilities and supplemental elements (e.g., lighting, security, signage and wayfinding).

c. Operations and Maintenance

- Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities for the Region, area municipalities, other agencies, private developers and property managers/owners.
- Installation and maintenance considerations such as site preparation, materials, anchoring, inspections, repair/replacement and winter maintenance.
- Summary of unit cost estimates, operating and maintenance costs, and costing approaches based on current jurisdiction.
- Overview of funding responsibilities, and approaches to coordination and external funding sources.

d. Prioritization and Planning

- Framework for prioritization based on targeting locations with highest cycling potential, identifying areas with greatest equity needs and focusing investment to remove barriers to cycling.
- Suggested bicycle parking supply for specific land uses for new or retrofitted developments.
- Coordination of bicycle parking with development review processes.
- Designing for future needs and monitoring of bicycle parking provision, including suggested Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

5. What We Heard

5.1 Key themes and insights provided throughout the engagement process for the Guidelines included:

- Current Satisfaction:** Satisfaction with existing bicycle parking is low. Participants indicated that more secure and reliable facilities would encourage them to bike more, and many cyclists rely on locking their bikes to non-designated structures such as fences or signposts, highlighting infrastructure gaps and accessibility concerns.
- Security and Safety:** Bicycle theft is an important concern. Users prefer short-term parking that is well-lit, in high-traffic areas, and visible from the inside of buildings to enhance safety.
- Ease of Use and Accessibility:** Participants emphasized the need for parking that is easy to access, unobstructed and highly visible, with guidelines ensuring accessibility for all users.
- Diverse Needs and Contexts:** Expectations for what constitutes “secure parking” vary by user group and by context, underscoring the importance of engagement in determining suitable bicycle parking types in the design process. Participants also highlighted that short-term and long-term parking needs differ, with longer stays requiring covered or indoor facilities.
- Emerging Modes:** Demand is growing for parking that accommodates e-scooters, e-bikes and cargo bikes, with a preference for ground-level options. Having e-bike charging available at bicycle parking sites is not currently a high priority as most owners can easily charge them at home.

- f. **High-Demand Locations:** Schools, shopping plazas, transit hubs, and grocery stores were identified as the highest-priority locations for improved bicycle parking.
- g. **Communication and Wayfinding:** It was reported that bicycle parking is often difficult to find. Participants recommended better mapping, signage, and improved employer communication about available facilities to support employee commuting needs for secure and convenient bicycle parking.
- h. **Amenities:** Users expressed interest in additional amenities such as water refill stations, bicycle repair stands and device-charging options (e.g., cell phones). Lock cost and weight were noted as barriers, and lock-lending programs were viewed as a helpful support measure.
- i. **Implementation Support:** Clear roles, responsibilities, and funding expectations were identified as essential for effective implementation. Participants also noted that businesses require guidance and resources for installing bicycle parking and expressed interest in programs that support installations on public property.
- j. **Integration with the Cycling Network:** Participants emphasized that bicycle parking should connect directly to cycling routes and not be isolated in vehicle-oriented areas. Participants noted the role of bicycle parking in the broader mobility network, the importance of aesthetics, and the need for a connected cycling system to support increased use.

6. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 6.1 There are no previous reports or decisions on the Bicycle Parking Guidelines project.

7. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 7.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:
 - a. Connected and Vibrant Communities
 - C1. Align Regional infrastructure and asset management with projected growth, climate impacts, and community needs.

- C4. Improve road safety, including the expansion and connection of active transportation networks to enhance the range of safe mobility options.
- b. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action
- E2. Collaborate with partners on the low-carbon transition to reduce community greenhouse gas emissions across Durham Region.
- c. Strong Relationships
- S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
 - S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.
 - S5. Ensure accountable and transparent decision-making to serve community needs, while responsibly managing available resources.
- 7.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:
- a. Processes: Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs.

8. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 8.1 The Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines provides a clear framework and foundation for the Region and its partners to help support more convenient, equitable, and attractive cycling in Durham Region by improving the quality, consistency, and availability of bicycle parking.
- 8.2 Developing regional Guidelines supports improved design, quality, and availability of bicycle parking, helps cyclists feel more comfortable using the Primary Cycling Network (PCN) and other routes, and improves first-mile and last-mile connections to transit, making multimodal travel more practical.
- 8.3 Endorsement of the Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines and its ongoing implementation will help to achieve the Region's strategic goals of expanding and strengthening its cycling network, respond to the need to provide for more local non-auto trips, and address community needs for improving safety, coordination and commitment to bicycle parking.

- 8.4 The Guidelines recommend several actions to guide the Region to support the implementation or improvement of bicycle parking at Regional facilities, DRT terminals, hubs and stations, and include bicycle parking in the design of Regional roads through historic downtowns and other areas, in partnership with the area municipalities. It is recommended that funding to implement the recommended actions be considered through the long-term financial planning process and included, as appropriate, in the relevant departmental annual business plans and budgets.
- 8.5 The Guidelines also help inform bicycle parking implementation for area municipalities; other agencies such as the conservation authorities, Parks Canada, school boards, post-secondary institutions and the province (e.g., Metrolinx, Ministry of Transportation); the building industry when preparing development applications, and existing commercial or mixed-use properties that want to retrofit their sites to add or modify their bicycle parking supply.
- 8.6 This report was also reviewed by Durham Region Transit staff, who concur with the Guidelines' recommendations.
- 8.7 For additional information, contact: Chris Leitch, Manager, Transportation Planning at Chris.Leitch@durham.ca.

9. Attachments

Attachment #1: Link to [Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines – Main Report](#)

Attachment #2: Link to [Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines – Appendix A](#)

Attachment #3: Link to [Durham Region Bicycle Parking Guidelines – Appendix B](#)

Respectfully submitted,

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