

Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



To Accessibility Advisory Committee
Date Tuesday, December 19, 2023
Subject **College Ave Cycle Tracks**

Recommendation

1. That the AAC supports the College Ave cycletracks project.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

To follow-up with details as requested by the AAC motion put forward in August 2023, in relation to the College Ave cycletracks project.

Key Findings

The project design at transit stops and in the intersection of College/Edinburgh align with existing design guidance and best practices. Year-round maintenance will be achievable in this area, budget and resources permitting.

Strategic Plan Alignment

This project aligns with the Strategic Plan pillar "Navigating our Future", by investing in and promoting active transportation and improving the safety, efficiency, and connectivity of the whole transportation system.

Report

The information below is provided in follow-up to the AAC motion received in August 2023: "That more information be provided before the committee supports the design, and consideration for year-round weather maintenance be included, as well as yielding for cyclists to pedestrians and bus users, and more information about disability aids getting through the protected intersection safely be included."

Year-round maintenance: Staff have met with Operations to review and discuss the designs once more. Staff have been assured that maintenance will be possible, budget and resources permitting.

- Per the Minimum Maintenance Standards, sidewalks and off-road cycling infrastructure are subject to different maintenance standards than vehicle lanes
 - Operations are ordering a new piece of equipment (an electric sweeper) that will be able to provide maintenance services for 7-8 months of the year. The sweeper will clear sand and grit, and be narrow enough to turn the corners within the protected intersection.
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- During the winter months, Operations will use vehicles already in the fleet, such as sidewalk plows, to clear this area.
- It is possible that additional clearing by snowblowers and hand may be required. The City will be monitoring the area and will respond accordingly.

Potential conflicts at transit stops: Staff have met with Transit Services to review and discuss the designs once more. Two explicit concerns were previously raised by AAC members:

- 1) Cyclists may not yield right of way to transit users who are crossing from the transit stop to the sidewalk.
 - Staff have revised the designs to assist with communicating the yield requirement.
 - The cycletracks will narrow at the transit stops, which will both shorten the crossing distance for transit riders, and visually indicate to cyclists that they're entering a shared space where pedestrians are to be expected.
 - Signage and pavement markings will be applied in adherence with provincial guidelines.
 - Where the transit landing is constrained, the cycletrack will not only narrow but will also ramp up to the transit stop. The change in surface grade is intended to slow cyclists down and to heighten their awareness of the potential conflict zone and yield requirement.
 - Staff also consulted with other municipalities in Canada. Options to enhance awareness of transit stops can be implemented if required. Enhancements were typically implemented where the infrastructure exists on a major corridor, the cycletracks are bi-directional (doubling the number of cyclists passing by the transit stop) and the urban density is much greater than in Guelph (such as in the City of Victoria). Given that none of these conditions exist on College Ave, the designs will be implemented as described, and monitored for efficacy.
- 2) Transit drivers may not see passengers waiting at a transit stop.
 - Transit staff have assured us that as long as there is no amenity blocking the passengers, drivers can see them. Drivers can see through the bus shelters to the waiting passengers inside, and it is possible to remove any advertising panels that could obstruct drivers' view of waiting passengers, as required.

Disability aids navigating the protected intersection: Staff have consulted internally with the City's Accessibility Project Specialist, externally with consultants and organizations such as CNIB, and have visited protected intersections in surrounding municipalities (such as Waterloo and Burlington) to understand how these intersections function when built and what factors contribute to or detract from accessibility.

- Every effort is being made to design the intersection for users of All Ages and Abilities.

- Tactile delineation will exist between the sidewalks and cycletracks, and TWSI's will be installed as per the FADM and AODA standards. Accessible Pedestrian Signals will use audio to assist with navigation.
- Staff are striving to provide a smooth path of travel for people using mobility devices, by minimizing the number of grade and surface changes within the intersection as much as possible, while still adhering to provincial guidelines.
- Adjustments to the intersection alignment and geometry are being made to ensure crossings are as straight as possible, in some cases property is being acquired to this end.
- Education and outreach will be completed with the cycling community in the lead up to opening the protected intersection, to ensure the expectation to slow down and yield the right of way is clearly communicated.

Staff are very interested in holding an on-site focus group with interested members of the AAC, once the intersection is built to further understand how the intersection functions and feels, and what design alternations need to be made in future phases of the project.

Attachments

Attachment-College Ave cycletracks presentation

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