



INFORMATION REPORT

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| TO: | Chair and Members Public Works Committee |
| COMMITTEE DATE: | September 11, 2020 |
| SUBJECT/REPORT NO: | Cycling Accommodation During Construction Detours (PED20147/PW20056) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item) |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED: | City Wide |
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COUNCIL DIRECTION

At the July 10, 2019 Public Works Committee, a member of Cycle Hamilton made a presentation to the Public Works Committee. The presentation identified five suggestions to improve road resurfacing and construction projects along cycling routes, how they are planned, and implemented. These suggestions were to:

1. Keep the Hamilton Cycling Committee informed well in advance of planned roadway construction projects;
2. Provide a summary of this information to the broader public as well;
3. Provide cycling accommodations alongside or through construction zones when possible;
4. If cyclists cannot be accommodated through a construction zone, identify and sign an alternate route; and,

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

5. Ensure construction projects are sufficiently funded to embed cycling accommodations within any project.

Staff were directed to review the recommendations contained in the Cycle Hamilton presentation and report back on how the City may accommodate the recommendations contained within the presentation.

INFORMATION

Staff has reviewed the recommendations made by Cycle Hamilton and compared these to current City practices and industry standards. The purpose of this Information Report is to advise Council of the results of that review and to identify a number of potential areas for enhancing current practices.

While not specifically related to Cannon Street alone, the suggestions from Cycle Hamilton were prompted as a result of the resurfacing and cycle track enhancement project that occurred on Cannon Street in the Summer 2019. Originally, the Cannon Street project was initiated as a fast-tracked resurfacing project, which would typically not involve any design work and be implemented in a short period of time. However, the resurfacing project was subsequently identified as an opportunity to enhance the existing cycling infrastructure, which in turn required a longer construction period and modified traffic management plan.

Prior to construction commencing, the cycling community expressed concerns about the closure of the cycle track for an extended period. One of the challenges with the Cannon Street corridor is that there are very few alternative routes. As a result, the impacts of closures of the cycle track were more severe than for a typical project.

While successful in terms of the cycle track enhancements that were achieved, the project served to highlight some areas for improvement in terms of construction detours, as well as how the cycling community is involved and informed.

As a starting point for all construction projects, the City routinely relies on provincially accepted guidelines to prepare traffic management plans. Specifically, the standard resource for safety accommodations through roadway construction zones is “Book 7 – Temporary Conditions” published by the Ontario Traffic Council (<https://www.library.mto.gov.on.ca/SydneyPLUS/Sydney/Portal/default.aspx?component=AAAAIY&record=34657287-fb36-43a2-84d7-7dc2c5e0d3a6>).

Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Book 7 includes a section on Cyclist Safety Considerations, and suggests the following as best practice:

- Provide early notice of projects that could cause significant inconvenience to cyclists (e.g. long detours), making use of cyclist organizations or user groups where available;
- Provide notification signs for all road users in advance of temporary conditions, consistent with general practice. Include distance tabs as appropriate; and,
- Ensure that signs do not intrude into the travel path of cyclists or pedestrians; if intrusion is unavoidable, maximize sign visibility.

It is noted that OTM Book 7 is currently being updated and is planned to include enhanced information to augment the existing guidance on cycling accommodations. Hamilton has staff representatives on the committee that is overseeing these updates.

In addition to Book 7 guidelines, the City has established guidelines entitled “Temporary Conditions, Bike Lanes Cycle Track”. These guidelines provide direction for the accommodation of cyclists through roadway construction zones and is attached as Appendix “A” to this Report. Pending work that is on-going to update the OTM Book 7 guidelines, and on-going reviews of best practices in other jurisdictions, it is the intent of staff to update and augment these guidelines, in consultation with members of the Hamilton Cycling Committee, as well as, the Hamilton and District Heavy Construction (HAND) Association.

In the interim, the five suggestions identified by Cycle Hamilton at the Public Works Committee meeting on July 10, 2019, are constructive ideas, and appropriate for assessing current and evolving practices with respect to how the City approaches construction projects.

Suggestion 1: Keep the Hamilton Cycling Committee informed well in advance of planned roadway construction projects

Current Practice:

The City’s “Hamilton Cycling Committee”, with membership of citizen volunteers, is provided with a list of planned projects at their regular meetings, and staff are present at these meetings to provide updates and answer any questions. Staff representatives on the committee attempt to bring projects to the committee that are in the early design stage. However, due to the project design cycle, there is a lag between when the project design is discussed at Committee and when construction commences.

Enhanced Practice:

In addition to discussing projects at the early design stage with the Committee, projects nearing the construction phase will be highlighted for information. This should not be limited to new cycling projects, but also major road construction projects that may

involve the closure of an existing cycling facility. Specifically highlighting the construction stage at the Cycling Committee will help to flag potential impacts of closures and opportunities to mitigate these impact closures.

It is noted that the July 2019 Cycle Hamilton presentation was discussed at the City's "Hamilton Cycling Committee" meeting on August 7, 2019; providing additional feedback for this Report. Share the Road Ontario, a non-for-profit cycling advocacy organization, was also consulted for input on this Report.

Suggestion 2: Provide a summary of this information to the broader public as well

Current Practice:

The Cycling Master Plan (2018), provides the direction for planned cycling infrastructure, which is used to inform roadway construction projects when they are scoped to determine and refine design details. The Cycling Master Plan was developed as part of the City-wide Transportation Master Plan and included extensive consultation with the broader public. However, as a longer range and static document, it only serves to identify the approximate timing of projects. More refined project listings are provided in the annual update on cycling projects to Council, but this is limited to new cycling projects only.

The Transportation Planning section also maintains and regularly updates a dedicated web page www.hamilton.ca/newlanes which includes a list of active cycling projects at both the planning stage and projects "in the works".

For City-wide construction projects, including all types of projects, the City provides a mapping tool that is available to the broader public.

<https://spatialsolutions.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=16e783d5df3c489fbe3e620adbd241f1>.

Enhanced Practice:

If promoted adequately, the dedicated cycling project webpage, maintained by Transportation Planning, is an appropriate platform for informing the broader public about upcoming cycling construction projects. This site is being enhanced to include information on the various project progress stages including feasibility, design, and upcoming consultation activities. This process has been piloted and will become the practice moving forward. When the website is updated with a new project, the community will be notified through the Cycling Committee, as noted in action point one above; as well as, through social media, and the Smart Commute Hamilton and Sustainable Mobility newsletter.

Suggestion 3: Provide cycling accommodations alongside or through construction zones when possible

Current Practice:

OTM Book 7 – “Temporary Conditions” published by the Ontario Traffic Council is utilized to inform decisions on cycling accommodations.

The City typically posts signs and construction notice information in construction zones as a routine practice.

Enhanced Practice:

Section 2.6.3.1 of OTM Book 7 provides fairly specific guidance on directing cyclists through the work zones including guidance on surfaces, widths and signage. A potential area for enhancement is in the application and enforcement of these guidelines. Some jurisdictions have had success with in-field training with staff and contractors, using well executed projects as examples.

Suggestion 4: If cyclists cannot be accommodated through a construction zone, identify and sign an alternate route

Current Practice:

Maintaining the existing cycling infrastructure is most convenient and always preferred when feasible and safe. However, given the scope of works, corridor capacity constraints, health and safety requirements, and project timing, this isn't always feasible.

Enhanced Practice:

As the City continues to increase the connectivity of cycling infrastructure, and usage increases, expectations to enhance cycling accommodation during construction projects is also increasing and justified.

The creation of temporary (or permanent) cycling facilities on a parallel corridor to accommodate construction, is typically beyond the scope of any construction project; not just because of financial constraints but also the time required to accomplish such a major addition to the cycling network depending on the complexity of the parallel corridor and adjacent street network. However, some cities have piloted approaches that create a rapid deployment route on a parallel facility by temporarily reducing vehicular lanes. This involves low cost infrastructure, such as traffic barrels, to achieve reasonable and safe detours using a variety of tools as part of the construction budget

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(e.g. bike boxes to help with turns, temporary protected facilities, temporary traffic signals at intersections, etc.).

Even with temporary measures, substantial efforts and resources are needed to develop detour routes. Best practices include the following:

- Clear wayfinding for detour routes;
- Creating readily accessible communications for detour routes;
- Providing advanced notice to the community that a detour is necessary so that people can plan their temporary routes in advance; and,
- Outlining a process that determines whether a detour can be accommodated, and, if not, documents why it is not possible.

Organizations such as Cycle Hamilton, and the Cycling Committee, are also key in regard to getting the word out on cycling detours.

Suggestion 5: Ensure construction projects are sufficiently funded to embed cycling accommodations within any project

Current Practice:

Projects are typically sufficiently funded to provide any special accommodations required for all road users, including cyclists, based on OTM Book 7 guidelines. This includes, information to the public, signage to alert traffic through a construction zone, and special accommodations for cyclists.

Enhanced Practice:

City staff continue to improve the quality and quantity of the cycling network for cyclists of all ages and abilities in the City. It is recognized that accommodation for cyclists and other roadway users is a critical part of construction projects. Bicycle traffic is to be considered in all roadway construction projects, but special accommodations for cyclists are primarily required where an existing cycling facility (either bicycle lanes or signed routes) is affected by roadway construction. Over time, this will need to be budgeted for and tracked as part of project budgets.

As this Report addresses the Review of Cycle Hamilton Recommendations Respecting the Cannon Street Resurfacing Project, it is appropriate to be identified as complete and can be removed from the Public Works Outstanding Business Item List.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” - Temporary Conditions Bike Lanes Cycle Track