January 31, 2012

Re: Downtown Master Plan Review

The Sudbury Cyclists Union is a group of more than 250 Sudbury residents who have a vested interest in ensuring the Downtown Master Plan addresses safe and accessible cycling.

Our vision for downtown Sudbury (as per section 3.0 of your Executive Summary) is a Centre for Sustainable Transportation that includes cycling. Our vision is:

- Bikes and pedestrians outnumber cars, thus easing congestion and pollution. Many downtown residents do not own cars and chose cycling as their primary mode of transportation.
- All main transportation arteries include bike lanes that link the bike lanes coming from the north, east, south and west of the city, as well as cycling trails that all meet in the center of town. Redesigned streets have been calmed and include bike lanes or bike sharrows.
- All businesses have bike racks that are available year-round. The new transit terminal and the street parkades include indoor bike parking. All buses have bike racks.
- Bike art is placed in different areas of the downtown, in particular in the theatre and arts districts. Art includes sculptures and wall murals.
- The downtown includes a Cycling Co-op that repairs donated bikes to sell at minimal cost to the community and to donate to needy recipients; that houses an equipped shop; that provides bike repairs know-how to cyclists; that gives bike safety courses and training; that provides meeting space for cycling groups; and that organizes events in the downtown that celebrate cycling.
- Bike valets are provided at the rejuvenated arena complex, four-star hotel and new multi-use community and conference space, especially for major events. Cycling is encouraged as a way of getting to special events with advertisements of facilities in all event descriptions communicated to attendees. A bixi bike share provides bicycles for tourists to use in the downtown.
- Cycling tours and trips bring ecotourism to the downtown. Cycling maps and adventure tours are available at the City of Sudbury Visitor Center. The Junction Creek Waterway Park is complete and allows tourists to travel across the city, and to stop at downtown restaurants and businesses. The cycling routes to Bell Park and to the Lake Laurentian Conservation trail areas are clearly marked and are marketed as day trips to tourists.
- Downtown caters to cyclists. Cyclists are attracted by businesses that offer healthy lifestyles and are seen at many restaurants and specialty shops. Downtown parks are used for cycling activities. The expanded Memorial Park provides space for bike rodeos for children and adults to learn how to cycle safely. Cyclists visit the farmer's market and other businesses and easily take larger purchases home by using the City bus bike racks. Cycling families take a day trip to the downtown for festivals and activities.

All three directives of Activity and Growth, Access and Connectivity, and Beauty and Pride are addressed by incorporating a comprehensive cycling solution to the downtown. Cyclists will bring economic and health benefits to the downtown.

The SCU would like propose the following action plans to complement your Action Strategy:

Short Term (1 to 5 years):

- Elgin Greenway: we agree with this proposal as long as it includes clearly marked bike lanes (one in each direction) that is separate from pedestrian traffic.
- Elm Street calming: we would like the opportunity to discuss the ramifications of on-street parking in relation to potential bike lanes on this artery.
- Nelson Street Bridge retrofit/security upgrade: we would suggest incorporating bike lanes on the retrofit. The Bridge is used extensively by cyclists who want to travel in a safe and quiet manner to Bell Park.
- Riverside Pedestrian Tunnel Upgrade: cyclists could take advantage of this tunnel. The current signage indicates that no bikes are allowed. At a minimum, signage indicating that cyclists need to walk their bike would encourage safe passage of cyclists and pedestrians.
- Bike sharrows: signage and painting appropriate sharrows on city streets is an inexpensive way to encourage cycling downtown. This interim solution to bike lanes and paths construction would help to change the current Sudbury culture that puts the emphasis on cars.
- Farmer's Market Relocation: the SCU would like to see some cycling component as part of the relocation. This building could possibly house our proposed Cycling Co-op. The SCU currently uses the existing Market as its gathering place for cyclists who meet for events. Having a cycling presence would draw additional people to the market.

Medium Term (6 to 10 years):

- Ste. Anne extension with cycle route: we agree with this proposal as long as it includes separate bike lanes.
- Memorial Park expansion: the SCU would like to see a cycling presence at the park. We would like an opportunity to discuss options.

On-going (anytime):

- Expansion of cycling network: as previously proposed to City Council as part of their 2012 Official Plan Review process, the SCU would like to confirm that it would like to see a complete cycling network in the city by 2015. While the expansion of the cycling network downtown is definitely what we want, we would like to see a definite timeframe put to this item with it moved up to the Short Term list.
- Gateway features installations: the SCU would like to see signage that indicates that Sudbury is a cycling-friendly community.

General Comments:

- All calming and beautification initiatives on major arteries that include Lorne St., Brady St., Elm St., Paris St., Ste. Anne's Road and Notre Dame Ave. need to accommodate cycling. Major arteries need dedicated bike lanes.
- Parkades: construction of parkades should include provision for parking of bicycles.
- New buildings: cycling racks and/or parking need to be incorporated into all new designs.
- Bike racks: a standard needs to be established city-wide. The selection and provisioning of a standard bike rack should be done in coordination with the Regional Municipality of Sudbury and cycling organizations, in order to ensure economy, effectiveness, ease of use and safety.

- On-street parking: more cities are incorporating on-street parking for cyclists. The SCU would like to see certain sections of on-street parking in the downtown reserved for cyclists. This would free up sidewalks from bike racks and involves only a small space investment.
- You show bike cycling facilities on Ste. Anne's Road and Elgin St. These need to be appropriately linked to other major arteries that lead to other parts of the city, which in turn, need cycling facilities, most notably dedicated bike lanes.
- Any changes to downtown roads need to address cycling. The Bicycle Advisory Panel Technical Plan incorporates a thorough review of all roads in Sudbury. The Sustainable Mobility Plan also has a number of recommendations that can enhance the cycling experience for the downtown. The SCU encourages the downtown plan to incorporate recommendations from these plans.
- Any proposed cycling initiatives should be reviewed by the Sustainable Mobility Advisory Panel and other cycling organizations in the city during the planning process in order to ensure that proper choices are made that best meet the needs of cyclists.

The Sudbury Cyclists Union applauds the cycling initiatives detailed in the Downtown Master Plan and hopes that our input will see additional cycling opportunities arise as the downtown reshapes and revitalizes itself.