



Sudbury Cyclists Union

Connecting Greater Sudbury Cyclists

February 22, 2019

City of Greater Sudbury
c/o Miranda Edwards and Marisa Talarico

Re: Elm Street Bike Lanes

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed project Elm Street – Traffic Lane Reconfiguration, which is currently posted on the City's Over to You website.

The SCU's primary goals when commenting on infrastructure proposals are to ensure that the projects that are planned are safe and comfortable for cyclists of all ages and abilities, and that they provide connectivity to the cycling network that is currently being implemented in Greater Sudbury. Our priority is to implement a minimum grid of safe routes that will connect all areas of the city, thereby making all destinations accessible to people who bike.

The Sudbury Cyclists Union strongly supports the implementation of cycling infrastructure on this street, as part of a road resurfacing project that will take place in 2019. We also strongly support the implementation of a Complete Streets approach on this street, and the implementation of a road diet to reduce the number of motorized vehicle travel lanes in order to accommodate cycling infrastructure.

The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) indicates the City planned on implementing a signed bike route on this section of Elm Street, which meant that cyclists would have shared the road with motorized vehicle traffic. Thank you for making it safer for cyclists by implementing dedicated, separated infrastructure instead of what is proposed in the TMP.

Safety

In a conversation with Marisa Talarico earlier this week, the City identified that there is a safety issue with the many points of conflict caused by the numerous driveways on the urban sections of the street if cycle tracks were to be installed. We were also told that the newer traffic counts on Elm Street support the choice to install bike lanes, that the counts are similar to the counts that are currently on Bancroft Drive, and that there are currently no projections that the traffic would significantly increase on Elm Street in the next few years. Your traffic counts also indicate that there is heavy traffic only during rush hour, and that during the rest of the day, the street does not experience high volumes of traffic. Thank you for this information so we can explain to our members why you are installing bike lanes instead of cycle tracks.

We do have a concern about the speed of traffic as it enters the urban area on Elm Street, and look forward to seeing the effect of merging traffic down to one lane, and any other traffic calming solutions that may be needed if speed measurement activities indicate that motorized traffic does not respect the 50 km/hour speed limit in this heavily urbanized area.

Connectivity

Since the scope of the project is limited to the section on Elm Street where a watermain was replaced in 2018, we hope to see options in the near future to connect this project directly via Elm Street to the Paris/Notre Dame Bikeway, and options to connect it to major cycling infrastructure to the east and west.

In our conversation, the City indicated that there would be no cycling infrastructure installed on Beatty because of the steep pitch of the hill, and that you are looking at alternative options. We look forward to seeing the options that will provide connectivity to all areas of the city. Extending the lanes to Cypress will bring connectivity to the south/west towards Lorne St. Our members who live or have lived in the neighbourhood would like to see connectivity via Ethelbert Street and McNeil Boulevard to the east, and potentially Alder Street as well.

Comfort

Many of our members have expressed a preference to implement separated infrastructure because it would be more comfortable for them to be separated from motorized vehicular traffic. This would obviously be the best choice for families and nervous riders, but we also understand that there are cost and safety issues that apply to installing cycle tracks on this particular street. If there are other ways of providing separated infrastructure, we would support this since that would meet the needs of those who have expressed their concerns. We look forward to seeing if the bike lanes increase cycling traffic on Elm Street for families, young riders, and commuters.

In closing, thank you for implementing Complete Streets on sections of road when the opportunity presents itself. We support your current priorities of the Paris/Notre Dame Bikeway and Lasalle Boulevard, and also support your installing cycling infrastructure on shorter sections of road as part of a scheduled road resurfacing or reconstruction project. We look forward to more dialogue on how we can connect these new pieces to the network in the near future.

Sincerely,



Rachelle Niemela
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