



Citizens for Safe Cycling

P.O. Box 248, Station B, Ottawa, ON, K1P 6C4

info@BikeOttawa.ca

www.BikeOttawa.ca

Ottawa, May 1, 2017

VIA E-MAIL: rosemary.theriault@ottawa.ca

Subject: Elgin Street and Multi-Modal Level of Service, for distribution to Transportation Committee

To Chair Egli and the members of Transportation Committee,

Citizens for Safe Cycling (Bike Ottawa) is writing to you today regarding two issues to be discussed at the May 3 committee meeting.

Complete Streets

Firstly, we would like to congratulate the City of Ottawa on the Complete Streets Implementation Framework. We believe it is essential to consider the needs of all road users when planning transportation projects, and this framework is a ground-breaking step in the right direction.

With that being said, we wonder whether the framework is always being applied where and how it should be, and that includes Elgin street. Elgin was not identified as a high priority cycling route in the Ottawa Cycling Plan, and this seems to have affected willingness to apply a complete streets lens to its reconstruction. Furthermore, we are skeptical that traffic operating speeds and volumes after reconstruction will fall into the portion of the MMLOS nomograph where a shared facility is recommended. So, while the framework sets the right tone, we don't feel that it is being used as effectively as it should be. Please keep that in mind when you discuss the next agenda item: functional design for Elgin.

Elgin Street

As to this second item, we wish to express support for the speed limit reduction on Elgin to 30 km/h, and the reduction of travel lanes on Elgin Street and Hawthorne Avenue. Bike Ottawa believes that

using design to lower the speed of vehicles in the downtown core is a critical intervention that council can make to provide a safer and more pleasant experience for pedestrians and cyclists.

However, a speed limit is meaningless without appropriate design and enforcement. Therefore, Bike Ottawa also requests that the committee recommend careful monitoring of speed and multi-modal level of service after the rebuilding of Elgin Street, to ensure high levels of service are being achieved for pedestrians and cyclists, and that the design is functioning to keep speeds below the 30 km/h target.

Furthermore, we believe that Elgin would be a good candidate for a Community Safety Zone. This is particularly important given the presence of Elgin Street Public School, Lisgar Collegiate, and the Jack Purcell Community Centre. As Ottawa's first major example of a 30km/h street, it will be important to succeed in achieving real-world operating speeds of 30 km/h or less, and reap the associated safety benefits.

While we support the proposed traffic calming measures, it is our position that the functional design does not go far enough in striking a balance that reflects Elgin Street as an important public space. We would like to particularly emphasize that there are currently 3749 parking spaces within 2 blocks of the area (including 850 underground parking spots at City Hall <http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/transportation-and-parking/parking>). The city could be more ambitious than cutting 32 parking spots out of an area-wide supply of 3749, particularly given the substantial downsides of on-street parking for traffic flow and safety. By freeing up space on Elgin, the city would also be in a position to pursue measures that reinforce Elgin Street's role as a people place, a desire reflected in public feedback time and time again: increased sidewalk widths, bike lanes, and increased greenery.

Finally, we would like to identify that, by not providing all-ages protected cycling infrastructure, the city is forgoing the opportunity to connect important cycling routes along Main Street and McKenzie Avenue, Laurier Avenue and the planned Wellington Street bikeway.

With thanks for considering our input,

Érinn Cunningham, and Heather Shearer
Bike Ottawa Advocacy Working Group