



To: Stephen Gallagher, P.Eng., Senior Engineer, City of Ottawa
Steve Desroches, Councillor - Ward 22 (Riverside South-Findlay Creek)

Via email: stephen.gallagher@ottawa.ca, Steve.Desroches@ottawa.ca

Date: February 13, 2024

Subject: Bank Street Widening and Reconstruction (south of Leitrim Road to south of Blais Road)

Dear Mr. Gallagher,

We thank you for the opportunity for the public to provide input into the above-mentioned Bank Street Widening and Reconstruction (south of Leitrim Road to south of Blais Road). We are writing on behalf of Bike Ottawa, a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that advocates for safe cycling infrastructure in Ottawa.

Bike Ottawa welcomes the attention to improving cycling infrastructure in this corridor. After careful consideration of the proposed plans, we would like to provide the following feedback:

- We are pleased to see facilities for people walking and biking planned for this corridor. This is far safer than the shoulder in current conditions. We urge that this infrastructure be connected to other walking and biking infrastructure in the area, which currently is far away and along unsafe roads. In general, the City's piecemeal approach to cycling infrastructure limits the number of people who can or are willing to use it. Many of these missing links can be filled with quick builds until renewal projects take place.
- On this note, However, it is unclear why biking and walking facilities end just before the intersection at Leitrim; ample research shows that intersections are unsafe walking and biking. Facilities should continue through this intersection, which should also be made protected.
- We are disappointed that vehicle lanes are being added to this corridor. Increasing vehicle facilities induces greater demand. Further, increasing car use contradicts Ottawa's stated commitments to reduce car dependency, combat climate change, support biodiversity, and favour equity.
- We are pleased to see that signalized intersections in this corridor are protected, as they should be. Nevertheless, there are two significant problems with these intersections:

- They are too wide, and the addition of vehicle lanes at intersections is problematic, as it substantially increases not only the crossing distance but the potential conflict points.
- Two intersections with protected elements have slip lanes (Bank at Findlay Creek and Mikana). Bike Ottawa opposes slip lanes in the strongest possible terms, as they prioritize the convenience of motorists at the expense of the safety and well-being of active users.
- We are pleased that crosswalks and crossrides at driveways and minor streets appear to be raised and continuous. These will help encourage motorists to observe the right of way of people walking and biking. Nevertheless, the intersection at Arena appears not to be raised and continuous, when it should be. If the entrance to the shopping plaza at Findlay Creek and Bank is not a continuous sidewalk, it also should be.
- Any transition from the vehicle facility's grade to a driveway's grade should take place in the boulevard; the cycle track or sidewalk should not have to accommodate vehicles crossing it. Moreover, a steeper transition will help encourage motorists to observe the right of way of people walking and biking.
- The 4% maximum grade for cycle tracks and 5% maximum for sidewalks are excessive. In winter conditions, these will both become slippery at the risk of people walking and cycling. Slope maximums should be 2%, as per the City's Pedestrian Plan.
- All biking and walking facilities should be designed with winter maintenance in mind. Among other things, this means making paths that are clear and intuitive for plow operators to navigate with snow cover. In this respect, we are concerned for some of the tight turns at "protected" intersections and some of the wiggles at intersection approaches—particularly given the problems in recent builds (e.g., Scott and Island Park Drive)
- In general, the corridor is short on trees, despite ample space being available for them, particularly in boulevards. Trees help slow drivers, absorb vehicle noise, filter vehicle air pollution, and shade people walking, biking, and rolling.
- Bike Ottawa seeks assurances that this corridor will be made safe for people walking and biking during construction. Any construction detours should ensure that active users have separated, protected facilities.

We thank you for your time and consideration. We also request a reply to the concerns we raise. We would welcome the opportunity to work with you on any aspect of this project that relates to active transportation.

Sincerely,
Katherine Cole
Ward Advocate

Guillaume Gaillard
Board member

William van Geest
Chair, Advocacy Working Group