

MINUTES
SAANICH BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ROOM #1
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2007, 4:00 P.M.

Present: Vice Chair: Darrell Wick
Members: Dave De Shane; James Grayson; Neil Neate; John Smith; D. De Shane
Staff: Mike Lai, Manager of Transportation; Anne Topp, Manager of Community Planning; Steve Holroyd, Design Services, Engineering; Brad Brajcich, Police Department; Isobel Hoffmann, Senior Committee Clerk.
Regrets: Pam Shatzko; Judy Gaylord; Sarah Webb
Guests: John Luton, Capital Bike and Walk Society.

MINUTES: Adoption of the November 22, 2006 Bicycle Advisory Committee Minutes is deferred to the February meeting.

This is a special meeting of the Committee in order to discuss grant applications through the Cycling Infrastructure Partnership Programme (CIPP) for three projects in Saanich and meet the deadline date of January 31, 2007. The programme is administered through the Ministry of Transportation. The projects received Council approval on January 22, 2007.

Royal Oak Transit Exchange (Royal Oak Drive / Elk Lake Drive intersection)

Project: To upgrade current on-road transit exchange and approaching roads. Install new curbs, sidewalks and bike lanes on Royal Oak and Elk Lake Drive. Total project costs \$3.2 million, of which \$302,000 are eligible under the CIPP criteria. Grant application of \$151,000 to be submitted if endorsed.

Using the Engineering design plans, Mr. Holroyd described the project to Committee Members, noting the following points:

- Staff has been working for many years with BC Transit to get a formal transit exchange, and the intersection of Royal Oak and Elk Lake Drive has been selected.
- The pedestrian and transit environment will be enhanced and bike lanes added.
- Currently the curb, gutter, sidewalk and bike lanes end at Pipeline; these will be extended through to Elk Lake Drive and up to the off-ramp at the Pat Bay Highway.
- A sidewalk will also be added to the east side of Elk Lake Drive, with bike lanes on both sides of the road.

In response to Committee comments, Mr. Holroyd stated:

- Saanich Engineering sidewalk specifications were changed a few years ago with respect to minimum widths, curb drops and slope of the gutters, etc., and should therefore be safe for scooter use.
- With respect to the dedicated right turn lane on Elk Lake Drive and possible conflicts with the adjacent bike lane, there are no immediate plans to change this, but it can be monitored and/or addressed as a design detail, (perhaps revising paint markings), recognizing that many cyclists will be turning left onto West Saanich heading south. Staff agreed to consider the committee's preference of providing a left turn bike lane rather than removing the bike lanes.
- CORA bike racks will be provided on the southwest and northeast quadrants of the intersection. (Members noted that CORA racks are not necessarily the best choice, especially if a bike has panniers.)

- Agreed a signal detector would be beneficial on Elk Lake Drive (southbound) for left turn traffic on to West Saanich Road; although the signal is outside the scope of work for the project, staff will discuss possible modifications with Public Works.
- It is doubtful a car could cut easily across the sidewalk at the corner of the intersection, although there are curb cuts on each side by the crosswalk and at the ramp to accommodate wheelchairs.
- It is recognized there is a lot of pedestrian activity and shared used with scooters and baby buggies in this area; sidewalks will be a minimum of 3 m wide.
- Two 12 m landscaped islands will be built on Elk Lake Drive between Royal Oak and West Saanich to break up the asphalt. Residents voted 50/50 for this feature, and staff decided to incorporate it into the design. Driveways will not be obstructed.
- He was not aware of an official bicycle local connector route from the overpass through the Viewmont Avenue and didn't think the proposed changes would affect the route. However, this particular section is under Ministry jurisdiction.
- He agreed it may be difficult at times for pedestrians changing buses at the intersection in terms of waiting for lights to change; this issue was raised at the Open House as well, but again the area is under the Ministry's control.
- Transit is hoping to formalize a park and ride area on Elk Lake Drive north of Commonwealth Place.

Cst. Brajich noted that the police are preparing a report on the illegal activities taking place in the vicinity of the house at the corner of Viewmont and Royal Oak Drive; he will ensure Engineering has a copy of the report.

With respect to landscaping, Mr. Holroyd noted the areas are under the Ministry's jurisdiction will be restricted to trees and grass, because they have advised they won't necessarily be maintaining it. Saanich has proposed additional landscaping in other areas, in particular around the Fire Hall to provide more screening and security.

MOTION: Moved by Mr. De Shane and Seconded by Mr. Grayson: "That the Committee support the project and the grant application to the CIPP programme in the amount of \$151,000."

CARRIED

Cordova Bay Road (Maxine Lane – Sunnygrove Terrace)

Phase II of the Project: 400m of curb, sidewalk and bike lanes on west side of Cordova Bay Road towards Galey Way; continuation of Phase 1 work completed from Haliburton to Maxine last year. Total costs \$415,000; grant application of \$64,800.

Mr. Lai stated:

- Positive support was received for the project at the open house held last night (January 23, 2007).
- The first stage of Phase II will see sidewalks and bike lanes constructed between Maxine Lane and Sunnygrove Terrace.
- Funding constraints for 2007 prevent completion to Galey Way - another 300 m.
- Bike lanes will be 1.5 m wide; sidewalk will be 2 m wide.
- In response to a question from the Committee he noted there are no plans at this time to install sidewalks and bike lanes on the both sides of Cordova Bay Road.

- Improvements are being considered for the marked crosswalk at Galey Way.
- Due to the alignment of the road, the centre line may have to be adjusted in sections in order to achieve the desired sidewalk and bike lane widths.
- Some rock blasting may also be necessary.

In response to comments and questions from the Committee, Mr. Lai stated:

- Chevron signs, or other signing, will be considered on the east side of Cordova Bay Road to advise all users of the need to share the road where appropriate.
- He noted the Lochside Trail is close and is a viable alternative for cyclists.
- Regarding other crosswalk locations (the Committee suggested Totem Lane), he advised that staff will be looking at other locations where appropriate, based on the current warrant system. Existing and potential use is considered, as well as visibility, traffic volumes, road geometry, etc.
- It is not normal practice to install a crosswalk just for transit users, but proximity to a bus stop is part of the warrant assessment.
- In response to suggestions for bulb-outs, textured or raised crosswalks, Mr. Lai stated that these are viewed as traffic calming devices and are generally not used on major roads.

MOTION: Moved by Mr. Smith and Seconded by Mr. Grayson: "That the Committee support the project and the grant application to CIPP for \$64,800."

CARRIED

Blenkinsop Road (McKenzie Avenue – Mt. Douglas Cross Road)

Project: 530 m bike lanes on both sides of Blenkinsop Road to provide link between recently completed Blenkinsop connector multi-use trail and the bike lanes on McKenzie Avenue. Total costs \$39,100; grant application to CIPP for \$19,550.

Mr. Lai stated:

- Based on information gathered, a high degree of usage is not anticipated along this corridor.
- It will be a dual-purpose paved shoulder area rather than a sidewalk, shared with pedestrians and cyclists.
- Most of the work is basically just repainting.
- The travel lanes in each direction have been narrowed slightly to 3.3m (rather than the normal 3.5 m) in order to achieve a 1.5 m bike lane on each side.
- Because Blenkinsop is part of the Truck Route as well as an important north/south connector, it is not feasible to narrow the road width to less than 3.3 m.

Committee comments were noted as follows:

- This is an important commuter link; it is surprising the projected usage is low, especially with the new and very popular link along Mt. Douglas Cross Road.
- Suggested that the bike lanes could be wider on one side than the other and pedestrians encouraged to use the wider side to avoid less conflict.
- It will be a challenge to share the use of a 1.5 m wide bike lane and it is not an appropriate environment for pedestrians.

- Some members felt strongly about the lack of pedestrian facilities in this area and felt that a shared use bike lane is not the answer, noting that it was more important to have a sidewalk than a bike lane.

Mr. Lai stated:

- The ditches on either side of Blenkinsop limit the width of the bike lanes; to fill in the ditches would increase the cost of the project astronomically.
- The rationale for the scope of the work proposed is based on the information that the area has a relatively low pedestrian use, and also it seemed logical to connect with the recently completed bike lane projects on McKenzie Avenue and the Centennial Trail.
- If there is a strong desire to make this a pedestrian-only facility rather than shared use, Engineering can consider this. This is not a high-cost project, but the funds can easily be redirected elsewhere.
- The Committee could suggest staff monitor the area to determine if there is a need for improved facilities due to a higher volume of pedestrian activity than expected.
- There will be appropriate road markings and signage to indicate it is a shared use, similar to what is now used on portions of West Saanich Road.

Ms. Topp noted there has not been a lot of public discussion on this project. The newly formed Blenkinsop Valley Community Association could be given an opportunity to review the plans and provide feedback. They are the people who live in the area and know what facilities are lacking or what they would prefer to see.

John Lutton pointed out that this route provides a good connection for regional trips, from the Peninsula to Cook Street and downtown Victoria. It is not just used by locals or recreational cyclists. He would prefer that the proposed works be completed and monitor the use for any conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians. Perhaps long-term plans could include enhanced pedestrian facilities if required. The proposed project will certainly improve the current situation. He noted there is a “shared” facility on Lochside Drive from the Central Saanich border through to Bazan Bay – perhaps staff could find out if any problems have occurred.

Mr. Wick stated there is no doubt that the bike lanes will be an improvement to the road, and perhaps it might be possible in the future to enclose one of the ditches for a sidewalk. Regarding the current low usage – that is probably because there is no safe place to walk.

MOTION: Moved by Mr. De Shane and Seconded by Mr. Grayson: “That in spite of the concerns expressed regarding shared use, the Committee supports the project as presented and a grant application to CIPP of \$19,550.”

CARRIED

The Committee noted that if it is found that the shared used facility is not effective, consideration should be given to construction of a separate sidewalk area in the future.

The Vice-Chair stated:

- He would have preferred to see the plans for these three projects before final drawings were prepared and before the open houses held.
- In the past, the Committee saw plans in advance; this has not happened in the past year and he hoped this would change in the future as it makes for a better project overall – which he feels is the role of the committee.

Mr. Lai stated:

- The department had some significant staff challenges last year and it has been difficult to maintain the existing workload.
- These three projects were put together towards the end of the year and were identified for the CIPP grant programme.
- It was unfortunate that the timing didn't work to bring the projects to the Committee beforehand, but he will endeavour to make this happen in the future.

ROAD SWEEPING & PAINT MARKINGS

It was noted that the current conditions of the bike lanes in Saanich is very poor; some areas have not been swept for months and this leads to serious safety issues for cyclists. This situation would not happen if a road were blocked. It was also noted that road markings need repainting in many areas.

Mr. Lai stated that with extreme weather conditions experienced over the past few months, staff has been overloaded, but he will convey the message about the sweeping. Weather conditions and temperatures have to be ideal for successful repair to road markings; the paint will not adhere if it is too cold. He acknowledged there are areas that need to be re-marked, and this will be done as weather permits.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Based on a survey of members, it appears that Thursday at noon is the preferred choice for regular meetings of the newly form Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Committee (BIPED).

Next Meeting: The next regular BIPED meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

.....
VICE-CHAIR, Darrell Wick

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

.....
Committee Secretary