

2014 - 2018 Bike Lane Infrastructure Plan

Recommendation:

1. That Transportation Committee recommend to City Council:
That the enhanced public engagement strategies, outlined in the June 5, 2014, Transportation Services report CR_1032, be approved.
2. That the report on the results of consultation and evaluation on the 121 Avenue and 76 Avenue bicycle network, be deferred until completion of the consultation on major bike routes, neighbourhood bike routes being considered in conjunction with neighbourhood renewal/revitalization and shared-use paths, outlined in Attachment 1 of the June 5, 2014, Transportation Service report CR_1032.

Report Summary

This report summarizes a proposed 2014 - 2018 implementation plan for bike infrastructure, public engagement approaches, and proposed public education enhancements.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 5, 2014, Transportation Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide the following report to Transportation Committee:

A proposed 2014 - 2018 implementation plan for new bike lane infrastructure, including recommendations for an enhanced public engagement strategy and recommendations for enhanced public education programs by the end of June, 2014.

At the March 13, 2013, Transportation Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration consult with the stakeholders in regards on the 121 Avenue and 76 Avenue community needs including safety, handicap parking, parking issues for residents and access and parking to any area businesses and facilities with regard to the development of the recommended bicycle network, and provide the results of the evaluation in a report to Transportation Committee.

Report

The City of Edmonton's Bicycle Transportation Plan includes a number of elements to make Edmonton a bike-friendly city in line with *The Ways* plans and the Active Transportation Policy. One of the elements of the Bicycle Transportation Plan is an extensive network of almost 500 km of proposed bike routes through the city to provide the option for Edmontonians to connect to the places they travel to on a daily and weekly basis by bike. To date, the implementation approach has included coordinating with renewal projects, filling in gaps in the existing on-street bike network, constructing missing shared-use paths, and focusing on on-street routes that could be built at low

cost.

The 2014 - 2018 implementation plan will shift to place priority on Major Bike Routes, Neighbourhood Bike Routes in conjunction with Neighbourhood Renewal/Revitalization, bicycle safety improvements and support infrastructure, and shared-use paths.

Major Bike Routes in the Core

The focus and budget allocation will be on high quality bicycle infrastructure in Edmonton's central areas (Downtown, Oliver, Strathcona, Garneau, University). These areas are priorities because they have the highest volumes of existing bicycle trips, they are major destinations for Edmontonians, they require bicycle infrastructure to reduce the number of vehicle-bicycle collisions, and there are many requests for bicycle infrastructure on these routes. Projects to be initiated with consultation are the Strathcona/Garneau/University route (83 Avenue) and the Downtown/Oliver/Glenora route (102 Avenue). Other Major Bike Routes to be planned and built in 2015 - 2018 are listed in Attachment 1 (pending budget approval).

This change in focus will require more funding to construct the type of infrastructure needed to make families feel comfortable cycling in these areas, which will bring greater potential to increase ridership and mode share. Characteristics of the Major Bike Grid are included in Attachment 2.

Neighbourhood Renewal and Revitalization Projects

Neighbourhood bike routes will continue in conjunction with neighbourhood renewal and revitalization projects because these routes typically do not impact vehicle parking, vehicle access, or the number or width of travel lanes. Characteristics of these routes are included in Attachment 2.

Projects to be completed or initiated in 2014 include Church Street (96 Street) as part of the McCauley Revitalization Project, and 127 Street as part of Westmount Neighbourhood Renewal Complete Streets Pilot Project and Collector Renewal in Inglewood. Other neighbourhood bike routes to be completed in 2014 are listed in Attachment 1. Consultation with the community has been completed in previous years for the 2014 routes and Church Street. 2015 - 2018 routes will be determined by the Neighbourhood Renewal Program.

Shared-Use Path Projects

Shared-use paths will be constructed with funding from Capital Program 12-66-1430 in 2014 and as part of developer projects in new neighbourhoods.

City-led projects for 2014 include 87 Avenue from Anthony Henday Drive to 189 Street and the completion of the 82 Street underpass widening. Additional possible projects for 2015 - 2018 are outlined in Attachment 1.

Safety Improvements, Support Infrastructure, and Signage

Safety improvements at intersections, support infrastructure, and signage are vital to increasing safety, improving ease of cycling in Edmonton, and supporting Edmontonians who choose to ride a bike for transportation and/or recreation. The Active Transportation Composite Capital Budget (12-66-1430) has been used in 2010 - 2013 to fund installation of bike routes and to invest in:

- bike racks;
- bike corrals for business districts;
- bicycle safety improvements at intersections; and
- shared-use path signs.

In 2014, signs for shared-use paths and bike racks in high use areas will be installed. The successful and popular bike corral program, in partnership with business associations, will also continue. Bicycle actuated signals will be piloted at Jasper Avenue and 110 Street to improve safety along an existing high use corridor. A permanent bicycle and pedestrian count station is also being installed on the High Level Bridge to test the technology, improve data collection, and reduce data collection costs.

Bicycle Facility Maintenance

The 106 Street Bike Route Winter/Spring Maintenance Pilot Project has just completed, and a report with the findings will be produced. The pilot provided insights into winter maintenance needs and approaches for on-street bike routes. The report will identify actions needed to keep the bike routes open for use in all seasons, propose places in the network that could be maintained for all-season use, and outline the required operating and capital costs. The City of Calgary has taken a similar approach to provide an all-season network of bike routes, including approving funding for snow clearing, street sweeping, and maintenance funding for pavement, roadway markings, and signs.

Deferring 76 Avenue and 121 Avenue

At the March 13, 2013, Transportation Committee meeting, Council directed Administration to complete further consultation and report back to Committee for proposed bike routes along 76 Avenue and 121 Avenue. Administration recommends delaying consultation on these routes to a later date. While the 76 Avenue and 121 Avenue routes are important to the connectivity and accessibility of the bicycle network, the implementation priority for bicycle facilities will be on the major bike routes, neighbourhood bike routes being considered in conjunction with neighbourhood renewal/revitalization, and shared-use paths.

Enhanced Public Engagement Strategies

Following the February 5, 2014, Transportation Committee meeting, efforts have been made to define a greater role for the public in decision-making, make the process more

accessible to impacted stakeholders and the public, and build greater public awareness of engagement opportunities.

Engagement approaches (see Attachment 3) have been developed for each of the three types of bike routes outlined in Attachment 2.

Changes in engagement approaches for the Connector Bike Routes and the Major Bike Grid include:

- The opportunity to review and provide input on route locations
- Providing feedback on design options and potential trade-offs
- Providing input on aesthetics such as landscaping and barrier design, if required as part of the project scope.

These processes have expanded to include up to six stages of engagement and will take place over 18 months to two years. The previous practice included two stages of engagement over four to six months. While the expansion will bring greater opportunity to reach more citizens, address the element of surprise, and give citizens more opportunity to shape the bike facilities, we anticipate that conflict and controversy will still exist in these processes.

Neighbourhood bike routes are part of the Building Great Neighbourhoods program, and the consultation to support them is embedded in that process. The Major Bike Grid Engagement Process will be first applied to the Strathcona/Garneau/University route (83 Avenue), and the Downtown/Oliver/Glenora route (102 Avenue) this year.

Public Education

Efforts to help cyclists and drivers understand how to use on-street bike infrastructure began in 2010. These efforts have grown substantially since that time to reflect the growing number and variety of on-street installations.

Public education efforts take considerable time and investment before results are widely evident. Research indicates noticeable headway has been made on a city-wide basis to break down major barriers. Because motorists and cyclists from all areas of the city travel to places where there is on-street bike infrastructure, this is a positive development that needs to be maintained. Attachment 4 provides more details on public education.

Mutual Benefits

More emphasis is needed to communicate why bicycle infrastructure is important and how it is mutually beneficial for both motorists and cyclists. A strong advertising presence, coupled with other communications activities, would help bridge this gap. Over time, this messaging will help citizens understand a greater context when they are

impacted by cycling infrastructure. This approach would be most effective if it was founded by a strong investment to support advertising.

Local Education – Street-team

Greater progress is needed to reach people directly affected by new construction. Additional investment could lead to a greater understanding of the rules of the road at the local level. A street-team could be created with summer students that would work personally with citizens on ways to drive and ride on the roadway with the new infrastructure. This would include activities such as door knocking and attending community events.

Policy

- Active Transportation Policy C544
- Public Involvement Policy C513

Corporate Outcomes

- Edmontonians use public transit and active modes of transportation.
- Edmontonians use facilities and services that promote health living.

Budget/Financial Implications

Administration will bring forward Capital Profiles to support the 2014 - 2018 Bicycle Infrastructure Plan for Council's consideration as part of the 2015 - 2018 Capital Plan.

Administration will bring forward a service package for consideration in the 2015 operating budget to fund enhanced public education programs for motorists and cyclists.

Justification of Recommendation

1. Administration requires Transportation Committee direction on public engagement strategies that can be consistently applied for bike infrastructure projects.
2. Consultation on the 121 Avenue and 76 Avenue bicycle networks should be deferred until after consultation on priority Bike Lane Infrastructure.

Attachments

1. Summary of Projects: 2014 - 2018 Bike Transportation Plan Implementation
2. Bike Route Typology
3. Public Engagement Approaches
4. Public Education

Others Reviewing this Report

- T. Webb, Chief Communications Officer, Office of the City Manager
- L. Rosen, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer