

Sidewalk and On-Street Bicycle Lane Program

Recommendation:

That the June 13, 2011, Transportation Services report 2011TS8672 be received for information.

Report Summary

This report highlights Transportation Services' accomplishments in support of Active Transportation in 2010, as well as anticipated construction of infrastructure to support walking and cycling in 2011 and beyond.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the October 5, 2009, City Council meeting, City Council approved Active Transportation Policy C544, "to optimize Edmontonian's opportunities to walk, roll, and cycle, regardless of age, ability, or socio-economic status; to enhance the safety, inclusivity and diversity of our communities, and to minimize the impact of transportation activities on Edmonton's ecosystem."

Report

2010 Accomplishments

There are over 3,670 kilometres of missing sidewalk located along roadways throughout Edmonton, limiting the accessibility of the City's existing sidewalk network. Each year, missing links are identified and prioritized in accordance with the 2009 Sidewalk Strategy to complete critical pedestrian connections. In 2010, 7.2 kilometres of sidewalk were constructed

(2.2 kilometres were completed as retro-fit sidewalks in existing parts of the city, while 5.0 kilometres were completed as part of the Neighbourhood Rehabilitation and Roadway Rehabilitation Programs).

Inaccessible bus stops are defined as lacking one or more of the following elements: a sidewalk connection, bus pad, or curb ramps. Although these accessibility needs are addressed within Edmonton's newer developments, it is the older areas where these issues are most prominent. An annual budget is currently allocated to resolving bus stop accessibility needs with priority given to locations with high usage. In 2010, 55 bus stops were made accessible.

As part of the City of Edmonton's Curb Ramp Program, approximately 300 curb ramps are constructed throughout the city on an annual basis. This program operates on a citizen request basis to ensure that the funds are directed in a fair and equitable manner throughout Edmonton. In addition to the Curb Ramp Program, approximately 180 curb ramps are constructed yearly through rehabilitation projects. In 2010, a total of 560 curb ramps were installed throughout Edmonton's neighbourhoods.

The Multi-use Trail Corridor Study provides an innovative network plan and implementation strategy for shared-use paths (multi-use trail) in the City of Edmonton, offering convenient access and linkage opportunities to all sectors of the city in a secure, economically feasible, and aesthetic manner. In 2010, approximately 8.8 kilometres of new shared-use pathways were constructed, 3.5 kilometres were completed as retro-fit shared-use

pathways, and 5.3 kilometres were completed as part of the Roadway Rehabilitation Program, further expanding this network through Edmonton's rail and utility corridors. To date, approximately 39 kilometres of this 62 kilometre network has been built.

The City of Edmonton's 2009 Bicycle Transportation Plan outlines a network of close to 500 kilometres of on-street and shared-use bicycle routes. As a first on Edmonton's streets, 16 kilometres of sharrow-marked routes were constructed in 2010.

Since 2002, the City of Edmonton has provided bicycle racks on bus routes 1, 4, and 9, as well as free access for bicycles on Light Rail Transit outside of the peak hours. As recommended in the 2009 Bicycle Transportation Plan, the City is moving towards providing bicycle racks on all buses, prioritized with cross-town and express routes across the river. In 2010, 121 new bicycle racks were added to the ETS fleet. The City of Edmonton now provides bicycle service on bus routes 1, 4, 8, 9, 30, 32, 111, 128, 139, and 180. All new buses purchased come equipped with a bicycle rack.

In 2008, a public bicycle parking program was established, to provide bicycle parking along major commercial corridors throughout the city. Over 300 racks were installed throughout Edmonton, including 23 racks installed on a request basis in 2010.

2011 Program

A number of significant projects will be undertaken in 2011, funded through Capital Priority Program 1430 (Active

Transportation) and/or in conjunction with Neighbourhood Renewal:

- sidewalks: 51 Avenue (75 Street to Roper Road); 50 Street (at 101 Avenue); 98 Street (Whyte Avenue to 90 Avenue); 119 Street (111 Avenue to 115 Avenue); Eilerslie Road (111 Street to 119 Street); Mayfield Service Road (Mayfield Common to 105 Avenue)
- inaccessible bus stops: sidewalks, curb ramps, and bus pads at over 30 locations
- curb ramps: Sakaw, Ogilvie Ridge, Glengarry, Elmwood neighbourhoods
- shared-use paths: 34 Avenue (34 Street to 37 Street); Saddleback (111 Street to 106 Street and 23 Avenue), Callingwood Road (178 Street to Transportation Utility Corridor)
- bicycle lanes: Saddleback Road Loop; 106 Street (51 Avenue to Saskatchewan Drive); 97 Street (34 Avenue to 83 Avenue); 76 Avenue (Gateway Boulevard to Saskatchewan Drive)
- shared lanes (Sharrows): Parkallen
- in 2011, an additional 100 bicycle racks are planned to be installed on existing buses
- Public Bicycle Parking: expansion to include 200 additional racks

2012 to 2014 Funding

For 2009 and 2010, approximately \$21 million of Transportation Services' Capital Budget was spent on Active Transportation infrastructure (average of \$10.5 million per year); of this amount, approximately 35 percent of the funding came from Program 1430 (Active Transportation), with the remaining 65 percent of the funding coming out of

renewal and other road projects (for example, neighbourhood reconstruction projects include missing sidewalk connections, curb ramps, and accessible transit pads). The \$21 million equates to approximately three percent of the Transportation Services' Capital Budget (excluding LRT).

City Council has directed Transportation Services allocate five percent of the overall capital budget for transportation (excluding LRT) to infrastructure to serve Active Transportation. Assuming a significant budget cutback to the Transportation Capital Budget in the 2012 to 2014 Capital Priority Program as compared to the 2009 to 2011 Capital Priority Program, it is anticipated that a five percent allocation to Active Transportation might realize about \$6 million annually over the 2012 to 2014 time frame. While the percentage of the overall Transportation Capital Budget allocated to Active Transportation increases from three percent to five percent, there is a net loss in annual funding for Active Transportation of about \$4.5 million. Assuming that Capital Priority Program 1430 (Active Transportation) is allotted 35 percent of this funding, the annual program will have only \$2.1 million to spend in each budget year which will significantly impact program delivery.

Challenges

Besides the obvious challenge of inadequate funding to address the infrastructure needs for Active Transportation as identified in the 2009 Sidewalk Strategy and the 2009 Bicycle Transportation Plan, a number of other challenges are expected to continue to impact Transportation Services' ability to

deliver on its mandate to "shift transportation modes" by supporting pedestrians and cyclists with the infrastructure and programs to make walking and cycling viable options.

- Strategic Support: While it is clear that the City's Vision (The Way Ahead) and the Transportation Master Plan (The Way We Move) support Active Transportation, it is difficult to develop a viable implementation plan in light of unknown future funding levels and decision making that appears to be in conflict with the mandate of Transportation Services to "shift transportation modes";
- Community Support: At a strategic level communities support walking and cycling; when the details of implementation are worked out, banning parking to add bicycle lanes and relocating trees to accommodate sidewalks are unpopular, and it is difficult to help people to understand that trade-offs and compromises are unavoidable consequences of introducing Active Transportation infrastructure into developed areas;
- Timing: Shifting renewal schedules and the need to coordinate Active Transportation Projects with larger contracts influences Transportation Services' ability to ensure that project information is delivered to stakeholders in a timely manner;
- Tendering: By definition, Active Transportation Projects are deemed to be small, and as such, standalone projects can become prohibitively expensive; only by aggregating a number of projects within one contract agreement can cost savings be achieved;

- **Operational Support:** Operationally, retrofitting Active Transportation infrastructure into existing road rights-of-way can be a challenge, and compromises are essential to ensure that the needs of all road users, including transit buses and emergency response vehicles, can be addressed;
 - **Monitoring Performance:** Technology is advancing to allow for counts of pedestrians and cyclists, but data collection remains resource intensive, making it difficult to monitor usage and track trends; and
 - **Behaviour Change:** Social marketers know that behaviour change takes time; while the infrastructure to support walking and cycling is essential, it is not the only determinant of behaviour change; raising awareness, education, and outreach are necessary supports, and long term trends the only true indication of success.
- The transportation system is integrated, safe, and gives citizens choices to their mode of movement.

Public Consultation

Decisions to construct sidewalks and on-street cycling facilities are made in accordance with the Sidewalk Strategy, Bicycle Transportation Plan, and Design and Construction Standards. Public involvement is typically limited to “information sharing” leading to concerns from stakeholders who felt they should have input into routing and design decisions.

Attachments

1. Proposed 2011 Active Transportation Capital Program

Policy

Active Transportation Policy C544 (2009)

Corporate Outcomes

- Edmonton strives to be a leader in environmental advocacy, stewardship, preservation, and conservation.
- Citizens use City infrastructure and they participate in services and programs that provide enjoyment and personal health benefits.
- Edmonton has sustainable infrastructure that fosters and supports civic and community needs.
- Citizens use public transit and active modes of transportation.