/cv
4:30 o'clock p.m. Wednesday, May 29, 2024
Environment, Transportation & Public Safety Standing Committee

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.10. Red Light Camera Update – City Wide **(C 19/2024) & (AI 10/2024)**
Clerk's Note: Duane Francis, area resident, submitting the ***previously distributed*** email dated May 24, 2024 as a written submission

8.2. Wyandotte Street Road Diet Update Report – Wards 4, 5 & 6
(S 146/2023)
Clerk's Note: Lori Newton, Executive Director, Bike Windsor Essex + The Bike Kitchen submitting the ***attached*** letter dated May 24, 2024 as a written submission.

DELEGATIONS:

8.2. Wyandotte Street Road Diet Update Report – Wards 4, 5 & 6
(S 146/2023)
a) Wayne Lessard, area resident (in person)
b) Brian Brown, ward 6 resident (in person)
c) Diana Furlong, ward 4 resident (in person)

bike windsor essex

May 24, 2024

REPORT TO THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY STANDING COMMITTEE:

Since 2001 - 23 years - Wyandotte Street East has been recognized as needing bike lanes from St. Rose through to George.

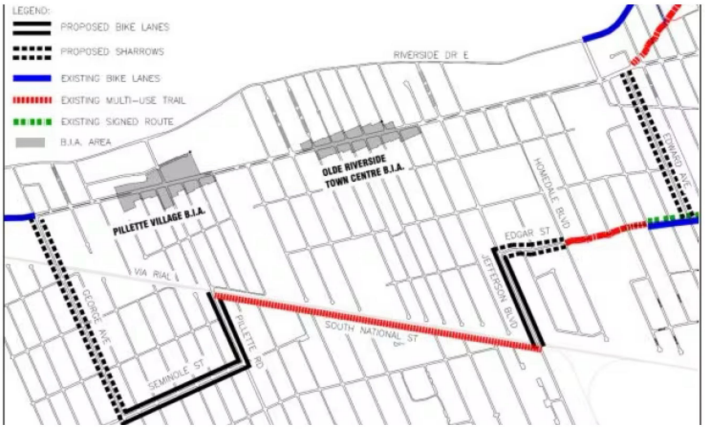
Timeline:

- In 2001, the Bicycle Use Master Plan (the BUMP) was ratified by City Council. It called for bike lanes along the entire Wyandotte Street corridor. Over the following two decades, studies continued to identify the need for Wyandotte Street bike lanes to help close the Windsor Loop.

- In 2014, Mayor Drew Dickens said, “Residents today are looking for more walkable, liveable communities where they don’t need a car to go and buy groceries. Where they can sustain many elements of daily living within their own neighbourhoods.” Ten years later, the Mayor remains uncommitted to safe spaces on our streets for cycling.

- In 2016, Administration recommended bike lanes on Wyandotte Street East. City Council approved and funded the initiative.

- In 2017, The ETPS bypassed the proposed bike lanes that would have run from George Avenue to Vernon Crescent, instead recommending the infamous zigzag solution, giving Riverside and Gillette Village a wide berth. The subsequent City Council meeting drew dozens of cyclists who rode to City Hall to protest the zigzag solution. Five BIAs, the Windsor Bicycling Committee, and 11 delegations were there to speak to the need for bike lanes directly on Wyandotte Street. They spoke from different perspectives; teachers concerned about their students’ safety, local business owners who recognized the benefits of cycling to retailers. City Council deferred the issue to a future ATMP.



The proposed zigzag was so preposterous that the proposal drew attention and ridicule from news media across the province.

- In 2019, Council approved the Active Transportation Master Plan. It is worth noting that the plan was partially funded by the FCM's Municipalities for Climate and Innovation program. The ATMP identifies Wyandotte Street as a multi-modal corridor and stresses the importance of providing direct AAA routes to and through the City's commercial districts, i.e. Riverside and Pillette Village.

- In 2020 Councillor Gignac was quoted as saying that "people in the Riverside area have been waiting a long time for the narrowed road. I don't want to come back at the end of the year and tell residents and business people we are still doing studies." A second "zigzag" was proposed but not acted upon.

- In 2023, Council approved the Environmental Master Plan and in the State of Our Environment report, the importance of cycling and active transportation to help decrease our greenhouse house gas emissions and improve the health of residents is noted.

- In 2024, Council approved the Vision Zero Action Plan to reduce or eliminate fatalities and injuries of vulnerable road users on our streets.

The City of Windsor clearly states within these policies that it is committed to improving cycling and other mobility options. It commits to doing this by developing well connected, attractive active transportation networks that are safe, convenient and user friendly for all modes of transportation and for all residents.

City Administration seems to be claiming that "*carmageddon*" will occur if Wyandotte Street car lanes are reduced to facilitate space for cyclists. The transportation engineering concept of "reduced demand" explains why *carmageddon* never occurred in numerous documented instances where traffic lanes were reduced or suddenly eliminated. For example: a 60-foot

section of the West Side Highway in Manhattan collapsed in 1973. The highway carried 80,000 vehicles a day. The City measured the impact of the vehicles on nearby city streets. To their amazement, about half of the traffic could not be found at all on nearby streets, and the rest was absorbed without major impact on the city's grid.

Wyandotte is a critical arterial that urgently needs traffic calming to reduce rampant speeding between Riverside and Strabane. Residents have complained about the speeding for decades and there have been multiple collisions on that stretch.

BAIT & SWITCH

It feels as though the City is using the ATMP to NOT install infrastructure. For example, cycling facilities were not installed on Ypres during recent road reconstruction. Administration's response was that the ATMP calls for Triple A facilities on Ypres, work the city was not financially willing to do and so the road was reconstructed with no cycling facilities at all. We would argue that something is better than nothing.

Regarding Wyandotte East, Administration asserts that "the only facility that meets the recommendations for an arterial road servicing the volume of traffic currently being realized, is fully protected and/or off road facilities." However, if we consider Cabana Road that was to have protected bike lanes as voted on and approved by City Council. Unbelievably, at the 11th hour, Administration changed the plan providing a painted white line on the pavement - no buffer, no protection on a major arterial.

Let's also consider University Avenue West that was to have temporary bike lanes installed last year as approved by City Council. Then, the current council turned back that decision "to save the dollars needed for the final solution". Yet, we don't know what the final solution is, we haven't seen a plan, there has been no public announcement of a timeline or a budget. And so we continue to risk the lives of those cycling from the west end to downtown and further east. Will our first 'complete street' even happen in our lifetime?

OTHER BARRIERS:

Other barriers identified by administration include the issue of snow clearance. How many days did we see snow in 2024? 3? 4? We're going to decide not to provide safety for cyclists for more than 350 days because of possible snow fall on a handful of winter days? City Council saw fit to "invest" in a waterfront goose poop remover to clean up the trails; perhaps this machine could clear bike lanes in the winter months when it's not needed for the goose poop?

Let's also keep in mind that very snowy cities like Montreal, Edmonton, Calgary are all investing in year round cycling networks and are somehow managing the snow.

Administration appears to recognize that protected bike lanes on Wyandotte East would bring multiple benefits and acknowledges that protected bike lanes are the preferred option as determined through public consultation. We all now know that adding bikes brings vibrancy, life and cash to neighbourhoods and local businesses. It is a fact that cyclists spend more money more often than potential shoppers driving by in a car.

Yet, despite all of the economic, health and safety benefits, Administration claims that a Road Diet "would negatively impact the level of service (LOS) on Wyandotte in a number of segments". Progressive cities understand induced demand and recognize that sacrificing equity and safety on the road so that car drivers save seconds during "rush hour" is no longer acceptable.

We urge you to put this issue to bed for once and for all. Protected bike lanes will help meet the City's commitment to road safety, carbon reductions and connected neighbourhoods; let's get it done.

Respectfully,

Lori Newton, Executive Director
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