



July 22, 2019

Mark Dickson
Transportation Project Manager
Active Transportation Team
City of Kingston

Subject: Review Comments draft Active Transportation Implementation Plan (ATIP)

Dear Mark,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Active Transportation Implementation Plan.

As a general comment, given the strategic priorities of the current Council, and the recent declaration by Council that Kingston has a climate emergency within its city limits, we are concerned the goal of 20 percent active transportation (AT) modal share needs to be achieved more quickly to meet the deepened commitment of Council. Since AT and transit are key elements contributing to the goal to reduce greenhouse gases, we encourage a more aggressive schedule be considered. In this regard, it is not clear if the infrastructure priority matrix included “greenhouse gas reduction” as one of the 18 criteria used to assess the AT routes relative to one another. We recommend this information be considered in the final version of the ATIP.

We are disappointed with the modest level of resources identified to implement the Plan and have concerns that this will impact achieving the long-term goal of having at least 20 percent of all trips using AT.

The ATMP proposed spending \$127,544,587 in the 16 years leading to 2034 (Table 11, p. 75), which works out to roughly \$8,000,000 per year. However, the amounts presented in the ATIP (Table 8 and Table 9) show spending approximately \$3 Million less, per year, in each of those first 5 years.

The KTMP, prepared in 2015, laid out a blueprint (Table 10-1, p. 73) for spending \$96 M for AT, \$85 M for transit and \$559 M for roads, TDM and TSM. Even though Council suggested a shift in mode share targets such that AT and Transit should increase to 35% of trips, leaving car trips to only 65%, roads still get 75% of the transportation budget. Of the total of \$740 Million, AT should receive \$148M not \$127.6, a shortfall of \$20 Million. Furthermore, since changing the culture to switch from cars to AT/Transit is a big shift in thinking, shouldn't there be more money spent up front (i.e. in the first 5 years) to make the culture change easier? Is there any indication of where the mode shares will be in 2023? If only we had a current Household Travel Survey.

If the mode shares move to 35% AT-Transit, that will mean roughly 35,000 fewer car trips per day. Assuming a modest 2km per trip and fuel consumption of 10 litres/100 km, that works out to a saving of 7,000 litres of fuel per day! This translates to 161,000 kg of CO₂ or 161 tonnes of CO₂ per day or roughly 50,000 tonnes per year. At the very least, this plan could be accelerated to be completed in 4 years for the \$23M allocated.

We support the proposed cycle routes. However, we are concerned and disappointed with the lack of new cycling infrastructure on Sir John A. MacDonald Blvd south of John Counter Blvd, and the Princess St. corridor beyond the downtown, in the first 5 years of the ATIP. The creation of safer routes and infrastructure along these arterial roads, will likely result in a greater AT modal shift sooner, better serving these neighbourhoods given their close proximity to the urban core for commuting to work, shopping (e.g. Kingston Centre), and other daily activities. Extension of safer routes serving these neighbourhoods beyond the downtown core, in the initial implementation phase, will likely result in greater greenhouse gas reduction, less congestion during peak hours, resulting in city-wide benefits for drivers, transit and AT alike. This kind of visible benefit, in the early phase of the ATIP, will foster a culture change contributing to the adoption and sustainability of the desired modal shift.

We recommend, as part of this 5 year plan, the proposed cycle Rt. 14 be extended south along Victoria St., as a designated signed route, to connect with the existing Princess St bike lanes, and perhaps to connect with Rt. 8.

The ATIP seems to place most attention on the establishment and expansion of a cycle network, with particular emphasis placed on cycling corridors. There is less clarity on the proposed work to address pedestrian challenges, and the inter-relationship of AT with transit. These are serious shortcomings of the ATIP and need to be strengthened.

We fully support the concept of promoting active routes to school and find the proposed pilot for a community-level School Travel Planning (STP) program to be innovative and offers opportunities for partnerships with community stakeholders to work together to find local Kingston solutions. Similarly, transit hubs are busy pedestrian locations, on busy arterials near high risk intersections, providing service to pedestrians of all ages and mobility abilities. The lack of attention to address these challenges at the transit hubs in the first phase of the ATIP is another shortcoming. We recommend that an Active and Safe Routes to Transit Hub Program be considered in the initial 5 year phase of the ATIP.

Other examples of how the ATIP can be strengthened to show more clearly when and how the pedestrian needs will be addressed include, but are not limited to:

1. The need for existing pathways to be refreshed and maintained; e.g. uneven pavement, regular flooding, asphalt replacement and pathways widened (e.g. in Polson Park, Calvin Park and Lakeshore), fallen fencing, grass mowing, tree and shrubs trimming, snow clearing, etc.;

2. Need to complete Safety Audits of existing pathways; e.g. access to arterial streets with unmarked mid-block crossings (e.g. Portsmouth Ave /Silver St. Pathway; SJA/LCVI/Calvin Park Library, etc.);

3. Night Audits for lighting and safety along existing routes and pathways (e.g. paths used by students walking to St. Lawrence College and Queen's University). Union St is a major walkway between West Campus and Main Campus with hundreds of pedestrians daily, yet snow clearing is not a priority;

4. An Amenities Audit along existing pathways for things like benches, trees for shade, garbage and dog waste collection, water fountains (people and dogs), art, etc.;

5. Wayfinding signage on existing pathways, within and between neighbourhoods; and

6. The new sidewalks proposed are mainly along arterial roads. It is recommended a Sidewalk Plan be developed that shows priorities and timing for installation of sidewalks to complete existing networks in neighbourhoods, such as to bus stops (e.g. along the east side of Portsmouth Ave leading from the Silver St pathway to the Portsmouth/Johnson bus stop), recreational facilities (e.g. the skateboard park on Portsmouth Ave) and in tourist zones (such as the historic Portsmouth Village along King St between Mowat Ave and the Portsmouth Olympic Harbour).

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed ATIP. We are encouraged by this work and look forward to continuing an active involvement in this important initiative. We are available to discuss any and all of these ideas and recommendations at your convenience.

Sincerely

Bruce Bursey

KCAT

with contributions from several KCAT members