

Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee (MCAC)

Agenda: January 8, 2019 - **Item 7.1**

Burnhamthorpe Multi-use Trail Changes

I'd like to provide an update on recent reports made to City staff about the Burnhamthorpe multi-use trail.

Committee members have ongoing concerns about the trail. It's a major east-west cycling route. We have recommended that the City make this an example of the latest design and safety features. Applying not just the minimum standards but the best standards.

There have been concerns about the design of this trail resulting in unsafe conditions at intersections and commercial entrances.

As well, issues with winter snow clearing, pruning of low branches, construction work and debris and these black bollards that the City insists on installing at intersections.

I'll deal with two recent issues about the downtown cycling detour and new cycling crossrides on Burnhamthorpe east of Dixie.

Downtown Cycling Detour

Firstly, last year Peel Region started a tunnelling project for a trunk watermain along Burnhamthorpe through the City Centre area. The shafts for access to the tunnel are located in the existing multi-use trail, spaced out along the tunnel alignment.

MCAC had recommended to install protected bike lanes around shaft areas and maintain use of rest of the existing trail between shafts.

This was ignored and the City and Region decided to put in a 3 km long detour north of Burnhamthorpe from Confederation through Civic Centre and ending at Central Parkway.

Cycling detour signage was installed at the start of the project. Since that time we've notified the City on a few occasions about deficiencies that include signs being down, missing or pointing in wrong directions.

On December 4, 2018, I submitted a report that about 80 to 90% of the detour signage was again deficient.

On December 5, I received a response from the Active Transportation office stating that this would be forwarded to Peel Region for correction.

This past Sunday, about a month later, I rode through the detour again and found the same deficiencies still there.

The way it is right now, without the signage in place, cyclists continue from Confederation along the trail up to the construction hoarding. Then they have a choice to go left over the grass into a parking lot or right out onto Burnhamthorpe and into a lane with oncoming traffic.

The cycling detour was put in for the safety of cyclists and rightly so. However the signage can't just be installed at the project start and then be neglected. Either the City or the Region or the contractor, somebody, needs to take ownership and inspect and maintain it on a very regular basis. If there is an injury or fatality, all three parties would probably be named in the lawsuit.

Burnhamthorpe East Cycling Crossrides

The second issue: late last year the City completed Burnhamthorpe reconstruction east of Dixie Road which included signalized cycling crossrides at three intersections and a mid-block location. And it's great to see these start to go in.

On December 4, 2018, I reported some concerns about the new crossrides to the Active Transportation office. There were signal poles located in line with the crossrides creating conflicts at the Fieldgate and at Ponytrail intersections.

On December 5, I received a response from the Active Transportation office stating that hazard markers would be added to the poles immediately.

This past Sunday, about a month later, I rode out to the new crossrides again. There were still no hazard markers on the poles. Also the City had decided to add these black bollards at each intersection. Now Bough Beeches Blvd which was clear before, has black non-reflective bollards in line with the crossride. The Fieldgate intersection and Ponytrail intersection now have pole *and* bollard conflicts.

Now cyclists have to not only watch out for right and left turning drivers while in the crossride, they also have to navigate a zig zag route between poles and bollards at the entrance and exits of the boulevards. It's an accident waiting to happen.

I personally can't understand why the City has proceeded to install these black non-reflective bollards and thereby adding hazards after being notified that there were already pole conflicts. It appears again that our input is being ignored.

And these are concerns with the physical aspects of the crossrides.

More importantly, there are also the operational aspects. Signalized cycling crossrides can't just be added to existing boulevard trails. In doing so, the intersections can become even more unsafe. The new cycling signals appear to be synchronized with the road traffic signals. It is usually preferred to provide advanced green signal activation for cyclists and pedestrians so they can move into the intersection and be visible to drivers before they start their turns.

Other things like no right turns on red, setting stop bars well back from intersections and realignment of boulevard trails closer to the curb at intersections need to be considered.

With the number of conflicts now at all of these intersections, I feel that relocation of poles and removal of bollards is the only corrective solution. Unfortunately this will mean spending additional taxpayer dollars.

I've also ridden through the brand new cycling crossrides on Rathburn and have noted some conflict issues there as well.

Better planning and design *before* going out to tender, applying the best standards and better layout and inspection during construction are going to be required. A modified phrase of measure twice and build once would definitely apply here.

I would refer you to the MCAC website and social media pages for more information about both these issues.

Thank you.

Leonard Verwey, MCAC Citizen Member