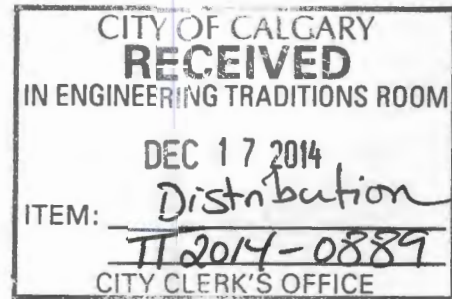


December 17, 2014



**RE: Response to Transportation and Transit TT2014-0889
Centre City Cycle Track and Stephen Avenue Pilot Evaluation**

The Calgary Downtown Association (CDA) remains consistent in our lack of support for many of the measures in the pilot evaluation matrix. To continue to rank economic vitality of businesses as a secondary measurement is disrespectful of those making significant contributions to Calgary's tax base and employing our citizens. When advocates of the cycling infrastructure, including some members of council, imply that increased revenues ranging from 49% to 93% are realized from increased cycling traffic, aiming for only a 2% increase in the number of customers per day, the number of visits per week, and the monthly spends of patrons, is insignificant. With less than 100 survey responses, the validity of the economic impact data is very questionable. It was the recommendation of the CDA that this area of data collection be carried out by a third party financial consultant, and we stand firm on that recommendation.

The CDA supports the increase of satisfaction for cyclists by 30% and pedestrians by 10%. For drivers, their satisfaction should also improve, as travel times should decrease with the reduction of vehicles due to the increase in bicycles. The travel times for motorists should, at a minimum, remain the same, but should not increase. It is not clear if adjacent streets are being monitored for travel time impacts, but they need to be.

The proposed goal for increasing the number of cyclists north of the CPR tracks by doubling the current volume is not aggressive enough to show success of the pilot. The 7th street cycle track increased ridership four-fold in one year, so the targets should be more reflective of the reported reality. Measuring the increase in the total downtown cyclist numbers would be more valuable, as migration from other roadways to the cycle tracks will be lost with this matrix. On Stephen Avenue Walk, we have been concerned to see that the number of illegal cyclists (those riding from 06:00 to 18:00 hours) is more than 70% of all cycling on the mall. This is an indication of poor communication about the timing of the pilot and of the propensity for reckless behavior from cyclists.

Safety has repeatedly been used as the main reason to install cycling infrastructure, especially cycle tracks. Unlawful riding measurements should be reflective of the experience on the 7th street cycle track, where it fell to 1%. We are pleased to see that 'careless bicycle riding' has been added to the Stephen Avenue Walk evaluation matrix. It is unclear as to why the benchmark has not yet been determined, but we trust it will



be in place before the pilot begins, not the fall of 2015, as indicated. The CDA remains unsupportive of a 10% collision reduction, as it is too low to justify the investment to date, and that to come.

The CDA has been consistent in our request for education about cycling, and especially for the pilot, as there will be many changes at one time. Other than bike ambassadors, who could engage with pedestrians and cyclists, it is not clear what other efforts are being made to educate people about the pilot, especially motorists, or what amount of the project delivery budget is allocated to education. We were asked to make our HOSTs™ (Hospitality Outreach and Safety Team) available to assist the City's ambassadors, as we did for the opening of the 7th street cycle track. When we requested they be trained to a CAN-BIKE2 certification, we were very disappointed that the certification was rejected. Our HOSTs will be receiving the CAN-BIKE2 training, at our cost, further demonstrating our commitment to cycling education.

Under the budget section of the report, we were surprised to see \$245,000 allocated for signals in the Stephen Avenue/Olympic Plaza section, as there has been no discussion or indication that signals would be required. The designs shared with the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) and the CDA, or at least the few that have been supported, are not worthy of a \$595,000 expenditure.

The loss of on street, short-stay parking has yet to be addressed. The CDA has been told that there will be a near zero impact on the parking due to the pilot. With the removal of 200 on-street spots in the downtown, and only a promise of a solution within a five-minute walk of the pilot, our businesses are concerned. The cost, availability and accessibility of short-stay parking in the downtown is the largest deterrent to doing business, especially for the retail sector. Angle parking may seem like a simple solution, but there are very few locations where it can be accommodated. It is more dangerous for cyclists, and is not supported by many Health and Safety experts.

Based on the engagement to date with the BAC, the CDA remains significantly concerned about the plans for a shared-space environment for Stephen Avenue Walk. As active participants on the BAC, and the long-term managers of the mall, we agreed that education, speed control and enforcement were the keys to making the mall safe for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, as the feedback indicated. Clearly, we were shocked at the workshops and the concept presentations to find place-making and programming added to the mix of deliverables from the City. This infringes in the work that we are contracted to do, and that we have been successful in doing for many years. It hardly falls in the realm of mobility infrastructure. As previously stated, this pilot introduces unnecessary risks and liability, which the City must shoulder. Enforcement issues, including bylaw changes have not been resolved, nor have issues related to property damage and personal injury been addressed. We have not seen any effort given to what happens on the mall when it reverts to a one-way roadway at 18:00 hours each day, except that two-way cycling, at all times, is a desired outcome of the City. Skateboarding and in-line skating, not currently allowed on the mall, have also not been addressed. The CDA recommended that the Stephen Avenue Walk pilot begin prior to July 1, 2015, as that is the first day of the most intense programming on the mall, followed immediately by the Stampede. We must trust that the committee will stand by

their promise not to allow cycling on the mall during the busy times, those being events and over the lunchtime (10:30 am to 2 pm daily), when vehicles are prohibited for being on the mall at all, except for emergencies.

In late 2013, the CDA began discussions with Animal and Bylaw Services and a representative from the Legal Department, unrelated to cycling, to address and strengthen the Stephen Avenue Bylaw. Areas of concern were, to name a few; panhandling, busking, preaching, protesting, and smoking, with the desired outcome to simplify the enforcement of the bylaw. Now that cycling has been added to the list, the discussions have moved to clarify the hours of operation, direction of travel, and potentially to defined areas for the type of travel to ensure enforcement that will stand up in court.

Communication and data-gathering have improved since the BAC was put in place. However, the execution of the survey, where IP addresses were not restricted to a single use, and where the survey was not readily accessible on the City's website, either by a search or on the ENGAGE tab, until near the end of the survey, even after it was brought to the attention of the team several times, was less than desirable, and negatively impacted the validity of the survey. Posting the BAC meeting notes from the November meeting to the City website prior to them being distributed and approved by the BAC raises governance issues.

The largest single concern the CDA has with this report is the recommendation that the next report from Administration to the SPC on Transportation and Transit would be no later than 2015 December. There is so much work left to be done to create an environment that will ensure the safety of users of the mall, and to create a matrix that effectively measures the pilot, that the CDA respectfully asks that the committee request that Administration report back prior to the pilot commencing.

Summary Bullets:

- Economic impact not adequately addressed
- Satisfaction for drivers needs to increase
- Number of cyclists in the downtown should more than double
- Safety measurements are not adequate, or are undefined
- Education is inadequate
- Cost for infrastructure on the mall is excessive
- Scope of deliverables to include programming and place-making
- Enforcement for the mall is unresolved
- Start date for the mall pilot is inappropriate
- Communication and governance concerns exist
- Committee needs to see solid metrics and designs for the mall before proceeding

Maggie Schofield
Executive Director