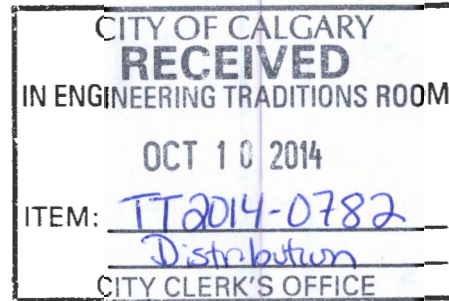


BIKE CALGARY

Historic City Hall (Sandstone Building)
700 Macleod Trail S.E.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

October 10, 2014



Bike Calgary Comments Pertaining to the Sidewalk Closures Update

Attention Councillor Keating, Chair SPC Transportation & Transit

Dear Councillor Keating,

Bike Calgary is pleased to submit this letter in support of the Sidewalk Closures Update. Sidewalk safety is important to all Calgarians, whether they walk, use mobility devices, cycle, take transit or drive. This is particularly true during construction projects. We are pleased to see the initiative has been taken by Council, and delivered by Transportation staff, to improve the pedestrian environment during such projects.

It is essential that Calgary maintain a safe and accessible environment for pedestrians at all times and on all streets, particularly those in the Centre City. As such, it is reassuring to see that more sidewalks are remaining open during construction, and that accommodations are being implemented more frequently. Calgarians do still experience a significant number of sidewalk closures, and we encourage Administration to follow through on this report, ensuring that every alternative is explored before a closure is approved. The following are our specific comments on the report before you.

Signage

Though the number of closures is decreasing, Calgarians still often express frustration and confusion with construction impacts on the pedestrian realm. This is particularly true when it comes to signage that may be missing, unclear and/or positioned inappropriately. Signage should clearly outline closures/detours, and be positioned well in advance of construction sites, preferably at intersections. Unfortunately, this is often lacking, but we trust that Transportation staff will strive to require and deliver higher quality signage in the future.

Cycle Tracks

The Sidewalk Closures Update also addresses construction site impacts on cycle tracks. Bike Calgary is very encouraged to see this section included. As the report outlines, cycling infrastructure can be impacted by construction work in much the same way as sidewalks are. Toward Calgary's goals of becoming a better city for cycling and increasing cycling mode share, a robust policy for dealing with construction impacts on cycling facilities is key.

Great care must be taken to ensure that cycling facilities are kept open and safe during construction projects. This is particularly true as Calgary's low-density of on-street cycling infrastructure means there are often not appropriate alternative routes. If a detour must be created, the detour needs to be to the same level of safety, comfort and accessibility as the closed section. Bike Calgary and the City are working to make cycling accessible to a wider



range of persons, so it is essential this work not be undone by failing to provide detours of the same quality as the infrastructure that encouraged those new riders in the first place.

10 Ave S

Starting this year, a construction site on 10 Av S between 4 St SW and 5 St SW has caused the partial closure of the Centre City's only E-W on-street cycling infrastructure. This closure represents an inadequate commitment to maintaining active transportation infrastructure during construction projects. There was no advanced notice that the lane would be closed, no detour created, and no signage installed to address the bicycle lane closure. Only after citizen complaints, were signs installed to direct those cycling and driving to use the remaining traffic lane in single-file fashion. If a detour absolutely cannot be installed, signage should, at the very least, be installed at the start of the closure.

7 St SW

The closure of the 7 St SW cycle track was a learning experience for how to deal with cycling facility closures. While it would have been preferable for the cycle track detour to have been implemented sooner, it was clear that Transportation staff were not yet prepared for this, or any, cycle track closure. The detour that was set up functioned well and was of appropriate quality for a temporary situation. For longer term closures, Bike Calgary recommends more secure barriers than cones, so that detours remain open consistently.

Centre City Cycle Track Network Trial

During the upcoming Centre City Cycle Track Network Trial, every effort should be made to avoid and reduce construction impacts on cycle track routes. Because the trial takes place over a limited time-span, and because many new users will be cycling in the Centre City for the first time, closures and detours will have a more profound effect. To ensure a successful trial that will collect data representative of a true permanent analogue, any detour needs to be of equal quality to the trial infrastructure. Full closures must be avoided.

General

It is encouraging that the City of Calgary is continuing to improve its commitment to active transportation. Efforts to address and minimize construction site impacts are an important component of this overall initiative. We respectfully ask that the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and Transit receive this update report for information.

Sincerely,

<signed>

Kimberley Nelson
(President, Bike Calgary)

<signed>

Dale Calkins
(Director, Bike Calgary)