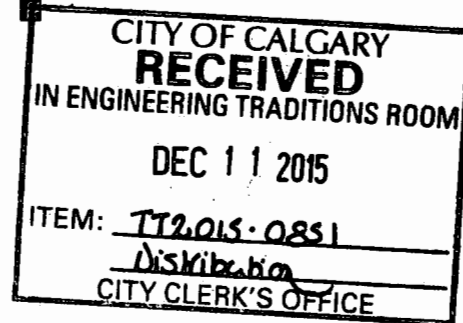


BIKE CALGARY

Old City Hall (Sandstone Building)
700 Madeod Trail S.E.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

December 11th, 2015



Bike Calgary Comments on Cycling Strategy Annual Report TT2015-0851

Attention Councillor Keating, Chair SPC Transportation & Transit

Dear Councillor Keating,

Bike Calgary thanks Committee for the opportunity to provide feedback on the ongoing implementation of Calgary's Cycling Strategy. Bike Calgary is a volunteer-based organization with over 2,200 members. Bike Calgary is dedicated to improving Calgary's cycling environment for all Calgarians who wish to travel by bicycle.

Calgarians are already cycling in significant numbers, based on annual cordon counts, spot counts for specific infrastructure, automated counters throughout the cycling network and reports such as the Civic Census. It is important that Council remain diligent in providing Calgarians safe, comfortable and reasonably efficient bicycle travel opportunities.

In the interest of brevity, we have aligned our comments with the Cycling Strategy's three pillars; (1) plan, design and build, (2) operate and maintain and (3) educate and promote. We invite follow-up questions should Committee members wish to draw on our experience as daily users of Calgary's bicycle network.

Plan, Design and Build

As both a key destination for commuter cyclists and an area highly amenable to local bicycle trips, providing robust bicycle infrastructure in the City Centre is essential. Bike Calgary congratulates Council and Administration for delivering the Centre City Cycle Track Pilot ahead of schedule and under budget. Further, we are encouraged to see certain performance measures, such as trip counts and percentage of female ridership, already meeting or exceeding expectation.

Bike Calgary is pleased to see improvements to the bikeway network beyond the Centre City into 2015 and we look forward to implementation of projects currently in the planning and design phase. We are however skeptical about the potential for meeting the 30km of cycle track and 180km of bicycle lanes targeted for 2020.



Spot improvements, such as curb ramps, pathway realignments at roadway intersections and enhanced markings and signage at crossings enable bicycle travel with little-to-no negative impact on established travel patterns. Bike Calgary is pleased to see a number of these improvements in 2015 and encourages City staff to continue identifying similar opportunities. We also encourage investigating how such improvements tie with opportunities to create comprehensive greenways (bicycle boulevards), particularly in areas where well connected residential streets provide an alternative corridor to busier roadways.

In terms of overarching Cycling Strategy Actions, while we are encouraged to see progress on the Bikeway Design Guide (C4), given its tie to Calgary's Complete Streets Policy and Guide and particularly its adoption as a broader-scope provincial document with potential legislative changes, we remain concerned with slow progress on the Pathway and Bikeway Implementation Plan Update (C1). We are also concerned with some projects defaulting to "traditional" boulevard pathways as Complete Streets treatments, or to no bicycle accommodation at all.

Though independent of the Cycling Strategy scope, pathways are critical to the cycling network. Enhancements to markings and signage should benefit pathway safety. Similarly, progress towards improved pathway-roadway intersections will enhance bicycle mobility and should provide greater operational clarity. Areas for improvement remain, specifically addressing safety concerns with water drainage and ice accumulation.

Operate and Maintain

Frequent refreshing of pavement markings and increased visibility of wider bike lane striping is appreciated. Gravel sweeping is satisfactory, though there have been observations of gravel being subsequently swept back into some bike lanes. Snow clearing has improved and is generally exemplary in terms of timelines and quality for cycle tracks. For bike lanes, please consider;

- Bike lanes function when cleared to a safe travel width consistently along the lane and when close to bare pavement is achieved, including for any turn boxes.
- The impact of snow, accumulating in parking lanes adjacent to bike lanes, and the resulting encroachment of parked cars into the bike lane, needs to be addressed.

We continue to hear of snow being cleared into cycle tracks and bike lanes, a situation that reaches beyond the Centre City and may require outreach similar to that done for the Cycle Track Pilot.

Consistent and predictable application of the Snow Routes Policy and its associated curb-to-curb clearing can be extremely beneficial to cyclists, by enabling use of the parking lane, where available, as opposed to the general-purpose travel lane.



Educate and Promote

Cycling infrastructure is new to Calgarians and many may be unfamiliar with how it functions, or even have difficulty with expectations pertaining to cyclists. In particular, motorists, turning incorrectly across bike lanes and cycle tracks, is a significant safety concern. Similarly, motorists unnecessarily yielding right-of-way to cyclists, or cyclists misconstruing right-of-way, can negatively impact the operation of Calgary roadways.

Continued development of programs to ensure Calgarians are aware of their rights and responsibilities when operating their motor vehicle around cyclists, as well as promoting lawful cycling behavior are encouraged.

On behalf of Bike Calgary, I thank you for your time and welcome any questions.

Sincerely,

Brent Clark
Infrastructure Lead, Bike Calgary

Agustin Louro
President, Bike Calgary