

Chair's Report - June 2013

1. Main Event BBQ

Many thanks to Wendy McRae for organizing this year's OOECA BBQ at CAG's Main Event, Saturday, June 15th. Wendy is still looking for more OOECA volunteers.

2. Board Slate for AGM Consideration

There will be several openings for new Board members. After wonderful service Barbara Hicks is retiring as Membership chair and our great new addition of Gabi Schaffer is, alas, moving to Alta Vista. Also, Don Fugler has expressed willingness to remain as Treasurer but the membership will have to specifically approve this because he will have served more than two two-year terms. All other Board members, to the best of my knowledge, are willing to stand for re-election at the November AGM. An understudy / co-chair for Transportation may be required to help Ron Rose, given the number of magnitude of transportation issues affecting OOE.

3. 125th Anniversary of OOE

It's noteworthy that 2013 marks the 125th anniversary of Ottawa East. Hard to believe the village was founded in 1888.

4. CiLP / Cost-shared Capital Programs

As discussed at the previous OOECA meeting Nick Masciantonio and I sent a letter to the mayor et al, raising issues about the cost of CiLP projects and the costing of cost-shared programs (attached).

5. Alta Vista Transportation Corridor

As of this writing it is still not known what the city will be recommending in the new Transportation Master Plan terms of the Alta Vista Transportation Corridor. Ron Rose, John Verbaas of City Centre Coalition and myself met with Councillor Chernushenko on June 3 to make clear our opposition to the proposed AVTC. See attached points that we made.

6. Mainstreeter - OOECA Column for June Deadline

Although I originally proposed that the next column be on what's proposed in the Transportation Master Plan or be an "appreciation" column thanking the many people who have made major contributions to the community over the last while, I'm now suggesting that it be on the need to work on better engagement of the residents of the Lees apartment buildings. We haven't yet seen any details on the new TMP and the "appreciation" column can wait for another day.

OOECA Comments to Councillor Chernushenko
Alta Vista Transportation Corridor (AVTC)

General: There is no community willingness to go along with the idea of trading a complete street on Main for a completed AVTC. Main as a complete street needs to be built now, consistent with the future of the OOE community and how Ottawa is to work in the future. AVTC as proposed would be deleterious to OOE, sandy Hill and Riverview Park and would be inconsistent with how Ottawa is to work in the future.

"The best incentive for transit use and transit construction in the long run is not to invest in the competing mode. Congestion is transit's friend." Pierre Johnson

From a community standpoint the "do nothing" option for AVTC is less injurious to the community than the build AVTC option.

Specific:

Before any further decisions are taken on the future of the AVTC the following assessments and actions are required:

1. determine the impact of the \$2.1B LRT investment
2. implement Lees and Hurdman TODs with full reliance on transit and active transportation
3. protect and enhance central green spaces - including AV corridor
4. review all options for best value / use of corridor lands
5. implement active transportation improvements in and to central Ottawa
6. determine impact of Main as a complete street (this assumes that this option will be implemented for Main Renewal)
7. assess impact of completed Hospital Link portion of AVTC (the Link remains a dubious proposition but if the City is really building it then let's see what impact / use it really has)
8. de-incent car travel and incent transit use and active transportation
9. determine impact of 417 widening
10. determine impact of new Hunt Club east / 417 interchange
11. be explicit about the fundamental flaw of the AVTC plan, i.e., receiving capacity at the northern end is only half of the forecast AVTC volume
12. destroy the argument that AVTC is largely a "free" good because it would largely be paid for by DCs - determine alternative DC uses of \$ currently earmarked for AVTC.
13. assess the induced demand that AVTC would create (The current modeling used AVTC analysis is the same method used to forecast traffic increases when the Hunt Club ramps were added to the Airport Parkway - the actual "induced" demand that occurred with the ramps on the Airport Parkway was far beyond what was estimated.)
14. re-examine old forecasts pertaining to "southern" population and traffic growth / patterns to see how they compare to actual growth. John Verbaas's analysis of the city's origin/destination data shows that recent data sets indicate reduced traffic from the south to the centre and to Quebec.

June 3, 2013

Mayor Jim Watson
City Hall
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1

Cost of New Community Facilities and Amenities - Old Ottawa East Experience

Dear Mayor Watson:

In order to seek better economies and transparency in the public capital expenditures of city and community funding programs, the Old Ottawa East community wishes to bring to your attention its recent experiences in trying to improve community facilities and amenities, i.e., new amenities funded under the Cash-in-Lieu of Parklands program (CILP) and the inflated costs in capital cost-sharing projects.

In the case of CILP, the costs of amenities we have had approved through City staff and our Councillor have been very high relative to what an individual or a business would pay for comparable goods. For instance, the picnic tables that are approved for Springhurst Park will cost \$2,500 and \$2,700 for the accessible model and garbage receptacles will cost \$1,700 each. While it's understandable that these items need to be commercial/industrial quality, that the cost is six times as much seems unreasonable. Similarly, a new bulletin board will be installed at a cost of \$4,500, yet our research suggests that comparable boards - including installation - are available for half this amount. The point here is that the CILP has a much reduced capital impact when such expensive bids are the rule.

As for our most recent cost-sharing project, we learned recently that the City staff actual cost for improvements at Springhurst Park is going to be \$28,000 (21.5 percent) more than the original City staff estimate of \$130,000. The Ottawa East Community Activities Group and Sandy Hill Community Health Centre had committed to covering the original 50 percent share of \$65,000 but now are told we must cover full \$28,000 increase. We do not understand how the original estimate was so inaccurate nor do we understand why we're on the hook for all of the increase rather than just 50 percent of it. More distressing, is that as 50 percent partners, the community has no official role in the drafting, review or selection in the RFP process.

We recognize the need for propriety and transparency in the City's tendering and contracting processes but we also believe that economy and efficiency are critical attributes of the process and would ask that you improve the process so that taxpayers and communities will receive a "bigger bang for their buck." We do not believe we are the only community affected by the current process.

To this end, we would like Council to initiate a review of the Capital Partnership and CILP Programs to ensure accuracy of City estimates and RFP draft process and ensure taxpayers receive the most-favoured pricing by contractors.

We appreciate Council and staff's time on this matter and would be available to discuss these matters more formally. We would also welcome the participation by

other communities with similar experiences. Given Council's prudent limits on annual tax growth it is increasingly more important to be more economical and transparent.

Sincerely,

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c.c. Councillor David Chernushenko
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