



July 9, 2013

Mayor Jim Watson and City Council
City of Ottawa
City Hall
110 Laurier Avenue West.
Ottawa ON K1P 1J1

Re: Main Street Renewal – Support for the “Complete Street” Design Option 5

Honourable Mayor Watson and City of Ottawa Councillors,

An opportunity such as the redevelopment of Main Street presents itself every 50-80 years when the below grade infrastructure requires replacement. As such, now is an exciting and important point at which to implement visionary solutions that are lasting and provide improvement to the community and City as a whole. Mayor Watson, Transportation Committee Chair Councilor Egli, and other members of the Committee and Council, have embraced and promoted the concept of “Complete Streets” where streets are shared appropriately with pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and automobiles. We congratulate the leadership demonstrated in this idea. Main Street’s Renewal is a chance to act on this progressive vision.

As a member of the Main Street Renewal Working Group, Sandy Hill Community Health Centre has participated in the discussions with community representatives, Delcan consultants and City Staff. Through this process, we have been voicing the interests and concerns of lower income and marginalized community members that live and use this neighbourhood. As such, SHCHC is in favour of supporting the multitude of benefits of a “complete streets” option. In their summary report presented June 17 and 18, 2013, the Consulting Team and City Staff identified Alternative Design 5 as the Preferred Design. SHCHC support this preferred design 5.

Overall, it performs the best in terms of:

- Supporting a healthy business environment with high quality sidewalks, cycling facilities, and 24 hour parking in protected bays;
- Promoting pedestrian safety and comfort due to a separation of the sidewalk from vehicle lanes and shortening of crosswalk lengths;
- Providing the most inclusive cycling facility (cycle track) for cyclists of all ages and abilities;
- Enabling space for improvements to community character and the visual environment;
- Reduced motor vehicle speed due to narrowing of roadway and road geometry;
- Increasing the separation between motor vehicles and residences and reducing their associated effects in terms of noise and vibration;
- Providing for an appropriate Arterial Road capacity and level of service for vehicles using the corridor while enabling pursuit of the City's objectives identified in the Official Plan, Transportation Master Plan, and the Old Ottawa East Community Design Plan.

Administration:

221 rue Nelson Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1C7

Tel/Tél: (613) 789-1500 • Fax/Télé: (613) 789-7962 • info@sandyhillchc.on.ca • www.sandyhillchc.on.ca

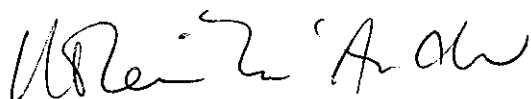


Evidence suggests that "complete street" designs that provide safe, active transportation infrastructure to pedestrians and cyclists will not only increase use, but will provide all of the additional benefits associated – a healthier, more active, less isolated population; a more vibrant Traditional Mainstreet with an increased consumer base for local business; reduced air pollution and associated health impacts. In addition, Alternative Design 5 is financially prudent and complements the City's massive investment in LRT infrastructure that seeks to make it easier, cheaper and more efficient for commuters of longer distances to use transit rather than personal automobiles.

What emerged in discussion of this Preferred Design Option 5 at Transportation Committee, was that there will not only be incredible community and regional benefit in terms of health outcomes and reduced health care costs, economic stimulus to local businesses and tourism through connected cycling routes, but also substantial taxpayer savings as the preferred design is far less expensive to construct, maintain and repair than recreating a 4-lane roadway. Much of the resistance seems to stem from an unlikely, yet worst-case scenario that, at worst, may add approximately 3-5 minutes to automobile drivers commute. There has been no discussion as to the inconvenience caused by additional commuting time for pedestrians and cyclists who currently avoid using Main Street and use alternate circuitous routes. Staff projections indicate that the preferred option would actually *increase* capacity of Main Street rather than restrict it. It would appear that opposing Option 5 would be to contradict the City's very transportation policies and would prioritize wealthier auto drivers commuting times over the health, safety and increased capacity that this complete street would bring for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users.

SHCHC complement the City Staff on working diligently to create a workable solution to a complex street. On July 5th, after many public delegations spoke unanimously in favour of Design Option 5, as well as significant discussion and clarification from staff for Committee members, Transportation Committee voted in favour of the staff report recommending Option 5. On July 17th, we urge the members of City Council to support the Preferred Alternative Design 5 and create a Main Street that will thrive for decades to come.

Yours Sincerely,



for:
David B. Gibson
Executive Director