

To: Oshawa Active Transportation Advisory Committee (OATAC)
From: Projects Working Group 2023 02-20
Subject: Integrated Columbus Part 2 Planning Act and Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Act Study

Report:

1.0 Purpose:

To respond to the City's request for comments regarding the Integrated Columbus Part 2 Planning Act and Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Act Study.

2.0 Transportation Master Plan:

2.1 The Transportation Plan introduces the concept of Mobility Hubs to Oshawa. This land use concept provides the opportunity changes in mode of travel and combined with small scale commercial provides an excellent opportunity to encourage walking, cycling and transit use. This concept should be fully supported at the locations shown on Exhibit 5-14 of the Transportation Plan.

2.2 The Transportation Plan quotes the existing city standards as found in the City's Engineer Design Criteria Manual and the City's policy of constructing sidewalks on both sides of all arterial and collector roads. These standards are obsolete, not followed by the city and are currently being revised by the city. The city has been building multi-use paths on one side of arterial and collector roads and a sidewalk on the other side for some time. The Transportation Plan requires revision to reflect the concept that sidewalks and multi-use paths are required on all arterial and collector roads. The text, including recommendations for each road and all the typical midblock cross-section diagrams should reflect the following.

Type "A" arterial roads in urban areas require a sidewalk and class 1 multi-use facility on both sides of the roads. With transit requirements and separation required between the auto travel lanes and pedestrian and multi-modal facilities the width of the right of way requirements should be checked. It is noted that all designs should have both facilities on both sides of the road, the initial construction will be a sidewalk on one side and a multi-use path on the other side to not increase costs until the levy requirements are reviewed and adjusted. In rural areas the Type "A" arterial road requires a multi-use path on one side of the road. There should never be a bike lane built on a Type "A" arterial road or the use of such lane will interfere with the intended function of the road.

Type “B” arterial roads should have the same active transportation facilities as Type “A” arterial roads except the distance between the curb and the active transportation facilities may be reduced.

Type “C” arterial roads with direct frontage require a multi-use path on one side of the road and a sidewalk on the other side of the road and cycle lanes or protected cycle lanes. This boulevard multi-use path will accommodate young cyclists going to school, stores, friend’s houses or other activities before they have the judgement and cycling skills to be on the roads. The bike lanes will accommodate experienced cyclists making utilitarian trips at speeds too fast to stop for a car backing out of the driveway and stopping across the multi-use path to check traffic on the street. Type “C” arterial roads with no direct frontage require a multi-use path on one side of the road and a sidewalk on the other side. Cycle lanes are not as necessary as Type “C” roads without direct frontage.

Collector roads require the same facilities as Type “C” arterial roads with direct frontage.

The city standard for local streets in residential areas of a sidewalk on one side of the road should remain the same unless there is a need for a multi-use path such as access to a school or a significant other attraction.

Given the above, the recommended active transportation facilities for each road link in Columbus may need to change. OATAC would provide comments at this level of detail if requested.

- 2.3 Simcoe Street is a Type “B” arterial road with a four lane cross-section over Hwy.407. The Ontario Traffic Manual for cycling states that it is preferable to avoid cycling crossings at free-flow on and off ramps. The first alternative is grade separation. Columbus development area people West of Simcoe Street will have a freeway interchange to cross either at Thornton Road or Simcoe Street. Simcoe Street have an in- boulevard multi-use trail south of Hwy. 407. This trail should be extended as a grade separated crossing of Hwy. 407 on the West side of Simcoe Street with a link through the proposed park back to Simcoe Street and to the Hub where Street EW.2 meets Street NS.2.
- 2.4 The Consultant recommends that an extension of a Type “C” Arterial road in Columbus to Carnwith Drive in Brooklin is not required to serve Columbus but the City and Region may continue to protect for the Carnwith Drive Extension in the longer term. For Type “C” arterial roads to perform their intended function they should not be long and generally not provide inter-municipal linkages. The City and Region should not protect for this connection as it is contrary to the intended function of these Type “C” Arterial roads and would reduce their ability to provide multi-modal safe travel within each community.

The concept of three levels of arterial roads is not wide spread and may not be well understood in some areas. To clarify the intended function of each level of arterial road, it is suggested that the text in the Part 2 plan for Columbus include a definition of each level of arterial road. Exhibit 1 provides clues to the arterial roads functions and their relationship to abutting development.

3. Columbus Draft Policy Text

- 3.1 Could policy 8.8.8.1.3; be worded to consider the requirements of other active transportation needs on multi-use paths in boulevards as well as pedestrians? It is likely that a sidewalk and multi-use path are going to be required on each side of Type "A" and "B" arterial roads in the long term.
- 3.2 Could policy 8.8.8.2.3 f; also consider appropriate locations for pedestrian and other active transportation crossings of arterial and collector roads?
- 3.3 Contrary to policy 8.8.9.2.2 c and policy 8.8.9.2.4; Care should be taken to maintain the function of Type "C" arterial roads as outlined in comments on the Transportation Master Plan.
- 3.4 The City is complemented by OATAC for recognizing the need for bicycle parking as indicated in policy 8.8.9.3.1 a. To our knowledge, this is the first time bicycle parking is included in a part 2 plan for Oshawa.
- 3.5 The City is complemented by OATAC for recognizing in policy 8.8.9.4.1 5th. paragraph that walkways need to be wide. As active transportation grows, the width provided in this policy will likely be required to provide a separation of pedestrians from faster moving wheeled active transportation vehicles.
- 3.6 Policy 8.8.9.4.2 indicates an extensive, integrated system of off-road active transportation facilities has been identified in the C.T.M.P., as shown on Schedule "B" - Columbus Transportation Plan. Schedule "B" appears to show only one off road trail. Schedule "B" requires revision to identify the extensive, integrated system of off-road active transportation facilities identified in this policy. Schedule "B" also needs revision to comply with the road related active transportation facilities recommended by OATAC.
- 3.7 Policy 8.8.9.4.3 and Policy 8.8.9.4.4
The type of safe cycling facilities on each road should be identified as part of the preparation of the Part 2 plan. OATAC has considerable concerns that providing for changes to the level of active transportation facility on roads without amendment to the Part 2 plan provides no restrictions on lowering the level of active transportation facility to save right-of-way dedication, facility construction cost and who pays for the active transportation facility. It provides no notification when a change is made to the design of a cycling facility. As was done when the agreement on who pays for active transportation facilities between the Region

and area municipalities, the type of facility may be changed to avoid cost. That is what appears to have happened to the Gibb Street, Olive Avenue active transportation facilities.

“On-road cycling lanes may include the following:”

Besides intersections, the weaving of cyclists in and out of traffic to avoid cars parked in cycle lanes or lined cycle routes is one of the most dangerous designs. There should be no parking in cycle lanes or lined cycle routes and signs to that effect should be installed on streets with existing cycle routes.

It has been found that painted decals (“sharrows”) within widen travel lanes to indicate joint use of the travel lane by motorists and cyclists is not making cycling any safer and the sharrows are being removed in the areas of California where they were first introduced. They may be of some benefit in Oshawa as they are new but the reliance on sharrows should not be over rated.

3.8 Policy 8.8.10.8

It has been found that the growth in active transportation is causing congestion on several trails and a considerable number of people; particularly seniors, mothers with prams and the physically challenged are no longer using the trails to walk. There is a requirement such as on the Harmony Creek Trail south of Rossland Road, the Oshawa Creek Trail in several sections and the waterfront Trail to provide a separation of faster moving wheeled vehicles from walkers. The width of land for off road trails will need to provide for two trails in most areas in the long term. Is 7 meters adequate for two trails?

4. Previous OATAC Comments

The OATAC provided comments regarding the Columbus Plan to the City on October 28, 2021 as report OATAC-21-30. The following is a review of the consideration given to these comments.

- 4.1 “Cycling signage including directional should be included on trails.”
No mention in the Part 2 Plan but could be covered latter.
- 4.2 “Connecting family friendly MUPs be created throughout the subdivisions.”
The text supports this concept but the Schedule “B” only shows one MUP in the valleys. The network of MUP on roads needs revision as noted in this report.
- 4.3 “Major routes such as Thornton, Simcoe, Ritson and Columbus have 4 metre wide MUPs as well as cycling lanes with either barrier or rumble strip protection.”
This recommendation appears to be ignored and only one facility is recommended for the routes and any MUP’s are not 4 meter’s wide.
- 4.4 “Wider sidewalks that would allow heavy set individuals to walk side by side, or two moms with strollers, suggested width is minimum 4 feet.”

Although not covered in the Columbus Plan, the Oshawa Engineering Design Criteria Manual is under review and may consider these comments.

- 4.5 “Collector roads have a sidewalk on one side and an MUP with centre lane on the school side of the road as well as bike lanes on both sides of the roads.”
There does not appear to be any consideration of additional active transportation facility requirements for access to schools. This should be standard for all collector roads whether accessing schools or not. The current plan puts sidewalks on both sides of the road.
- 4.6 “Adequate house setback for vehicle parking of multi-generational families so that street parking is reduced or eliminated. An example of problem parking which forces cyclists into a dangerous situation is Mary St.”
This aspect does not appear to be discussed except to allow the dangerous condition of allowing parking on cycling routes, even when the cycling facility is painted on the road.
- 4.7 “Reduce speed on local streets to 40 kmh.”
It is mentioned that the best practices from a draft Traffic Calming Guidelines should be considered where possible but there does not appear to be any consideration of road speed, particularly local streets being posed at 40 kmh. It is recommended that the definitions of arterial, collector and local road functions be included in the transportation section and these definitions include reference to appropriate speeds for the function the roads are to serve including a 40 kmh for local residential streets.
- 4.8 “Two N/S routes unimpeded by 407 interchanges with MUPs one on either side of Simcoe St. on the west side please consider a route with no future 407 interchange between what is currently showing “open space” and “industrial park” to run at the very minimum from Columbus to Winchester Rd.”
Ritson Road, which does not have an interchange, provides a crossing of Hwy. 407 on the East side of Simcoe St. There is no provision for a safe crossing at Simcoe Street or Thornton Road as both will have interchanges. The Highway Traffic Manual recommends a grade separated crossing of a freeway instead of crossing freeway ramps. This grade separated crossing of Hwy. 407 should be a continuation of the Simcoe Street boulevard MUP and north of Hwy. 407 provide access to the Simcoe St. Class 1 bikeway and access to the cycle facilities proposed for street NS-2.
- 4.9 “Access points with curb cutouts from subdivisions to MUPs”
This guideline is not mentioned but could be included in the update of the Oshawa Engineering Design Criteria Manual.

Exhibit 1 Arterial Road Functions and Their Relationship to Abutting Land

Active transportation facilities must fit with the other uses of the road and complement the intended function of the road. The consultant identifies the classification of the roads in Columbus as defined in the Official Plans as Type “A”, “B” and “C” arterial roads but does not describe the function of these roads or their relationship to the abutting neighbourhoods, nor the tools that are available to have the roads function as they are intended. The function of each type of arterial road and how they are to be achieved should be included in transportation section of the Columbus Part 2 Plan. An example of such a description is provided below and provides a guideline on the type of active transportation facilities required to achieve multi-modal transportation on the designated arterial roads.

Type “A” arterial roads are the highest level of arterial road and are to be designed to operate at 70 km./hr. in urban areas with controlled access and large spacing between traffic lights. They are to accommodate heavy volumes of auto and truck traffic and provide higher speed transit service. By their nature, higher speeds and five lanes wide with long turning lanes, they will divide a community and community level facilities such as high schools and community centres should be located central to the community to be served not on the Type “A” arterial road. No schools should be located on Type “A” arterial roads. Traffic lights should be located for two way traffic flow. To achieve their objective Type “A” arterial roads require wide boulevards with both walking and cycling facilities on each side of the road separated by boulevard from the traffic lanes. In rural areas walking and cycling facilities should be behind the ditch.

Type “B” arterial roads are to be a balance between moving people and community focus. They are to operate at a lower speed than Type “A” arterial roads in urban areas and are to be four lanes wide with shorter turning lanes and more interruption in traffic flow by traffic lights. Although they are to be a friendlier road for pedestrians and cyclist they should have walking and cycling facilities behind the curb on each side of the road in urban areas and behind the ditch in rural areas.

Type “C” arterial roads are to be walking, cycling and transit friendly. They are to be more related to the neighbourhood than the function of moving autos. Their traffic volume is to be controlled by reduced speed and intersection design. With the traditional intersection auto volumes may be controlled by frequency of traffic lights, reduced number of turning lanes and other means. New innovative measures must be used to reduce traffic volumes and speed with roundabouts. Pedestrian facilities should remain behind the curb. For Type “C” arterial roads with direct frontage, bicycle facilities are required both between the curbs and in the boulevard. For Type “C” arterial roads without direct frontage walking and cycling facilities should be in the boulevards.