Peoples Official Plan Coalition

12 November 2024

Ottawa City Council
110 Laurier Ave W
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Dear Mayor Sutcliffe and Councillors,

We write concerning a motion (ACS File No.: ACS2024-OCC-CCS-0094) coming before Council at their November 13, 2024 meeting to amend the Scope of the McBean Street Resurfacing Project.

We urge you to vote against this motion. The motion is problematic for several reasons.

First of all, the proposed cycling facilities would make the corridor safer for all road users, but particularly the children that regularly to access the school along this stretch of McBean. It is critical that children have access to safe transportation options to and from school. A 2022 study of Canadian cities observed that while motor vehicle collisions involving children are declining across Canada, collisions involving child cyclists are not. The study also notes that "the risk of cycling may be even higher than walking for children," and observes "a particular need for separate bicycle infrastructure from motor vehicle infrastructure."[1]

Cycling infrastructure makes streets safer for *all* users, whether cyclists, pedestrians, or even drivers.[2]

Removing the planned cycling facilities also contravenes several of our city's commitments. To begin with, in 2015, Ottawa City Council approved the Complete Streets Implementation Framework, which requires the consideration of Complete Street elements—such as separated cycling facilities—as part of any transportation project.

The present Council approved the 2023 Transportation Master Plan Active Transportation Project List, which included the cycling facilities on this stretch. The Village of Richmond Community Design Plan, approved in 2010, envisions McBean Street as a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented commercial area. As noted above, cycling facilities also enhance the pedestrian experience.

[1] Rothman et al., "Child pedestrian and cyclist injuries, and the built and social environment across Canadian cities," DOI: 10.1136/injuryprev-2021-044459.
[2] Marshall and Ferenchak, "Why cities with high bicycling rates are safer for all road users," *Journal of Transport & Health*, 2019; DOI: 10.1016/j.jth.2019.03.004.

Council has also committed to increasing the use of sustainable modes of transportation. The second Big Policy Move in its new Official Plan makes a commitment that “by 2046, the majority of trips in the city will be made by sustainable transportation” like cycling. This transition is necessary to achieve our emissions-reductions goals, improve accessibility for all Ottawans, and improve mobility; and safe, connected cycling facilities are part of this effort.

Finally, it is important that Council continue to strongly support cycling facilities in light of threats like Provincial Bill 212. It is in this spirit that the majority of Ottawa City councillors recently signed an open letter opposing this bill. We ask you to make good on this opposition and also oppose the motion coming before you on November 13.

We count on your bold leadership to adhere to the Official Plan principles of sustainable transportation and complete streets, and acknowledge the evidence that cycling infrastructure is a notable part of those important principles.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

The Peoples Official Plan Coalition

The Peoples Official Plan (POP) coalition is composed of over 20 not-for-profit organizations representing tens of thousands of Ottawans. We advocate at Ottawa City Hall for better transit, greater walkability and active transportation, greenspace for all, housing equity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, equity and inclusion, sustainable waste management, and food security, all sought through ethical city planning practices.