

Brampton Cycling Advisory Committee Subcommittee Zoom Meeting Minutes Tuesday, July 27, 2021

Present: Polly Thornham, Dayle Laing, Lisa Stokes, Laura Bowman, Steve Laidlaw, Alina Grzejszczak, Devang Patel, Nelson Cadete, Cllr. Rowena Santos

Regrets: Kevin Montgomery

Devang announced, before the meeting that he will be taking up a new full time, permanent position as Traffic Signal Technologist with the City of London on August 16. The hearty best wishes and gratitude of BCAC go with him!

1. Nelson Cadete: Summary of Torbram Expansion presentation, which has been deferred to the next Planning Committee meeting.

Andrea took nine guiding principles for projects, including equity and right-sizing, and made a score card for planning, to help capital works staff plan projects. The score card was applied to two projects, Sandalwood Parkway and Torbram Road south of Queen Street. Both of these had previously been recommended for expansion from four to six lanes. The score card test applied to these projects found that the expansion would result in travel along these sections being shortened by only two minutes, and therefore, not worth the cost. The recommended emphasis for these two projects was to add cycling facilities and beautification, not road widening.

Unfortunately, due to the 1000-page agenda and appendices, there was no time to present the report, so it was voted to be received, and will be presented at the next Planning Committee meeting on August 11. Nelson will advise BCAC by email regarding the time, so members can attend, if possible.

2. Lisa Stokes: Bike Lights at Intersections and P-Gates

Lisa pointed out three issues with the light signals controlling crossrides at intersections:

1. Pushing buttons is not convenient for cyclists, if they must dismount to activate them.
2. There is inconsistency of the process for cars and bikes at various intersections in Brampton, which is confusing for both drivers and riders, and therefore dangerous.
3. Cyclists who arrive at a light when it is green have to wait a full light cycle for a crossride green. It won't be obeyed.

One solution she suggested was to have the crossride button turn all car signal lights red, in order to avoid collisions with cyclists.

Lisa suggested an invitation be sent out to Risk Management staff, to have a bike ride with some BCAC members, to point out the inconsistencies and difficulties, as firsthand experience is the best teacher.

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Nelson responded that the Traffic Signals staff explained the inconsistencies as being between Regional and Municipal road intersections:

At Regional intersections, cyclists are directed to proceed on green, with car traffic.

At Municipal intersections, the crossside signal stays red until the button is pushed. Nelson explained that the staff at the City don't want cyclists being hit by left-turning cars, while proceeding forward on green. He added that various methods of detection of bikes at intersections are being explored.

Lisa pointed out that there is a difference between the intersections at McLaughlin and Countryside.

Cllr. Santos offered to invite Craig Kummer, Senior Manager, Traffic Services, Brampton, and other staff, on a ride, to experience the issues Lisa raised. [This has been arranged for August 4.]

Lisa raised a second issue, which is the inconvenience and/or obstruction created by P-Gates. She shared a video of her manoeuvring her bike and trailer through a P-Gate, only with the help of Cindy Evans. The location was a railway crossing at John St., downtown. There is another one at a crossing on a trail, west of Mississauga Road.

Laura also commented that she had been placed in a dangerous situation in trying to negotiate a P-Gate on a bicycle with a trailer. Nelson responded that City Parks staff find the P-Gates very inconvenient as well. He said that they are not the favoured choice going forward. The old ones will need to be upgraded. A photo of a mini rail crossing light and arm, like those on roads, was shared. They are in use in Newmarket and Waterloo. In Brampton, trail offsets are being considered/planned, to make sure cyclists slow down before crossing streets and tracks.

Lisa agreed to send her photos and video to Nelson, to have him make inquiries about crossing arms and other improvements.

3. Steve Laidlaw: The Future of Solving Bicycle Theft In Peel

Steve is making a proposal to have BCAC pay more attention to the major problem of rampant bike theft everywhere, but specifically in Brampton. He quoted some statistics and facts, to illustrate the problem:

1. In 2019, 2 million bikes were stolen, in the US - one every 30 seconds, with a recovery rate of 2.4%.
2. In 2020, in Toronto, over 4000 bikes were stolen - three times the number in 2014.
3. In 2020, the COVID pandemic caused a large spike in bike demand.
4. A lack of bike recovery has caused a reluctance in reporting thefts, to the reported thefts are likely a fraction of the real number of thefts.
5. There is no universal system of VIN numbers for bicycles.

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6. Police departments and the public usually trivialize bike theft, as yearly auctioning of bikes illustrates. A more serious attitude is needed, along with appropriate police funding, for many reasons.
7. BCAC and STR Bike Friendly Cities should make reduction of bike theft a priority.
8. There is a blog post on bikebrampton.ca, on preventing bike theft.

Steve did some research, and found the website, <https://project529.com/garage>, which is a universal bike registry set up by Police Det. Rob Brunt and Microsoft exec, J Allard.

This website serves North America at the moment, with plans to go global. Det. Brunt was given a chance to run a pilot project, which achieved a 40% reduction in reported bike thefts.

There are now several police departments in Canadian cities using the program.

The universal system of bike identification uses photos, model, make, colour, special features/items, and ID number of the bike. Soon, it will be able to be found anywhere in the world.

Here are three website links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48V9Xtpgq9I>
<https://project529.com/garage/press>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqVkaK71a0g>

Steve's main recommendations to BCAC are to:

1. take up the cause, and advertise the program, to make it more well-known.
2. as a committee, recommend to the City of Brampton to urge the Region of Peel to have the Peel Police adopt the program.
3. have him make a presentation to the Mississauga Cycling Advisory Committee
4. advocate for a person in the Police Department to run the program.
5. advocate for funding to be provided to run the program.
6. discuss the issue at the next meeting, with the aim of making a motion to have Steve present to MCAC.

4. Devang Patel: Scan of Municipal Traffic By-Law Review

Devang went over many existing by-laws, both in Brampton and surrounding municipalities.

A couple of issues needing attention are:

1. the single-file cycling by-law
2. a generally acceptable definition of an e-bike, and updated by-laws to deal with acceptable and unacceptable vehicles on cycling infrastructure

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Devang began with a review of the existing by-laws regarding cycling. One that needs attention and revision is the eight KPH limit for bikes on multi-use paths. This is very low, and is not enforced.

A glaring need is a clear definition of an e-bike. There are no by-laws addressing the various electric assisted or run vehicles, as they have proliferated in the last few years. The Ontario Ministry of Transport is in the process of developing a definition at the moment. Brampton will wait for the definition from the Province, but prefers that the definition includes vehicles which look like bikes and have pedal assist, and not those which look like motorcycles.

Another revision which is desirable is how to decide who can ride on the sidewalk. The distinction should be made based on the rider's age, not the diameter of the bike's wheels.

Contra-flow bike lanes are bike lanes on one-way streets, which allow bikes to travel in both directions. These are efficient, and should be allowed.

The next step will be to condense the presentation into a table, and present to the full committee meeting in August.

5. Topics for the August 17 meeting:

1. Nelson Cadete: East-West Cycling Corridor
2. Devang Patel: By-law discussion
3. Nelson Cadete: Design of Adjacent Parking and Bike Lanes
4. Steve Laidlaw: Bike theft prevention
5. Nelson Cadete: Bike Friendly Community Award application
6. Nelson Cadete: Etobicoke Creek/Coke branding and sponsorship update
7. Nelson Cadete: AT implementation update

6. October meeting:

1. Planned Infrastructure Along Clark Blvd.