

Report

TOWN OF FORT FRANCES
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Municipal Planner Report #2014-19

To: Mayor and Council

From: Faye Flatt, Municipal Planner

Date: 4 September 2014

Subject: Request for On-Road Bike Lane ~ Colonization Road West (NWHU)

The Northwestern Health Unit submitted a proposal for an on-road bike path along Colonization Road West between Oakwood Avenue and Biddison Road. The matter was referred to the Planning and Development Executive Committee (PDEC) for recommendation with input from the Operations and Facilities Executive Committee (OFEC). A copy of the original request is attached.

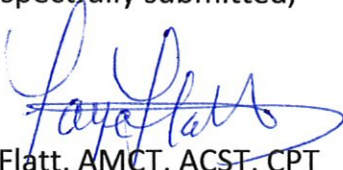
OFEC advised PDEC that it does not support the proposal as requested but continues to support "the construction of an off-pathway as outlined in the existing active transportation plan approved by Council". A copy of the OFEC report is attached.

At the PDEC meeting held September 4th, it was noted that although the request contemplated implementation prior to the school year, it was too late in the season to accomplish this. In addition, because the road allowance was not wide enough to accommodate an on-road bike lane (especially if vehicles are parked on the street), a dedicated off-street pathway should be designed and included in roadway upgrades planned in future. PDEC also felt that once a decision was made, all interested parties, along with the Police Services Board and OPP, be provided with all pertinent information and that in the interest of public safety, increased and improved speed limit enforcement was warranted.

Based on the foregoing, Planning & Development Executive Committee recommends that:

1. Refer and include off-street bike path/paths in the design of municipal upgrades and/or replacement projects contemplated in future for Colonization Road West; and
2. Refer and direct the Police Services Board to:
 - a. convey to the OPP the need for increased speed limit or other enforcement for the public safety; and
 - b. consider and make recommendations to Council on how safety can be improved upon on Colonization Road West for all roadway users

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Faye Flatt', written over a horizontal line.

F. Flatt, AMCT, ACST, CPT
Municipal Planner
Att'd

COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THIS REPORT WILL

1. Refer and include off-street bike path/paths in the design of municipal upgrades and/or replacement projects contemplated in future for Colonization Road West; and
2. Refer and direct the Police Services Board to:
 - a. convey to the OPP the need for increased speed limit or other enforcement for the public safety; and
 - b. consider and make recommendations to Council on how safety can be improved upon on Colonization Road West for all roadway users

21 July 2014



September 3, 2014

Report To: Planning & Development Executive Committee

From: Operations & Facilities Executive Committee

**SUBJECT: Active Transportation Proposal – Colonization Road West –
Oakwood Road to Biddesen Road**

The Operations & Facilities Executive committee was to provide input to the lead executive committee, the Planning & Development Executive committee in regards to the Active Transportation Proposal - Colonization Road West from Oakwood Road to Biddesen outlined in the letter dated July 8, 2014 from Elaine Fisher, Health Promoter, Northwestern Health Unit.

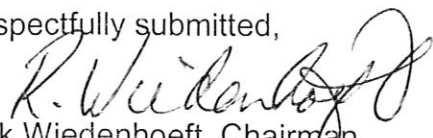
The Operations & Facilities Executive Committee reviewed the Active Transportation Proposal - Along Colonization Road West from Oakwood Road to Biddesen with Elaine Fisher at the September 3rd, O & F executive committee.

At this time the O & F executive committee can not support the active transportation proposal as presented, however will continue to support the construction of an off-pathway as outlined in the existing active transportation plan approved by Council.

Going forward the O & F executive committee recommends the following;

- 1) That the Police Services Board members of Council bring the pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists safety hazard along this section of Colonization Road West to the police authorities (OPP) attention i.e.- excess speed of motorists and that an effort be made to try to improve the enforcement aspect of policing along this roadway i.e. – heightened police presence.
- 2) To receive any recommendations from the Police Services Board on how to improve safety for all roadway users along this section of Colonization Road west.
- 3) That any municipal infrastructure replacement or upgrade projects along this section of Colonization Road west included the development of an off-road asphalt pathway on one side of the road behind the curb to be utilized by both bicyclists and pedestrians. The off-road asphalt pathway would be similar to what has been constructed along the Laverendrye Parkway (waterfront).

Respectfully submitted,


Rick Wiedenhoef, Chairman
Operations & Facilities Executive Committee



www.nwhu.on.ca
396 Scott St.
Fort Frances, ON
P9A 1G9



July 8, 2014

Fort Frances Town Council
320 Portage Avenue
Fort Frances, ON P9A 3P9

Dear Mayor and Council:

RE: Active transportation and safety- on-road bike lane along Colonization Road W.

A recent local meeting and the July 3rd article 'Bike lanes eyed for west-end road' in the Fort Frances Times have brought attention to safety concerns faced by pedestrians and cyclists, including children and families using Colonization Road W.

The Northwestern Health Unit, along with concerned parents and other local stakeholders would like to work with the Town to improve safety and active transportation for all users along this well-travelled road.

We acknowledge the fiscal restraints the Town is currently experiencing and would like to work together to find solutions at little or no cost to the Town. We would like to propose the following to Town Council and its applicable Planning and Executive Committees:

1. **An on-road bike path running along both sides of Colonization Road W. between Oakwood Ave and Biddison Road:** Based on our local Active Transportation Plan and discussions with municipal staff/councilors, this path is approximately 3200 lm. Based on with final estimates from the Town, we will work to secure funds for paint, signage, markings and any other municipal/provincial requirements for an on-road bike path.
2. **In-kind support from the Town:** If we can secure funds for project materials, we would like to ask if the Town is able to provide in-kind services including staff labour/time for marking and painting as well as town equipment to complete painting for the on-road bike path.
3. **On-street parking bylaw amendment:** We would like to request an amendment to current parking bylaw and request no on-street parking between 7am and 9pm. Several people have monitored parking along the route and on-street parking seems to be minimal in this area, so we don't anticipate this will negatively impact local residents.

Other initiatives associated with project: There is work underway with other stakeholders (OPP, Police Services Board, local school, coalitions and residents) to install the OPP speed sign to increase awareness about speed and safety along this corridor. We are also exploring the possibility of implementing a local bike train or walking school bus to encourage more children to walk and bike to school along safe routes.

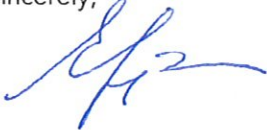
Project timelines and approval: If it is possible for Town staff, we are hoping to work with staff and councilors to seek appropriate approvals, and, ideally, have the project completed for the new school year in September.

Over the last several years, several local coalitions, municipal staff and stakeholders have worked on improving pedestrian safety and active transportation opportunities in Fort Frances. We applaud the Town of Fort Frances staff and council, key stakeholders, media partners and volunteers for their ongoing support related to active and safe routes.

We will continue to work on a comprehensive approach that will ensure that the best design and safety features are in place to create a supportive environment where it will be easier for all populations to be safe and active.

If you require further information, please contact me at 274-9827 ext. 3638 or efischer@nwhu.on.ca. We look forward to discussing this exciting project with the Town.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Efischer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Elaine Fischer
Health Promoter

Dear Town Council,

The reason why we need a bike lane is because for our safety cars go really fast in the road and we want to stay as far away from the cars as we can.

Another reason for the lane is for our health. If you are not healthy, you will spend lots of your time inside and at the doctor's office.

The last reason is so that we can bike to school. When you bike to school you stay healthy and you can talk and hang with your friends while staying safe.

Sincerely,

Kade Oster

Hi Andrew, Ken and Doug

Not sure to whom I should direct these comments regarding the proposed bike path along Colonization Road West, so please redirect and forgive me if it is not appropriate to contact you as councilors!

I reside in the 1200 block of Colonization Road West and completely agree with the need for a bike path, particularly for the health and safety of children who are riding to school. I also applaud the intent to post speed limits more clearly as many vehicles travel at excessive speeds along this road.

I do have a couple of concerns however, and only based upon what I have seen in the press.

With regard to the proposed parking by-law which restricts parking on the road from 0700 hrs to 2100 hrs. This seems a bit excessive and certainly not within the travel times of children going to school, nor at weekends and holidays. Residents who have several visitors, e.g. at family/friends gatherings, have limited parking space in their driveways and no available parking nearby. Anyone having work done by contractors cannot accommodate large vehicles on their driveways. Certainly there are times when not allowing parking on the road will present difficulties for some residents.

It would also be a good idea to better educate children, in general, to the rules of the road as some ride all over the place!

Thanks so much.



VALENTINE MILLS
<stormy7@shaw.ca>
19/07/2014 07:45 PM

To ravis@fort-frances.com
cc mmcgaig@fort-frances.com
Subject Proposed Bike Lane on Colonization Road West

Dear Mayor Avis

I would like to address the issue of the proposed bike lane along Colonization Road West.

As a loyal tax-payer of the Town of Fort Frances, and a resident of Colonization Road West for over 25 years, I am extremely concerned about the proposed bylaw which restricts parking on our road. Contrary to what I have read in the local press that this will have little impact on the residents, I totally disagree with this statement. No-one has asked the residents for their input on this matter. On the contrary, it will have a significant impact on us e.g. when we have a number of visitors to our homes, or contractors doing work in our homes and so forth. Why must there be no parking allowed between 7 am until 9 pm at night.

I can understand the need for this restriction during times when children are going to and coming home from school. However to impose this beyond those times is excessive. We are a residential street and should have the right to park on the road just the same as any other street in Fort Frances. I can understand bike lanes on non-residential highways, as is the case everywhere else, but not on a residential street where we do not even have an alternative access, e.g. a back lane.

Children are riding bikes all over town, to and from school in many cases. Why bike lanes on our road.

I totally understand the need for safety on the roads, particularly for children, however, there are alternatives to this proposed bylaw. Firstly,

there needs to be restricted and closely monitored speed control on the road. Many vehicles travel at excessive speeds, including huge transport trucks going to and from McCools yard. Deer have been killed on our road on a number of occasions.

I would propose reducing the speed limit to 40km and have the police monitor this. This is the major problem. By reducing the speed limit there should be no need to have separate bike lanes.

Secondly, most children have absolutely no idea about the rules of the road and need education in this regard. They ride their bikes on the wrong side or in the middle of the road having no regard whatsoever for traffic.

I would very much appreciate your consideration of these concerns.

Respectfully,

Valerie Mills

1223 Colonization Road West
Fort Frances, ON



Ken Perry
<lakracer@yahoo.ca>

07/18/2014 07:11 PM

Please respond to
Ken Perry
<lakracer@yahoo.ca>

To ELIZABETH CLARK <abbyt@shaw.ca>

"lakracer@yahoo.ca" <lakracer@yahoo.ca>,
cc "ravis@fort-frances.com" <ravis@fort-frances.com>,
"dbrown@fort-frances.com" <dbrown@fort-frances.com>

Subject Re: Bicycle Path on Colonization Road West

Hello Liz, Ken here as you can see. My biggest concern with a bike path in front of your house is the location of the proposed ending point. Daniel Ave. is but one block from the Kings Highway and there is no proper crossing for bikes especially next to MacDonald's which is the most direct route to the two elementary schools. You are right in suggesting that there needs to be more educating of children in bike safety. Sooner than later I would recommend. I recognize also the inconvenience of no parking for extended lengths of time. Bike lanes need to be used by families also so that parents and older siblings can guide their family members on bike safety. Hence evening and weekend needs for those same paths. More bike paths would be a welcomed addition to our community, but my prime concern at the present is better roads and streets, upgrading our water and sewer systems, before we end up in emergency situations, and maintaining our current assets before we agree to expand our responsibility with no more dollars. I am on both of the committees that oversee finance and infrastructure, and I am sure we will be discussing these concerns when this topic comes up. Thank you for the input. Best regards Ken

Michael & Sheri De Gagné
1233 Colonization Road West
Fort Frances, ON

2014 July 21

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Safety of pedestrians and cyclists on Colonization Road West

Thank you to the Fort Frances Times edition of July 14th alerting us to the proposed traffic changes to Colonization Road West. The article offers several suggestions to improve the safety of all users along the section of road from Biddeson Avenue to Oakwood Road, including the addition of on-road bike lanes on each side of the road and no daytime / evening parking.

The health and safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists is very important. However, we disagree with the proposed addition of two on-road bike lanes and parking changes. This proposal would negatively affect residents by impeding parking for local residents' social events and contractor services. Off-road bike / walking lanes is the preferred option, and understandably more expensive.

Searching for methods to reduce the root cause of an unsafe condition we suggest your consideration of the following items:

1. To alert people to the maximum safe speed for the section on Colonization Road West between the two curves near Riverview Cemetery & Emo Road, initiate a speed reduction to 40 km/hour with appropriate signage
2. To warn motorists of 'unusual conditions ahead' post diamond shaped warning signs with yellow background and black symbol indicating 'curve ahead' or 'winding road'
3. No change to the current calendar parking regulations
4. Education of motorists by more frequent use of the portable electronic speed indicator equipment and continued bike safety education sessions for children
5. As this section of road does not have any sidewalks, provide increased attention in the winter months of curb-to-curb snow plowing to ensure adequate space for motorists, snowmobilers, pedestrians, and cyclists sharing the road
6. Increased priority in the winter months to push back, or remove snow banks if needed, at both curves to increase visibility of all vehicles & pedestrians
7. Enforcement and education regarding safe and courteous use of our roads throughout all seasons can result in positive changes that prevents injury and increases participation in healthy outdoor exercise & active transportation.

Thank you,

Michael & Sheri De Gagné

Doug Brown/Frances
08/21/2014 05:15 PM

To Faye Platt/Frances@Frances, Travis
Rob/Frances@Frances, Mark McCaig/Frances@France
cc
bcc
Subject Fw: Bicycle Path on Colonization Road West

Hi Faye, here is the package on the active transportation proposal by Elaine Fisher. The package will be discussed at the September 3rd O & F executive committee meeting. You should have some direction from the O & F executive committee on Wednesday in the afternoon as will have to prepare memo. I don't



support this proposal. 2014AUGUSTBIKELANE.pdf

Doug Brown, P. Eng.
Operations & Facilities Manager
320 Portage Avenue, Fort Frances, Ontario
Town of Fort Frances
Work #-807-274-9893 Ext. 306
Cell # 807-275-9755

August 20, 2014

Report To: Operations & Facilities Executive Committee

From: Doug Brown – Operations & Facilities Manager

**SUBJECT: Active Transportation Proposal – Colonization Road West –
Oakwood Road to Biddeson Road**

The Operations & Facilities Executive committee is to provide input to the lead executive committee, the Planning & Development Executive committee in regards to the Proposed Active Transportation Upgrades along Colonization Road West from Oakwood Road to Biddeson Road as outlined in the letter dated July 8, 2014 by Elaine Fisher, Health Promoter, Northwestern Health Unit. See attached copy of the letter.

In order for the executive committee to make a decision on the issue I have taken the liberty to attach the following information;

- 1) Design Guidelines for Bikeways – prepared by the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth.
- 2) Fort Frances Active Transportation Plan – Phase 2 Map – June of 2011
- 3) City of Toronto – Bikeway Network information - Pavement Markings & signs, Rules for Passing and Flyer “understanding Bicycle lanes”.
- 4) MTO – Ontario's Guide to Safe Cycling - riding in traffic & cycling and the law.
- 5) Laws regarding parking in the bike lanes - Ontario Traffic Council – blog
- 6) Ontario Bike Regulations – Know your rights – By Sheila Ascroft.

Road Facts of Colonization West Road - Oakwood to Biddeson;

- 1) Average asphalt width from gutter edge to gutter edge is 10.10 meters.
- 2) Calendar Parking from Emo Road to Oakwood Road in effect under traffic control by-law. 10/03.
- 3) Parking Prohibited – Both sides from east limit of guard rail Biddeson Creek to 118 meters westerly. (Dentist – Kennedy – 1201 Colonization Road West)
- 4) Parking stall width is 3.0 meters in accordance with the Town's zoning by-laws.
- 5) Minimum traffic lane width is 3.7 meters.

Both Town Staff and Council want to promote active transportation up-grades in a cost effective manner in accordance with the Town's official plan and the Town's active transportation plan approved by Council. Please find attached the emails from residential property owners along Colonization Road West in regards to the proposed parking restrictions & active transportation upgrades. There appears to be opposition to the proposed parking restrictions 7:00 am to 9:00 pm. As a result I took the liberty to determine if one parking lane 3.0m, two bike

lanes (each at 1.2 meters in width) and two traffic lanes (3.7 meters) could fit within the 10.10 meters asphalt roadway width. One would require 12.8 meters where there is only 10.10 thus a shortfall is 2.7 meters. Thus the Town will have to make a decision on whether or not to revise the traffic control bylaw for the proposed parking restriction.

As a result of the downsizing in staff within the O & F division over the past two years it is difficult to support committing to providing any in-kind services to paint bike markings or lines of the roads when essential operational maintenance tasks are not being completed in a timely fashion due to lack of manpower. For example 20 % of the catchbasins should be sucked out of winter sand on an annual basis and several catchbasins need to be lowered. No work has been completed on either of these maintenance tasks so far this year.

A memo must be prepared to be forwarded to the Planning and Development executive committee in the near future. This issue will be discussed in detail at the September 3rd, 2014 executive committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Brown, P. Eng
Operations & Facilities Manager

2014August ActiveTransportationColonizationRoadWest