

Sudbury Cyclists Union

Jason Ferrigan, Senior Planner
City of Greater Sudbury



Dear Mr. Ferrigan,

The Sudbury Cyclists Union (SCU) is pleased to provide you with our input towards the Elgin Greenway project, which was compiled at our meeting on April 7, 2013. Members spent significant time in discussing their vision for the Greenway, with the majority of the discussions addressing question 1 of your input questionnaire.

Our vision includes:

- **A road that incorporates the principles of Complete Streets.** A Complete Street is designed for all ages, abilities, and modes of travel. "On Complete Streets, safe and comfortable access for pedestrians, bicycles, transit users and the mobility-impaired is not an afterthought, but an integral planning feature." (Toronto Centre for Active Transportation: Complete Streets for Canada website). We believe that we have an opportunity to fully implement those principles and ensure that all users, whether they are 8 or 80 years of age, are accommodated and feel comfortable and welcome.
- **A separated dedicated bike path.** We feel that with the anticipated volume of traffic on the Greenway, it is best to keep cyclists and pedestrians separated. We support the idea of an off-road dedicated path, which will allow cyclists of all ages and abilities to cycle comfortably through the new linear park. We do caution that some cyclists, who will continue to use Elgin Street as a transportation corridor, may continue to choose to cycle on the road.
- **Part of a connected cycling network that serves all of the downtown as well as drawing from other Sudbury neighbourhoods.** In order to encourage people to come to the downtown area, safe connections need to be implemented region-wide. Spending millions of dollars on one street that does not have connections will not accomplish much. The City needs to move forward quickly with the establishment of a complete cycling network that will encourage citizens and visitors from all city neighbourhoods to cycle to the downtown. The City needs to ensure that sustainable mobility is integral to all capital projects and budget development. It is crucial the City identify, discuss and implement cycling enhancements in all and future capital construction projects. The Transportation Study and a Sustainable Mobility Implementation Plan should be implemented prior to finalizing plans for the Greenway. For example, we feel the neighbourhoods that access the downtown via Brady Street would have difficulty in doing it now via walking or cycling, even with the Riverside underground tunnel. It is unfortunate that last year's construction along Brady Street did not include a full Complete Streets implementation that could now link businesses, visitors to the Howard Johnson hotel, and citizens from other areas to the Greenway. The Greenway cannot be developed in isolation of other linkages. For example, cycling routes need to connect the Greenway to Bell Park, and then on to Laurentian University and the South End concurrently with this project to ensure its success.
- **No parking on the side of the greenway. Minimize parking currently used by the City and by the YMCA. Minimize parking required for the Farmer's Market.** We felt that this space would be better allocated to the park and its amenities, would provide better views of the district for users of the park, and would allow activities that would draw users to the park. We acknowledge that this may cause some resistance from businesses and citizens who normally

park there. We encourage the City to provide innovative solutions to this change, including park and ride programs for citizens who work downtown, reduced bus fares for special events being held at the arena and at other downtown areas, and parking structures close to the downtown.

- **A safe environment that encourages citizens and visitors to visit and stay to spend money in the area.** Whether it is right or not, current perception of this area is that it is unsafe. Measures need to be put into place to correct this. This would include lighting on both sides of the street, and better lighting on and under connector bridges and underpasses, especially the Nelson St. Bridge. Engineering should include effective traffic calming measures to slow down traffic to ensure the street is safe and enjoyable. No one appreciates loud, aggressive driving in their surroundings. Covered, secure bike parking structures could be attached to the transit stops along that section of Elgin; this would make the area a focal destination point for cyclists and link both modes of transportation. Safe parking structures would encourage more cyclists to mix both modes of transportation for trips to the downtown area, and would encourage them to park their bicycles and then visit the downtown area to shop or eat. The transit stops need to be protected in order to provide safe havens for transit users.
- **A pedestrian and cyclist-friendly road which favours the ambience of the district i.e. arts and entertainment.** We propose increasing pedestrian and cyclist traffic while reducing aggressive driving behaviours, high speeds, and dangerous scenarios. As a comparison, we discussed the city of Old Montreal, which has a distinct culture and “feel”, which has an old-world flavour with its cobbled streets and quaint buildings, and which has thriving shops and restaurants. The park should have facilities that will make it a destination as well as a transportation corridor. While we acknowledge that some people may want to “watch the trains”, we felt that a solid sound barrier is needed to protect the ambience of the district, and allow people to stop, meet, and talk in the park. Along with the Farmer’s Market, other events and facilities could draw more people to the area. Vendors, good street furniture, patio eating facilities, buskers, outside concerts, street art (including art that promotes cycling, walking and transit), would help to draw people to the area. The park could also be used for winter activities and displays like Christmas tree lights and ice sculptures. The park needs to be accessible at all times, and may even compliment some of the festivals that are currently held downtown like Rib Fest and the Downtown Yard Sale. We need to ensure that we make the place friendlier, more attractive and accessible - a destination that people will want to visit. We need to provide attractions that will draw citizens and families from outlying areas like the Valley, Chelmsford, and other neighbourhoods and communities. We need to “think out of the box” and design an environment that will challenge and change the current attitudes of downtown - and of Sudbury lifestyles in general.
- **A park that reflects our Northern and Sudbury environment.** We propose using sustainable, native species as landscape. We discussed the possibility of a community garden as an example of local food sources. The design of the park should complement other initiatives that will be within walking distance, like the Rock of Fame, and the design that will be implemented for the section being developed by the School of Architecture. Clear signage could be erected at the entrance and exit of the park, for example a recreation of the welcome arch that used to be at the entrance of Sudbury. We need to ensure that the park is one of the “jewels” in our community and that it will serve as a template for further developments of sustainable mobility transportation corridors.
- **Amenities targeting cyclists.** Along with bike parking structures, the SCU proposes ideas like bike renting facilities for visitors to the downtown who are cyclists and a bike coop at the Farmer’s Market location. Internationally and nationally, cycling customers constitute a growing market segment with strong purchasing power. A study on Bike Lanes, On-Street Parking and

Business – a Study of Bloor Street in Toronto’s Annex Neighbourhood, Feb. 2009, by the Clean Air Partnership, noted that patrons arriving by foot or bicycle visit the most often and spend the most money per month. The downtown cannot compete with the big box stores, for example, so targeting populations like cyclists who are looking for something different, and something friendly to their lifestyles should be part of the development.

Our Top 3 Priorities

In summary, our top 3 priorities are:

1. The development of the Greenway using Complete Streets principles, in coordination with the development of proper connections so people from 8-80 years of age and of all abilities will come and use the park.
2. A safe cycling infrastructure that encourages cyclists of all ages to use the dedicated bike path.
3. A safe, unique environment that will draw more cyclists downtown.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input, and we look forward to further discussions as the project moves forward.

The Sudbury Cyclists Union