



Active Transportation Advisory Committee

MINUTES

A meeting of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) was held on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., in the Mansbridge Room at the Stratford Rotary Complex.

Committee Members Present: David Daglish – Chair Presiding, Kelley Teahen, Pat Ranney (Cycle Stratford), Christine Lee (Avon Trail), Councillor Jo-Dee Burbach, Joel LaCourse, Rhonda Gesinghaus Vaters

Staff Present: Vicky Trotter – Council Committee Coordinator, Nick Sheldon – Project Manager, Casey Riehl – Recording Secretary

Also Present: Inspector Jason Clarke

Regrets: Councillor Harjinder Nijjar

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Reading of the Land Acknowledgement and Moment of Silent Reflection.

Reading of the Respectful Workplace Conduct Statement

2. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and The General Nature Thereof

None declared.

3. Welcome New Members Joel LaCourse & Rhonda Gesinghaus Vaters

Members and staff introduced themselves.

4. Election of 2025 Chair & Vice-Chair

Staff declared nominations open for the 2025 Chair of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. Rhonda Gesinghaus Vaters nominated David Daglish.

Staff asked if there were any further nominations. No further nominations were made.

Motion by Christine Lee

Seconded by Pat Ranney

THAT the nominations for the 2025 Active Transportation Advisory Committee Chair be closed. Carried

David Daghish indicated that he would allow his nomination to stand.

Motion by Christine Lee

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT David Daghish be elected as the 2025 Chair of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. Carried

Staff declared nominations for the 2025 Vice-Chair of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee open. Councillor Burbach nominated Kelley Teahen.

Staff asked if there were any further nominations. No further nominations were made.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Pat Ranney

THAT the nominations for the 2025 Active Transportation Advisory Committee Vice-Chair be closed. Carried

Kelley Teahen indicated that she would allow her name to stand.

Motion by Pat Ranney

Seconded by Christine Lee

THAT Kelley Teahen be elected as the 2025 Vice-Chair of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. Carried

5. Adoption of Previous Minutes

Motion by Kelley Teahen

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT the minutes from the Active Transportation Advisory Committee meeting dated November 27, 2024 be adopted as printed. Carried

6. Car-Free Fridays

Councillor Burbach and the Downtown BIA have been discussing the possibility of ATAC partnering with them to re-vamp car-free Fridays or to perhaps try a new initiative. The BIA has reported that interest in car-free Fridays has been dwindling and perhaps it might be time to try something new. Rhonda Gesinghaus Vaters suggested that the event needs to be advertised more. Ms. Gesinghaus Vaters volunteered to assist the BIA with car-free Fridays if they are interested in keeping the event going.

Vicky Trotter will contact Kim Griffiths from the BIA to invite her to the February 26, 2025 ATAC meeting to discuss a possible partnership and planning for future events.

Pat Ranney will discuss car-free Fridays with Cycle Stratford to gather some feedback from them before the next meeting.

Ms. Trotter also noted that ATAC has earmarked budget funds in 2025 for their annual bike event that could be re-directed if necessary to assist with a different event.

7. Festival Route Working Group Update

Pat Ranney and Vicky Trotter will be meeting next week to discuss this project. Once the budget is passed, further details and plans can be explored for the signage.

If any ATAC members are interested in joining this working group, please let them know. Current ATAC members on the working group are Pat Ranney and David Daghish, with the assistance of Vicky Trotter.

8. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

8.1 Safety Concerns Crossing Ontario Street at York Street

Nick Sheldon stated that Engineering has received the recommendation passed by the committee in November regarding safety concerns at Ontario Street and York Street. The recommendation has been added to the list to be reviewed by staff. Mr. Sheldon will report back to ATAC once information is available.

Councillor Burbach inquired with Inspector Clarke what his perspective is on this area. Inspector Clarke noted that it is a risky and difficult spot to cross. There have been many close calls, luckily very few accidents reported. In his opinion, some type of traffic control would need to be installed, such as making the curve into an actual corner.

Members suggested better use of the sidewalk that runs under the street. The current sidewalk is not accessible and there is not adequate signage for visitors to know that the sidewalk exists as an option. Fixing this sidewalk would likely need to be addressed by Community Services as it is park area.

Joel LaCourse noted that this area would be a good place to install a flower boulevard in the middle of the street. This would prevent people from crossing the street in that area.

Christine Lee suggested a pedestrian cross-over in this area with warning signals far enough ahead in each direction that drivers are aware that people may be crossing ahead. In an effort to slow traffic, Ms. Lee has also seen cities paint

lines on the road gradually getting closer and closer together to give the illusion that you are speeding up, which actually makes drivers slow down.

Kelley Teahen suggested that City staff and members look at the Vision Zero campaign that Hoboken, New Jersey has successfully implemented to achieve the goal of preventing traffic-related injuries and fatalities.

9. New Business

9.1 On-Street Parking on John Street

Rhonda Gesinghaus Vaters inquired about the on-street parking that is now on John Street. John Street remains a cycling route, however, has on-street parking that makes it unsafe for cyclists to navigate around cars. Ms. Gesinghaus Vaters questioned if this main corridor to downtown could have bike lanes for cyclists to get to the downtown area.

Nick Sheldon stated that John Street is a signed bike route that did not have a designated bike lane. In his opinion, the width of the road could accommodate a bike lane. The current by-law would need to be amended to eliminate on-street parking, which is an option but could also still be a challenge.

Motion by Rhonda Gesinghaus Vaters

Seconded by Pat Ranney

THAT the Active Transportation Advisory Committee requests Council direct staff to investigate the possibility of removing the parking lane and installing bike lanes on John Street South between Queensland Road and West Gore Street;

AND THAT all required by-law amendments be made. Carried

9.2 Missing Sidewalk Links

Joel LaCourse inquired about a residence on Lorne Avenue that does not have a sidewalk in front of it. There is a sidewalk on either side, but not one in this small section. He questioned if the City could prioritize connecting the sidewalks this area.

Nick Sheldon explained that this is private property that the City does not own. They have not been able to expropriate the land to date, thus the sidewalk has not been connected. It is identified as a missing sidewalk link on the City's list. He noted the City has a \$200,000.00 annual budget for missing sidewalks. In 2025 they will be completing a link on Erie Street (near McDonald's restaurant).

Mr. LaCourse stated that the homeowner is motivated to have a sidewalk installed and will direct him to contact the engineering department to begin the process.

Mr. LaCourse also inquired about a missing sidewalk link on Lorne Avenue between Home Street and Erie Street. Councillor Burbach explained that previously the province was looking at turning Lorne Avenue into a by-pass. In this case, the Province would take over the whole project, including any pedestrian/cycling options. Nick Sheldon stated that this area is included in the Master Transportation Plan. It is a very large project and has been identified for the installation of a multi-use path.

Mr. LaCourse inquired if Stratford could somehow be linked up with a trail to St. Marys. Members noted that currently the closest link is the Avon Trail. Christine Lee explained that the trail comes in close to Road 111 (near Stratford Home Hardware).

Councillor Burbach suggested that ATAC could create a list of their missing link priorities and partner with the Accessibility Advisory Committee, as they have done in the past, to work together to compile a list that could be provided to staff as suggested priority areas.

Vicky Trotter will provide ATAC members the map of the identified missing links in the City of Stratford. The map shows the links that have been completed and ones that are still required to be done.

Mr. LaCourse noted that the sidewalks on Freeland Drive and C.H. Meier Boulevard are both underwater in the spring and questioned if that can be rectified. Members also noted that these areas are heaved somewhat from roots due to the large trees in those areas.

Mr. LaCourse inquired why there is not a sidewalk on both sides of C.H. Meier. Nick Sheldon explained that C.H. Meier is a planned wider right of way in the Transportation Master Plan. There is intent to have a multi-use trail on C.H. Meier from Devon Street to Douro Street and continuing to Romeo Street. The City had previously applied for funding for this project, unfortunately they were unsuccessful in receiving funds.

Mr. LaCourse noted that despite snowing every day, the City's Public Works Department has done a great job these last couple of weeks clearing the snow off of the sidewalks.

9.3 QR Code on Trail Sign in Confederation Park

Christine Lee reported that the QR code on the new trail sign in Confederation Park is not working properly. Vicky Trotter will investigate and have the links restored if need be.

9.4 Request for 40 Km/Hour Speed Limits

Pat Ranney inquired about the status of the 40 km/hour speed limit that is proposed in the Master Transportation Plan. Councillor Burbach stated that she brought the issue forward and it was defeated at Council. Council was not in favour of the high cost of re-signing all residential streets. There was a suggestion to change the entrance signs into Stratford to read that all residential streets are 40 km/hour instead of the current 50 km/hour. The speed limit reduction is still included in the Master Transportation Plan, however, will not be addressed again until the next term of Council.

9.5 Micro-Mobility

Kelley Teahen inquired how much responsibility for the rules surrounding micro mobility, such as e-scooters and e-bikes, lies with municipalities versus something broader on a provincial or federal level. Ms. Teahen also questioned if there have been many incidents or reports of people operating them in a way that are endangering other people.

Councillor Burbach stated she is aware of one incident involving a motorized scooter where there was at least one injury. Inspector Clarke stated that there have been a few reports, however no major concerns have been raised. The police do receive a number of complaints from people inquiring if riders should be wearing helmets. Anything that is propelled by a motor, falls under the Highway Traffic Act. However, a motorized bike that has pedals is still considered a bicycle.

Ms. Teahen noted that there is a conference being held in May that will have a panel discussion regarding micro mobility and how it is being handled in different jurisdictions. Councillor Burbach stated that it would be great to get direction from the province, that way the laws are the same across the board for all municipalities in Ontario.

9.6 Community Response Unit

Inspector Clarke reported that a new Community Response Unit has recently been created. The response unit is made up of five members who work days and afternoons throughout the week. They respond to any lower priority calls that do not require a police response initially. If ATAC has concerns and feel like an issue

may need enforcement, the Community Response Unit could possibly assist. ATAC members can contact Inspector Clarke directly and report problem areas that might need directive patrol.

9.7 Albert Street Reconstruction (Phase 2)

Nick Sheldon reported that there has been an open house regarding the Albert Street reconstruction project (phase 2). This reconstruction is part of the Transportation Master Plan for a bike boulevard eastbound on Albert Street. The remaining two blocks to King Street are scheduled to be completed in 2025.

The Avon Street and Avondale Avenue reconstruction project will also take place in 2025. The City of Stratford has a policy that when reconstruction takes place in a residential area, the road is to have a sidewalk on one side. This area currently has two sidewalks and will be redesigned to have one. The pedestrian pass is very low in this area. The idea is to have one sidewalk in low pedestrian areas in order to afford and maintain sidewalks in other areas. Councillor Burbach noted that information on this project is on the Engage Stratford website.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next ATAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Stratford Rotary Complex in the Mansbridge Room.

11. Adjournment

Motion by Christine Lee

Seconded by Joel LaCourse

THAT the January 22, 2025 ATAC meeting adjourn. Carried

Start Time: 7:00 P.M.

End Time: 8:26 P.M.