9. CONSULTATION – NOVEMBER 2010

9.1 Technical Advisory Committee

Following the selection of Laurier Avenue as the preferred corridor, two technical advisory committee (TAC) meetings were held with City staff from all relevant departments to review the preliminary designs and ensure all opinions and concerns were noted and addressed where possible. In addition to TAC meetings, numerous working meetings were held with staff from various departments to discuss different design features. A summary of the opinions and issues raised during these meetings are provided in Appendix G. The main points of discussion were:

- Traffic congestion and traffic diversion
- Loading zones and taxi zones
- Existing and proposed on-street parking
- Design considerations at driveways and entrances
- Bicycle parking
- Garbage Collection
- Transit operations
- East and west end linkages
- Buffer treatments
- Intersection design
- Maintenance requirements
- Access for emergency services

9.2 Public Advisory Committee

A Public Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held November 23, 2010 with representatives from the following groups:

- Cycling Vision Ottawa
- Citizens for Safe Cycling
- Centretown Citizens Community Association
- National Capital Commission
- Dalhousie Community Association
- Centretown Citizens Ottawa Corporation
- Action Sandy Hill
- Chinatown BIA
- Somerset Village BIA
- Bank Street BIA

The members of the PAC were presented with the Laurier Avenue detailed design and public open house material and asked to provide feedback. The comments and discussion ranged from discussion about the design features recommended along the corridor to concerns raised by the Bank Street BIA regarding Laurier Avenue as the preferred corridor. A full description of the discussion is included in Appendix H.
9.3 Public Open Houses

A public open house was held on November 25, 2010 to present the Laurier Avenue preliminary design and receive feedback from the public. The open house was advertised in the local newspapers, on the City of Ottawa website and flyers were sent to all residents and businesses on or near Laurier Avenue. In addition to the open houses, members of the public could review the draft reports from MRC and Vélo Québec on the City of Ottawa’s website and provide feedback to the project team. A consultation summary report has been prepared to document the feedback received from this consultation process and is included in Appendix H. A brief overview of the consultation is provided below.

9.3.1 Public Open House Attendance

A total of 78 people signed-in at the public open house and the city received 112 emails and 39 comment sheets. Based on the attendees who provided postal codes, 30% live on Laurier Avenue while the other attendees were mostly from the surrounding areas of Centretown, the Glebe, Sandy Hill, Westboro, Wellington West and Lebreton Flats. There were also a few individuals who travelled in from as far as Orleans, Kanata, and Hunt Club.

9.3.2 Summary of Feedback

The feedback received from the consultation session showed a considerable amount of support for the project from the community but also a lot of concern from the residents of Laurier Avenue particularly regarding the loss of on-street parking spaces on Laurier Avenue. The main themes that surfaced through the public consultation process are described below.

Right-Turn Design Alternatives were presented to the public for their comments on the best solution of four possible options. The preferred treatment was ‘Option A’, while ‘Option D’ received some support. The other options received no support. The preferences provided by the members of the public are shown in Figure 9.1 and reflect a total of 39 opinions. Option A reflects the proposed design for the segregated bicycle lane pilot project and is shown in Figure 9.2.
Safety is an important consideration in the design and implementation of the bicycle lanes along Laurier Avenue. Members of the public pointed out the importance of selecting appropriate pavement markings and signage to reduce conflicts between road users at intersections, driveways and access points. There were also comments received regarding the importance of proper snow clearance for the bicycle lanes and the need to carefully consider the drainage along the facility.

Pedestrians represent the highest modal share travelling through the intersections along Laurier Avenue. It was pointed out by members of the public the importance of ensuring the safety of pedestrians along the corridor and improving the pedestrian environment.

Impact on Residents was a main concern for people who live on Laurier Avenue. The main concern of residents was the decrease in on-street parking on Laurier Avenue as well as concern regarding the increased traffic congestion that will result. The condominium buildings on Laurier Avenue (Lyon St. to Bronson Ave.) have very limited underground parking for visitors and rely heavily on the existing on-street parking on Laurier Ave. Some residents of Laurier Avenue expressed concern that the property value of the condominium units could decrease as a result of the pilot project.

Impact on Business was raised as a concern from some businesses along Laurier Avenue. Some business representatives expressed concern regarding the decrease in on-street parking along Laurier Avenue and the potential impact this could have on them. The importance of making loading and unloading of delivery trucks and tour buses as safe and simple as possible to minimize the impact on these operations was highlighted. Similarly, it was pointed out that ensuring Para Transpo is able to continue to operate similar to existing conditions is very important.

Traffic Congestion was a significant concern for many people and there was some concern that increased congestion will cause drivers to divert onto smaller residential streets. In addition to the reduction of vehicle travel lanes from four to two as required for the implementation of segregated bicycle lanes, there were a few design features which raised concern or opposition from some members of the public. Banning the eastbound-left (EBL) movement at Metcalfe Street was a concern particularly due to the existing ban on EBL movements between Kent Street and Cumberland Street. With limited locations where EBL movements are permitted, there is concern from the public that this may increase driver frustration and confusion along the corridor. There was also a concern that banning the right-turn-on-red movements will contribute to traffic
congestion. There was also a mix of support and opposition regarding the advanced cycling and pedestrian phase along Laurier Avenue.

**Cycling Connections** were a primary concern of many who provided feedback on the proposed segregated bicycle lane design. There was significant concern with the east and west end cycling connections. There were suggestions that the east end should be extended to east of Nicholas St. or King Edward Ave. There were numerous responses that the west end connection needed more work and the most important connections presented were to Scott Street, the Ottawa River Pathway and Somerset Street. There were also some suggestions that the facility be terminated at Percy Street rather than Bronson Avenue. In addition to suggested connections or extensions of the segregated bicycle lanes along Laurier Avenue, there were suggestions that a network of segregated bicycle lanes should be provided including a grid of east-west and north-south streets.

### 10. MONITORING PLAN

A performance monitoring plan will be critical to understanding the success of the segregated cycling facility and may help improve the design of future segregated bicycle facilities in Ottawa. The monitoring plan will involve data collection to be used to review the facility performance for all road-users and evaluate the success of both the project and the design features used along the corridor. The monitoring plan will also include an on-going review of the traffic operations on the surrounding road network to ensure any issues that arise are promptly addressed.

#### 10.1 Vélo Québec – Cycling Expert Opinion

As part of the Vélo Québec Segregated Bicycle Lane Pilot Project Peer Review report, a number of suggestions have been made to be incorporated into the City of Ottawa monitoring plan for this project. The Vélo Québec recommendations focused on the additional data collection to be carried out by the City to properly monitor and evaluate the success of the project. It was suggested that the monitoring plan include a business survey, an intercept survey, and a bicycle traffic count. The monitoring plan described below has been based on the data collection efforts suggested by Vélo Québec in their peer review report.

#### 10.2 Data Collection

##### 10.2.1 Business Survey

A business survey should be conducted to review the perceived impacts of the segregated bicycle facility on local businesses along the Laurier Avenue corridor. This should include the street-level retail businesses as well as the managers of the office towers along the corridor. If possible, the city should also try to include the hotels, taxi companies, school bus companies, street vendors, courier services and Para Transpo to determine whether the loading facilities provided are perceived to be adequate to address the needs of these businesses and services operating along the corridor. As suggested by Vélo Québec, the business survey should be conducted between the spring and fall of the second year (2012) when cycling volumes are expected to be the highest.
10.2.2 Intercept Survey

An intercept survey should be conducted to solicit feedback from cyclists using the segregated bicycle facility. The survey may be conducted as an on-the-spot interview or by providing passing cyclists with a paper form or internet address to provide feedback at their convenience. The survey should address the overall satisfaction of cyclists with the existing design as well as request suggestions for improvements to the facility and suggestions regarding further expansion of the segregated cycling network.

10.2.3 Traffic Counts

Automated traffic counters should be installed along the Laurier Avenue cycling lanes to record the 24-hour cycling volumes. It is recommended that they remain for the entire duration of the pilot project to track the seasonal variation in cycling throughout the year.

Existing bicycle traffic counts along the Laurier Avenue corridor show 2-way cycling volumes of less than 20 bicycles per hour west of Lyon Street, between 40 and 70 bicycles per hour from Lyon to Bank and between 100 and 140 bicycles per hour east of Bank Street. Due to the low volumes of cyclists west of Lyon Street, it is suggested that counters be installed near Elgin Street and Kent Street to capture the majority of cyclists using the corridor.

In addition to cycling traffic counts, it is recommended that the City conduct turning movement traffic counts during the AM and PM peak periods along Laurier Avenue as well as along adjacent parallel streets which have been significantly impacted by traffic diversion. The City traffic operations staff should be consulted to isolate the intersections of greatest concern. It is recommended that most of the selected turning movement counts be conducted during the summer period when cyclist volumes are high and the City traffic counting program is in operation. There should also be a few critical intersections counted every three to four months for the first year of the pilot project to ensure that traffic concerns related to the pilot project are properly addressed.

10.2.4 Collision Data

It should be noted that the City currently records all collisions occurring on City roads through the Ottawa Police. No additional collision data collection is required as part of the monitoring plan but this data will be reviewed as part of the traffic impact assessment carried out as part of the pilot project.

10.3 Traffic Operations Review

The traffic operations staff at the City will use existing intersection cameras and the traffic data collected as part of the monitoring plan to review the impacts upon the surrounding road network and make adjustments to signal timing plans as required over the course of the pilot project.

The City will also undertake a transportation impact assessment which will review the impacts of the pilot project on all road-users.
10.4 Evaluation

The City staff will review all relevant data collected over the course of the pilot project to assess the impacts to all road users and determine the overall success of the pilot project and the design features used along the corridor.

11. NEXT STEPS

The Laurier Avenue corridor has been selected by City of Ottawa staff as the preferred corridor for the downtown east-west segregated bicycle lane pilot project based on the corridor evaluation process and public consultation. The preliminary design for the Laurier Avenue corridor has been presented to a Public Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and the general public in November, 2010. The plans will be presented to Transportation Committee and City Council in February, 2011.

Should the pilot project be approved, the detailed design and tender package will be prepared to construct the segregated cycling facility in 2011. It is recommended that the City initiate the development of a communications program. The program should be a comprehensive public outreach package that integrates advertising, kick-off events, and public education components. The program might be modelled after similar and successful projects in Vancouver and Portland, where social media and promotional videos were well received by the public and helped all road users understand how segregated bike lanes and turning movements work.

The estimated capital costs to implement the proposed segregated bicycle lanes on Laurier Avenue have been provided in Appendix K. The total costs to implement the pilot project including the communications plan, detailed design and contingency costs are expected to be $1,300,000. There will be an additional $187,500 required for the annual maintenance of the facility. Should the facilities be removed at the end of the pilot project, the expected removal/reinstatement costs would be about $160,000. These costs include segregated cycling facilities between Bronson Avenue and the Rideau Canal but these costs could be reduced if the limits of the segregation were reduced.