

DECISION REPORT

Admin Report - Bicycle Bylaw Update - February 2020.docx

ISSUE

This report discusses and recommends the following amendments to Bylaw No. 6884, The Bicycle Bylaw (the Bylaw) for City Council's consideration.

BACKGROUND

History

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on November 18, 2019, considered the Bicycle Bylaw Update – Proposed Revisions report and resolved, in part:

- “2. That the Administration report back on maintaining Section 13 in the Bylaw (want bicycles to remain in the bicycle lane when one is available); and
3. That the Administration report back on limiting cyclists riding on sidewalks in BID areas and the industrial area.”

Current Status

Exclusive Bicycle Lane Use

Section 13 of The Bicycle Bylaw states:

- “13. In any location where an exclusive lane for the passage of bicycles has been established and is so designated by traffic signs and pavement markings, every person operating a bicycle shall utilize such lane only, except that any such person may depart from the exclusive bicycle lane when approaching an intersection and indicating an intention to turn by giving the required signal to that effect.”

For clarification, the above section was written prior to protected bike lanes. The reference to ‘exclusive bicycle lane’ referred to painted bike lanes, for example that exist on Preston Avenue between 14th Street and Research Drive.

Riding on Sidewalks

The policy framework provided in November 2019 to City Council recommended that sidewalk riding be allowed for children under the age of 14. At 14 years of age, children are high school aged and on the cusp of being eligible to receive learner driver's licenses and should be confident and capable to ride on the street.

Public Engagement

Exclusive Bicycle Lane Use

The Bike Bylaw review invited 14 stakeholder organizations and two City of Saskatoon Advisory Committees to comment on the current bylaw and to submit considerations for a new bylaw. The organizations included: Biketrix, Canadian Paediatric Society, City of Saskatoon Accessibility Advisory Committee, City of Saskatoon Traffic Safety Committee, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Meewasin Valley Authority, Saskatchewan Cycling Association, Saskatchewan Government Insurance,

Saskatchewan Health Authority, Saskatchewan Prevention Institute, Saskatoon and District Safety Council, Saskatoon Council on Aging, Saskatoon Cycles, Saskatoon Public Schools, and Walking Saskatoon.

The Saskatchewan Healthy Authority and Saskatoon Cycles specifically recommended removing the requirement for people riding bicycles to use only the exclusive bicycle lane. The other stakeholders supported the initial recommendation at a roundtable meeting held on September 26, 2019.

Riding on Sidewalks

The initial recommendation to allow children under the age of 14 to be able to ride on the sidewalk was specifically recommended by Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Saskatoon Public Schools, Saskatchewan Healthy Authority, Saskatoon Cycles, and Walking Saskatoon. The other stakeholders supported the initial recommendation at a roundtable meeting held on September 26, 2019.

Saskatoon's Business Improvement Districts (BID) were asked for their opinion on revising the Bylaw to explicitly allow children under the age of 14 to ride on sidewalks in the BID. Feedback received is summarized below:

- Downtown BID did not support revising the Bylaw.
- Riversdale BID narrowly supports revising the Bylaw.
- Sutherland BID did not support or oppose revising the Bylaw, but requested additional enforcement on the west side of Central Avenue (the east side is designated multi-use path).
- Broadway BID supports revising the Bylaw.
- 33rd Street BID was undecided.

City of Saskatoon's Current Approach

Exclusive Bicycle Lane Use

Protected bike lanes, raised cycle tracks and shared paths are all considered part of Saskatoon's All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling network. AAA facilities provide separation between people driving and people cycling to ensure safety and comfort for both. AAA facilities provide a level of protection from motor vehicles that is welcoming to cyclists of all skill levels. Nevertheless, people cycling who are comfortable riding with traffic and are able to sustain higher travel speeds may choose to ride in the traffic lanes with motor vehicles.

Riding on Sidewalks

The current practice is to not ticket children under the age of 12, but no age limit is clearly included in the existing Bylaw.

Approaches in Other Jurisdictions

Exclusive Bicycle Lane Use

Other jurisdictions such as Calgary, AB; Edmonton, AB; Ottawa, ON; Regina, SK; Toronto, ON; Vancouver, BC; Victoria, BC; and Winnipeg, MB have repealed similar requirements from their bylaws in recent years. The only Canadian city found to retain

the requirement is Kelowna, BC where people cycling “must, ride as near as practical to the right side of a highway, within a bicycle path if available.”

Riding on Sidewalks

Some jurisdictions specify a maximum allowable age or specify a maximum wheel diameter. A comparison of jurisdictions is provided in the table below:

Jurisdiction	Ages allowed on sidewalk	Wheel diameter	Bicycle Type
Calgary, AB	14		
Edmonton, AB	Not specified	Less than 50 cm	
Kelowna, BC	12		Non-chain driven 3 or 4 wheeled cycle
Manitoba	Not specified	Less than 41 cm	
Ottawa, ON	Not specified		
Vancouver, BC	16		

OPTIONS

Exclusive Bicycle Lane Use

Option 1 – Do not require cyclists to use bicycle lane when one is available

Advantages (as identified by stakeholders):

- Transportation equity is maintained.
- People cycling who are confident riding with traffic and are able to sustain higher travel speeds may choose to ride in the traffic lanes with motor vehicles.
- Cycling mobility is maintained by providing easier left-turn movement at intersections and mid-block locations (lanes, commercial access).
- Cyclists will not be trapped in a bike lane when a vehicle is blocking the cycling facility.
- Prior to snow and debris being removed / cleaned from a cycling facility, cyclists have options to ride elsewhere.
- Not segregating different modes of travel facilitates education for all road users on how to share the public right-of-way. The more people that cycle, the better compliance to rules of the road among all users is achieved, as sharing the public right-of-way becomes the norm.

Disadvantages:

- Occasionally impeded vehicular traffic flow.

Option 2 – Require cyclists to use bicycle lane when one is available

The advantages and disadvantages are the reverse of Option 1.

Riding on Sidewalks in the BID and Industrial Areas

Option 1 – That children under the age of 14 are permitted to cycle on sidewalks

Advantages:

- Children are provided a safer place to ride their bike. They are considered a vulnerable road user due to their level of awareness, control, and agility, as well as their reduced visibility.
- Children travel at lower speeds and lesser distances.
- Promotes cycling as a transportation choice at an earlier age.

Disadvantages:

- Perceived risk of pedestrian injury.

Option 2 – Nobody is permitted to cycle on sidewalks

Advantage:

- Reduced potential of a collision between pedestrian and cyclist.

Disadvantages:

- Children riding with vehicular traffic are more vulnerable.
- Children will not ride their bicycle.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council:

1. That Bylaw No. 6884, The Bicycle Bylaw be amended to include:
 - a) That cyclists do not have to remain in the bicycle lane when one is available;
 - b) That children under the age of 14 be permitted to cycle on sidewalks; and
2. That the City Solicitor be requested to prepare the appropriate amendment to Bylaw No. 6884, The Bicycle Bylaw.

RATIONALE

Exclusive Bicycle Lane Use

As discussed and supported by the stakeholder group, the above recommendation was provided primarily in consideration for people cycling who are comfortable riding with traffic and are able to sustain higher travel speeds may choose to ride in the traffic lanes with motor vehicles. For this reason, it is the predominate practice not to legislate that cyclists use exclusive bike lanes only.

Riding on Sidewalks in the BID and Industrial Areas

As discussed and supported by the stakeholder group, the above recommendation was provided primarily in consideration for protecting vulnerable road users.

ADDITIONAL IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial implications.

Legal implications that deal with the enforceability of the new requirements under the bylaw are yet to be determined. Social implications, outside of safety, were not

reviewed. Environmental benefits gained by increasing active transportation have not been quantified.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

A communication plan will be ready for implementation following the adoption of any updates to the Bylaw. One key element will be revisions to the BYXE campaign to educate residents about all changes. A news conference and additional advertising outside of the campaign may also be required.

Report Approval

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