

Dear Councillor Lehman,

We live at 1132 St. Anthony Road, London and we are writing this letter to voice our opposition to the construction project, as proposed, to rebuild St. Anthony Road. In particular, we oppose the addition of the sidewalk on the south side of the street.

At the outset, we would each request, separately, delegation status and request that this letter be placed on the public record.

We don't believe that sidewalks will increase pedestrian safety, address accessibility issues or encourage personal mobility, which seem to be the main justifications for the addition of sidewalks detailed in the Report to the Civic Works Committee dated February 9th, 2021.

Because the neighbourhood is bounded on the south by the Thames River and on the east by the Thames Valley Golf Club, there are no through streets and the speed limit is 50 kmh. There are no community centres, churches, public attractions or gathering places that would attract excess traffic. The neighbourhood is not near any bicycle or pedestrian routes, such as the Thames Valley Parkway. Even covering the neighbourhood in sidewalks wouldn't make getting to Springbank Park or the Walkway any easier, as the bridges to both those areas are over a kilometer away to the west and east, respectively. As a result, the volume of vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic from outside the neighbourhood is low to non-existent. The streets are very wide and can accommodate parking on both sides of the street with enough room for traffic to still easily pass.

Sidewalks in this neighbourhood would not enable accessibility, encourage personal mobility or increase pedestrian safety. We have lived in Old Hazelden for over 30 years, have raised our children here and never have we not walked the neighbourhood with our family because there are no sidewalks and never have we felt unsafe walking on the side of the road. We have seen our neighbours use walkers, scooters and canes without issue. With the reconstruction of the roadway, any issues with mobility due to an uneven road surface will disappear. In the winter, when we walk through Hazelden North, we walk on the side of the well-cleared roadway because it is preferable to the dangerous ice- and snow-covered sidewalks, which are impassable to anyone with mobility issues.

As a result of the limited benefit that sidewalks will bring to the neighbourhood, the proposal to cut down almost 30% of the mature trees on the City boulevard to accommodate sidewalk installation is unacceptable; indeed, this part of the neighbourhood, the eastern portion of St. Anthony Road, is least affected by tree removal. If sidewalks were to be installed to all of the streets in the neighbourhood, it would mean that 50% or more of the mature trees on those boulevards would have to be removed due to the location of the trees on those streets, which would be an environmental disaster. We do not want St. Anthony Road to be the thin end of the wedge that would see so many trees removed that would undoubtedly destroy the character of the neighbourhood.

Yours truly,

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