

Dear Councillor Lehman,

I hope you are well. I am writing to voice our opposition to the installation of sidewalks on St. Anthony Road between Hyde Park Road and Hampton Crescent, scheduled to take place this summer. While we are residents of St. Anthony Road, please note that our property is not on the stretch slated for sidewalks this summer. We are west of Hampton Crescent but stand with our neighbours in opposition of this project.

While there are many reasons to be opposed to the project, we are opposed for the following reasons: Need, Cost, Safety, Trees and Community

Need

We understand that the London Plan has provisions for sidewalks in all future street development as well for streets without sidewalks when infrastructure work is to be done. Our street is a residential street that is not en route to anywhere. No one comes onto this street unless they are going to a specific address here. One cannot gain access to any other destination (businesses) with more efficiency by going down our street. As such, vehicular traffic is confined to residents and people visiting residences for personal or professional purposes.

Additionally, people in this community have walked on the street since its initial development in the early 60s. No one living here will use these sidewalks, for reasons that will be expanded upon below.

Councillor Jesse Helmer has been quoted as saying *"Generally speaking, people who live on the street don't really want a sidewalk and people who don't live there and walk down the street do want a sidewalk."* I don't think Councillor Helmer has a good understanding of these neighbourhoods. Our neighbourhood is flanked by two condo developments. Many residents of both of those developments walk down our street for exercise and fresh air. They could easily choose other areas, which are just as close and have established sidewalks, but choose to walk in our neighbourhood. I have never heard them complain of the lack of sidewalks.

Cost

Given the year we have had and the pressures on the multi year budget as a result of the pandemic, we feel that taxpayers' money should be directed to more important projects. Given the needlessness of this project, eliminating the cost will allow for that money to be redirected, in future years, to more meaningful and necessary city work such as low cost housing.

Safety

Safety is an issue that is important to everyone. It is argued that sidewalks will improve the safety of pedestrians due to creating a separation between the pedestrian and the road. Our road is travelled by all types of pedestrians heavily. We have seniors and others who need mobility devices such as walkers, canes and scooters who travel our road daily. The road is flat and safe for people requiring mobility devices. Sidewalks offer changes in height and, over time, sections of sidewalks shift to create trip hazards that are especially dangerous to those who require assistance with mobility. I doubt the City wants to assume that liability. I am personally aware of individuals in our community who have significant challenges with mobility and are opposed to the sidewalks for this very reason.

Trees

This is a mature neighbourhood, close to the river that has many mature trees. These trees are host to many birds and animals with whom we coexist. The "Forest City" has had a declining canopy for many years. At a time when climate change is becoming increasingly important, it is not the time to be removing mature trees, which help to absorb Carbon Dioxide and provide cooling shade to homes, thus reducing their

summer cooling requirements. This project will be removing 30% of the trees that currently exist along that stretch, an action that will take decades to reverse.

Community

The heart of the London Plan is to create a community for everyone. In Hazelden, our community is defined by the street. The street is where we gather. We learn about each others' families, health, celebrations and challenges. It is where we get to know each other. The street is the place that creates a sense of community and a need, desire and obligation to support each other. Sidewalks will not add to that. We will still gather on the street to live and learn and to laugh and console. We urge you and City Council to not take this away from our neighbourhood for the sake of policy in the London Plan.

Respectfully,

Lynda and Bill McCauley

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