



## KNOXDALE MERIVALE COUNCIL

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### **Knoxdale Merivale Council, Ward 9**

#### Submission to the Transportation Committee

#### Item 1 Transportation Master Plan, Ottawa Pedestrian Plan And Ottawa Cycling Plan Update ACS2013-PAI-PGM-0193

November 13, 2013

The Knoxdale Merivale Council (KMC) has reviewed the proposed Transportation Master Plan, and supports the general directions of the Plan.

In particular, KMC is encouraged by the ideas for making cycling safer for cyclists of all skills and ages. We are delighted to see that the City has adopted our recommendation for completion of the Nepean Trail. This multi-use network of pathways will not only be a splendid example of improved connectivity and cycling safety, but we hope will also provide a safe, convenient and comfortable network of walking routes. This latter aspect is particularly important in providing pedestrian access to the commercial areas along Merivale Road, a notoriously hostile route for cyclists and pedestrians alike. The Nepean Trail can also connect Ward 9 communities on the southern side of Hunt Club Road through the existing network of NCC and city's pathways, along Prince of Wales and Woodroffe in particular.

KMC supports the general vision of the TMP "to recognize that transportation is a means to an end — namely, the protection and improvement of our quality of life; to support social, environmental and economic sustainability by giving residents ability to meet daily needs by walking, cycling, taking transit or ridesharing." KMC agrees with the strategy of improving various modes of transportation, and in particular extending LRT, the slightly more ambitious modal share targets and the wider use of affordability analysis. Great work went into identifying possible routes and suggested improvements.

However, the vision needs detailed plans for its implementation. KMC has several reservations:

1. The LRT, as proposed in the TMP (although affordable, green, clean and comfortable) would add time to the downtown commute for many Ward 9 residents. There are existing direct, express bus routes for downtown commuters, in the morning and evening.
2. Implementation of the transportation network (in particular servicing the work, live and play model) will only marginally affect residents of Ward 9, who would continue to rely on buses or cars. The Plan mentions transit signal priority, queue jumping signals, and peak period bus lanes, all referring to the live-work component. However, not much is said about the live-play component, and many Ward 9 roads/intersections are failing or nearing a failure point.
3. "Neighbourhood-based personal travel planning" has a nice ring to it: what exactly will it entail? Raising the walking distance to transit stations will lower the quality of the overall pedestrian

experience (especially on the many Ward 9 residential streets without sidewalks) and negatively affect older and differently able adults. How will the TMP vision accommodate the aging population and special needs commuters?

4. **Merivale Road:** KMC considers the future of Merivale Road to be of critical importance. Merivale is in fact the geographic centre of urban/suburban Ottawa, and has the long-term potential to be transformed into a real Main Street, the centre of a truly walkable and liveable community. The proposed Merivale Road Density Study, to be carried out in 2014-15, will potentially have major implications for the proposals in the TMP. The suggestion that this Study will closely follow the existing Merivale Road secondary plan does not offer much insight of what could or would be done. Meanwhile, existing congestion along Merivale Road affects residents and businesses alike. The current proposed western LRT route does not provide an opportunity for LRT or rail of any form to come to Merivale Road. Suggested peak-time bus-only lanes (on the section of Merivale that is north of Baseline) would have little impact for Ward 9 neighbourhoods. And, it is difficult to see how to implement the TMP's plan to widen Merivale Road (from Baseline to Slack Road) for bus lanes, given the close proximity of numerous commercial buildings and some townhomes to the existing roadway. KMC would need to see the final results from the Merivale Density Study before expressing support for any transportation-related plans. Realization of the Merivale area's full potential will ultimately require a major transit corridor. Even today, the main commercial section of Merivale has more than reached capacity at peak periods. Yet it appears that Merivale Road was not seriously considered for inclusion in the Affordable Rapid Transit and Transit Priority Network.
5. KMC continues to have serious reservations about the plans for Prince of Wales Drive, which is already under serious pressure from commuter traffic. For example, it is not clear what solutions will be proposed for Prince of Wales/Hunt Club, Hunt Club/Riverside or Prince of Wales/Deakin, which are all failing intersections. Further north, the majority of traffic from Prince of Wales will be directed to the Baseline/Fisher intersection, where those headed downtown will be faced with a single lane on Fisher. Perhaps it is time to consider alternate solutions, like BRT or even LRT.

KMC stands ready to be a part of any advisory group resolving the finer points of implementing the Transportation Master Plan as it relates to Ward 9.



Agnes Warda, Chair  
Knoxdale Merivale Council

(KMC operates as an informal, unincorporated entity, gathering together all 8 Community Associations in Ward 9 (Country Place, The Glens, General Burns, Fisher Heights and Area, Manordale-Woodvale, Merivale Gardens, Tanglewood Hillsdale and Trend-Arlington))