



December 9, 2019

## **Coalition for a Liveable Sudbury**

### **Written submission –Lasalle Corridor Official Plan Amendment (OPA)**

Four OPA maps are posted for the Lasalle corridor, creating a new Regional Centre in the Montrose mall area, and designating Regional Corridor and Secondary Community Node areas along the Lasalle corridor. Since Regional Corridor and Secondary Community Node are new designations, new text defining these designations will be added to the Official Plan. Note that this text was not posted on Over to You, and could only be accessed by searching Council agendas. Greater clarity and accessibility for the information would facilitate public input.

Overall, Coalition for a Liveable Sudbury supports planning policies for nodes and corridors, as well as the vision for LaSalle Boulevard as a well-connected, accessible, multimodal complete street that supports all users of all modes of transportation, improves road safety, and enhances the quality of life of its residents.

This OPA is a first step to implement some positive planning principles and tools, including further intensification at nodes, reduced parking minimums, mixed use zone structures, design guidelines, streetscaping and public art, and connectivity with neighbourhoods and amenities. ‘Secondary Community Node’ and ‘Regional Corridor’ designations are positive additions to the Official Plan. We support the overall focus on pedestrian friendly form, mixed use and provision of a mix of housing, transit supportive density along main transit routes, active transportation facilities, connections to surrounding neighbourhoods (including parks and trails), open space accessible to the public, and reductions in parking requirements. We are pleased to see this focus extended to Regional Centres (including the addition of residential uses).

We are pleased to see new parking policies that may permit reduced parking requirements (Section 11.4). However, these policies should be much stronger. Parking requirements are one of the strongest tools for shifting travel modal shares to transit and active transportation. Note that provisions for bicycle parking should be included.

This long term planning must be integrated and consistent with community targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create complete streets and provide sustainable transportation options, and provide housing. In many cases, we support stronger policies than the ones proposed (setting requirements for key elements) and we would especially like to see requirements for active transportation infrastructure and transit supportive infrastructure for Regional Corridors.

We are concerned that this OPA has been prepared in isolation from Greater Sudbury's draft Community Energy and Emissions Plan, and does not reference climate change. Climate change mitigation and adaptation must be a lens for all Greater Sudbury policies, plans and decisions. This OPA has the potential to assist in meeting many CEEP goals, if policies are strengthened or added to. We hope that this lens is rigorously applied in developing the associated Zoning amendments and by-laws, and in developing additional OPAs.

### **Consistency with Greater Sudbury's Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP)**

Greater Sudbury's draft Official Plan has an intensification target of 20%. Greater Sudbury's CEEP's Compact, Complete Communities actions requires **80%** of new development to be in urban centres (nodes), or adjacent to existing or new transit services (corridors), starting in **2025**. In addition, average home size will decrease 20%, and the share of new homes that are single-family will drop sharply to 10% by 2050.

Although the new Regional Centre, Regional Corridor, and Secondary Community Node areas in the Lasalle corridor OPA allow and assist meeting these goals, they in no way ensure that these goals will be met. To meet these goals, the Official Plan must not only encourage intensification in desired areas, it must **require** that intensification happen in these areas, and not be permitted in others. Currently, high density can happen anywhere in Living Area 1. Gentle density should be allowed in all living areas, but high density should only be permitted in nodes and along corridors served by frequent transit. Similarly, transit supportive density should be required (not simply encouraged) in nodes and corridors. Greater Sudbury's modest growth rate means that we cannot afford to misdirect growth if we wish to meet intensification goals and reach transit supportive density.

Secondly, the timeline of the nodes and corridors strategy is mismatched with the timeline for CEEP Compact, Complete Communities actions. Change must happen at a much faster pace. All OPA's should be developed and approved through a CEEP lens. This is also true of associated rezoning and other planning tools. For example, parking standards are a powerful tool for shifting travel patterns and should be implemented in a manner consistent with meeting CEEP goals.

Regional corridors and nodes are home to large commercial areas with large flat roof and parking areas. These large areas have potential for green infrastructure, on-site stormwater management, and green energy production. Requiring green roofs, permeable parking surfaces, and green energy production on commercial roofs and parking areas are all planning tools that could be applied to regional corridors and nodes to meet CEEP goals. Similarly, requirements for bike parking, and EV charging stations and parking should be included.

Regional Centres, Regional Corridors, and Secondary Community Node, and other identified Nodes (such as Town Centres) are where the most development is hoped to occur. Therefore, it is especially important that policies for these areas support CEEP goals, most especially for Compact, Complete Communities, Efficient Buildings, and Low Carbon Transportation. Note that the urban forest also has an important role to play in climate mitigation and adaptation. This is something that should inform landscaping requirements, as well as other policies (e.g. support for or requirements for green roofs).

### **Providing dedicated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure**

As we and others have consistently pointed out, the proposed road design in the Lasalle Corridor Study fails in one of its basic aims: to provide safe and comfortable infrastructure for walking and biking for all users, including the most vulnerable (the elderly, children, and people with disabilities). The vision is for Lasalle to be the 'gold standard' for a complete street, but the proposed design does not meet even the minimum requirements for a true complete street, or the Transportation Master Plan street design standards for arterials (sidewalks and dedicated cycling facilities on both sides of the street). Lasalle is a main travel corridor, an arterial road, and has many key destinations. Dedicated infrastructure for both pedestrians and cyclists is a must.

We would like to see language in the definition of Regional Corridors that ensure dedicated and separated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is provided in both directions, including safe crossings. Transit infrastructure such as bus bays, dedicated bus lanes, and advanced greens for transit, should also be supported. Regional Corridors are main travel corridors, and they must function well as main travel corridors for all modes of travel. Regional Centre and Secondary Community Node designations should also specifically reference cycling infrastructure (wherever 'pedestrian-friendly' design is referenced).

Lasalle was identified as part of a minimum grid of cycling routes by the Sustainable Mobility Advisory Panel. Completing a safe, connected and convenient network of cycling routes in a timely manner is a basic requirement to significantly increase the number of residents travelling by bike. Similarly, walkability and transit supportive measures are also needed to shift travel patterns to sustainable transportation. Note that there have been many collisions involving pedestrians along Lasalle, and improvements for pedestrian safety should be a priority.

The CEEP goals are for 35% active mobility and 25% transit modal share by 2050. These goals must be integrated into the nodes and corridor strategy. As nodes and corridor policies and projects move ahead, they must always support walking, biking and transit as safe and convenient modes of travel.

### **Consistency with climate adaptation**

Greater Sudbury will develop a Climate Adaptation Strategy in 2020. Flooding is a common problem along certain areas of the Lasalle corridor, and is only expected to become a greater challenge. Policies to address and prevent flooding, protect water quality, and increase climate resilience should be part of the Lasalle Corridor strategy, and included in the definitions and associated zoning rules for all Regional Corridors and Nodes. Our Regional Corridors should not only be complete streets and public spaces, but also green streets (providing shade and green stormwater management). Note that the Lasalle corridor is in the Junction Creek watershed, and planning policies and associated requirements should be protective of the health of Junction Creek.

We look forward to further opportunities to provide input. We request to receive notice of further opportunities to provide input, and of any decisions regarding this OPA.

### **Contact:**

Naomi Grant

Co-Chair, Coalition for a Liveable Sudbury

grant\_naomi@hotmail.com