

November ATAC Meeting Update

The main part of the meeting dealt with the Precinct Plan for the [Ridgewood South](#) development, which is south of the Harte Trail, bounded more or less by the Perimeter Highway, the Harte Trail/Ridgewood Ave (with some sections extending into undeveloped areas north of the Harte Trail), Wilkes Avenue, and Assiniboine Forest. We have been asked to come up with some principals that will help guide transportation planning in the area. A major East/West arterial (2-4 lanes approaching 20,000 AADT), with connections to the Perimeter highway and the future southward extension of the William Clement Parkway North/South traffic would be on local streets, in the range of 1000-2000 AADT. Cycling facilities will be included in the development, and consideration is being given to a multi-use path along the northern side of the east-west arterial, as well as a grade separated crossing of the Perimeter Highway at the western end of the Harte Trail. As the east-west arterial would include roundabouts (similar in design to Beaverhill and Lakewood, although 2 lane roundabouts are also being considered) every 400m, my initial concern is with how cyclists will be managed at these intersections. Being forced to stop every 400m for an uncontrolled crossing would seem to be a strong negative. Alternatives may be to build physically separated cycle tracks along the arterial and through the roundabouts, with priority at the roundabouts being given to cyclists, or a combination of bike boulevards and pathways north/south of the arterial with crossing facilities along the local streets that favour cyclists, especially if combined with 30km speed limits on the local roads. I will be passing along design guidance on such roundabouts with cycle tracks from the Dutch Bicycle guidelines manual (CROW). As this is a new development, we should hope to see quality facilities that emphasize direct, comfortable and safe routes for cyclists.

I am still hoping to get some feedback on a proposed [winter cycling network](#). Please have a look and send feedback to city@biketothefuture.org.

ATAC is also working on a data collection strategy for AT, and will be meeting in January to begin working on the goals/framework of a Winnipeg Cycling Master Plan in January 2012.

It was also noted that a public open house on plans for the Higgins underpas on Main Street will be occurring Thursday November 29th, at the Tallest Poppy restaurant. Attendees will have to register with Stefanie Voyce from the Downtown BIZ.

St. Mathews

My previous pessimism on the likelihood of preventing a poor design from being installed on St. Mathews was justified. See below for a visual of what has been built on St. Mathews.



Despite being made aware that the planned bulbouts and 1.2m bike lanes on St. Mathews were narrower than the minimum guidelines given by the Transportation Association of Canada, AASHTO, Velo Quebec, and NACTO, the sub-standard 1.2m bike lane will be installed next to parking, encouraging cyclists to ride in the door zone.

The explanation for the decision to go with a 1.2m bike lane in the areas where parking was allowed was that this was what was done on Garry. In light of the fact that Garry is a one way with less traffic travelling slower, I did not feel this was a valid comparison. Further, measurements showed that the actual width of the bike lane on Garry ranged from 4-1/2' to 5' except for a very short section between driveways into and out of the Rideau Tower at 90 Garry. The cities rationale for changing the plans was that drivers would not be able to find their lanes in winter if the lanes did not match up with the existing roadway seams, and that there was no budget for more bulb-outs. It should be noted that drivers on Grosvenor between Stafford and Cambridge have had no problem navigating under the exact same circumstances.

The facilities built on St. Mathews are a substantial deviation from the plans circulated during public consultations, and take what could have been a substantial improvement for cyclists and pedestrians and replaced it with a roadway that will be less safe for cyclists, without any input from the cycling community. The preferred plans would have allowed for 2m bike lanes, shorter crossing distances at key intersections, and retained adequate parking in an area that does not have a high demand for parking (some people may have had to walk an extra block for parking near the Minto Armouries).

This project has seriously undermined the public consultation process and sets a poor precedent since we can no longer know what will be built until we see tender documents, at which point there is little chance of changing outcomes.

Master Transportation Plan

The city released its Master Transportation Plan and held an open house. There are some good points in it, but our general concerns are the lack of a detailed cycling plan and meaningful budget to implement such a plan. Added to that is the fear, that even the positive strategies identified within the plan will be ignored due to budget constraints and priorities. We have released a public statement on the Transportation Master Plan, which is available [here](#). Thanks to everyone, especially Tom and Paula who helped out with this.

Bomber Stadium AT Plan

This is something we are still working on, but time has been an issue. The Bomber's have not responded to requests for a commitment to the Bike Valet at the new stadium. We think there is significant potential to encourage fans to bike to the games, and that a concerted effort to encourage this could yield results.

St Vital/U of M Red River Crossing

Kevin Champagne has been representing BttF on the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) looking into this. The PAC has met two times so far. They are currently looking at four locations for a possible crossing, which may take the form of a bridge or a tram/gondola. A previous transit study on the gondola option is available [here](#) (you have to scroll down to get to the actual report). Vancouver's TransLink is looking into something similar to serve as a connection between Simon Fraser University and their Sky Train, and have produced a [feasibility report](#). The 4 crossing options currently under consideration are Minnitonka, St. Amant, Henteleff Park (different alignment than what had previously been discussed) and now Kings Park, as shown in the following diagram. Including a transit connection on the bridge has been dropped off the list of options.



Pembina Highway Cycling Facilities (Chevrier/Crescent to Plaza)

No decision has yet been made on the cycling facilities to be built when this stretch of Pembina is rehabilitated next summer. The city is currently considering two alternatives. Our preferred option is to install two one way buffered bike lanes on Pembina, with the bike lanes diverting behind bus stop platforms at all bus stops. The second option being considered is a bike path on the east side of Pembina. Our concern with this facility is that the number of driveway accesses and roads on this stretch will make for a disjointed pathway, and that the combination of driveway accesses, speed on Pembina, width and orientation of Pembina, congestion, parking and bus stops will make it very difficult for drivers to watch for cyclists, leading to an increased danger of right and left hook accidents, and a generally unsafe facility. While separated two way paths have been used successfully in Montreal, they are installed on roadways with far fewer driveway and access points.

Ongoing Concerns

The projects to rehabilitate the Pembina Underpass and complete Phase II of the Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor have the potential to provide critical links in the city's cycling network, and will have to be watched over carefully. We will need to host some meetings to come up with principals for these projects that we can then get included into project scoping documents. This is shaping up to be an uphill battle for us. There will be a public consultation process for both projects. Preliminary design to come up with a conceptual plan for the Pembina Underpass should take place over this winter. Plans for the second phase of the southwest rapid transit corridor will also likely have to being ASAP.

Submitted by Mark Cohoe
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