

CENTREPLAN 2050 – DOWNTOWN BIKE ROUTES

Phase 3 Public Information Summary



Background

As part of CentrePlan 2050, we are designing three key bike routes Downtown to improve connectivity to, from, and within the Downtown:

- St. Mary Avenue and York Avenue
- Notre Dame Avenue and Cumberland Avenue
- William Stephenson Way

Engagement

In Phase 3, we shared our recommendations for two specific bike routes:

- St. Mary Avenue and York Avenue
- Notre Dame Avenue and Cumberland Avenue

These recommendations are based on technical analysis and what we heard through the first two phases of public engagement.

In July 2024, we held two pop-up events and a virtual event. The public was invited to learn how feedback helped determine the recommendation for each route, next steps, and ask questions about the project. In addition, the project team met with three property owners on St. Mary and York avenues to discuss parking, loading, and access needs.



Figure 1: Participant discusses bike routes at the True North Square Plaza pop-up event on July 18, 2024.



Figure 2: Participant discusses bike routes at the Central Park pop-up event on July 20, 2024.

Table 1 provides an overview of public engagement opportunities.

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Table 1: Public engagement opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
July 17, 2024 – July 30, 2024	Project webpage	1,900 unique visits
July 18, 2024	Pop-up event #1 – True North Square Plaza	75 attendees
July 20, 2024	Pop-up event #2 – Central Park	42 attendees
July 30, 2024	Virtual event	16 participants Notes in Appendix A.

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- News release – July 17, 2024
- Facebook posts with over 40,000 followers – July 17 to 29, 2024
- X posts with over 127,000 followers - July 17 to 29, 2024
- Instagram posts with over 6,500 followers - July 17 to 29, 2024
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with over 5,600 recipients – July 17, 2024
- Email to 158 project subscribers – July 17, 2024
- Email to over 100 stakeholder organizations – July 17, 2024
- Postcards mailed to over 13,000 Downtown residents and businesses – July 18, 2024

Next steps

In fall 2024, the functional designs for the bike routes on St. Mary Avenue, York Avenue, Notre Dame Avenue, and Cumberland Avenue were finalized.

St. Mary Avenue and York Avenue have planned road reconstruction as part of the future Downtown street renewals between 2025-2027. Bike lanes on both streets will be constructed as part of that project. There is no timeline for construction of bike lanes on Notre Dame and Cumberland avenues. Before construction can occur, Council would need to allocate funding.

The intersection of William Stephenson Way and Waterfront Drive requires further study to address traffic concerns identified in this project.

Appendix A – Virtual event notes

Location: Zoom

Date: July 30, 2024

Attendees: 16

Time: 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

The public was invited to attend a virtual event to learn more about the recommended designs for two specific bike routes:

- St. Mary Avenue and York Avenue
- Notre Dame Avenue and Cumberland Avenue

The event included a brief presentation on each recommended bike route design, followed by a moderated question and answer period. Attendees were also able to ask questions using the Zoom Q&A function and members of the project team provided responses throughout the event. A record of questions and responses can be found below.

Note: Questions that were answered live during the session were transcribed and have been edited for grammar, spelling and clarity.

Question and answer record

Question	Answer
Could you expand upon "impact to traffic operations"?	We need to balance use of the right of way and we want to maintain automobile capacity while adding bike routes. In this case, we considered a bi-directional bike lane on York Avenue along with the uni-directional design. In the case of the bi-directional option, this introduces a bike traveling counter flow to traffic. This requires changes to traffic signals to allow for a bike-only traffic signal, which takes time out of the signal cycle for automobiles.
The green paint that is currently used is very slippery when wet or covered in snow. Is there any plan to upgrade this paint with something with more grit, or with different pavement? Yes, absolutely! My wife almost wiped out when it was raining on Garry, between York and Broadway when a car came out of the keg parking lot beyond the sidewalk. I almost wiped out on Westminster and Maryland when a car did stop before the stop light to turn right.	The green paint is actually an epoxy resin, which is more durable than regular road paint. I haven't experienced it being too slippery and it is certainly less so than regular road paint. Are there specific locations you could provide so we can check? Thanks. I will check those locations out in the rain or over the winter. Glad there were no wipe outs!

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Very excited to finally have a useable bike lane on St. Mary. In the design notes, can you please ensure proper drainage is taken into account in the construction? For example, the Stradbrook drainage seems rather good, whereas many sections of Assiniboine suffer from poor drainage. This is important on shoulder seasons when we have generally clean paths with most of the snow melted, but without drainage we can have significant ice accumulation in some spots.	Yes, drainage is an important part of all road design. That level of detail is addressed during the next phase of design. Unfortunately, over time some roads tend to heave and deflect causing drainage issues. These are addressed over time through road maintenance.
I need to go unfortunately, but I wanted to thank the city of Winnipeg and Urban system for helping to build out our bike network. This is an important step in making sure Winnipeg is sustainable and strong.	Thank you [name redacted]! Have a great night.
<i>Transcript of question asked during the session:</i> My comments are largely twofold. One is economics of the downtown and the second is winter. This project almost seems to be left hand, right hand, sort of thing. On the one hand, the city wants to encourage economic development and that includes parking. When people are going to the MTS Center, they're not riding their bikes in January to watch a Jets game. And any sort of development that we're going to have downtown requires parking - we can't wish cars away. We're losing 97 spaces and that's significant. The fewer spaces there are the scarcer the product becomes and the higher the cost becomes. There's work going on in the Millennium Parkade. So few spots there. It's not necessarily conducive to the regeneration of downtown. The second point I wanted to make was about winter and the last numbers I saw regarding winter cycling. We're not Vancouver. We're not Amsterdam. We're around 250 cyclists in the winter. The maintenance of the bike lanes is very expensive. I understand people bike more in the summer, but there are good 4 months in this city when you're really not biking. When you	<i>Transcript of answer provided during the session:</i> The parking is certainly a legitimate concern and we're keenly aware of that. There are unfortunately tradeoffs that need to be made to add bike lanes. If we didn't have to do remove some parking, we certainly wouldn't do that. We spoke with adjacent property owners to make sure there is still loading and curbside access for these landowners. It is a balancing act. This is a trade of if we're going to add these bike lanes that that needs to be made. Part of CentrePlan 2050 is also to encourage more residential development, and trying to turn downtown into a neighbourhood rather than a place where people just come and go to work or big. Bike lanes will contribute to making Downtown a place where people want to live. As far as winter goes, we are a winter city. Some people that choose to bike in the summer that probably will never choose to bike in the winter. But there are also people on the fence but they don't feel safe. They don't

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consider somewhere like Notre Dame, it's difficult enough in the winter for plowing to be good enough that you maintain all of your lanes. If you only have 2 lanes and the plowing isn't good, you're down to one lane. I would add that we live downtown and we never have enough parking for our guests. Parking is at a premium. So you're saying you want people to live downtown. There is a balance, and we need parking for ourselves, and for our guests.	feel comfortable. They might ride in traffic in the summer, but don't want to in the winter. Adding the protected bike lanes provides that space to choose that mode in the winter. I would suggest checking out the river trail that The Forks puts out in the winter. Winnipeggers are hardy and we want to get out in the winter, and people are biking and walking and skating on that trail. It's partially a recreational thing, but it's also partially that they feel safe, and that's what the separated or protected bike lane offers.
I certainly am riding my bike to concerts and Jets games in winter. And it isn't only me. There many great private lots for you to use. Park and ride is also a great option!	Thank you for your comment.
Winter maintenance of bike lanes is significantly under budget year over year. If you're worried about city facilities in the winter, why do we own golf courses?	Thank you for your comment.
<i>Transcript of question asked during the session:</i> I'm currently studying data science at the University of Winnipeg and I'm looking for real world data sets for personal and insightful research myself. I just wanted to know is the data set that you guys used or prepared for the study and research analysis for this project. Is available for public access or public domain can be done or not?	<i>Transcript of answer provided during the session:</i> The city has an open data portal and I believe there is some traffic vehicular accounts there. We also monitor bike traffic the same way as cars with pneumatic tubes. We also have permanent bike counters that are cut into the concrete, and it picks up the metal on the bike and counts it. I don't believe that data is out on the open data portal. We're still working towards sharing that data more publicly. We've only started our count program in a formal way recently so we don't have a huge body of data available. <i>The participant was provided Project Team contact information to follow up regarding data sets.</i>
<i>Transcript of question asked during the session:</i> I think it's great that you have the form going on here, and a number of things make sense. What concerns me	<i>Transcript of answer provided during the session:</i> Winnipeg and other cities have challenges in their in urban environments. In this case we're trying to build

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is you talk about a balance, and in order to have a downtown community, you've got to have services to be able to accommodate or provide all the things that someone living needs. I currently have a business in the Exchange and I'm hands-on talking to many business owners, some that are currently existing, some that are declining, some have moved out and we look at the numbers and still have major concern about loading zones. I can cite certain businesses that their street business or the business they did has dropped 100. If they didn't have an outreach business to the rest of the city they would not be in business anymore. I have people that count the number of bikes that are coming through the exchange particularly in the winter. It doesn't exist, and I'm just wondering what's going along with this project to enhance more bikers to come shopping or use the services downtown. Somebody going to, I'll say, Clementine's or somebody going to restaurants? I'm watching them come down in groups of 3 or 4 people in a car. I don't see anybody coming by bicycle. So, I'm not sure how this is being tracked, and when I've asked for numbers in the past I'm not getting real counts of what is existing and how it's been progressing. I'm just wondering how do we get this information? And who is going to watch this balance? We want to create neighbourhoods and I'd like to see more residential downtown. But how do we attract services? Because we can get more people to move downtown? But if you don't have the businesses to support them why would they stay downtown. I'm hearing the other caller talk about how there's no place for people to park to come visit downtown. Are those issues being taken into account? I've never been surveyed and I checked with the 100 people in my organization and not one of them has ever been	out a separated bike network. In the 2015 Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies, there was a representative survey that reported that there was pent-up demand for biking. People want to bike more, but don't feel comfortable riding in traffic. The other common thing we hear is that I would love to bike more to work or to destinations, or serve my daily needs, but to do that I have half my route on a on a path or a bike lane, but then I have to go the last mile in traffic, and I'm just not willing to do that. I'm not comfortable with that. We don't have a complete bike network yet and can't really compare it to our car network that we've been building out for 100 years. This is new. We're trying to establish a more complete network so people can actually get from A to B with most of their trip on a separated facility. We are re confident that that is going to bring out more people. Center Plan is intended to try and turn Downtown into more of a neighbourhood. From an urban planning perspective, the best thing that we can do is get more people living Downtown, traveling by foot and on bike, accessing services, and treating it as their neighbourhood. Hopefully, that will have benefits for business and the downtown as a whole.

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surveyed. None of them ride their bikes to work, so I'm not really sure who the surveys are being sent out to.	
If 100 people in your organization based in the Exchange has zero people getting there by bike, it sounds like your organization is rather hostile to people using bikes.	Thank you for your comment.
You should visit Minneapolis! They have winter like us. Even Chicago.	Thank you for your comment.
In winter time the city really struggles to maintain the roads particularly downtown. I sat on committees for sidewalks and maintenance of sidewalks for people having the ability to walk on sidewalks, and that's never been solved. So, we have current issues with snow clearing and potholes. I'm a biker, but I can't go bike riding because I'm concerned about my safety because of the conditions of the roads. They've opened and closed the bike lanes in the Exchange numerous times for construction. My focus is on what are we doing now as we're moving through the process. Is there a consideration for businesses? I could give you the name of at least 5 businesses that are moving out of downtown and I've also spoken to those that have already moved out of downtown and are happy they've made that move. I have my had my business downtown for the last 60 years that I've been involved in it. We've seen a reduction, and not just because of safety, but access. We have constant concerns. And so, the numbers that are down for a variety of people anywhere from 20 to 40% of their traffic that's coming. I appreciate looking forward, but should this not be done in tandem with car traffic and with all the other influences? I've been told flatly, it's not because of bike lanes that businesses are suffering. I can accept that. How do the bike lanes integrate or be part of the development when all the other things are not being	You have absolutely outlined a problem that we are facing downtown, and that you, as a business owner, absolutely face more than most people. And so that's completely understandable. We'll work to get a better response for you, or a lengthier response for you. But know that you're not alone in saying and voicing these concerns.

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Question	Answer
taken care of? I'm not really sure what the outcome, or what it is that we're achieving. You as a group will have lots of bike lanes in place, and maybe there'll be people biking, but for businesses that need to exist and develop and sustain themselves in a downtown that is developing, they're not surviving. Has that been taken into account? Who is at the table? I travel cities all over Europe in the summertime, but in the wintertime, nobody has the winters that we have. That's a crucial part of it when the city has not had the budgeting and the ability to maintain the roads, and now we have bike lanes. I can tell you that driving from where I live to downtown, we are compromised. And people are getting through these 2 lane streets that were 3 because the streets are not being plowed properly. Does that have any impact on what's going on here?	
I love all the work being done to narrow crossing distances for pedestrians!	Thanks. While this is a bike focused project we try to make improvements for people walking where we can as well. Generally speaking these two overlap and what is good for one is often good for the other.
Yes! Boulevard trees are so necessary. I was happy to see them included in the Marion St bike lanes.	Thank you for your comment.
Deeply appreciate the chance to engage! Thanks and take care!	Thank you [name redacted]! Have a great evening.