

CHAIN MAIL

The Newsletter of Citizens for Safe Cycling
Volume 26 Issue 1 – Winter 2010

Budget 2010 Kind to Cycling

Ottawa City Council approved the municipal budget for 2010 on January 28th. The great news is that the funds requested by Transportation Committee for capital and operating expenses related to cycling—totaling around \$16 Million—were not cut back!

This budget means that the Ottawa Cycling Plan (OCP) is finally becoming a reality. Although the plan was approved in July 2008, this will be the first year where any significant dollars are earmarked toward carrying out its recommendations. CfSC made appeals to the mayor and councillors in November to underscore how important this investment is for the city. Our efforts are getting attention and gaining traction.

Chain Mail is launching a map-based inventory of the infrastructure projects that have recently been or will be carried out. With this issue, we survey the west side of the city within the Greenbelt. The description of projects begins on page 3. In future issues, other areas of Ottawa will be documented.

Apart from the investment in what will be built, the budget also includes money to hire more staff to study and plan cycling and walking facilities. To date, Ottawa has employed just one cycling facilities coordinator. However, there is too much work in this city—particularly with a new plan to be implemented—for one person to handle, and so we expect that two more planners will be brought in to help.

Wait, there is still more! Thankfully, the city plans to bring back CAN-BIKE skills training in 2010, after a hiatus of one year. (See the article on page 7.) Plus, there will likely be a new city cycling map printed. The most recent one was published in 2006.

Municipal Election Date: October 25, 2010

We'll have to keep monitoring the progress of these exciting developments. Equally important is that the momentum continues with the new city council we elect in October. We want to ensure that the new council maintains the momentum on cycling investment.



Photo: CfSC

Time 'Running Out' on Meters

The City of Ottawa has approved the conversion of downtown street parking from a meter-based system to a so-called Pay & Display one. This move has impacts on cyclists who might want to lock up to a meter post.

As we understand it, City of Ottawa Parking Operations plans to replace all parking meters with bike parking where demand warrants. To quantify actual bike parking needs, the city conducted a major survey of parked bikes (regardless of attachment location) over a week of good weather in mid-summer 2009 on both sides of all streets having parking meters. (Continued: p.7 'Pay & Display')

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Chain Mail is published by Citizens for Safe Cycling ("CfSC"), the non-profit association that promotes cycling as a viable means of transportation in Ottawa by advocating:

- Acceptance of the responsible cyclist as a legitimate road user.
- Education of all cyclists to improved riding and traffic skills as part of their normal driving skills.
- Improved engineering to facilitate cyclist traffic, such as proper traffic control systems, adequate lane width, and sufficient parking.
- Legislation that is effective and enforced.
- Representation of cycling issues to all levels of government.

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For inquiries about CfSC membership, please send e-mail to Membership@SafeCycling.ca, or join using the form on p.8.



CfSC Volunteer of the Year for 2009

Congratulations to Will Hallam for being chosen as CfSC's Volunteer of the Year for 2009. Will was the brains behind our innovative 'booth trailer'. As shown in the previous issue of Chain Mail, the trailer allows us to take our promotional show "on the road"—literally!

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Harvest House is a treatment centre for drug and alcohol addiction.

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Clearing the Way for Winter Cycling



Photo: CfSC

We have been seeing more cyclists on our roads this winter. Local media outlets have been asking CfSC for numerous interviews on the subject of winter cycling. One question being asked by cyclists and reporters alike is: "What's being done to facilitate winter cycling?"

Apart from a handful of exceptions where multi-use paths are being cleared, winter maintenance of cycling facilities *per se* has not been adopted as policy by the City of Ottawa. This may be one outcome of a study conducted in 1995 by the pre-amalgamation City of Ottawa entitled "Evaluation of the Ottawa Winter Bicycling Demonstration Project", in which enhanced winter maintenance was applied to roads with bike lanes. Conditions and cyclist volumes were monitored throughout the winter on 'enhanced maintenance' bike lanes as well as on streets having bike lanes that were *not* maintained. The study's conclusion was:

"...[It] is possible to significantly improve the conditions of the bicycle routes in winter and to achieve acceptable conditions for many cyclists by the 3rd or 4th day after a snowfall. However, this is achieved at a significant cost. Weather conditions are also an important factor in bicycle usage, if not more important than route condition. Given this and the very low level of bicycle usage observed, it is unlikely that enhanced maintenance of the winter bicycle routes would cause usage to rise to a level which would justify the additional costs..."

During the recent (winter 2009) OC Transpo strike, CfSC encouraged the NCC and City of Ottawa to pay more attention to the clearing of cycling facilities, given the difficulty of getting around during the transit outage. The NCC would appear to have no objections if the City wishes to plow, maintain, and accept full legal liability for any sections of the NCC pathway system open during the winter. *(Continued: p.7 'Clearing the Way')*

CfSC's 'Eye on Cycling Projects'

Part of our outreach to cyclists is to keep you informed about what is going on in Ottawa and what we are monitoring or promoting.

We are providing a map that highlights where things are happening or have been recently completed. Since it is difficult to fit the whole city on one centre-spread of the newsletter, we will focus on a different area of Ottawa in this and the next two Chain Mail issues. In this issue, we examine the 'near' west end, from the Greenbelt to the Rideau Canal, and north of Hunt Club Road to the Ottawa River.

Turn to pages 4-5 for the map. We describe the various activities on this page and page 6. Use the call-out key (letter designations) to cross-reference with descriptions that are below. NOTE: "OCP" = Ottawa Cycling Plan.

See "News & projects" on our website for any updates.

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- A CARLING AVENUE BIKE LANES (part 1)**
Who: City of Ottawa When: Under study
This is a study to assess feasibility of bike lanes on Carling Ave from Corkstown Rd to the Trans-Canada Trail crossing (NCC path at east end of Andrew Haydon Park). This segment is identified in the OCP as needing bike lanes. Study to be made in expectation that rehab of road will be done as scheduled in 2011-2013 period.
- B OTTAWA RIVER PATH REHAB**
Who: NCC When: 2010-11
The proposal is to rehabilitate the path from Britannia Park westward to Carling Avenue. Path width is to increase to 3 metres. This may be funded from the \$35M federal stimulus money given to the NCC, as announced on Jan 6, 2010.
- C RICHMOND ROAD BIKE LANES**
Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010
Richmond Rd is identified as a 'spine route' in the OCP, but its cycling facilities are not yet continuous. A near-term plan is to fill two gaps by implementing eastbound bike lanes. The section from Ancaster to Lockhart will be accomplished by revised pavement marking. The section from Bellfield to Grenon will be done in conjunction with sidewalk rehabilitation.
- D HAMPTON PARK CONNECTOR**
Who: City of Ottawa When: 2011 candidate
CfSC, with the support of local business and community associations, successfully lobbied to have the path through Hampton Park, linking Parkview Road and Island Park Drive, added to the OCP. A motion requesting the link be added to the OCP was carried at the December 2, 2009 meeting of Transportation Committee. In 2010, a detailed plan (with cost estimates) should be prepared for this 300-metre link, so that it will be on the 2011 list of

OCP construction candidates. This link requires co-operation between NCC and City of Ottawa.

- E SHERWOOD AVENUE 'ZIG-ZAGS'**
Who: City of Ottawa When: Completed
A traffic-calming measure being piloted by the city is the painted zig-zag lines along Sherwood Avenue in the Civic Hospital area. The stretch from Carling to Parkdale has received this treatment in 2009. What is your opinion of this measure? (Write to info@safecycling.ca or post to our Discuss list) Should Sherwood be designated as a bike route in the OCP?

- F SOMERSET WEST RE-BUILD**
Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010-11
As part of sewer/water system renewal, 2010 will see Somerset rebuilt between Breezehill and Preston. In 2011, the work will continue from Preston to Booth. Bike lanes will be implemented where possible, and possibly 'sharrow' pavement markings where bike lanes are not practical. (Note: new bike lanes on the bridge over the O-Train—shown in our last issue—would be retained.)

- G WELLINGTON- PORTAGE BRIDGE**
Who: NCC When: By 2011
A proposal is to add a westbound bike lane from Bay Street to the Portage Bridge. This work will be done as part of a new pedestrian crossing at that intersection, with construction planned for 2010 or 2011.

- H DOWNTOWN SEGREGATED BIKEWAY**
Who: City of Ottawa When: In planning
Planners will examine feasibility of segregated east-west bike lanes through Centretown, possibly on Gladstone Avenue from Preston to Elgin. An alternative would be via Somerset Street.

- J WATTS CREEK PATH REHAB**
Who: NCC When: Completed
The path from Moodie Drive to Carling Avenue was repaved (and paved for first time on some sections), and received safety upgrades.

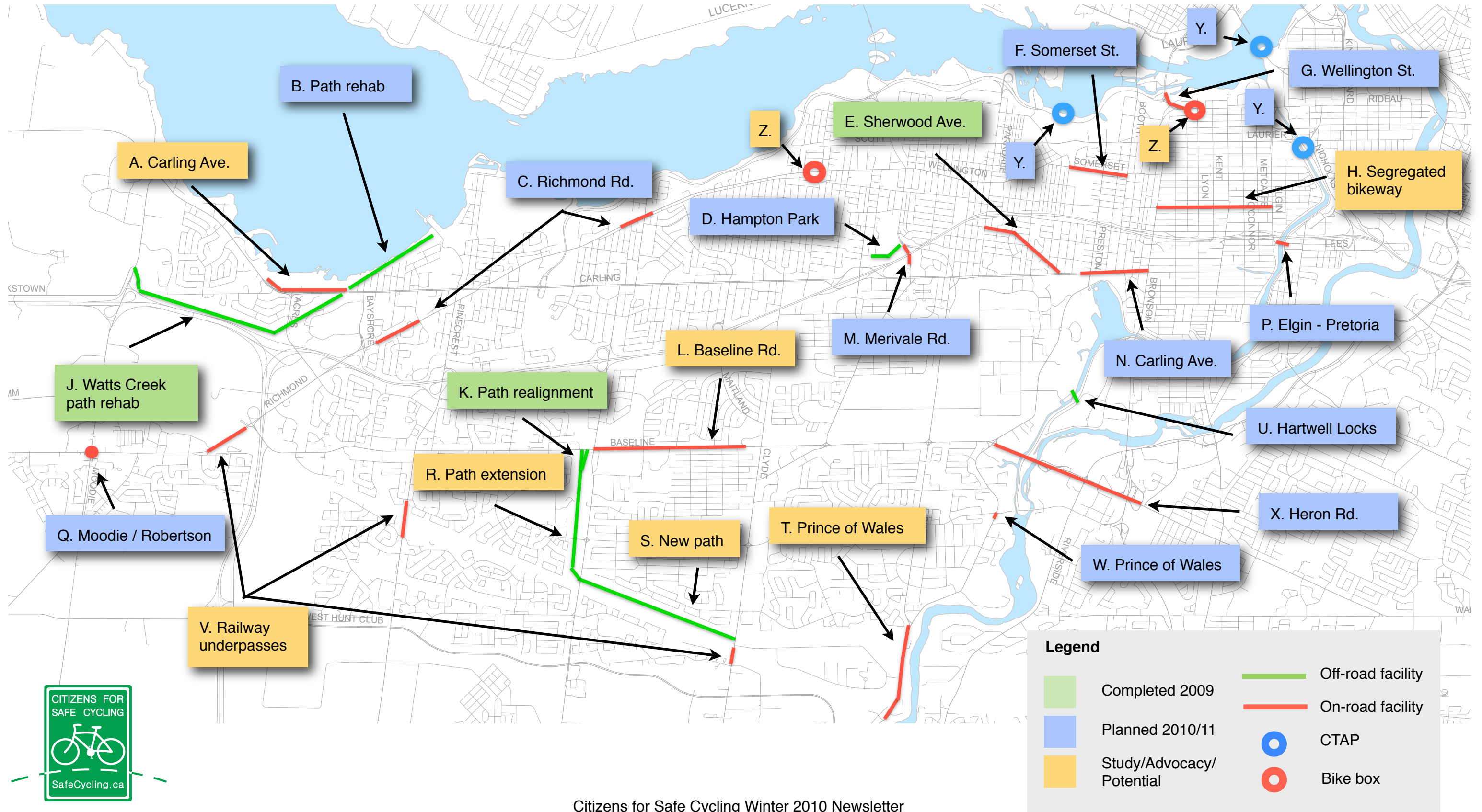
- K WOODROFFE PATH DETOURS**
Who: City of Ottawa When: Completed
To prepare for the upcoming construction of a new Baseline Transitway station and tunnel, the multi-use path has been realigned. CfSC has learned that this is probably not a final alignment, but it could persist for several years. This implementation has issues, such as discharging cyclists into crosswalks, which have been identified to the city.

- L BASELINE BIKE LANES**
Who: City of Ottawa When: In planning
Baseline Road is due for reconstruction from Woodroffe Avenue to St. Helen's Place (just west of Clyde) sometime in the 2011-2013 period. A bike lane feasibility study is being proposed for 2010.

(Continued: p. 6 'Projects')

2010 CfSC Eye on Cycling Projects

Part 1: Near-West Map



Projects... (continued from p.3)**M MERIVALE ROAD BIKE LANES**

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2011

Lanes are to be built on Merivale from Island Park Drive (where bike lanes already exist) to the entrance of Westgate Shopping Centre. This is to be done in conjunction with the Cave Creek Sanitary Collector reconstruction. Merivale portion is to be done in 2011.

N CARLING AVENUE BIKE LANES (part 2)

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

Bike lanes and/or reserved bike/bus lanes are to be created on Carling Avenue from the O-Train overpass (near Preston) to Bronson as part of 2010 Integrated Road-Sewer-Water project.

P ELGIN AT PRETORIA BRIDGE

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010-11

Bike lanes are planned for the end of Elgin Street and the Pretoria Bridge (i.e. between Isabella and Colonel By Drive) to address sidewalk cycling and to encourage road sharing. The first phase is to be done this year.

Q MOODIE-ROBERTSON INTERSECTION

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

This intersection and immediate approaches will be reconstructed with road width increased to accommodate bike lanes. Lanes may not be painted until the sections of road further from the intersection are redone.

R PATH EXTENSION – WOODROFFE CORRIDOR

Who: City of Ottawa When: In planning

As part of the construction for the SW Transitway extension south of Baseline station, the multi-use path will be extended toward Norice Street. CfSC has given initial comments for the preliminary design phase.

S WOODROFFE-MERIVALE PATH

Who: City of Ottawa When: In planning

This is a new city multi-use path that would follow the railway corridor from Woodroffe at Norice eastward to Merivale at Colonnade. It is costed but not yet scheduled.

T PRINCE OF WALES DRIVE “E.A.”

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2008-2010

An Environmental Assessment (EA) study is looking at potential widening of the road between Fisher and Woodroffe. The study is due to be completed in 2010.

U BIKE RAMP – HARTWELL LOCKS

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

The lockmaster is working to provide a ramp for rolling bikes up and down the lock embankment, rather than using stairs or the existing path worn in the grass. The City of Ottawa has earmarked funds for their contribution to the project in the 2010 Capital Budget. This will improve the link between Carleton University and the Central Experimental Farm. Still to address is finding a better way to cross the actual gates of the locks!

V RAILWAY UNDERPASS RETROFITS

Who: CfSC When: Proposed

CfSC is proposing an interim approach to bike lane creation at the underpasses for Richmond Road, Greenbank Road, and Merivale Road. The intent is to make more width for cycling without the expense of sewer/catchbasin infrastructure changes. We would like the city to study the feasibility of this idea.

W PRINCE OF WALES BIKE LANE FIX

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

This is a project to correct the discontinuity in Prince of Wales Drive bike lanes at Meadowlands by moving curbs.

X HERON ROAD BIKE LANES

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010-11

This is a pavement preservation (i.e. resurfacing) candidate for 2010. The project is slated to implement reserved bike lanes and/or reserved bus-bike lanes, between Prince of Wales Dr and Data Centre Rd.

Y CfSC’s CYCLING TRENDS ANALYSIS PROJECT (CTAP)

Who: CfSC + others When: 2009-2012

Construction work on in-ground loops and vaults for the counters was completed in fall 2009 on the Colonel By Drive path near Laurier Avenue and on the Ottawa River Parkway path near the Prince of Wales rail bridge. The Alexandra Bridge site was commissioned in June 2009. Counting is expected to be operational at all three sites by spring 2010, for a 3-year data collection period. Counting results will be regularly posted on www.safecycling.ca. CfSC thanks the NCC, City of Ottawa, and Telus for their co-operation and financial support on this project.

Z BIKE BOXES

Who: City of Ottawa When: Under study

Bike boxes are special pavement marking treatments on roads, to give cyclists a safe waiting zone at intersections—and to make them more visible to motor vehicles for certain turns and through movements. The City of Ottawa is considering 11 locations for deployment of Bike Boxes; among the locations being considered are Richmond at Churchill, and the north end of Bay Street (to assist cyclists turning left onto the new bike lane described in project ‘G’ above).



Hartwell Locks

Photo: CfSC

Cycling courses return

by Alayne McGregor

Cycling skills courses will be back in Ottawa this spring.

The City of Ottawa Parks and Recreation Department has taken over providing courses for children and adults, after both EnviroCentre and CfSC decided not to bid on a contract to provide courses last year. No city cycling courses ran in 2009.

City cycling skills coordinator Monja de Luca told CfSC that 19 courses have so far been scheduled, starting with a CAN-BIKE II course in late March. Just over half are for children, with the remainder split among courses for teens, commuters, women, seniors, and adult cyclists in general. They will be run across the city, from Orleans to Kanata, and mostly between May and July.

Since each course requires a minimum of four students, some may end up not running. De Luca said that if the city gets a good response to the initial offerings, it will continue courses into the fall. "Fall's a great time to ride. Why not teach people then, too?"

Course registration opens in mid-March, with courses advertised in city recreation and sports guides as well as through cycling clubs and bike shops.

De Luca said city staff members were glad to have the program back up and running.

See the *OTTAWA RECREATION GUIDE, Spring-Summer 2010, coming out in March.*

Pay & Display...(continued from p.1)

The resulting 'unmet demand' for bike parking was then increased by factors related to land-use types and a reasonable expectation of higher demand in the future. On a block-by-block basis, the projected bike parking demand was then addressed by:

A) a conversion of existing parking meters (using a 'ring' conversion kit), if the post is not right at curbside;

B) if a meter is at curbside, it will be either removed (if no unmet demand was measured) or, if possible, converted and relocated to either a boulevard, back of the sidewalk or, as a last resort, to the other side of the street;

C) if a meter is targeted for conversion but is already next to an obstruction or would end up beside one (such as a building façade) if moved from curbside to back of the sidewalk (see note below), conversion was specified for two meters instead of one, to make up for the fact that an obstructed ring and post could accommodate only one bike (versus the usual two).

Clearing the Way...(continued from p.2)

In fact, such agreements have been in place for many years along NCC's Rideau Canal pathways. Yet, CfSC was unaware of any extraordinary action during the strike.

Looking forward, Chapter 4 of the Ottawa Cycling Plan (OCP) identifies snow clearance in the Road Maintenance and Repair Programs section (4.1.8) and includes:

"Technical Recommendation: 4-12: That the road maintenance scheduling program recognize and prioritize primary "Spine" segments of the cycling network and prioritize these streets for snow removal and year-round cleaning."

Ottawa maintains one of the largest municipal transportation networks in Canada with over 7,370 km of maintained surfaces (roads, sidewalks, Transitway). If we add, say, 30 km of bike facilities to this total—for a route from each of the western, eastern, and southern outskirts to downtown—that would represent an increase of at most 0.5% for winter maintenance.

Next Steps:

- The Ottawa Cycling Plan should be followed up to define what 'Spine' routes should be considered for winter cycling
- The NCC may at least be encouraged to plow pathways *once* sometime in March, where snow removal in shady wooded areas could extend the useful season of pathways by 5%
- As the CTAP automatic bike counter network is extended in future years, a few of the counters should start to provide winter cycling data—the first reliable such data in Ottawa. (See <http://www.safecycling.ca/news-and-projects/266-cfsc-cycling-trends-analysis-project>.)

Note: Posts cannot remain beside the curb because they may interfere with opening car doors; under Pay & Display, cars no longer have to park in defined spaces as painted on the road. Also, having bike parking right next to the road presents a potential safety hazard to cyclists who are in the process of locking/unlocking their bikes.

The City also plans a new Integrated Street Furniture Program for 2011. Locations and numbers of bike parking spaces are not yet decided. The cycling community is encouraged to provide input on these parking requirements. The city has committed to making this work for the cycling community. The commitment is a phased program to deal with meter removal and ring-and-post installation; the second phase will deal with unmet demand in non-metered areas.

**Dreaming of the “Islands”–
Students envision novel facilities for bikes**

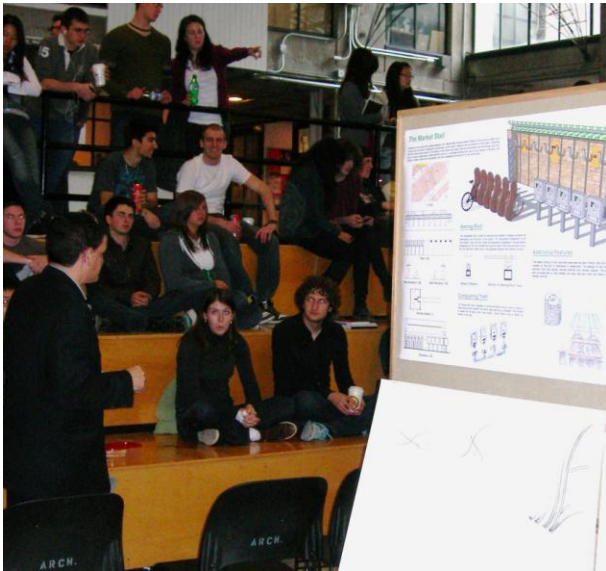


Photo: CfSC

Winter often has us dreaming of islands down south. This January, CfSC engaged some budding architects to imagine how rest stops and parking ‘islands’ for Ottawa cyclists could look in the future.

Cycling along the NCC pathways is a perfect way for visitors or residents to enjoy a beautiful day. Many spots along the pathways are perfect places to stop, have a picnic, or read a book, but very few such facilities exist that are particularly welcoming for cyclists.

Parking for cyclists in Ottawa's downtown core (especially in the Market) is hard to come by, and may only get worse as parking meters are removed for 'Pay and Display'. Additionally, the expanding 'bike share' system will need space for its specialized kiosks/rental stations.

With the co-operation of a professor at the Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism at Carleton University, CfSC developed a for-credit assignment for second-year students to come up with ideas on how the above challenges could be addressed. Here are the parameters that made up the assignment:

Bike Rest Stops: At scenic points of the pathway system or in parks. These should provide:

- Shade
- Picnic tables plus waste/recycling bins
- Bike parking spots (minimum 10, maximum 20)
- Integrated wayfinding/notice boards
- Integrated emergency call system
- Lighting (solar or mains powered)
- Bike air pumps.

Bicycle Stations (Bike Parking Islands): Typically in the downtown core, perhaps deployed in place of one or two car parking spaces. Assume these islands will be deployed during the summer cycling peak months (June-September), thus freeing the spots for cars during the rest of the year. As well as lighting and pumps as described above, these should provide:

- Parking stations for bikes or the special stations for bike-share bikes, akin to what is used for the BIXI program in Montreal.
- Roof to keep off the rain
- Drinking water, with provision to wash off fruit
- Sign (perhaps lighted) for whatever business the parking island is located in front of
- Provisions for facility to be easily picked up, transported, and stored for the off-season.

The students presented their concepts on January 20th in a forum attended by CfSC President Zlatko Krstulich, several local architects, and an NCC representative. Sketches and models of their ideas for bike parking/picnic areas were on display.

CfSC is working with Carleton to make this an annual student project. We welcome input from cyclists; send your ideas to info@safecycling.ca.

Become a Member Today!

Join today to get your Better Bicycling Kit containing lots of cycling info, including recent CfSC newsletters and a free Ottawa Cycling Map!

Send your form with cheque or money order to:

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Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

Please send mailings by e-mail when possible.

My additional contribution of \$ _____ to assist CfSC volunteers with their work is enclosed.

Any cycling comments/concerns? _____

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