

CHAINMAIL

The Newsletter of Citizens for Safe Cycling
Volume 26 Issue 2 – Spring/Summer 2010

Spring in our Cycling Capital

We think this is one of the busiest spring seasons ever around Ottawa. Not only is there a lot happening with cycling events, but there's also probably never been so much construction going on. See below and read our electronic newsletter *Ottawa Cycling News* for details about the festivals. Have fun and take care!

Bike to Work Week – June 7-11, 2010

From EnviroCentre

Bike to Work Week is an opportunity to celebrate cycling to work for fun, fitness, and the environment. The week of activities is sponsored by the City of Ottawa TravelWise Program and coordinated by EnviroCentre.

Pledge to cycle to work on one or more of the five days and become eligible for great prizes, including a new bike, cycling gear, CAN-BIKE courses, and gift certificates for Bank Street merchants. Click on the Bike to Work Week logo at www.envirocentre.ca and follow the link to the pledge.

Starting with a launch at City Hall on Monday, June 7 at 10 am, there are events happening throughout the week. On Tuesday, June 8, EnviroCentre will have a Celebration Station set up on the NCC pathway near Lebreton Flats. That morning, CfSC representatives will be on site to answer questions regarding the new Cycling Trends Analysis Project (CTAP).

Join us for a FREE Cycling Lunch & Learn on Wednesday, June 9 at City Hall in the Councillors' Lounge at Noon. Presented by a certified CAN-BIKE instructor, this presentation will provide information and tips for safe cycling.

On Thursday, June 10 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm there will be a BBQ and fundraiser on Bank Street, between Slater and Laurier. All proceeds will go to the Ottawa Helmets on Kids Initiative. The event includes the Bruce Timmermans Cycling Award Ceremony. The awards will be presented to the 2008 and 2009 winners by the Ambassador of the Netherlands and City officials. There will also be a special presentation by the Just Voices Choir singing their repertoire of cycling songs.

For event information visit www.ottawa.ca/b2ww or contact Elyse McCann elyse.mccann@ottawa.ca



*A cyclist about to be counted at one of our CTAP installations (Ottawa River Pathway)
Photo: CfSC*

CTAP Official Launch:

**June 8, 2010
(7:30 – 9:00 AM)**

Ottawa River
Pathway near
Booth Street

Watch for it!



Ottawa LRT Stations: Where do bikes fit in?

Planners for the future Light Rail Transit (LRT) project have released a draft document outlining their design guidelines for the new stations.

We are glad to report that bicycles will be accommodated on the new system. Once the trains start running, would you take your bike on them? Would you park your bike at a station, as part of a multi-mode trip? Would you be able to handle taking your bike up and down levels via stairwell, escalator, or elevator? (The downtown tunnel stations will be deep, and all that has been mentioned in the guidelines so far is cyclists using the elevators.)

Please send us your thoughts on the above and on anything special that you'd like to see. Drop us an e-mail at info@safecycling.ca.

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.

Opinions expressed in *Chain Mail* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of CfSC, its board, or its members. Reproduction is permitted, provided that both author and source credits are given.

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Contributions are welcomed. Text may be edited for style, length, and clarity. Please send submissions to editor@SafeCycling.ca

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The 2009-2010 board of directors of CfSC is composed of:

President: Zlatko Krstulich **Vice-president:** Hans Moor

Secretary: Alayne McGregor **Treasurer:** Peter Sloan

Past President: Tom Trotter

Directors-at-large: Juergen Weichert, Peter Mason, Rob Brooks, Paul Clarke

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

Ontario tax goes back on bikes in July

A reminder that the current exemption from the Ontario provincial sales tax on bicycles and safety-related accessories will end on July 1st of this year, when the new HST comes into effect. So make those purchases soon!



Photo: CfSC

Recent collisions - Defending yourself from the ‘hit from behind’

We note with concern the recent rash of collisions involving cyclists in Ottawa and in the province of Quebec. A multiple-fatality incident near Rougemont, QC, was eerily reminiscent of the tragedy that occurred on March Road in Kanata last year. What is common here is that a group of cyclists on a high-speed road was hit from behind or side-swiped by a motorist, in dry and sunny conditions, and not at dawn or dusk. You might think that a large pack of five to six riders, such as in these cases, would be visible enough to drivers. But obviously, there isn’t necessarily safety in numbers, even though you’re obeying the rules of the road. So what else can you do?

Cyclists need to consider all defensive techniques, first to be seen and second to be able to react to threats from behind. (This is not to imply that the victims cited above did not take the necessary precautions.) On group training rides, cyclists will often form a tight bunch to gain the benefit of ‘drafting’ behind the leader. This reduces their visibility from behind and could make them vulnerable to a chain reaction if the tail-end rider is hit. Many participants are bent forward over the handlebars, further reducing their profile to drivers approaching from the rear.

Of course, since lighter weight is paramount in an activity requiring speed, sport riders are not inclined to ride with pannier bags or mirrors mounted to their bikes. But panniers with sufficient fluorescent and retro-reflective material on the rear surface could really help in making your presence more obvious on the road. Alternatively, you could attach one of the warning flags that stick out to the left of your bike and wave a signal of ‘steer clear’ to passing vehicles. If you don’t want panniers or a flag, your clothing could also work for you. Obviously, if you’re bent over in an aerodynamic position, your fluorescent-coloured jersey may not be very apparent to drivers unless they are sitting high up in a truck cab or bus. This is especially true if the jersey is cut short in the back or tucked into your shorts. Consider a bright jersey with a long tail, and leave it untucked. Or what about cycling shorts in a colour other than the ‘standard-issue’ black? And rear lights can be obtained that are featherweight.

Even after following such measures to increase your visibility, you still would benefit from an ace in the hole—a mirror to see what’s coming at you from the rear. Then you will hopefully have a chance to take evasive action if you notice someone getting too close for comfort. It’s amazing how many cyclists ride on the road without this most valuable of bike accessories. You have the choice of mirror models that mount on the handlebar or on the helmet. Well worth the \$5 to \$20 for a little peace of mind!

Harvest House Printing Services

Please contact:
Tom Mekarski at
(613) 260-6458 or
hh13@magma.ca

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

All proceeds go towards helping a young man change his life.



CfSC's 'Eye on Cycling Projects'

The route you choose to cycle will often depend on the road or path facilities available. Knowledge of where disruptions are occurring and where improvements have been made is important. We are issuing maps to highlight where things are happening or have been recently completed. In the last issue, we covered the near-west end. In this issue, we examine the east end, from Orleans to the Rideau Canal, and from 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.

A ALEXANDRA BRIDGE RE-PLANKING

Who: NCC When: 2010-11

The multi-use path portion of the bridge will have new wood boards (in Douglas fir) installed. To be done either in fall of 2010 or in 2011. Note also: the bridge is now undergoing central deck work, affecting the road lanes—it is one way traffic northbound from 2 to 7PM on weekdays, and one way southbound at all other times.

B SUSSEX DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION

Who: City of Ottawa, NCC When: 2010

The road will be undergoing major sewer and other reconstruction between George and St. Patrick Streets. It has been narrowed to one lane. A bike lane is to be added. While cyclists could use that lane, they would have to take the lane. Alternatively, cyclists could detour through William St./Byward Market/Parent St. to Bruyère St., or take Dalhousie to Bruyère St. More info is available at http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/public_consult/sussex_george/faq_en.html.

C ROCKCLIFFE PARKWAY PATH

Who: NCC When: Potential

Sometime around 2013, while road improvements are being done, a pathway will be cantilevered from the north side of the roadway. There will be a barrier between the cars and cyclists.

D OTTAWA RIVER PATHWAY

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

This will be formalization of a multi-use path between Hiawatha Park Road and Trim Road. Currently a rather rough track with dirt in some stretches and coarse gravel in others, it will be paved from Hiawatha to Tenth Line, and finished with stone dust from Tenth Line to Trim Road.

E LAURIER AVENUE WEST IMPROVEMENT

Who: CfSC When: Advocacy

Currently, the Laurier westbound bike lane ends just west of the bridge over the Rideau Canal. At this point, cyclists can come into conflict with traffic merging from the NAC/Driveway area. We have been advocating for extension of the bike lane to Elgin Street. Feedback from the city is there is not enough room for a bike lane but 'sharrow' markings on the through lane may be feasible.

F LAURIER AVENUE EAST IMPROVEMENTS

Who: CfSC, U of O When: Advocacy



Photo: CfSC

We are pushing for improved cycling eastbound on Laurier Avenue in the approach to the intersection with University Private of the University of Ottawa campus at Tabaret Hall. Starting from Nicholas Street, several curb features narrow the width of the curb lane. Upon reaching the signals in the photo, the lane is down to only about 3.2 m, which makes sharing difficult. We are requesting road widening to allow a bike lane, plus addition of a bike box at the crosswalk. The bike box would simplify bicycle left turns onto the campus.

G RIDEAU RIVER FOOTBRIDGE

Who: City of Ottawa When: Under study

A footbridge is being proposed over the Rideau River to also accommodate cyclists. This is similar in concept to the Corktown Bridge over the Canal. Such a crossing is covered in the OCP. This would be a continuation of the east-west route along Somerset and would join downtown to Overbrook along Donald Street.

H McILRAITH BRIDGE BIKE LANES

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

Bike lanes are to be added as part of structural rehabilitation. The central median is to be narrowed to make space for the lanes.

J BROOKFIELD ROUNDABOUT

Who: City of Ottawa When: Completed



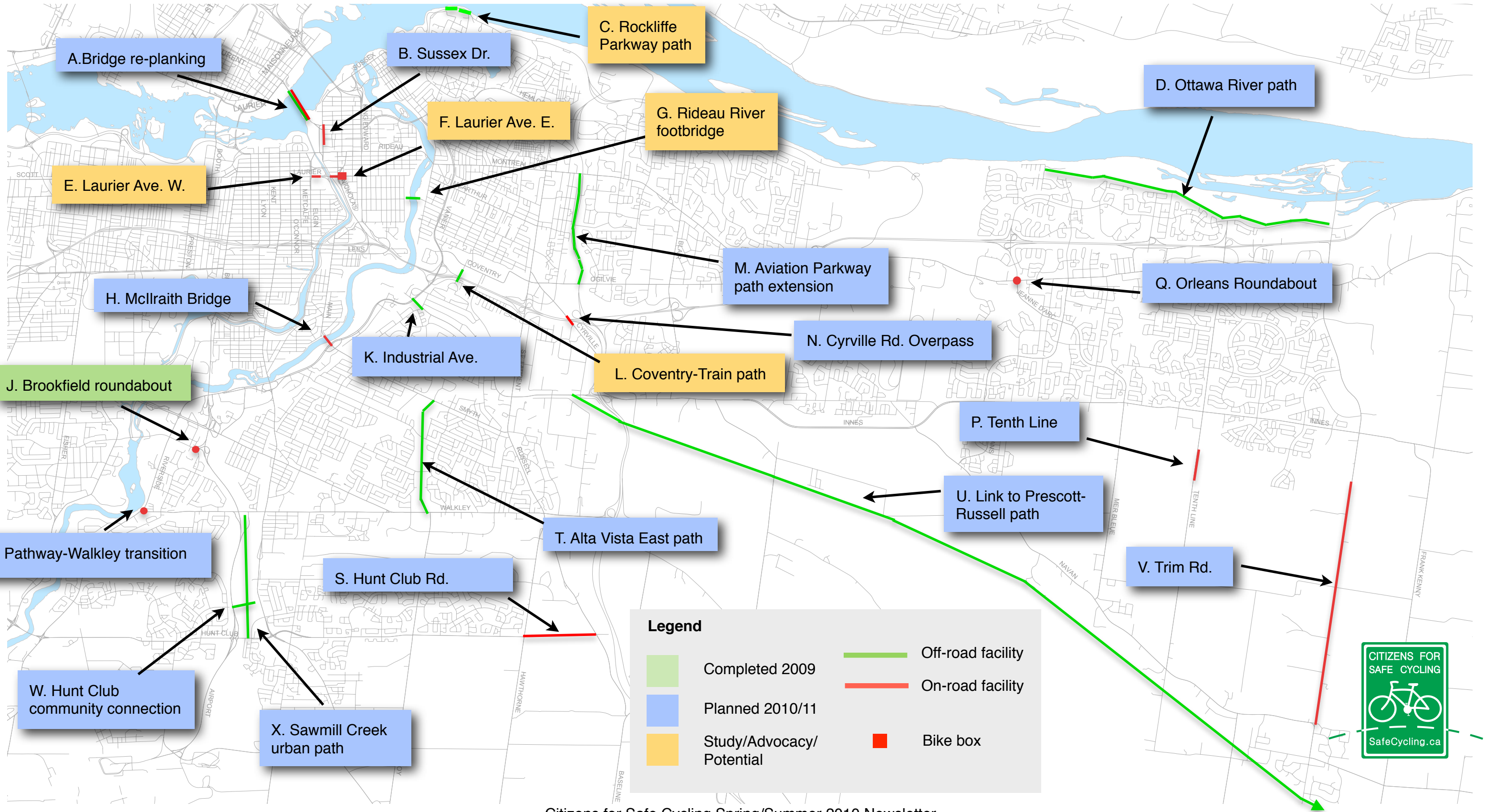
Photo: CfSC

A hybrid (part single-lane, part double-lane) roundabout was constructed at the Brookfield-Flannery intersection. Generally, single-lane roundabouts are more convenient for cyclists than standard signalized intersections, but CfSC invites comments on any problems that users may have encountered with this one, due to its hybrid nature.

(Continued: p. 6 'Projects')

2010 CfSC Eye on Cycling Projects

Part 2: East Map



Projects... *(continued from p.3)***K INDUSTRIAL AVENUE PATH**

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

A multi-use path will replace a sidewalk from Riverside Drive to Alta Vista Drive, parallel to Industrial Avenue and along the north boundary of Cancer Survivors Park. This closes the gap in a route between the Riverside pathways and the path running by the north sides of Sienna Private and Santa Cruz Private (leading to Station Boulevard, a low-volume street route).

L COVENTRY-TRAIN PATH

Who: City of Ottawa When: Under study

An environmental assessment study is being carried out for a multi-use pathway connection over the 417 highway. The bridge would link Coventry Road/Overbrook community on the north side with the Train Transitway station and VIA Rail station on the south. Study completion is due in November.

M AVIATION PARKWAY PATH EXTENSION PLUS NEIGHBOURHOOD CONNECTIONS

Who: NCC, City of Ottawa When: 2010

The NCC path will be extended from Montreal Road to Ogilvie Road, on the west side of the parkway. In conjunction with this, the City will make path connections to Rainsford Avenue and La Cité Private.

N CYRVILLE ROAD OVERPASS OF THE 417

Who: MTO When: 2011-12

The Ministry of Transportation expects to close one of the two Cyrville overpasses for about ten months starting next year. The bridge is the one closer to the Hwy 417/Regional Road 174 "split". It will be replaced as part of improvements to the highway beneath. The new overpass will have bike lanes.

P TENTH LINE ROAD

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

Cycling facilities will be added as the section of Tenth Line Road from Lakepointe Drive to the Blackburn Hamlet Bypass Extension is upgraded to an arterial. (Our map's base is not completely up to date and does not show the crossroads.)

Q ORLEANS ROUNDABOUT

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

A two-lane roundabout is to be built at the intersection of St. Joseph Boulevard and Jeanne d'Arc Boulevard. CfSC sent written concern to City Council about the preliminary design, stating that better measures were needed to support safe cycling at the roundabout. We look forward to seeing the detailed design.

R PATHWAY-WALKLEY TRANSITION

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

This is a pilot project to provide cyclists with an efficient transition between path and road without going into a pedestrian crosswalk (where you are supposed to dismount, and not ride). The junction of the Riverside Drive multi-use pathway with the west end of Walkley Road has been set up with a dedicated location for cyclists to activate their signal. For instance, instead of having to push the 'walk' button (per the accompanying photo), just wait at the bike ramp as distinguished by a separate asphalt pad and the built-in sensor



View from Riverside Drive/Mooney's Bay path at the Walkley intersection. Approach to pedestrian crosswalk is concrete; ramp for bikes to cross and ride east on Walkley is asphalt. Markings for the bike sensor loop to activate the signal are visible. Photo: CfSC

will trigger a green light for you. Similarly, cyclists coming from the east will have a loop in the road at the intersection approach and a different asphalt ramp to receive them on the west side to enter the path.

S HUNT CLUB ROAD EAST EXTENSION

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

Bike lanes are to be part of the extension from Hawthorne Road to Russell Road.

T ALTA VISTA EAST PATH

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

A path will extend from Smyth Road to Walkley Road, in the corridor of the proposed Alta Vista Parkway. This will join up to the top of Conroy Road, which already has bike facilities.

U PRESCOTT-RUSSELL PATH LINK

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

This is a project to upgrade the abandoned rail corridor from Innes Road near the 417 eastward to the city border. It will link with a major multi-use pathway in Prescott-Russell that leads to the Montreal area. Negotiations with VIA Rail are to be completed before final go-ahead.

V TRIM ROAD LANES

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

As part of road renewal from 800m south of Millennium Boulevard to Navan Road, paved shoulders are to be included.

W HUNT CLUB COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010-11

This is a multi-use path to connect neighbourhoods on opposite sides of the Airport Parkway, and in doing so, linking the Hunt Club Community near Cahill Dr. W. to the Transitway at South Keys station. The EA study has been completed.

X SAWMILL CREEK PATH

Who: City of Ottawa When: 2010

A path will be formalized from Hunt Club Road to Walkley Road. It will pass under the Airport Parkway's northbound Walkley off-ramp at the Walkley end.

Cyclist Q&A

Is it legal for me to cycle on the path (specifically between Churchill and Bayview) that runs parallel to Scott Street? I'm curious because there was no yellow line and it was not clear whether or not it was a sidewalk.

The City response...

"The facility that runs parallel to the Transitway was constructed as a multi-use pathway, including use by cyclists. Another leg of the multi-use pathway along Scott/Albert was constructed in 2008 from the pedestrian access to Bayview O-Train eastwards as far as Commissioners (just west of Bronson). This is also a legal biking facility and will be shown on the Ottawa cycling map. Note that the pathway is interrupted when crossing over the O-Train corridor and a SIDEWALK is located there. Cyclists cannot therefore ride the entire distance along Scott/Albert without either dismounting at this (and other short sidewalk segments) or moving onto the roadway and behaving as a vehicle.

"A related issue: we are developing a means of reducing conflict between different pathway user groups by use of a Pathway Etiquette, so to speak. This will be shown to the public through use of new signs planned for installation this summer.

"The Scott/Albert corridor pathway will be the first pathway to receive these signs, and they will inform everyone that bikes are permitted but they must not exceed 20 km/h, must give an audible signal before passing and must otherwise remain on the right (this is very similar to the signs the NCC has already installed on their multi-use pathway network).

"These signs will make it clear that cyclists are allowed on the pathways. The other item that will help the public distinguish between sidewalks and pathways: a centreline stripe to create a more orderly flow of sustainable transportation modes."

Another missing link: the Moodie bike lane disappears between 417 and Corkstown Rd



Cyclists are left to contend with merging traffic from the highway.
Photo: CfSC

Issues with the Moodie Drive Overpass of Highway 417

Construction on the bridge that carries Moodie Drive over the 417 Highway was completed last summer, in conjunction with the 417 widening project. The bridge abutments were moved further apart, effectively making for a longer bridge. However, work carried out at the same time has affected the safety of cycling and other modes of active transportation.



Northbound lanes, shoulder on Moodie bridge. Photo: CfSC

The result of this bridge "rehabilitation" is that very narrow bike lanes are situated, both northbound and southbound, between through lanes and Queensway on-ramp lanes. The bike lane widths are painted at only 1.22 metres in these sections—and even as little as 1.09 metres near the bridge limits. This is insufficient in view of an 80-km/h posted speed limit that is regularly exceeded by motor vehicles. Also, where there used to be a sort of snow storage area separated from the roadway by curbing (i.e. a quasi-sidewalk), now the roadway extends right to the barrier wall. You have essentially a paved shoulder of only 0.86 metres in width in places—so forget about safely riding or walking your bike here or seeing people walking two abreast, if at all.

The situation is destined to degrade further, due to the proposed extension of the West Transitway from Bayshore to Moodie Drive. In that scenario, buses from Kanata destined for the Transitway to head downtown will get off the 417 at Moodie and cross this bridge to the north side. This means a lot of buses! Hence, CfSC has issued a position statement about the Transitway extension requesting, among other things, that the city address the deficiencies and conflicts with a better road/path design. Look for more information on www.safecycling.ca.

Safe Passing Law bill introduced at Queen's Park

A private member's bill was tabled in the Ontario Legislature on May 18, 2010. It proposes to amend the Highway Traffic Act to specify a minimum distance that non-bicycle vehicles may pass a cyclist. The minimum distance is three to five feet, depending on the vehicle's speed.

Wellington West Alternate Route

City work to facilitate a quieter alternative route to Wellington Street West is nearing completion. The route uses Armstrong Street to avoid busy traffic periods on the main Hintonburg/Mechanicsville/Parkdale Park east-west thoroughfare. Armstrong Street runs parallel to Wellington and, for the most part, one block to the north.



Photo: CfSC

New island to mark the (yet-to-be-painted) counterflow bike lane on Garland Street at Wellington intersection. Cyclist is positioned where a loop sensor will activate the new traffic signals.

Since the eastern end of the ‘deviation’ uses Garland Street, which was one-way northbound, the plan relies on creation of a counterflow bike lane heading south. Once eastbound cyclists on Armstrong reach Garland, they will be able to turn right and use this bike lane to ride a short block and rejoin Wellington. Due to Garland’s previous situation, traffic signals for southbound vehicle travel were never required at that intersection, but they are in place now! (See photo.)

‘Think YOU got problems?’

There’s a new website in town called Ottawa Biking Problems. It lists more than forty different areas in the city where cyclists are at danger or unreasonably inconvenienced by the facilities. This includes city-recommended bike routes where one cannot bike because of sidewalks, dangerous merges with off-ramps from the 417, or the magic disappearing bike lane. Some of the problems have easy solutions, some not.

The locations and problem descriptions were created by more than twenty local cyclists. Do you know an area that could be improved? Fill out the webform and have it tracked. Have a look at <http://www.ottawabikingproblems.ca>.

Free Bike-Share soon in Bells Corners

The Bells Corners Free Bike-Share will be launched at the Saturday June 12th *Bikefest West* event in Lynwood Park. It will be run by community association volunteers out of the community building in partnership with Recyclore, the Bells Corners Business Improvement Area, and the City of Ottawa.

The project is modeled after successful free bike-shares in Gatineau and in Montreal. After signing a waiver and leaving

photo ID, cyclists are set up with an appropriate safety-checked bicycle that has been rescued from the landfill and refurbished by the volunteer mechanics at Recyclore. It’s free because start-up costs have been covered by the Bells Corners business community, there is no rent to pay on the community building, and everyone involved is working as a volunteer. A promotional campaign will let local residents, families and tourists know about this free service.

DISCOUNTS FOR CfSC MEMBERS

Bicycle shops in the area that offer discounts to card-carrying CfSC members:

NOTE: “P&A” means bike parts and accessories.

Bushtukah	10% off P&A and clothes
Fresh Air Experience	10% off P&A and clothes, and 5% off bikes
Full Cycle	10% off P&A
Joe Mamma Urban Cycles	10% off P&A
Kunstadt Sports	10% off P&A and clothes
McCrank’s Cycles	10% off P&A
Orleans Cycles	10% off P&A
Rebec and Kroes	10% off P&A and clothes
Tommy and Lefebvre	10% off accessories and clothes
The Cyclery	10% off P&A
Valiquette’s	20% off in-stock accessories

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:

Citizens for Safe Cycling J’aimerais recevoir la
 Box 248, Station B documentation en français
 Ottawa, ON, K1P 6C4 lorsqu’elle est disponible.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____
 Tel: Home: _____ Work: _____
 E-mail: _____

Are you... Joining or Renewing?

Please select one membership option:

- Individual: 1 Year (\$ 25) 2 Years (\$ 45)
- Household* 1 Year (\$ 30) 2 Years (\$ 55)
- Low Income: 1 Year (\$ 10)

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? _____

*Household Memberships Only:

2nd Member’s Name: _____

2nd Member’s E-Mail: _____

Citizens For Safe Cycling