Winnipeg

Review of the Assiniboine Active Transportation Bikeway
September 2011

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Audit Department

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MANDATE OF THE CITY AUDITOR

The City Auditor is a statutory officer appointed by City Council under *The City of Winnipeg Charter*. The City Auditor reports to Council through the Audit Committee (Executive Policy Committee) and is independent of the City's Public Service. The City Auditor conducts examinations of the operations of the City and its affiliated bodies to assist Council in its governance role of ensuring the Public Service's accountability for the quality of stewardship over public funds and for the achievement of value for money in City operations. Once a report from the City Auditor has been communicated to Council, it becomes a public document.

BACKGROUND

The mandate of the Audit Department includes the provision

> "To examine problem areas, within the capabilities of the Audit Department, which are brought to the Auditor's attention by taxpayers, department heads, employees, Council, Standing Committees of Council, members of Council and the CAO."

In August 2010, the Audit Department received a complaint from a citizen alleging a consultant failed to comply with the terms and conditions of the associated contract. As a result, a limited scope review of the process to contract with the consultant and resultant work was initiated.

INDEPENDENCE

The team members selected for the review did not have any conflicts of interest relating to the subject matter of the review.

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Audit Department completed a limited scope review of Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 120-2009 – Traffic Impact Study, Community Profile and Community Facilitation. The review focused on three specific areas:

(1) To review the City's involvement in active transportation (to provide background),
(2) To assess the compliance of the consultant to the terms and conditions of the RFP, and
(3) To evaluate the public consultation processes employed to engage the public prior to the design and construction of the Assiniboine Active Transportation bikeway.

APPROACH

The work performed consisted of a review of:

- The Bid opportunity RFP 120-2009.
- The Contract Administrator scoring evaluation for RFP 120-2009.
- The sole submitted proposal and evaluation of submission against evaluation criteria.
- The Internal Award Report for RFP 120-2009.
- The Consultant's submitted final report.
- The membership listing for Active Transportation Advisory Committee.
- The listing of groups, businesses, organizations or individuals that were targeted for contact directly via phone or email to notify them of public meetings.
- The public consultation advertising materials.
- Status reports submitted to Community Committees.
- The listing of attendees, session notes and participant evaluations from the Master Meeting and Open House public consultation meetings.
- Email correspondence from the public, City staff and contracted consultants.
- Other documentation contained with the Project Administrator's project file.

We interviewed City personnel from the Public Works Department to attain a comprehensive understanding of the project and the processes used to manage the contract. We also interviewed a representative from the lead firm contracted to conduct the work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Audit Department wants to extend its appreciation to the management and staff of the Public Works Department. In addition, we appreciate the cooperation we received from Marr Consulting.

Members of the Audit Team
Bryan Mansky, MBA, CMA, CIA Deputy City Auditor



Brian Whiteside, CA•CIA

September 2011

Date

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AT THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

The topic of "Active Transportation" has been a priority issue for City Council for several years. On January 25, 2006, Council approved the *Active Transportation Study* to serve as a resource in formulating future active transportation policies and programs for the City. The study contained several recommendations encompassing five broad principles:

1. The City shall adopt active transportation principles as an integrated part of doing business.
2. The City shall actively promote active transportation among staff and the citizens of Winnipeg.
3. The City shall develop an active transportation strategy.
4. The City shall be innovative and seek partnerships in funding and supporting AT facilities and programs.
5. The City shall establish a comprehensive citywide network of active transportation facilities.

Subsequently, on April 25, 2007, Council adopted the *Active Transportation Study Implementation Plan* which called for the following four actions:

1. Hire an Active Transportation (AT) Coordinator
2. Establish an Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC)
3. Build Awareness and Foster Dialogue Regarding Active Transportation
4. Develop a Detailed Action Plan with Time Frames

By July 2007, an AT coordinator was hired and the ATAC committee was formed and efforts were underway to raise awareness. Action plans were detailed in the Active Transportation Action Plan Reports that followed. On May 1, 2008, the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal & Public Works reviewed the Public Works Department's report *2008 Active Transportation Action Plan Report* and concurred with the recommendations and the identified listing of projects. The Assiniboine bikeway was included in the action plan and identified for construction in 2008. The report was forwarded to Council and approved on May 14, 2008. In that report, Council also approved a motion to incorporate AT facilities into any reconstruction or rehabilitation required on any infrastructure identified as an active transportation facility in the proposed city-wide active transportation network.

The approved *2008 Adopted Capital Budget* included monies identified for active transportation corridors. A note within that capital budget provided for monies to be expended "Subject to Council approval of priorities after the Active Transportation Plan is developed in early 2008".

Council approved the *2008 Active Transportation Action Plan Report* and the *2008 Adopted Capital Budget.* These documents identified the active transportation corridors and allocation of capital budget funds for construction. Council approved the overall strategic plan and project prioritization for this project. It is common practice that a number of smaller scale construction projects (local streets, sidewalks) be approved and then delegated to the Director of Public Works for completion.

Although the Public Works Department was not required to report back to Council, it has been their practice to notify the appropriate Community Committee regarding significant changes to streets within the area. On September 8, 2009, the Public Works Department issued a report to the City Centre Community Committee containing details of the public consultation process, the final design and a map of the proposed Assiniboine bike boulevard. The report further noted that "Implementation of the Assiniboine Bike Boulevard is a significant change to the current use of the right-of-way, which may result in some controversy." We believe this reporting to the Community Committee was appropriate due to the nature of the project. The Assiniboine bikeway did not proceed to the actual construction phase until 2010 due, in part, to a lack of resources.

The Public Works Department properly reported to the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal & Public Works and Council the plans for the development of the Assiniboine Bike Boulevard. The status update report to the City Centre Community Committee also served to inform the applicable City Councillors of developments within their designated area. We believe that the reporting provided by the Public Works Department was sufficient.

The City completes several hundred smaller-scale construction projects during each construction season. Any requirement to expand reporting with specific construction details of each project would be burdensome on the Councillors due to the volume of material to review. This could also create a bottleneck due to timing issues that could potentially delay projects resulting in increased costs. As we will illustrate further in this report, we identified shortcomings in the public consultation process. If the recommendations that follow are implemented, we believe the City will have an improved public consultation process that will lead to the identification of an optimal solution, balancing possibly several competing objectives. This will also serve to mitigate the risk of project delays and changes occurring to the project after construction has been initiated.

REVIEW OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO. 120-2009

Background

The City of Winnipeg implemented an Active Transportation Program in April 2007. The program includes the development of several transportation facility types that are new to the City of Winnipeg and include:

- Bike Lanes – special lanes on roadways specifically dedicated for the use of cyclists;
- Sharrows – specially widened curb lanes intended to be shared by vehicles and cyclists side by side; and
- Bike Boulevards – roadways where non-local vehicle traffic is discouraged and cycling traffic is encouraged.

The characteristics of the neighbourhood play a significant role in determining which facility to implement. The City's past experience with the first bike boulevard (Argue St.

closure) suggested that enhanced public consultation was necessary to properly engage the stakeholders affected by the project.

In March 2009, the City issued Request for Proposal No. 120-2009 – Traffic Impact Study, Community Profile and Community Facilitation. Bidder's proposals were to include details on their ability to effectively manage this type of project and include:

a. experience in development of Community Profiles and Community Facilitation;
b. experience related to the development of Active Transportation facilities;
c. experience in conducting traffic impact studies;
d. the number of projects, each requiring a Traffic Impact Study, Community Profile and Community Facilitation, that the firm can run concurrently; and,
e. success of past projects.

The RFP defined the purpose of the community profile was to identify key organizations and stakeholders that are interested or affected by the project. The information that is gained through the study would be important in ensuring that the project planning process integrates transportation planning and engineering considerations with community planning in its social, economic, environmental and land use dimensions. The RFP further defined the purpose of the Stakeholder Facilitation as to develop consensus regarding which possible project treatment should be completed.

Traffic impact studies were defined within the RFP as being an assessment of the traffic impacts on the street in question, as well as on adjacent streets and at adjacent intersections as a result of any diverted traffic, for any options being considered. These impacts need to be identified and considered before any changes are made to the streets in question. The evaluation of the impacts could preclude certain options from being considered for implementation on particular streets.
The active transportation projects identified in the RFP included:

- Assiniboine Bikeway
- Alexander/Pacific Bikeway
- Bannatyne/McDermot Bikeway
- Eugenie/Des Meurons Bikeway
- Pembina Highway

Further, the RFP included specific details of the routes begin and end points and any options contemplated for each bikeway. The successful proponent was to identify additional options and then through a public consultation process select the best option for construction of a bike boulevard. The goal for the Pembina Highway project was unique in that the successful proponent was only to determine the best method by which the cycling environment can be improved on Pembina Highway from Osborne Street to Plaza Drive.

Each proposal submitted in response to the RFP was to contain the following components:

a. Form A: Proposal;
b. Qualifications and Experience;
c. Campaign Proposal;
d. Portfolio;
e. Fees.

The deadline for submissions was 4:00 p.m. April 9, 2009. The traffic studies and public consultation for all five projects was to be completed and verbal recommendations submitted to the City by June 22, 2009. The final written report was due by July 31, 2009. The RFP identified

that these deadlines are required so that the recommended project treatments could be implemented in the 2009 construction season.

The City would evaluate the proposals based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Pass/Fail - compliance by the Bidder with the requirements of the Request for Proposal or acceptable deviation therefrom.

If the bidder passed, then the qualifications of the bidder and any subcontractors would be evaluated as follows:

- Campaign Proposal 30%
- Portfolio 40%
- Fees 30% (the lowest Bidder shall receive the full 30 points, and the second lowest Bidder and subsequent Bidders shall be prorated accordingly.)

Summary of Work Conducted

We reviewed the submission received in response to RFP 120-2009.

We noted that the City received only one submission in response to this RFP from Marr Consulting. The submission was received prior to the deadline date and passed the Materials Management Branch review to ensure the submission is complete, did not contain any conditions, additions, deletions, alterations or other irregularities. We further reviewed the evaluation matrix completed by the Contract Administrator and it appeared reasonable.

We then undertook our own review of the bid submission to evaluate the key criteria that would encapsulate the bidder's ability to perform the work. The commentary on our evaluation is restricted solely to a review of the information contained within the bid submission document. It is not to be interpreted as comments regarding the competencies of the firm.

Criteria	Evaluation
Experience in development of Community Profiles and Community Facilitation	Adequate - Proposal identified a variety of community profile projects the bidder and/or subcontractors had undertook. Projects ranged in size and scope.
Experience related to development of Active Transportation facilities	Adequate - Proposal identified a number of active transportation plans that had been developed for other jurisdictions.
Experience in conducting traffic impact studies	Adequate – Proposal identified a subcontractor that had performed numerous traffic studies of varying magnitude.
The number of projects, each requiring a traffic impact study, community profile and community facilitation that the firm can run concurrently	Inadequate - Criteria was not explicitly addressed in RFP submission.
Success of past projects	Adequate - Integrated into the write-up of each project summary.

Conclusion on the RFP Process

We believe the RFP process was executed fairly and in compliance with *City's Material Management Administrative Standard*. The bidder's submission met the key requirements of the RFP and successfully communicated their ability to conduct the required work. Although the successful proponent's proposal did not explicitly identify the number of projects the firm could run concurrently, the submission identified a large project team (12 individuals from 3 firms) to enable completion of the project in the desired time frame. Team members had a variety of experience in active transportation, urban planning, traffic studies, graphic design and technical support.

We do note that the RFP used the term "consensus" in relation to stakeholder facilitation. Consensus will typically mean group decision making and require some form of compromise by at least some participants. The use of this could have been problematic for both the successful proponent and ultimately the citizens who became involved in the process.

> The enhanced model includes the development of a Community Profile, which is intended to identify the important stakeholders that will be affected by the project along with their concerns. The next step in the process is to get these stakeholders together for a facilitated planning process in order to reach consensus regarding the possible options for facility development.
>
> *City of Winnipeg RFP 120-2009, page 13*

The City did want to solicit extensive public input into the development of the active transportation bikeways. However, the City needed to balance the public's preferences with other realities such as cost, environmental responsibilities and safety. The lead consultant did confirm that they used the word consensus more in the spirit of the term and did not communicate that language to the public. This approach by the consultant helped to ensure that citizen's expectations regarding the public participation in the consultation process were properly aligned with the intent of the process. In the next section we will discuss the consultant's work under the resultant contract.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR ASSINIBOINE BIKEWAY

A chronology of the events related to the Assiniboine Avenue bikeway is included as **Appendix 1.**

Background

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) (see **Appendix 2** for membership listing) had identified the Assiniboine bikeway as a potential active transportation pathway and it was included in the *2008 Active Transportation Action Plan*. Although the Assiniboine bikeway was identified in 2008, they did not proceed to the RFP stage until 2009 due to a lack of resources.

An internal report, dated April 20, 2009, recommended a contract be awarded to Marr Consulting Services for RFP 120-2009, which included the Assiniboine bikeway as one of five projects to be completed. The project deadline was specified as June 22, 2009 for a verbal

debriefing and July 31, 2009 for a final report so that construction could commence in 2009. However, construction did not commence until 2010, part of the reason for the delay was that the construction costs came in higher than what was originally projected and budgeted. In September 2009, the City did enter into a tri-party agreement with the provincial and federal governments to provide stimulus funding for these projects, but by then it was too late to tender for construction in 2009. The original project timeframes were aggressive, but it was believed that the consultants, with their qualified teams could execute these projects within the defined time frame.

It is important to note that the Assiniboine bikeway was one of 36 Active Transportation projects being constructed during the 2010 construction season. In previous years, the City would typically undertake only a couple active transportation projects. The large number of active projects is one contributing factor in the City's decision to outsource the group of projects contained within RFP 120-2009. While the City retained an oversight role, the expectation was that the consultant team would manage the projects and present the deliverables to the City.

Conclusion on the Public Consultation Process

We believe that Marr Consulting Services met the terms and conditions as specified within the contract based on our limited review of the work they conducted; however, we did identify issues in the public consultation process. In the next section we identify opportunities to improve future public consultation processes, whether they are conducted by City staff or external groups on behalf of the City.

Observations and Recommendations

We reviewed the public consultation process including the quality of the active transportation information provided to citizens to engage them in the public consultation process for the Assiniboine bikeway.

The consultant utilized the City of Winnipeg website as one avenue to communicate with citizens. **Appendix 3** illustrates the active transportation menu available to citizens to obtain information on any of the projects that were underway. The website is continually updated with new information, as such, we were unable to confirm what specific information would have been available at any specific point in time.

Bid submissions received in response to a City RFP do not become public documents, only the contractor name, date of award and contract amount are made public. In the following sections we have evaluated several aspects of the project planning and public consultation processes conducted by Marr. Although the bid submission received from Marr Consulting did itemize the level of effort expected to be required for various tasks, the details will not be disclosed as part of our analysis. We will limit our comments as to whether we believe, in our judgment, that the expected level of effort was reasonable for the identified tasks.

Public Consultation Planning

Subsequent to the award of contract, the consultant undertook preliminary planning work to gain a better understanding of the projects and to develop the materials to be used during the first public consultation meeting. The bid identified a certain number of days effort per project, including Assiniboine that would be dedicated to the identification of stakeholders for the Community Profile. The consultants identified businesses, associations and resident groups and the local “Biz” groups or other associations (i.e. cycling association) would identify additional businesses/associations to include in the communication database. The ATAC also had an opportunity to identify additional groups for notification. For the Assiniboine project, the bid further identified a specific number of days effort to conduct a land use analysis, to conduct a traffic impact study and to develop conceptual designs of applicable bike infrastructure options. In our opinion, the identified number of days to perform background analysis and identify options in anticipation of the public consultation meetings was adequate.

The level of resources dedicated to performing background work to develop a community profile and identify feasible options appeared reasonable. From our review, there appeared to be adequate opportunity for various parties to identify groups, businesses, organizations or individuals that should be contacted as part of the public consultation process. We were informed that “unaddressed admail” was also sent to each address in the four neighbourhoods, a distribution total of 16,125 households and businesses via Canada Post. Despite that wide distribution, we reviewed a listing of groups, businesses, organizations or individuals that were contacted directly via phone or email and were concerned with the breadth of the listing. The contact listing appeared to focus on schools, school divisions, cycling businesses and associations, various community organizations as well as governmental departments.

We would have expected the listing to also include local businesses who may be impacted either during the construction phase or by the resultant changes to the traffic corridors under consideration. The lead consultant advised that the inclusion of the business associations was

viewed as avenue to streamline the process, reduce costs and to communicate with the individual businesses. Extending the database development component would have added costs and they tried to strike a cost/benefit balance with the solution being the usage of the business associations. A shortfall was the lack of a formal agreement with the business associations to ensure that there was a common understanding of the proposed role they were to play in communicating information to their membership.

Based on the experience of the Argue Street bikeway, the City wanted to develop a community profile, which was intended to identify the important stakeholders that will be affected by the project along with their concerns. We believe the omission of local businesses in the community profile was a gap that contributed to a lower level of involvement during the future public consultation process.

> Experience with the development of the City's first Bike Boulevard (Argue St closure done through the WinSmart Program) suggests that the public consultations required (public Open Houses and Public Hearings) for the development of Bike Boulevards is inadequate to properly engage the important stakeholders that are affected by the project. As a result the City intends to enhance the Public consultation component in future Active Transportation projects such as the Assiniboine; Alexander/Pacific and the Powers Bikeways. The enhanced model includes the development of a Community Profile, which is intended to identify the important stakeholders that will be affected by the project along with their concerns. The next step in the process is to get these stakeholders together for a facilitated planning process in order to reach consensus regarding the possible options for facility development.
>
> *City of Winnipeg RFP 120-2009, Section D2.2*

Recommendation 1
We recommend that for future Active Transportation projects, the Public Works Department ensure local businesses are included in the community profile and contacted as part of the public consultation process. Contact listing and communication materials should also be properly documented in the project files.

Management Response
Management agrees with this recommendation. However it should be noted that an attempt to engage local businesses was undertaken and that some local businesses were included in the community profile. It is acknowledged though, that too much reliance may have been put on the BIZ's to communicate broadly with the business community.

Management will modify the community profile approach if and when used on subsequent AT related projects and ensure that there is adequate communication directly with local businesses that may be impacted by the project(s).

Master Meeting

Master Meeting
The first public consultation meeting was held on June 2, 2009 and was called the Master Meeting where stakeholders from all neighborhood routes would be brought together for a presentation on the benefits of active transportation and what it means for Winnipeg. Breakout sessions would then follow to divide attendees into their respective neighborhood groups. Attendance at the Master Meeting required people to commit approximately 2.5 hours of time, as it was felt that the public needed to invest time to fully understand proposals before they could provide meaningful input. The bid submission estimated a number of person days (for all

four projects– Assiniboine, Alexander/Pacific, Bannatyne/McDermot, Eugenie/Des Meurons) to prepare for the meeting, respond to public enquiries, conduct the meeting, review and analyze findings and create recommendations. We believe the identified number of days to perform those tasks was reasonable. Fifty-five people attended the June 2, 2009 Master Meeting, with seventeen attending the Assiniboine break-out session.

Five options were presented for the Assiniboine bikeway. They were as follows:

1. Bike lanes on both sides of the road
2. Two-way cycle track entire length with traffic change to one-way eastbound
3. Bike route signage
4. Combination of two-way cycle track and multi-use pathway; traffic calming by one-way loop system
5. Closure of Assiniboine between Main Street and Fort

Appendix 4 includes additional details for each proposed option. The results of the Master Meeting and the Assiniboine breakout session were then compiled and analyzed. Participants were provided the opportunity to provide input and complete evaluation forms to rank options and document other concerns/comments. We reviewed the submitted evaluation forms and noted that the most common comment was regarding the ability for the Assiniboine bikeway to connect with the Main St. and Osborne Ave. arteries. Most participants ranked option #2, option #4 or a combination of #2 and #4 as the preferred alternatives.

A modified option #4 was selected by the consultant team in consultation with the Project Coordinator. The selected option combined option #2's preferred two-way cycle track with option #4's traffic calming measures. An excerpt from the Marr Consulting Final Report describes the option below:

> Modified Option 4: Combination of two-way cycle track and traffic calming by one-way loop system with removal of parking
> Options 1 through 3 and Option 5 were provided by the City for consideration by the project team, while the project team developed Option 4. Option 5 was eliminated by the project team in consultation with the TAC before the Master Meeting due to the impact that the closure of Assiniboine between Main Street and Fort would have on several intersections on Broadway as analyzed by the project team's traffic engineers. Option 2 was the preferred choice from the public participants at the Master Meeting with an understanding that the two-way cycle track the entire length of Assiniboine was key to their choice. With this public input, the project team developed a Modified Option 4 to see the cycle track extend the entire length of Assiniboine while maintaining some parking on Assiniboine between Kennedy and Hargrave and two-way traffic between Main Street and Hargrave. In consultation with the TAC, the project team determined that the Modified Option 4 provided a balance between maintaining traffic flow for local residents, retaining as much parking as possible, and not overwhelming adjacent streets such as Broadway with increased traffic, and creating a showcase active transportation facility for the City of Winnipeg.
>
> *Excerpt from Marr Consulting Report, page 18, November 2009*

This first public consultation meeting provided the opportunity for individuals to participate in the process and provide input. Although the project team did contact many groups/associations directly via phone or email and was combined with a mailing to all addresses within the region, turnout at the Master Meeting would be considered low.

Costing of Assiniboine bikeway options

Within the RFP, the City noted that the selection of the preferred option would be based on several criteria, one being cost.

> The goal of the two processes is to create opportunities for public involvement in the planning process that leads to a preferred option that will be selected based on the following criteria: technically sound; reflect the needs of the community and City in general; cost-effective; environmentally responsible and safe; and is generally understood and accepted by most of those affected.
>
> *City of Winnipeg RFP 120-2009, Section D2.3*

We noted in the materials that we reviewed, there is no mention of the cost for any of the identified options. We believe this is a significant shortcoming. The omission of the costing component for the various options dramatically reduced the effectiveness of the consultation process by removing a critical piece of information. We were advised by the lead consultant that they communicated costing in the discussion with public in terms of ranges being inexpensive to expensive. An issue with this approach is that it leaves the definition of "inexpensive" or "expensive" to the subjectivity of each participant.

The options presented differed significantly in regards to impacts on traffic, businesses and residents and also on the degree of construction work required to implement. The absence of a cost figure minimized the ability for the public to provide meaningful commentary. The participant's evaluation of options may have been altered if the City had provided reasonable estimates of the cost of each option.

The City did have limited experience in the construction of active transportation projects and was breaking new territory with the option of developing a cycle track. While the communication of inaccurate budget estimates would be a concern, we believe the communication of subjective terms to define the cost component may have created a situation where the perceived cost identified for an option between participants could have been significantly different. The City does possess vast experience in a wide variety of construction projects and had engaged a team of consultants to assist in the expansion of active transportation facilities. The creation of cost estimates for each option would require additional effort; however, the value would be to create an improved public engagement process.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that for projects where the Public Works Department wants to engage stakeholders (internal or external) in the decision-making process, that reasonable cost estimates be developed for each identified option.

Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation. It should be noted that the Public Works Department already provides order of magnitude cost estimates for projects where stakeholders (internal or external) are engaged wherever possible. The level or accuracy of cost estimates is however highly dependent on the level of detail associated with a project. In this particular case, the stakeholders were consulted to establish the type of facility that was to be built, a scenario where accurate cost estimates are not available.

This recommendation can be implemented within 12 months of approval of the Audit report by the proper committee of Council.

Open House

Open House Meeting – Selected Option Presented

The selected option was to be presented at the Open House meeting scheduled for June 24, 2009. Sixty-one people attended the meeting, a turnout that was lower than anticipated. During this meeting, participants were again provided the opportunity to provide input and complete evaluation forms to document concerns/comments. We reviewed the comment forms submitted by participants and for those that did comment on the Assiniboine bikeway the majority were in favor of the compromise merging aspects of option #2 and #4.

We were informed by the Active Transportation Coordinator that the consultants also held two additional meetings with the Downtown Biz and the Exchange District Biz to ensure input was received from the local business community as it was thought that this group had been underrepresented at the Master Meeting. Communication was limited to discussions between the consultants and the Biz association staff, there were no presentations made to the Biz association membership. The bid submission identified a number of person days (for four projects – Assiniboine, Alexander/Pacific, Bannatyne/McDermot, Eugenie/Des Meurons) dedicated to prepare for and conduct the Open House meeting. We believe the number of days effort identified was adequate.

Communication Materials

The City recognized that it had limited experience in the development of active transportation corridors and wanted to improve the public consultation process. The desire to improve the process was tempered by a short time frame to complete the project to enable construction during the 2009 season.

Potential bikeway options were presented at the Master Meeting. The preferred bikeway option was then presented at the Open House meeting. The consultants developed an information flyer and an invitation to attend each meeting was mailed out to all addresses in the neighborhood. **Appendix 5** provides an example of the notice developed for the Master Meeting. **Appendix 6** provides an example of the notice developed for the Open House meeting. For both meetings, the flyer and Canada Post mail out was further supplemented with print and radio communications and updates on the website. From our review of the available advertising materials, we believe there is an opportunity to better convey the nature of the consultation being sought.

The Master Meeting and Open House notifications disclose details of the meetings (date, time) and that the meetings deal with active transportation. While that is valid, it does not accurately convey the final impact of the potential solutions. The Assiniboine Avenue bikeway was to be developed within an existing infrastructure framework, that includes roads, bridges, buildings and tress, which already exist and create logistical boundaries. If the existing infrastructure is to be enhanced to accommodate active transportation, then there is the potential that some aspect of the current infrastructure will be altered.

We noted that the public notifications contained very limited commentary to suggest there could be any impact to vehicular traffic or parking. The inclusion of the term “traffic calming”, which is not defined, in the notification does not necessarily suggest that roads may be closed, traffic directionality changed or parking impacted. By excluding the full potential impact that the active

transportation route could have on vehicle traffic, businesses and residents, the interest to participate in the process was limited to those most interested in active transportation.

The lead consultant agreed that they should have included some stronger language that would have suggested “change” could occur on the traffic routes. She further cautioned about using too strong of language as then people could become anti-active transportation and it could become an us versus them mentality. The sessions would then be more confrontational and detract from the overall intent of constructive dialogue. We do agree with that cautionary note, that there needs to be a balance in the communication materials to ensure all citizens are properly informed regarding the nature of the public consultation process. This would then enable each individual to decide if and to what extent they could be affected and want to participate in the process.

Recommendation 3
We recommend that for projects where the Public Works Department wants to engage stakeholders (internal or external) in the decision-making process, all notifications regarding the projects should be designed to clearly communicate, with the broadest audience, the intent of the consultation and an overview of possible outcomes from the construction project.

Management Response
Management agrees with this recommendation. This agreement is however premised on the assumption that “broadest audience” is intended to refer to the need to more effectively engage local businesses that may be impacted by a given project, as opposed to a broader than normal geographical area.

This recommendation can be implemented within 12 months of approval of the Audit report by the proper committee of Council.

Communications Subsequent to Initiation of Construction

August 2009 Notification to Citizens – Selected Option Presented
In August 2009, following the two formal public consultation meetings, a letter was delivered to all residents and businesses of the Assiniboine Avenue area describing the selected Assiniboine bikeway option. The letter is attached as **Appendix 7**. The letter does identify that the Assiniboine bikeway will feature a two-way cycle track and that traffic calming will occur via a one-way loop system between Kennedy St. and Hargrave St., while two-way traffic will remain between Main St. and Hargrave St. The letter also states that emergency vehicles would have access to the cycle track if required. The letter contained a web address where someone could view a graphical representation of the proposed plan. The above noted option was presented to City Centre Community Committee on September 8, 2009.

The August 2009 notification accurately described the selected option for the Assiniboine bikeway and contained a link to a graphical representation. We believe this communication was adequate.

July 2010 Notification to Citizens – Changes to Selected Option
Beginning in April 2010, additional concerns were raised regarding the selected option for the Assiniboine bikeway. The concerns were raised by the residents of apartment blocks located at

15 Kennedy St. and 375 Assiniboine Ave. The concerns centered on the ability of people living in these premises to be able to continue accessing the Handi Transit service.

The City of Winnipeg's Universal Design Standard requires the public service to incorporate Universal Design principles into the earliest stages of project development. Once the concerns were identified, it was incumbent on the City to alter the Assiniboine bikeway option so that Handi-Transit users would maintain access to the service.

It was decided that additional public consultation was not required and the consultants and City staff would identify possible solutions. The Active Transportation Coordinator informed us that multiple options were evaluated for both locations but the final design in both cases was the only feasible option. In the case of 15 Kennedy St., the City was able to build a separate Handi-Transit loading zone. In the case of 375 Assiniboine Ave., the presence of large elm trees precluded this possibility. For 375 Assiniboine Ave., the team decided to keep the traffic west bound so that the passenger side door on the Handi Transit bus could pick up people at the curb.

In July 2010, the City issued a letter to all area residents and businesses regarding the changes to the Assiniboine bikeway. The letter is attached as **Appendix 8**. This letter addressed the final changes made to the proposed bikeway and provided a detailed traffic flow diagram. The most significant change from the previous design was expanding the one-way to include the section from Navy Way to Hargrave St., which was originally intended to be two-way. Another change was making the first part of Hargrave St. (off Assiniboine Ave.) two-way rather than just one-way.

We do note that the option that was selected as a result of the master meeting and subsequently presented at the open house is the option that closely resembles what is presently being constructed. The July 2010 communication accurately described the proposed changes to traffic flow and the timing for construction. A graphical representation was included in the letter. We believe this communication was adequate.

Additional Changes to Design

Further changes have been made to the Assiniboine bikeway design based on additional discussions with the public. The final constructed design is virtually identical to the August 2009 design originally communicated to the public. The July 2010 re-design called for Assiniboine Avenue to be one-way from Navy Way to Hargrave Street, that has since reverted back to the original two-way concept. The only material difference between the original plan presented after the public consultation process and the present construction, is a change to a section of Hargrave Street. Originally designed to be one-way north, it is now a two-way route. The final design was communicated to the public through advertisements in the Winnipeg Free Press in December 2010. The advertisement is attached as **Appendix 9.** The City continues to improve on signage and other issues as they are identified.

APPENDIX 1 – CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS – ASSINIBOINE AVENUE BIKEWAY

Date	Event	Commentary
May 1, 2008 - SPC Infrastructure Renewal & Public Works May 14, 2008 – City Council	Approval of 2008 Active Transportation Plan	Identified several active transportation projects including Assiniboine Avenue and noted that an estimate for this project was pending.
March 10, 2009 - SPC Infrastructure Renewal & Public Works March 25, 2009 – City Council	Approval of 2009 Active Transportation Plan	Assiniboine Avenue is not identified since it had been already approved in 2008.
	RFP 120-2009 issued.	
April 9, 2009	RFP 120-2009 closes.	
May 6, 2009	Contract awarded for RFP 120-2009	Internal award report for approval by Director of Public Works Department. Contract awarded to Marr Consulting.
June 2, 2009	Master Meeting conducted	
June 24, 2009	Open House meeting conducted	
August 10, 2009	Preferred option identified - notification to area residents	Marr Consulting mails information to all area residents informing them of the selected option for the Assiniboine Avenue bikeway.
September 8, 2009	Report to City Centre Community Committee	Acting Manager of Transportation, Public Works Department submits report to CC to be received as information. Report details the selected option for Assiniboine Avenue bikeway. CC concurred with the recommendation.
January 29, 2010	Stimulus funding agreement signed	City enters into a tri-party agreement with Province and Federal governments to receive stimulus funding for AT projects.
April to June 2010	Concerns identified for Handi-Transit users	Handi-Transit users identify concerns with the selected option and the impact on the ability to continue to utilize the service in a safe environment.
July 23, 2010	Selected option modified - notification to area residents	City of Winnipeg mails information to area residents informing them of changes to selected option for the Assiniboine Avenue bikeway.
August 3, 2010	Construction tender awarded	Maple Leaf Construction Ltd. Awarded contract
September 2010	Suit filed against City to halt construction	Local businesses affected by the Assiniboine Avenue bikeway construction file a suit to halt construction. The focal point of their concern is how the resulting changes will affect local traffic.

APPENDIX 2 - ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Janice Lukes/Sigrun Bailey	Winnipeg Trail Association
Beth McKechnie	Resource Conservation Manitoba
Gareth Simons/Mark Cohoe	Bike To The Future
Howard Skrypnyk/Mike Sosiak	Province of Manitoba
Anders Swanson	Mayor's Environmental Advisory Committee
Kathleen Leathers	Prairie Pathfinders
Jan Schmalenberg	Physical Activity Coalition of Manitoba
Tim Woodcock	Manitoba Cycling Association
Kevin Nixon	City of Winnipeg, Public Works Dept. (Active Transportation Coordinator)
Neil Myska	City of Winnipeg, Public Works Dept. (Transportation Facilities Planning Engineer)
Judy Redmond	City of Winnipeg, Planning, Property and Development Dept. (Universal Design Coordinator)
Susanne Dewey Povoledo	City or Winnipeg, Planning, Property and Development Dept. (Senior Transportation Planner)
Bjorn Radstrom	City of Winnipeg, Transit Dept. (Transit Planner)
Donna Beaton	City of Winnipeg, Planning, Property and Development Dept. (Park Strategic Planner)
Ken Boyd	City of Winnipeg, Public Works Dept. Street Maintenance (Support Services Eng.)
Jonina Ewart	City of Winnipeg, Public Works Dept. (Superintendent of Park Services – East Area)

APPENDIX 3 – CITY OF WINNIPEG WEBSITE - ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION



City of Winnipeg website - October 18, 2010

APPENDIX 4 – ASSINIBOINE BIKEWAY OPTIONS - MASTER MEETING

"Building the Network"
Public Consultation Meeting 02 June 2009

ASSINIBOINE SUMMARY

1. **Bike lanes on both sides of the road**

   Osborne to Kennedy

   - Retain existing multi-use pathway from Osborne
   - Improve connection to multi-use pathway from Kennedy
   - Install mini-roundabout at Kennedy intersection as a traffic calming measure

   Kennedy to Main

   - Add a painted bike lane in each direction by removing parking along south side of Assiniboine to Main Street
   - Replace lost parking by creating two parking lanes (instead of one) on both Edmonton and Kennedy
   - Connection to Main Street/Main Street Bridge remains as existing
     - Use of pedestrian corridor northbound
     - Use of existing facility on Main Street Bridge southbound

2. **Two-way cycle track entire length with traffic change to one-way eastbound**

   Osborne to Kennedy

   - Retain existing multi-use pathway from Osborne
   - Improve connection to multi-use pathway from Kennedy
   - Install curb extensions on Kennedy at Assiniboine

   Kennedy to Main

   - Add a two-way cycle track beside the south curb by moving parking to north side of Assiniboine
   - Change traffic to eastbound entire length
   - Replace lost parking by creating two parking lanes (instead of one) on both Edmonton and Kennedy
   - Connection to Main Street/Main Street Bridge remains as existing:
     - Use of pedestrian corridor northbound
     - Use of existing facility on Main Street Bridge southbound

Appendix 4 – Assiniboine Bikeway Options - Master Meeting (continued)

3. **Bike route Signage**
   - Create awareness by adding new signage
   - No changes to roadway configuration

4. **Combination of two-way cycle track and multi-use pathway; traffic calming by one-way loop system**

   Osborne to Kennedy
   - Retain existing multi-use pathway from Osborne
   - Improve connection to multi-use pathway from Kennedy
   - Install curb extensions on Kennedy at Assiniboine

   Kennedy to Hargrave
   - Add a two-way cycle track beside the south curb from Kennedy to east of Navy
   - Move parking from south side to north side between Kennedy and Hargrave.
   - Add traffic calming with one way loops,
     - eastbound from Kennedy to Edmonton
     - westbound from Carlton to Edmonton
     - eastbound from Carlton to Hargrave

   Hargrave to Navy
   - Cycle track continues to east of Navy, ending there with connection to multi-use pathway through Bonnycastle Park
   - Two way vehicle traffic from Hargrave to Main Street
   - No parking from Hargrave to Navy.

   Navy to Main
   - Two-way traffic continues
   - Connect new multi-use pathway section into the existing system in Bonnycastle Park
   - Parking on south side
   - Multi-use Pathway continues through park to Main Street
   - Connection to Main Street/Main Street Bridge remains as existing:
     - Use of pedestrian corridor northbound
     - Use of existing facility on Main Street Bridge southbound

Winnipeg

Marr

SCATLIFF + MILLER + MURRAY

APPENDIX 5 – JUNE 2 - MASTER MEETING NOTIFICATION

BUILDING THE NETWORK

Active Transportation
Any human-powered way of getting around! Rollerblading, walking, cycling…



A growing number of Winnipeggers are using bicycles as a means of transportation for work and play. The City of Winnipeg is planning to develop cycling route improvements **in your neighbourhood** as part of our city's Active Transportation Network.

You are invited to a working session to learn about Active Transportation in Winnipeg and contribute to the development of cycling route options for:

Eugenie • Des Meurons • Youville • Egerton between the Norwood Bridge and Fermor Avenue

Assiniboine Avenue between Osborne and Main Street

Alexander • Pacific • Elgin between the Red River College campuses on Notre Dame at Route 90 and on Princess Street

McDermot • Bannatyne Avenue between Waterfront Drive and Sherbrook Street

We'd like your input on the variety of options for Active Transportation in your neighbourhood: bike lanes, bikeways, traffic calming and more.

Tuesday, June 2, 2009
Norwood Hotel
112 Marion Street
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Schedule
Registration & Refreshments 5:45
Introduction & Presentation 6:00
Neighbourhood Break-out Sessions 6:45-8:15
Wrap Up 8:30 pm

Call Erik to register at **927-3456** or email **bikeroutes@marrcc.com** by May 31, 2009

Winnipeg

marr

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Stantec

For more information on the City of Winnipeg's Active Transportation Program, visit www.winnipeg.ca

APPENDIX 6 – JUNE 24 – OPEN HOUSE NOTIFICATION

BUILDING THE NETWORK

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Active Transportation

Any human-powered way of getting around! Rollerblading, walking, cycling…



A growing number of Winnipeggers are using bicycles as a means of transportation for work and play.

You are invited to a Public Open House to learn about Active Transportation in Winnipeg and find out about proposed cycling improvements in your neighbourhood.

Eugenie • Des Meurons • Youville • Egerton between the Norwood Bridge and Fermor Avenue

Assiniboine Avenue between Osborne and Main Street

Alexander • Pacific • Elgin between the Red River College campuses on Notre Dame at Route 90 and on Princess Street

McDermot • Bannatyne Avenue between Waterfront Drive and Sherbrook Street

For more information contact Erik at
Phone: 927-3456
Email: bikeroutes@ marrcc.com

Wednesday, June 24, 2009

Red River College
Princess Street Campus
160 Princess Street
4:00 pm – 8:00 pm

CGA Manitoba Room
P-107 Main Floor



Winnipeg

Marr · Scatliff + Miller + Murray · Stantec

For more information on the City of Winnipeg's Active Transportation Program, visit www.winnipeg.ca

APPENDIX 7 – AUGUST 2009 LETTER – SELECTED ASSINIBOINE OPTION

marr
consulting services

10 August 2009

Dear Resident of the Assiniboine Avenue Area

RE: ASSINIBOINE AVENUE BIKEWAY

We are writing to inform you about plans for a new cycling facility on Assiniboine Avenue. This is part of the Building the Network project and the City of Winnipeg's commitment to develop more Active Transportation facilities.

All residents in this area were previously invited to a workshop on June 2 and an Open House on June 24. Planning is now in the final stages, with the intention to begin construction this fall, if possible.

The Assiniboine Bikeway will be an innovative enhancement for cyclists and pedestrians. It will create safer facilities linking key neighbourhoods of Wolseley and Osborne with The Forks and downtown. The Assiniboine Bikeway will feature a 3.0 metre wide, two-way cycle track with a 0.5 metre curb barrier from Main to Kennedy. A cycle track is a physically separated bike lane, allowing complete separation of cyclists, pedestrians and motor vehicles, but emergency vehicles can easily cross the curb if needed. Traffic calming will occur with a one-way loop system between Kennedy and Hargrave, while two-way traffic will remain between Main and Hargrave.

The traffic calming measures will reduce through traffic from Osborne to Main, yet still provide access for residents and will not lead to excessive congestion on Broadway. However, there will be an overall loss of street parking in the area of about 10 parking spaces. This is because approximately 40 parking spaces will be removed from Assiniboine, replaced in part by 30 new spaces on the east side of Kennedy. Some parking will be retained on the north side of Assiniboine. There is the possibility of adding more replacement parking in the future. Please note that due to other possible projects in this area, additional parking changes such as metering, are also already under consideration, although not directly part of this project.

Details about the project can be found on the City of Winnipeg's Active Transportation website: http://www.winnipeg.ca/PublicWorks/MajorProjects/ActiveTransportation/

If you would like to share any comments or would like additional information, please contact Councillor Jenny Gerbasi's office at 986-5878, Kevin Nixon (Public Works) at 986- 4966 or Erik Dickson in our office (927-3456 ext. 242), preferably before August 28, 2009.

Yours sincerely,

Ruth Marr

Marr Consulting Services
8th Floor, 136 Market Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3B 0P4 tel: 204-927-3456 fax: 204-927-3443
www.marrcc.com

APPENDIX 8 – JULY 2010 – CHANGES TO SELECTED OPTION

Winnipeg

Public Works Department

July 23, 2010

Dear Area Resident, Business Owner, and/or Stakeholder,

RE: Assiniboine Bikeway – Active Transportation (AT) Route

This summer, the City of Winnipeg will construct the **Assiniboine Bikeway**. This is part of the City's commitment to develop more Active Transportation (AT) facilities in Winnipeg through the Active Transportation Infrastructure Stimulus Program (ATISP), which is funded by all three levels of government.

Active Transportation means using human power to get around. Cycling, walking and in-line skating are some examples of how people can get from Point A to Point B whether for recreation or commuting.

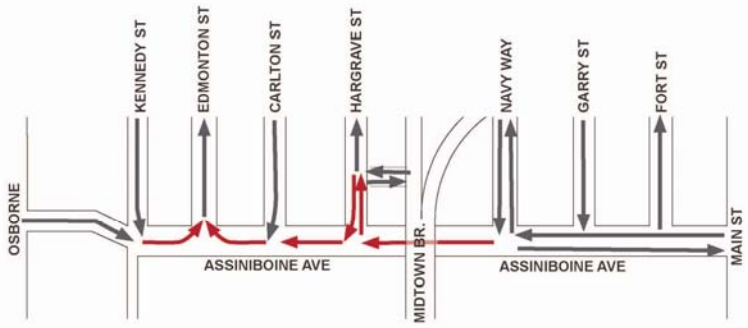
The **Assiniboine Bikeway** is an innovative enhancement for cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles that will provide better Active Transportation connections between the Assiniboine Avenue neighbourhood and areas like Wolseley, Osborne, The Forks and downtown. When complete, the Assiniboine Bikeway will feature a 3.0 metre wide **cycle track** placed on to the south side of the Assiniboine Avenue roadway between Kennedy and Garry. The cycle track will connect to an off-road bike path between Garry and Main alongside Bonnycastle Park.

A cycle track is a two-way bike lane separated from vehicle travel lanes by a half-metre wide curb barrier. This safety feature helps keep cyclists and drivers apart, but is mountable so emergency vehicles can easily cross the curb if needed. Access to private driveways and parking lots on the south side of Assiniboine has been maintained by lowering the curb barrier at these locations.

The Assiniboine Bikeway also involves changes to traffic flow movements to retain and create on-street parking stalls, accommodate Handi-Transit movements and reduce non-local "cut-through" traffic. Changes to the location of some on-street parking will accommodate the construction of the cycle track.

The following changes to traffic flow movements in your neighbourhood will commence with the start of construction tentatively set for mid-August 2010:

- Assiniboine Ave. from Kennedy St. to Edmonton St. will become **one-way eastbound**
- Assiniboine Ave. from Edmonton St. to Navy Way will become **one-way westbound**
- Hargrave St. from Hargrave Place to Assiniboine Ave. will become **two-way**



Canada Manitoba Winnipeg

Appendix 8 – July 2010 – Changes to Selected Option (continued)

Construction will take approximately 4-6 weeks. During that time, all parking will be temporarily suspended along Assiniboine Avenue. Once construction is complete, you will see several changes to on-street parking in the neighbourhood, including:

- Addition of new on-street parking to the east side of Kennedy Street between Broadway and Assiniboine Avenues
- Addition of new on-street parking to the north side of Assiniboine Avenue from Kennedy to the Midtown Bridge
- Removal of on-street parking on the south side of Assiniboine Avenue between Kennedy and Garry (on-street parking will remain on the south side of Assiniboine Avenue between Garry and Main)

The new directions of travel and changes to the location of on-street parking spaces are shown on the attached diagram.

In 2009 and 2010, the City met with residents, business owners and stakeholders regarding the planning and design of the Assiniboine Bikeway. The input received at meetings and public events was important in planning the changes and many of the comments received have been incorporated into the final design.

For questions about construction in your neighbourhood, please contact Scott Suderman at Stantec Consulting, 981-9706.

For questions about the Active Transportation Infrastructure Stimulus Program, please contact Erik Dickson at Marr Consulting Services, 927-3456 ext. 242.

Yours truly,

Bill Woroby, P. Eng
Project Manager
Active Transportation Infrastructure Stimulus Program – City of Winnipeg, Public Works

hike it bike it like it
WINNIPEG'S ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

In December of 2009, Winnipeg City Council approved $20.4 million in capital funding to support an extensive active transportation network throughout the city. This funding comes from the three levels of government (the City, Province and Federal governments each contributing one-third, or $6.8 million). This active transportation program involves the creation of 37 projects that range from multi-use pathways to bike boulevards. When this program is completed by the end of this year, Winnipeggers will be able to access 375 km of active transportation routes. More information about active transportation can be found on the City of Winnipeg's website:
www.winnipeg.ca/activetransportation/HikeItBikeItLikeIt.asp

Canada Manitoba Winnipeg

Appendix 8 – July 2010 – Changes to Selected Option (continued)



Canada Manitoba Winnipeg

Appendix 9 – December 2010 - Free Press Advertisement

Winnipeg

During the past summer, a bike path was constructed on Assiniboine Avenue between Kennedy Street and Main Street. The construction of the bike path involved changing some of the traffic flow along Assiniboine Avenue and Hargrave Street.
The traffic flow changes involved making:

- **Assiniboine Avenue, one way eastbound between Kennedy Street and Edmonton Street**
- **Assiniboine Avenue, one way westbound between Hargrave Street and Edmonton Street**
- **Hargrave Street, two way between Hargrave Place and Assiniboine Avenue**

The drawing illustrates the traffic flow changes and provides an overview of the locations of some of the businesses in the area.

