July 5th, 2015

To the Members of the Executive Policy Committee:

On July 9th of 2014, I made a submission to EPC on behalf of the Wolseley Residents' Association which expressed both our group's strong support for a by-law limiting travel by all motor vehicles to a distance of one block along Sunday/Holiday Bicycle Routes, but also our real concern that the associated plan to remove the barricades would actually lead to an increase in traffic along the four bike paths. We asked that the barriers remain in place to serve as very clear and visible reminders to motorists.

Although we were very pleased when the new by-law was finally approved by City Council, our concerns re: increased traffic flows resulting from the elimination of the barricades remained. We hoped that our fears were unfounded, but, unfortunately, this has not proved to be the case. The number of vehicles travelling down Wolseley during these closures has most definitely increased, and in a significant way.

We do realize that there will always be some motorists who will go around barriers and ignore by-laws. However, added to those numbers, we now have all of the motorists who would normally choose and genuinely wish to respect the rules, but who simply *forget* that it's a bicycle path day. Whether they're on their way home from work, shopping, etc., it's not difficult to see how people could simply continue traveling along their typical, familiar route home, purely out of habit.

The large, bright barricades have served as a very clear and obvious reminder to motorists for years. Although the new by-law signs are, of course, visible, they are not particularly noticeable. They are black and white, rather small, and placed on poles to the side of roadways. The small "New" signs which have been recently added to the bottoms of the by-law signs help somewhat, but it's still nothing compared to what was there in the past.

We do realize that there is some cost involved in reinstating the barricades, but it seems to us such a shame that while the City is spending millions of dollars building up new active transportation/bicycle infrastructure, it is losing (for the sake of a relatively minimal cost) four long-established routes – km and km of path. And, please, have no doubt, they are being lost.

A few examples. On one Sunday, we counted 13 cars passing by the head of our street within one minute. The weekend before last, at one point, there were 4 cars lined at the stop sign, heading west, and 3 cars sitting at the opposing stop sign, heading east. We continue to hear parents telling their cycling children, "No, don't come onto the road. Stay on the sidewalk. There're too many cars. It's not safe!" One weekend, after a rainstorm, a family of four were cycling around a huge puddle on Wolseley - one which takes up an entire lane - and before they could get completely around it, there were 3 cars right on their tails, bumper to bumper, just itching to get by them. The second that the last family member passed the puddle, the cars whizzed past. It's quite sad. And more than a tad silly, really.

We realize that there will be some police enforcement, but we also understand that the police have many other priorities. Officers may be able to monitor the routes for an hour or two every few weekends, but that will not be adequate to deal with the significant number of cars which illegally pass through each route every weekend. If barriers can serve to minimize the traffic by even 50%, by reminding many and dissuading others, then that will relieve the pressure for police presence and allow

for the department's resources to be allocated elsewhere. We understand that the Winnipeg Police Service supports barricade reinstatement.

My husband and I spent a few hours one Sunday afternoon offering friendly reminders to hundreds of drivers about the new by-law, the time frames, the fine, police enforcement, etc. All but one (an elderly man who considered the law unreasonable) were *very* grateful for the information. Many who were familiar with the path said that they hadn't seen the barriers, so just assumed that it wasn't in play. Others said that they hadn't noticed any signs. A few had been aware, but had simply forgotten. Some were local, but many were just 'cutting thru', following the ever-increasing trend of drivers using Wolseley instead of Portage Ave., bike path day or not. Regardless, there were many thank you's for the info, and people did turn off.

In terms of a more formal public education process, we had been told, initially, that if the barriers did end of being written out of the new by-law, the City would institute a wide-spread information campaign prior to the cycling season to let Winnipegers know about the new rules. We were later informed that MPI would actually be responsible for any kind of education campaign. After a good number of phone calls and messages left, I finally heard back from MPI just recently. Unfortunately, they explained that this was a City of Winnipeg matter, and not at all up to them.

We would strongly encourage, then, that the members of this committee approve Councillor Orlikow's motion reinstating the barricades at key entry points to the four Sunday/Holiday bicycle routes. We whole-heartedly believe that the combination of barriers and by-law enforcement will provide the means of minimizing traffic and maximizing safety. Thank you very much.

Suzanne and John Lussier
Wolseley Residents' Association Members