I am very encouraged that the city is trying to improve the bus routes throughout the city as I am a strong proponent of active transportation and one who takes the bus frequently.

However, as a longtime Wolseley resident, I have major concerns about having a major bus route go through Wolseley. My main concerns are that Wolseley Avenue is a greenway with the goal being to make it safer for all who use the street. Having a major bus route through the area will make it much more unsafe mainly for bicyclists, but also for pedestrians. It will be a slow, inefficient route for the bus. Heavy buses should use roads that have been designed to carry heavy traffic loads such as Portage and Maryland, not Arlington and Wolseley. I have elaborated on these concerns in the points below.

Safety Concerns:

1) Wolseley Avenue has just been made a greenway with a speed limit of 30 km/hr. Having up to 8 buses/hr going up and down Wolseley will make it much less safe for cyclists and make for a very inefficient bus route. Would buses that are behind schedule be tempted to go more than 30? I shudder every time I see a bus going down Wolseley past a family biking with little children.
2) It is not uncommon to see an impatient driver pass a slow-moving bus that is behind some cyclists. This creates an extremely dangerous situation. With the recent tragedy on Wellington Crescent where a cyclist was killed, it behooves Winnipeg Transit to not create a situation where this is much more likely to happen again.
3) Mulvey School is located at the corner of Wolseley and Maryland. It is attended by over 300 children from nursery to Grade 6. Hundreds of children cross the street up to four times each day. Although they are supervised and have crossing guards, it would be tragic if a child was injured or killed by a bus going through that congested area.
4) In addition to Mulvey School students, every school day hundreds of other children walk or bike down Wolseley to attend many other nearby schools including Laura Secord, Westgate Mennonite, Balmoral Hall, St. Mary's, Kelvin and River Heights. There are over 600 elementary age students at Laura Secord alone, many of whom live east of the school. In addition to crossing at the light which makes it difficult for cars and buses to turn right onto Maryland, children sometimes cross at other places than intersections. Although this shouldn't happen, it does, and having many large buses going up and down Arington and Wolseley decreases visibility and increases the likelihood of accidents.
5) Having so many pedestrians crossing Maryland at Wolseley, makes it very difficult for cars and buses to turn onto Maryland. Although vehicles should wait until pedestrians are fully across, many don't wait, and I have witnessed many times where a pedestrian was almost hit by a vehicle anxious to turn.

Inefficient Route for Buses

1) In the winter in is very common to have the traffic backed up from Maryland to Arlington as the cars wait to turn right onto Maryland. With people crossing, sometimes only 2-3 cars are able to turn each light cycle. This means that the buses would likely be waiting 10-15 or even 20 minutes to turn right onto Maryland. This would make for a very inefficient bus route.
2) When the children from all of the schools are crossing, vehicles are basically unable to turn left or right onto Maryland. This would make a bus route through there very inefficient especially at the times before and after school and at lunchtime.
3) Before and after school is also when many, many bikes are traveling down Wolseley. This means that buses are very often stuck behind slow-moving bikes which would create hold-ups on the bus route.
4) Wolseley is not a wide street and often I see pedestrians, bikes, buses, cars all trying to navigate this narrow street. Many times, vehicles going in one direction have to wait until traffic on the other side has gone by. This is especially true when buses are going by. I have sometimes seen impatient drivers passing a bus. This would make it very inefficient to have a major bus route going down this street.

Residential Roads Not Designed for Heavy Traffic

1) This is a residential area and should not be a throughway. Major bus routes should go down streets that are designed and built to carry heavy traffic loads such as Portage, Maryland and Sherbrook. Arlington and Wolseley are not built to carry such heavy traffic and would soon deteriorate, causing much upheaval to any bus route there.
2) A possible idea would be to have a small feeder bus service the area which would connect with major bus routes on Portage, Sherbrook and Maryland.

Respectfully submitted by:

- Ann McConkey