Submission – Steve West

Item No. 4 Wellington Crescent (Academy Road to Stradbrook Avenue) Bike Lane Pilot Project – formerly Speed Limit Reduction on Wellington Crescent

Submitted: Wed, 07/16/2025 - 11:36

Delegation information

Committee you want to address
Council

Agenda item you want to address (number and title)
Report of the SPC on Public Works, July 3, 2025: Item 4, Wellington Crescent (Academy Road to Stradbrook Avenue) Bike Lane Pilot Project – formerly Speed Limit Reduction on Wellington Crescent

Support or oppose recommendations
I am opposed to the recommendations

Submit comments in writing checkbox
Submit comments in writing

Comments
Report of the SPC on Public Works, July 3, 2025:
Item 4, Wellington Crescent (Academy Road to Stradbrook Avenue) Bike Lane Pilot Project – formerly Speed Limit Reduction on Wellington Crescent

Mayor and Members of Council:

I fully support the bike lane pilot project. I am strongly opposed to the delay until 2026.

On June 26, 2024, 20 days after a driver killed cyclist Rob Jenner on Wellington at Cockburn, a Winnipeg Transit driver improperly changed lanes to fully occupy the lane I was riding in, in precisely the same spot where Rob died. At the last second, in my peripheral vision, I saw the bus overtaking and moving toward me. I instinctively and immediately braked. Mark Cohoe, executive director of Bike Winnipeg, was riding behind me and witnessed the incident, stating that if I hadn't reacted so quickly, the back of the bus would have struck me. If I weren't an experienced cyclist and hadn't been coached on emergency braking, I might not have had the awareness to react as I did.

I've shared this incident with members of Council, and I have to tell you, each time, I relive the trauma and the what-ifs my family could have faced like Wendy and Rob's family and

friends face every day. But I think it's important to keep relaying it because separated infrastructure may have saved Rob from being hit, and definitely would have prevented my near-miss. I've previously had to react to bad driving decisions on the subject stretch of Wellington. I won't ride that route now unless I'm in a group, more visible. It's just not worth the risk, and I hear the same from many, many other riders.

I'm writing to you as a citizen, although I will add that in April 2025, in my capacity as chair of Bike Winnipeg's City Centre local bike group, I was invited to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee for a confidential review of the draft plan for the pilot project. The public service had done a commendable job of designing a temporary solution, and I was genuinely excited that this was going to happen - that this hazardous gap in the network was finally going to be filled after, literally, decades of requests from advocates and users alike.

Also, in April 2025, when watching the video of that month's Public Works meeting, I heard the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works and the public service discuss the pilot project, the report for which had been delayed. The essence of the briefing was that the pilot, referred to as a "quick build," could be completed by this summer using materials already in inventory. At no time during that briefing, nor in the following months of continuing delays, was a need for consultation ever mentioned publicly. That has only arisen publicly in recent weeks.

The public service's report you're considering today states that conducting public consultation in advance is not typical of a pilot project. After all, how can you gather information on the impacts of temporary infrastructure that is not there? That would be a wasteful exercise. On a related note, I heard a City response to an inquiry about the new Transit routes launched last month, saying that they've been put in place and feedback will be gathered over the pilot period. That's how it's usually done, the experts tell me. Why is this pilot project being treated differently than the City’s norm?

I fear it's only a matter of time before the next near-miss is not a miss. Please follow the established City practice regarding pilot projects. Move to approve the project today, implement it this summer, and over the coming year, gather information on its efficacy and any impacts of the temporary infrastructure while a permanent solution is sought, as you would with any pilot project.

Our safety truly depends on it.

Sincerely,

Steve West

Public engagement (optional)

I consent to being contacted to participate in potential public engagement related to this matter.
Yes

Personal information

First name
Steve

Last name
West