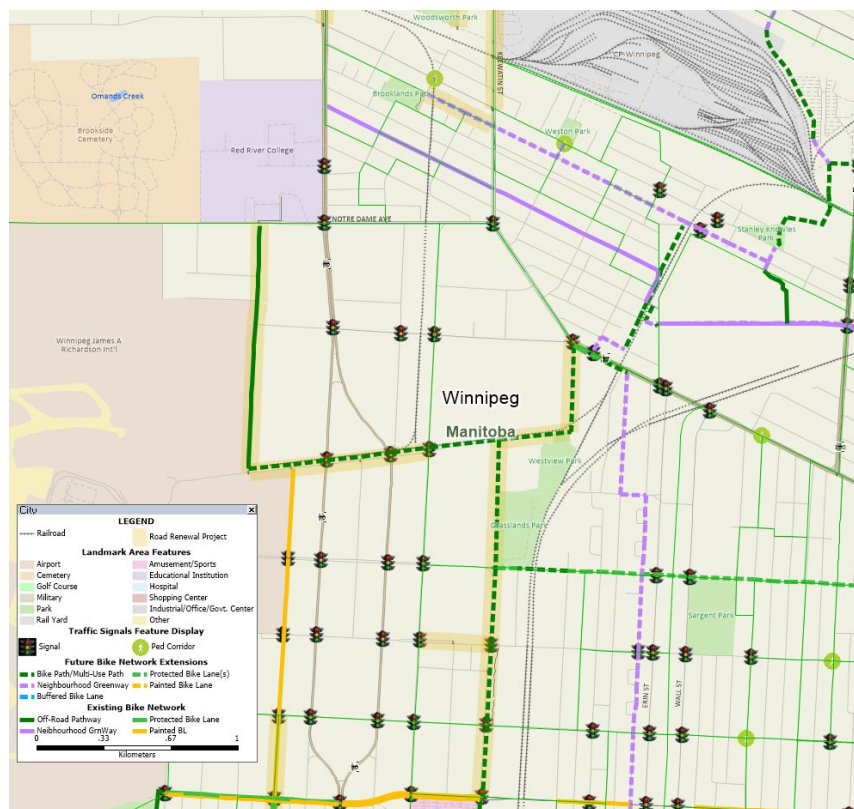




Weston-Pacific-St. James Industrial-Sargent-Park Connectivity Opportunities

Summary

Roadway rehabilitation work scheduled in 2022 (Saskatchewan Ave, Midland St, Alexander Ave, Pacific Ave, Sherwin Rd) will provide the city with an opportunity to achieve a significant leap in connectivity of the bike network through the Weston, Pacific Industrial, St. James Industrial, Sargent Park, and Daniel McIntyre neighbourhoods, and set the stage for much wider connections to be realized as future planned projects (Empress St, McPhillips Underpass, Arlington Bridge, Keewatin Underpass, St. Matthews Bikeway upgrades) extend bike routes leading into this area.



Existing, planned, and proposed bike network near Saskatchewan Ave. Source - Bike Winnipeg.

Roadway work in 2019 & 2020 created an excellent pathway connection along Empress St. from St. Matthews Avenue in the north south over the Empress Street Overpass to the North Assiniboine Parkway. Inclusion of a pathway with scheduled rehabilitation work on Saskatchewan Ave in 2022 would help provide a connection between the existing Berry St. and Sherwin Rd pathways, and would provide a connection to the Empress St. Bikeway once it is extended north to Saskatchewan Ave (preliminary design is scheduled for 2023).

We are very concerned that the 2021 budget does not show any plans to incorporate cycling facilities into rehabilitation works along Saskatchewan Ave, Berry St, Sherwin Rd, Alexander Ave, or Pacific Ave despite their inclusion in the proposed bike map as outlined in the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies and their role in providing needed connections to planned and existing bike routes. Likewise, the lack of any cycling improvements along Midland St. will fail to provide needed connections in the city's bicycle network.

Council policy states that active transportation facilities be incorporated into reconstruction and rehabilitation projects on regional streets identified in the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies¹. Action 1B.x of the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies calls on the city to "Ensure that bicycle requirements be addressed in all new and renewal road projects that are part of the bicycle network or where the road provides connectivity or support to the bicycle network."²

What's missing from the planning to date is a way to connect from this planned Empress Street pathway north to the Alexander-Pacific-Elgin Neighbourhood Greenway and the Northwest Hydro Corridor Greenway, and northwest towards the Keewatin Street Pathway. Work to extend the Keewatin Pathway south to Gallagher Avenue is scheduled to take place in 2021. Work on the Northwest Hydro Corridor Greenway should begin in 2021 and extend down to the Casino by 2026 (although an extension across the CPR Mainline may need to wait for a rehabilitation of the McPhillips Street Underpass).

In providing strong connections through these neighbourhoods, the city will be positioning itself to create critical connections between destinations such as St. James Industrial Park, Polo Park, The North End, Tyndall Park, Assiniboine Park, Daniel McIntyre, Wolseley, etc. It will also be making the most of past investments in the cycling network along Empress St., St. Matthews Ave, Sherwin Rd, Alexander Avenue, Berry St, and future investments along Empress St., Arlington St., Keewatin St., the Northwest Hydro Corridor, the McPhillips Underpass, and St. Matthews Ave.

¹ Pg. 2-15, City of Winnipeg Supplement to the 2021 Preliminary Budget

² Pg. 291, Winnipeg Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies

Area Bikeways

The following planned or potential low-stress bikeways will need to connect in the Weston, St. James Industrial, Pacific Industrial, Sargent Park, and Daniel McIntyre neighbourhoods:

- Keewatin Pathway
- Northwest Hydro Corridor Greenway
- Spruce/Clifton Neighbourhood Greenway
- Alexander/Pacific/Elgin Neighbourhood Greenway
- Sherwin Rd Pathway
- Empress St Bikeway
- Arlington St Bikeway
- Ruby/Banning Neighbourhood Greenway
- Wellington/Cumberland Bikeway
- Berry Neighbourhood Greenway

An All Ages & Abilities Connection from Empress St to Alexander Ave

An all ages and abilities connection from Empress St to Alexander Avenue is possible using a mix of neighbourhood greenways along low volume residential streets in the Weston Neighbourhood, pathways along Saskatchewan Ave, Midland St, and the BNSF rail line, and a short two way protected bike lane segment along Notre Dame Ave between Dublin Ave and Spruce St. If implemented, the route would provide users with safe crossings of Notre Dame Ave, Weston St., McPhillips St, and Logan Ave at existing traffic signals or pedestrian corridors. Assuming future plans to extend the Northwest Hydro Corridor will include a safe crossing of Logan Ave, only the Elgin @ Keewatin crossing would require crossing improvements (push-button activation for the pedestrian corridor for people on bikes).



Looking south from Alexander Ave towards Notre Dame Ave, with Pascoe Park to the right.



Looking north from Winnipeg Ave towards Alexander Ave and Pascoe Park. Note the well used pathway.



This two way bike lane on Pembina Highway could serve as a model for a two-way protected bike lane on Notre Dame Ave connecting Dublin Ave to Flint St and Spruce St.



A second view of the two way bike lane on Pembina Highway..

Replacement of the Omand's Creek Bridge on Saskatchewan Ave in 2016 included provision for cycling facilities on Empress Street and a 2.5m wide sidewalk across Omand's Creek that could accommodate a shared use pathway connecting Empress Street to a potential pathway along Saskatchewan Avenue leading to a Midland St pathway.

Include Connections to Alexander Ave in Planning for Empress St Pathway

We are asking that pathways along Saskatchewan Ave and Midland St be included in the rehabilitation work on these roadways set for 2022. Upgrades to Notre Dame and to plans for neighbourhood greenway and pathway connections north of Notre Dame should be included in the scope of the Empress St. preliminary design scheduled for 2023.

As there are no existing plans in the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies for a crossing of the BNSF line to connect to planned Wellington Avenue Protected Bike Lanes (which serve as a spine in the bicycle network and connect through to Cumberland Avenue and the Downtown Protected Bike Lanes Network), we are also recommending that planning for the Empress St Pathway include a connection to the planned Clifton Neighbourhood Greenway via Notre Dame Ave and Spruce St.

It is recommended that a future grade separation be considered to provide a direct connection between the Empress bikeway to the Wellington Ave bikeway.

Roadway Renewal Opportunities

Empress Street (preliminary design 2023)

Extend the pathway along the east side of Empress from St. Matthews up to Saskatchewan Ave to create connections between Polo Park and the North Assiniboine Parkway to the Alexander, Sherwin, Berry, Elgin, and Wellington/Cumberland bikeways via Saskatchewan.

Once completed, the Empress Bikeway will provide access to five critical east/west spines in the city's bike network:

- Saskatchewan Avenue Bikeway
- Wellington Avenue Protected Bike Lanes
- St. Matthews Bikeway/Yellow Ribbon Trail
- North Assiniboine Parkway
- South Assiniboine Parkway

Saskatchewan Avenue (rehabilitation 2022)

Saskatchewan is being rehabilitated between Midland and Sherwin (except for a stretch between St. James and Empress) in 2022. We are asking that a pathway connecting the Sherwin Rd pathway to our proposed Midland St. pathway be included in the rehabilitation project. Saskatchewan is part of the spine network between Berry and Border St., and considering the connections it makes possible, should likely be considered as a spine network facility from Midland to Sherwin.

Once completed, the Saskatchewan Bikeway would provide connections between the following north/south bikeways:

- Sherwin Pathway
- Berry Bikeway
- Border St. Bikeway
- Empress Bikeway
- Midland Bikeway

Midland St (rehabilitation 2022)

Midland is being rehabilitated between Saskatchewan and Notre Dame in 2022. We recommend that an off-road bike path be included in the rehabilitation project to provide a connection from Saskatchewan Ave to Notre Dame Ave and ultimately to Flint St. and Alexander Ave as well as to Spruce/Clifton St.

Berry Bikeway (rehabilitation 2022)

Berry St. is being rehabilitated between St. Matthews Ave and Silver Ave, and between Portage Ave and Silver Ave in 2022. We recommend that work on Berry complete the northern end of the northbound bike lane between Silver and St. Matthews Ave, and improve intersection treatments at major crossings.

Sherwin Road (rehabilitation 2021)

Sherwin Rd is scheduled for rehabilitation between Saskatchewan Ave and Notre Dame Ave in 2022. We recommend that this project incorporate a pathway connection between the planned Saskatchewan Ave bikeway and the existing Sherwin Rd pathway, and that the project look at ways to improve the connection into Red River College's Notre Dame Campus.

Alexander Avenue (rehabilitation 2021)

Alexander Ave is scheduled for rehabilitation work between Dee St and Keewatin St in 2021. We recommend that a signalized crossing of Keewatin be considered in the scope of work for this project.

Pacific Avenue (rehabilitation 2023)

Pacific Avenue is scheduled for rehabilitation work between Xante St. and McPhillips St. in 2023. We recommend that the roadway be widened at the rail crossing to allow for right angle crossings of the rail line by people on bikes. It should be noted that the Arlington Bridge Replacement Project calls for removal of this rail spur.