OSBORNE TO DOWNTOWN WALK BIKE BRIDGE AND CONNECTIONS

Phase Two Public Engagement Summary

December 2020

Background

The City of Winnipeg (the City) is committed to building pedestrian and cycling infrastructure for people of all ages and abilities. As part of the Osborne to Downtown Walk Bike Bridge and Connections study the preliminary design of the bridge and parks, and functional design of pedestrian and cycling connections are now complete. Through this study, a preliminary design for a new pedestrian and cycling bridge over the Assiniboine River has been developed to connect Osborne Village to Downtown via McFadyen Park on the north side of the river and Fort Rouge Park on the south side of the river. Considerations for this project include the functional design of pedestrian and cycling connectivity throughout Osborne Village and the riverwalk. A preliminary design for upgrades to both McFadyen Park and Fort Rouge Park includes crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), and riverbank stabilization on the south bank of the Assiniboine River.

Engagement

The public engagement strategy was tailored to provide a number of engagement opportunities, both in-person and online, over a six-month period. This allowed for a process that moved from visioning (see Phase One Public Engagement Summary) to a more detailed analysis of public preferences based on the options presented. Integrating the engagement process into the design schedule provided the project team with two engagement phases to better understand public desires.

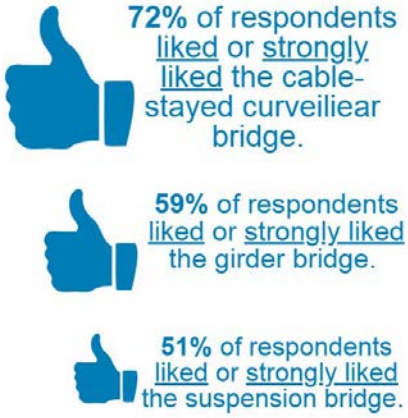
Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

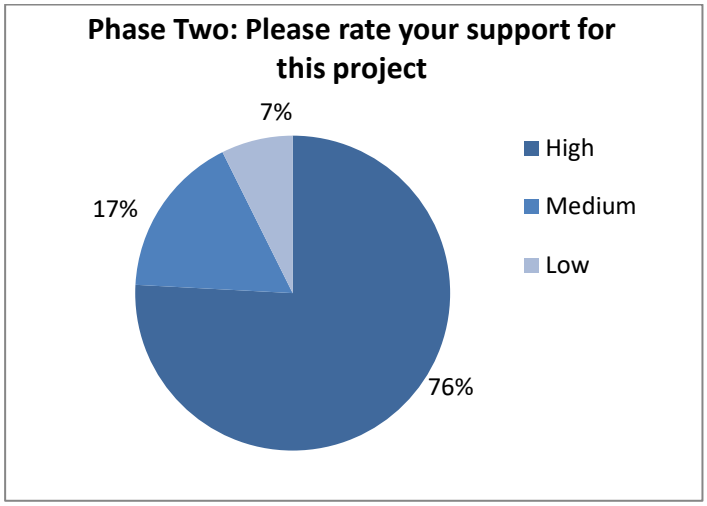
- City of Winnipeg website: Launched January 4, 2018 with 6,067 page views;
- News release: May 22, 2018;
- Eight Facebook posts with 16,797 followers: May 22 – June 11, 2018;
- Eight Twitter posts with 78,700 followers: May 22 – June 11, 2018;
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with over 5,300 recipients: May 25, June 7 2018;
- Postcard delivered to 14,662 mailboxes in Downtown and Osborne Village: May 24 2018;
- Advertisement on Facebook with 1,261 clicks: May 22 – June 3, 2018;
- Signage placed in Fort Rouge and McFadyen Parks May 22- July 2018;
- Signage placed on 11 proposed cycling routes May 22 – July 2018, and;
- Project update sent to email notification list: May 22 (188 recipients) and May 31 (206 recipients).

Key Findings or What We Heard

Highlights of the detailed response table are available on page three. The complete table is available within the full public engagement report.



- The cable-stayed curvilinear bridge was rated higher than the two other bridge concepts in both the online survey and public workshop.
- Concerns about safety were brought forward in all phases of the project. Safety was noted as a top concern by 49% of those who attended the public workshop – 17% highlighted the need for pedestrian and cycling separation on the paths and bridge; 17% expressed general concern about physical safety including dangerous or criminal behaviour around the project area at night; and 15% expressed concern about pedestrian and cycling safety around road crossings.
- Winnipeggers prioritized the addition of bike lanes to River Avenue and Stradbrook Avenue (with protected facilities east of Osborne Street) above all other location in Osborne Village in both the online survey and public workshop.
- Participants expressed support for the proposed changes to Fort Rouge Park and McFadyen Park (online survey 74% and 75% respectively). Top reasons for support included:
    - Construction of a dock in Fort Rouge Park;
    - Upgrades to spray pad in Fort Rouge Park;
    - Belief that park upgrades will attract more park users;
    - Appreciation for a direct connection to the bike lane on Assiniboine Avenue;
    - Support for the new plaza separation from the bike path; and,
    - A concept that satisfies many different uses in McFadyen Park.
- There were higher levels of support for the project in Phase Two compared to the first phase. High support increased by 6% from 70% (Phase One) to 76% (Phase Two). Medium support remained consistent at 17%. Low support decreased by 6% from 13% (Phase One) to 7% (Phase Two).



"We need more interesting visions in our town, remember The Forks."

- Workshop attendee

Date	Activity	Details
May 29, 2018	Stakeholder meeting	Invitations were sent to approximately 40 stakeholder organizations. The stakeholder meeting was attended by project staff and representatives from seven organizations.
June 5, 2018	Public workshop	The event was attended by 53 members of the public. Participants provided feedback through a variety of group activities centered on newly developed concepts for the bridge, parks, and the cycling network.
May 22 - June 12, 2018	Online interactive survey	Completed by 680 participants from a widely representative population describing their link to the area as: resident of Osborne Village (31.6%); visitor the area (23.78%); traveler through the area (22.08%); resident of the Downtown (13.16%); work in the area (9.13%), and; business owner (0.21%).
June 7, 2018	Visit to McFadyen Park	Conducted 12 in-person discussions with park users and reviewed park concepts.

What We Heard	How It Was Considered
BRIDGE	
Winnipeggers supported the addition of benches on the bridge for accessibility and enjoyment of the bridge.	Built-in benches have been included in the bridge design at several locations, where possible.
In both Phase One and Phase Two, we heard from users about concern for collisions between cyclists and pedestrians, with some suggesting barriers to separate different modes of use.	The idea of separate routes for the cyclists and pedestrians was explored, but would result in additional loss of greenspace including mature trees and likely add to required maintenance and enforcement. The bridge is designed to provide 5m of clear width. This is enough room for eight cyclists/pedestrians standing still side by side. This is also the width of the Esplanade Riel, which functions well for both pedestrians and cyclists. The curved bridge path will naturally slow cyclists to reduce the chance of collision with pedestrians. Cables on the bridge have been situated on the inside curve of the deck to provide unobstructed views for cyclists and pedestrians.

	Traffic barriers have not been considered in the design as they do not allow for efficient snow clearing (winter maintenance was an important factor for participants). Other permanent barriers between cyclists and pedestrians also prevent pedestrians, especially those with mobility issues, from achieving views from both sides of the bridge. Barriers encourage higher speeds for cyclists. The bridge is intended to accommodate all types of active transportation users and connect two parks where children are playing and visitors are gathering, as such slowing cyclists with curvature designs was determined to be a better design solution.
The cable-stayed curvilinear bridge was rated higher than the two other bridge concepts. Support for the cable-stayed curvilinear bridge was most commonly linked to the inclusion of benches, the addition of the curve in the bridge deck, the similar look/continuation of design in connection to the Esplanade Riel, a belief that it was the best-looking concept, and the suggestion that the design would create landmark/ tourism potential.	The cable-stayed curvilinear bridge was the selected bridge design, based on public input, and technical and aesthetic design considerations and evaluations.
PARKS – BOTH PARKS	
Respondents noted a need to clear the riverbank area of garbage and illegal behavior.	Clean-up at the riverbank will be incorporated as part of stabilization work and site restoration. Casual surveillance from the bridge and increased public activity in the parks and on the banks should help discourage illegal behaviour. Existing waste receptacles will be maintained and new receptacles will be added at strategic locations based on anticipated pedestrian activity and paths of travel.
Concern about multi-use paths running too close to children's play areas and increasing the opportunity for collisions.	The idea of separate routes for cyclists and pedestrians was explored but would result in additional loss of greenspace including mature trees, and likely add to maintenance and enforcement. McFadyen Park: A street-front plaza will be incorporated to act as a traffic calming and buffering mechanism for cyclists and pedestrians moving among the playgrounds and tennis courts. The plaza will separate bridge access from river access.

	Fort Rouge Park: All play components will be located within the multi-use path 'loop,' eliminating the need for pedestrians to cross the path and access play areas.
Comments about safety included a request for sufficient lighting to keep the parks safe at night.	Existing lighting will be improved and new park lighting will be added along pathways and ramps to improve visibility. Supplemental lighting will be designed to meet current illumination standards for safe exterior spaces, while preventing glare onto nearby residences. New vegetation will be selected, located, and planted to preserve sightlines and eliminate hiding spots. The expected increase in activity in both parks due to this new bridge should also be an effective deterrent to criminal activity. Illumination levels should be no lower than the Illuminating Engineering Society minimum standard, but also not too high to become wasteful and unpleasant. Fixtures will be full cutoff to control glare and competition with bridge lighting, LED for energy efficiency and fixture life, durable aluminum poles and bases to eliminate rusting, and a colour temperature in the 3000K range. Bridge lighting will be used to illuminate pathway, ramps and dock and will be incorporated into the bridge structure.
CYCLING AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS	
Winnipeggers prioritized the addition of bike lanes on River Avenue and Stradbrook Avenue (protected east of Osborne Street) above all other locations in Osborne Village. Treatments on other areas of these roads additionally gained more support than all other proposed locations outside of Scott Street (ranked 4th in terms of support).	Protected bicycle lanes on Stradbrook Avenue and River Avenue were recommended for the cycling network as part of this study based on the public input and technical evaluation of the proposed cycling network options.
In locations where two road treatments were offered as concepts for comment, raised bike lanes did not receive as much support as the other option presented – River Avenue and Stradbrook Avenue: protected, Roslyn: buffered.	Raised bicycle lanes were not recommended for the cycling network. Where protected bicycle lanes are recommended, the bike lane design is recommended at pavement-level.
Respondents both online and at the public workshop requested a two-way bike lane on River Avenue.	A two-way bicycle lane on River Avenue was not recommended for the cycling network as part of this study due to the negative impact to on-street parking.

Next Steps

The preliminary design of the bridge and parks, and functional design of pedestrian and cycling connections are now complete. The design team used the public feedback received during their design work, which occurred over the summer of 2018.

Public input gathered in Phase Two demonstrated the highest level of support for the cable-stayed curvilinear bridge. Based on both public input and technical design considerations, the cable-stayed curvilinear bridge was selected as the preferred bridge option.

Based on parks feedback, the design of the parks was modified to reduce the potential for collisions between children using the playground and cyclists accessing the multi-use paths.

The evaluation of the cycling network used technical analysis and public feedback when evaluating route impacts on the community and businesses and level of comfort for all road users.

The recommended cycling network includes east-west connections in Osborne Village along River Avenue, Stradbrook Avenue, and Wardlaw Avenue, and north-south connections along Scott and Lewis Street. Further public input will be required ahead of confirming the final design of the cycling connections.

The next phase of the project is detailed design of the bridge and parks and preliminary design of the cycling connections. While the project is currently not funded, it was referred to the Unfunded Major Capital Projects list and more recent 2020 Infrastructure Plan for annual review and prioritization. Project timing is subject to funding availability and Council approvals. This project will be further defined upon the completion of the Transportation Master Plan.

A full public engagement report with project appendices is available on the Engage tab of the project website.