

Opportunities for Rapid Deployment of Safety Improvements on Active Transportation Routes – May 2024 Update

ISSUE

This report provides an assessment and recommendation on the opportunities for rapid deployment of safety improvements on an access to the University of Saskatchewan from the south and other key areas of the city where similar safety benefits could be realized.

BACKGROUND

History

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on June 28, 2023, considered the Councillor C. Block – Cycling Safety motion and, resolved in part:

- “3. That Administration provide an update on the implementation of the Active Transportation Plan, including but not limited to the status of any planned connections in the area bound by College Drive, Preston Avenue, 12th Street, and Clarence Avenue and in the interim report on the opportunity of Rapidly Deploying safety improvements on an access to the University of Saskatchewan campus from the South as well as other key areas where comparable safety benefits could be expected and where planning for permanent solutions is not yet underway.”

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on October 25, 2023, received the Active Transportation Plan Implementation – October 2023 Update [report](#) for information. This report included an update on the planned connections in the area bound by College Drive, Preston Avenue, 12th Street and Clarence Avenue.

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on February 28, 2024, considered The Traffic Amendment Bylaw, 2024 - Proposed Bylaw No. 9960 [report](#) and passed Bylaw 9960, which changed the maximum speed limit from 50 kilometers per hour to 30 kilometers per hour on portions of 23rd Street West and 14th Street designated as a neighbourhood bikeway.

The Standing Policy Committee on Transportation, at its meeting held on April 2, 2024, received the Opportunities for Rapid Deployment of Safety Improvements on Active Transportation Routes [report](#) for information. The report indicated that the Administration would report back with an assessment and recommendation on opportunities presented in the report for rapid deployment of safety improvements on a route and/or gap to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation in May or June 2024.

City Council, at its Regular Business Meeting held on April 24, 2024, received the Road Safety Audit – College Drive and Wiggins Avenue [report](#) and resolved in part, “That the Administration continue with implementation of recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

That recommendation 8 be added and implemented through an increase of \$60,000 to capital project P.02288 from RCE.

That Administration also report, in alignment with BRT route planning and the campus connector study, on Option 9 or another more complete solution to fully accommodate all modes of transportation at the intersection of Wiggins and College Drive.”

Current Status

Transportation does not currently use a rapid deployment approach to implementing safety improvements along active transportation (AT) routes. Transportation uses the traditional plan, design, bid, build approach to implement permanent AT infrastructure.

Rapid Deployment

Rapid deployment is a tool used by cities to accelerate the expansion of their active transportation network. Rapid deployment uses semi-permanent materials, existing street space and focused engagement techniques to create a process where active transportation facilities can be planned and installed within months.

Many jurisdictions use a traditional approach (plan-design-bid-build) to construct AT infrastructure. However, more recently, a rapid deployment approach has gained popularity. Rapid deployment became popular during the COVID-19 pandemic as needs were identified for additional routes to meet the desire for more outdoor activities that could accommodate physical distancing requirements. The rise in vision zero commitments, growing demand for sustainable transportation modes, increasing micro-mobility options and tighter budgets have contributed to the continued momentum of rapid deployment. There is no standardized process for implementing rapid deployment as each community has unique processes and context to consider. An outline of what a rapid deployment process could look like for Saskatoon is included in Appendix 1.

OPTIONS

The Administration used the process outlined in Appendix 2 to identify opportunities for rapid deployment. The process yielded nine routes and eight gaps as opportunities for rapid deployment implementation. Route 6 is an opportunity that provides access to the University of Saskatchewan from the south. An overview of the route and gap options is provided in Appendix 3.

Opportunities for Rapid Deployment of Safety Improvements on Active Transportation Routes – May 2024 Update

In assessing the routes and gaps, the following factors were considered:

- Connectivity of the route/gap to existing all ages and abilities (AAA) active transportation and/or cycling infrastructure.
- Connectivity of route/gap to key land uses such as hospitals and schools.
- Anticipated impacts to other road users such as transit, parking, and vehicular travel lanes.

The opportunities have been developed such that each route or gap option can be selected as a stand-alone route/gap or combined with other routes/gaps for implementation. A detailed discussion of each route and gap is provided in Appendix 4.

Option 1: Status Quo

This option would involve no change to the current approach for implementing active transportation routes. The Administration would not pursue rapid deployment on any route or gap. This is not recommended by the Administration as it does not address the immediate safety concerns that have been raised about providing safety improvements for active transportation routes.

Option 2: Implement a Neighbourhood Bikeway using Rapid Deployment on Route 6

This option would involve the implementation of a neighbourhood bikeway using rapid deployment on Route 6. Sufficient funding is available to install a portion of Route 6 (between 14th Street and College Drive) in 2025; remaining funding would be dependent on the 2026-2027 and/or a future Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget process. This is discussed further in the Rationale section below.

Option 3: Implement Rapid Deployment on another Route(s)

City Council may direct the Administration to pursue rapid deployment on another route(s). The Administration would support a different route(s) but would require direction from City Council on which route(s). Depending on the length and type of facility, there may not be sufficient funding to install the full length of any alternate route. Appendix 5 outlines a short-list of routes and gaps that have been identified as the Administration's next priorities for rapid deployment.

Opportunities for Rapid Deployment of Safety Improvements on Active Transportation Routes – May 2024 Update

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety will remain a concern until permanent cycling infrastructure can be implemented. • Safety improvements will continue to be delivered using the traditional approach and take longer to implement than a rapid deployment approach.
Option 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An AAA cycling facility is installed that connects the University of Saskatchewan and Royal University Hospital to the 14th Street Neighbourhood Bikeway. • Safety improvements installed quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entirety of Route 6 will not be installed initially: 14th Street to Clarence Avenue at Circle Drive South will be dependent on the 2026-2027 and/or a future Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget process.
Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An AAA cycling facility would be installed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on route(s) selected, funding may not be available to install and may be dependent on the 2026-2027 and/or a future Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget process.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council Option 2:

1. That the Administration implement a neighbourhood bikeway using rapid deployment on Route 6;
2. That rapid deployment of Route 6, from College Drive to 14th Street, be installed in 2025.
3. That rapid deployment of the remainder of Route 6, from 14th Street to Clarence Avenue at Circle Drive South, be considered as part of the 2026-2027 Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget process.

RATIONALE

The Administration recommends implementing a neighbourhood bikeway on Route 6 using a rapid deployment approach. Starting with one route provides the Administration with the opportunity to better understand the rapid deployment process, work out implementation challenges on a smaller scale and determine more accurate pricing for future rapid deployment projects. The Administration recommends installing Route 6 in two phases:

- Phase 1: College Drive to 14th Street in 2025; and,
- Phase 2: 14th Street to Clarence Avenue at Circle Drive South in a future year subject to funding.

Installing Phase 1 will provide an opportunity to improve cycling access to the University of Saskatchewan from the south. Funding is available in Capital Project P.02468 – Active Transportation Plan Implementation.

Installing Phase 2 will complete the rapid deployment of Route 6, providing greater benefit to more residents. Funding is not currently available for Phase 2 and will be forwarded to the 2026-2027 Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget deliberations for consideration.

Route 6 is anticipated to be a neighbourhood bikeway installed on the following streets:

- Munroe Avenue from College Drive to Cascade Street;
- Cascade Street from Munroe Avenue to Churchill Park;
- Ferguson Avenue from Wilson Avenue to Calder Crescent; and,
- Calder Crescent from Clarence Avenue to Ferguson Crescent.

The current shared-use pathway on the north side of College Drive will be upgraded to a multi-use pathway as part of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project to accommodate connections east and west along College Drive and facilitate access to the University of Saskatchewan campus, Royal University Hospital and Downtown.

The neighbourhood bikeway on 14th Street between Saskatchewan Crescent and Cumberland Avenue will be completed in 2025 which will accommodate connections east and west along 14th Street. Reduced speed limits on the neighbourhood bikeway section of 14th Street from Saskatchewan Crescent to Cumberland Avenue will come into effect in July 2024, and the remaining intersection treatment at Cumberland Avenue and 14th Street will be installed in 2025. This will complete the neighbourhood bikeway on 14th Street from Saskatchewan Crescent to Cumberland Street. East of Cumberland Avenue, the AAA route continues via a shared-use pathway on the north side of 14th Street terminating at Carleton Drive.

Route 6 has been selected for the following reasons:

- Munroe Avenue extends south for several blocks, providing a continuous cycling connection across multiple neighbourhoods;
- A few minor jogs at the south end of Route 6 provides a connection for cycling across Circle Drive South at Clarence Avenue;
- There are no anticipated impacts to transit, parking or the number of vehicular travel lanes;
- The cycling facility is anticipated to be a neighbourhood bikeway which is a lower-cost option that still provides an AAA cycling facility;
- In April 2024, City Council approved installation of a non-AAA painted bike lane and bike box at Wiggins Avenue and College Drive to be installed in 2024. This

installation could be reviewed once the cycling facility along Munroe Avenue is rapidly deployed in 2025 as Munroe Avenue would provide an alternative AAA cycling facility to access the University of Saskatchewan, Royal University Hospital and Downtown from the south; and

- Funding is available to install a neighbourhood bikeway on Munroe Avenue, from College Drive to 14th Street in 2025.

With additional funding, the Administration could expand rapid deployment to include more routes or gaps. While the Administration would support the implementation of any route or gap identified in this report, Appendix 5 outlines a short-list of routes and gaps that have been identified as the Administration's next priorities for rapid deployment.

ADDITIONAL IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

Sufficient staffing and funding are available to rapidly deploy Phase 1 of Route 6, from College Drive to 14th Street in 2025. Consultant services would be procured to complete the planning, design, procurement, construction management, engagement, and project monitoring. The total cost estimate to implement Phase 1 is \$150,000. Adequate funds are available from Capital Project P.02468 – Active Transportation Implementation Plan.

There is no funding or staffing resources available to plan, design or construct the remainder of Route 6 (Phase 2) in 2024 or 2025. The total cost estimate to implement Phase 2 is \$1,190,000. The Administration recommends that Phase 2 of Route 6, from 14th Street to Clarence Avenue at Circle Drive South, be considered as part of the 2026-2027 Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget process.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

As part of the project, the Administration would develop a communications plan and engagement strategy. Communication activities typically include methods such as flyers, letters, digital information, or similar mediums to communicate project and construction activities to residents and property owners near the project area. The University of Saskatchewan, Active Transportation Advisory Group, and other targeted stakeholders would be engaged through the rapid deployment implementation process should Munroe Avenue proceed as a rapid deployment project.

NEXT STEPS

1. Retain a consultant to complete the functional design, detailed design, and procurement, and oversee installation, engagement, and monitoring activities for rapid deployment of Phase 1 along Route 6, from College Drive to 14th Street in 2025.
2. Upon completion of the detailed design, undertake procurement for the installation of a neighbourhood bikeway using rapid deployment on Phase 1 of Route 6, from College Drive to 14th Street.
3. Following installation, conduct engagement, monitor implementation, and make adjustments as identified.

**Opportunities for Rapid Deployment of Safety Improvements on Active Transportation Routes –
May 2024 Update**

4. Prepare a report for the 2026-2027 Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget process for Phase 2 of Route 6, from 14th Street to Clarence Avenue at Circle Drive South.

APPENDICES

1. Rapid Deployment Anticipated Process Overview
2. Process to Identify Opportunities for Rapid Deployment
3. Route Options and Gaps Options Overview
4. Route and Gap Option Descriptions
5. Additional Opportunities for Rapid Deployment

Report Approval

Written by: Danae Balogun, Active Transportation Program Manager

Reviewed by: Nathalie Baudais, Engineering Manager, Transportation
Jay Magus, Director of Transportation

Approved by: Terry Schmidt, General Manager, Transportation and Construction

Admin Report - Opportunities for Rapid Deployment of Safety Improvements on Active Transportation Routes – May 2024 Update.docx