



Cycle In Kanata North Report

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Acknowledgements

Cycle In Kanata North is a joint project of Councillor Wilkinson's Transportation Action Committee Kanata North (TACK) and EnviroCentre's Sustain Kanata North project.

We would like to acknowledge the special support of Don Grant of the Ottawa Centre EcoDistrict who shared resources developed for a similar event, organized in September 2015 at Ottawa City Hall. Thank you also to George Yaremchuk and the Mississippi Mills Active Transportation Advisory Group for providing the rural perspective on commuter cyclists.

We extend our gratitude to Jenna Sudds of the Kanata North BIA who has been supportive of this initiative from the start, and has helped to promote the event and find volunteers.

Our thanks go also to KRP Properties and Deborah Lovegood for providing the location, meeting space, and refreshments, and to Bushtukah for providing bike tune-ups at the event.

Thanks to the volunteer cyclists who braved a cold and windy ride and/or who provided input through email: Kate Johnston, Allan Poulsen, Richard Wiens, Peter Tregunno, Monna-Leigh McElveny, Grant McSheffrty, Martin Cayouette, Ben Vanderbelt, Mark Barry, Nino Mangione, Peter Musgrave, Vincent Hughes, Lawrence Lu, Alex Mayer, Rohnda Hamoui, Brad Stratham, Graham Nicoll, Jan Mattingly, Wayne Mattingly, Edwin Gans, Anita Netherton, Tim Sparling, Wilson Murillo, Peter Cheng, Frank Gildenhaar, Eric Kibbee, Dan Duroucher, and Bojana Kolbah.

EnviroCentre and Sustain Kanata North

EnviroCentre is a local, not-for-profit and the go-to source of practical services and programs that help individuals, families, and organizations conserve energy, improve environmental health, and act more sustainably.

Sustain Your Community is a three-year initiative of EnviroCentre, working with Ottawa communities to carry out projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, provide cost-savings to residents, and support citizen engagement. Sustain Kanata North is focused on Active Transportation, Energy Conservation, and Local Healthy Food.

www.envirocentre.ca/sustainkanatanorth

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Background

Businesses in the Kanata North Business Community (KNBC) directly employ 20 300 people and together generate \$7.8 billion in annual GDP. The KNBC is located along both sides of March Road and is supported by the Kanata North Business Improvement Association. A 2015 report commissioned by the Kanata North BIA, "Kanata North Technology Ecosystem: Generating Economic Opportunities for all of Canada," states that the GDP per employee is three times the national average while the total tax collected by the three levels of government is \$2.9 billion. KNBC is established as a significant economic area on the national stage.¹

According to Kanata North BIA, half of the employees live within a five kilometer radius of KNBC, while the remainder commute in from Ottawa, West Carleton, Stittsville, and beyond.² Most drive year-round due to the high capacity and speed of the road infrastructure and the ample free parking. In addition, the investments in transit and cycling infrastructure have not kept pace with the employment growth. On April 13th, 2016, business leaders of the KNBC wrote an open letter to City of Ottawa Mayor Watson to request improvements to the existing transit system and the extension of the light rail transit to Kanata. This letter demonstrates that the transportation infrastructure supporting this economic area needs attention from government.

To address these transportation issues from the residents' perspective, Councillor Marianne Wilkinson formed the Transportation Action Committee Kanata North (TACK) two years ago. TACK provides on-going feedback to the councillor and city staff and has worked on projects such as a resident survey, and the Kanata North Cycling Map.

The 2013 Ottawa Cycling Plan, addresses the need for cycling infrastructure in the suburbs by committing to "focus on improving cycling route connections to schools, community centres, employment areas and other local destinations."⁴

The Kanata North BIA does not have information on the commuter modal share of the 20 300 employees. In TACK's 2015 survey of 544 residents, 24% of respondents say they cycle to work sometimes.³ Currently, it is difficult to know how many employees cycle in and how often. However, the fact that so many the KNBC employees live close to their place of work, makes Kanata North an excellent candidate for investment in cycling infrastructure.

¹ www.kanatanorthbia.ca/area/economic-overview

² www.kanatanorthbia.ca/kanata-norths-economic-impact/

³ Kanata North Transportation Survey 2015

⁴ Ottawa Cycling Plan, November 2013



About the Cycle In Event

The Cycle In Kanata North event was held on Wednesday, May 4th during the morning commute time. Volunteer cyclists registered in advance to join one of five teams coming from different directions. The teams met at 7:00 am at designated meeting spots and cycled to 555 Legget Drive, which is a central location in the KNBC. As the teams cycled, they took photographs and noted the condition and challenges of the route.

Most of the teams arrived at 555 Legget by 8:00 am and the team leaders recorded their observations on feedback forms. The participants enjoyed warming up with coffee and a light breakfast before heading into work.

The Routes

Five routes were selected in advance by members of TACK. Maps and photographs of the routes are included in this report.

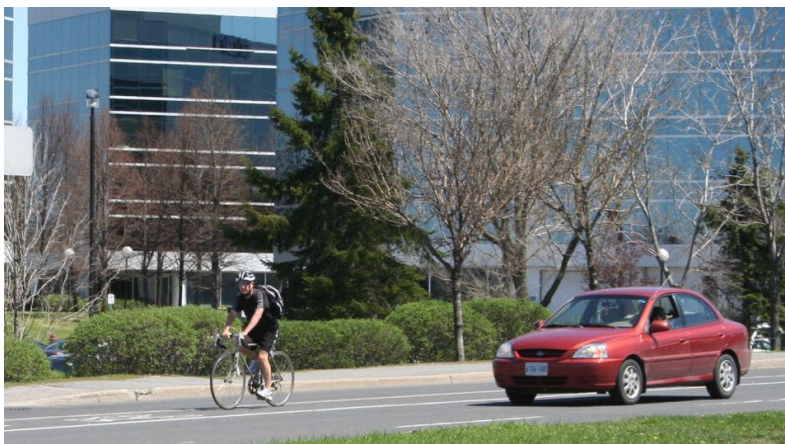
— Route 1 was from the north to collect cyclists traveling from Dunrobin and surrounding West Carleton. This route traveled along Old Second Line Road and Terry Fox Drive.

— Route 2 came from Ottawa along Carling Avenue.

— Route 3, also from Ottawa, traveled along NCC pathways and a dirt trail.

— Route 4 came in from the west bringing cyclists from Arcadia, Stittsville, and the western area of Kanata Lakes. This team traveled along Terry Fox Drive.

— Route 5 was the southern route that collected cyclists from South Kanata, Beaverbrook, Village Green, and eastern Kanata Lakes. They met at the 417 Pedestrian/Bike bridge and traveled on community streets, multi-use pathways, and March Road.



Summary of Findings

The teams generally enjoyed their rides despite the unseasonably cold and windy weather. Kanata is fortunate to have lots of trees, parks, gardens, and pathways. Two of the teams cycled through the scenic Greenbelt. The natural forested lands with rocky outcrops adjacent to Terry Fox Drive and Old Second Line Road were also striking in their natural splendour.

There were relatively few problems noted by Groups One and Four which traveled along the newly-constructed Terry Fox Drive. This road has both well-designed bike lanes and a wide multi-use pathway on one side. There were some minor problems observed, but in general the routes from the west and north were deemed safe and enjoyable by these teams.

Traveling from the East - Carling Avenue

Two teams cycled from Ottawa to KNBC. Group Two cycled along Carling Avenue which has recently been repaved with a wide shoulder. Most of the vehicular traffic on Carling is heading straight, so there is limited left and right-turning traffic for cyclists to contend with. This route is preferred by experienced commuter cyclists who favour a quick and direct route to their workplace. There is one significant pinch point — the Carling train bridge near 3701 Carling Avenue. This narrow bridge requires that cyclists "take the lane" in high-volume, 80 km/h traffic. There are signs prohibiting the passing of cyclists under the bridge. However, cyclists report that they are regularly passed, including on the day of the event. This is a dangerous situation and the reason many commuter cyclists avoid this stretch of Carling Avenue.

The alternate route for cyclists coming from Ottawa is along the Watts Creek NCC pathway in the Greenbelt. The NCC pathway is a wide, asphalt pathway. It is direct, has good sight-lines, and is very pleasant. To reach KNBC, Group Three cyclists turned off the NCC pathway to cross Carling Avenue at Burke Road. During peak hours, the traffic is heavy and cyclists wait a long time to cross. Once across Carling Avenue, the team followed a dirt path which is muddy when wet, is over-grown, and has a broken bridge, loose gravel, and so forth. This pathway is not maintained but it eventually leads to the private roads on the Marshes Golf Course, which the cyclists used to reach 555 Legget Drive.

Traveling from the South - March Road

For cyclists traveling from the south, (Beaverbrook, Katimavik, Village Green, etc.) there are multiple strategies to reach KNBC, all of them eventually require navigating March Road. This high-speed multiple-lane road has bike lanes. However, during peak times many vehicles are making right and left turns into the business park. For the Cycle In event, the team travelled on a combination of community streets, multi-use pathways, and a private parking lot. Various problems were encountered with curbs, pot holes, broken pavement, and unmarked speed bumps. The members of the Cycle-In team were experienced, confident cyclists comfortable travelling on busy roads. They reported a problem with right-turning traffic and also the need for a curb cut into the KNBC multi-use pathway.

For cyclists who are not comfortable on 80 km/h, high-volume, multi-lane roads, there is no obvious way to avoid March Road to access the KNBC. March Road is the only legal option to cross the active rail line on March Road. To attract new and/or less-experienced cyclists, an alternate route to March Road is needed going forward.



Top Recommendations for Kanata North Ward

Safe crossing for Carling Avenue

Commuters using the NCC pathway require a safe route to cross Carling Avenue to access Kanata North businesses. A signalized cross-over would be an excellent solution at the end of Burke Road. Alternatively, the abandoned train bridge could be converted into a cycling route.

Safe route through or around Carling Train Bridge

Commuters cycling **along** Carling Avenue require a safe way to navigate through or around the abandoned train bridge. Traffic signals to stop vehicles or a side route around the bridge would help the situation.

Extension of NCC pathways into KNBC

Upgrade the dirt path on NCC land that connects Carling to Terry Fox Drive at the golf course.

Improvements to March Road bike lanes

Cyclists approaching Kanata North businesses from the south require a safe route along March Road. The cycling lanes on March Road could be made safer by reducing the current speed from 80 km/h, by employing green paint in conflict zones, and other methods of separating cyclists from vehicular traffic.

Alternate Route to March Road

For cyclists approaching from the south who are not confident on multi-lane roads, an alternate route needs to be developed that enables them to cross the train tracks. When the construction of the KNL lands is completed, there will likely be some neighbourhood roads and pathways that link together. Consideration is needed to ensure that this route is as direct as possible and that a temporary route is in place during the interim construction period.

Install way-finding signage for cyclists



Other Recommendations

Fix the rumble strip for turning cycle traffic at Old Second Line Road and Terry Fox.

Use pavement markings (green paint) to highlight cycling lanes to the right-turning traffic at March and Terry Fox Road.

Fix the pot holes in Gow Park, Legget Drive, and Stacey Road.

Improve the intersection at March Road and the Metro to accommodate cyclists navigating the hill.

Install a curb cut for Multi-Use Pathway linking March Road to Legget.

Improve the intersection for cyclists heading north on March Road with the right-turning traffic on to Solandt.

Complete missing section of pathway from Signature Centre to the intersection of Kanata Avenue and Terry Fox.

Fix gouges in cycling lane along Terry Fox Road just north of Richardson Side Road.

Cyclists from rural areas west of Ottawa

Cyclists coming from the rural wards encounter additional problems beyond the boundaries of the Kanata North ward. A May 2016 report by George Yaremchuk and the Mississippi Mills Active Transportation Advisory Group highlights concerns of cyclists traveling from west and south of Kanata. The report "Linking Mississippi Mills to Kanata North" discusses three routes:

1. A northwest route via Panmure Road to Carp and then Old Carp Road.
2. A central route along Old Almonte Road and entering Kanata along Richardson Side Road to follow Terry Fox.
3. A southeast route along the Trans-Canada Trail and through Kanata South to Kanata North.

The group found that the viable link is the second or central route along Old Almonte Road. It is the most direct route for the majority of the rural residents and a good portion of it is already comfortable for cyclists. According to the report, this option is deemed to be most cost-effective way to improve access. Some of the work is already scheduled by the City of Ottawa to improve Old Almonte Road and to add bike lanes and paved shoulders along 3.5 km of Richardson Side Road to access Terry Fox.

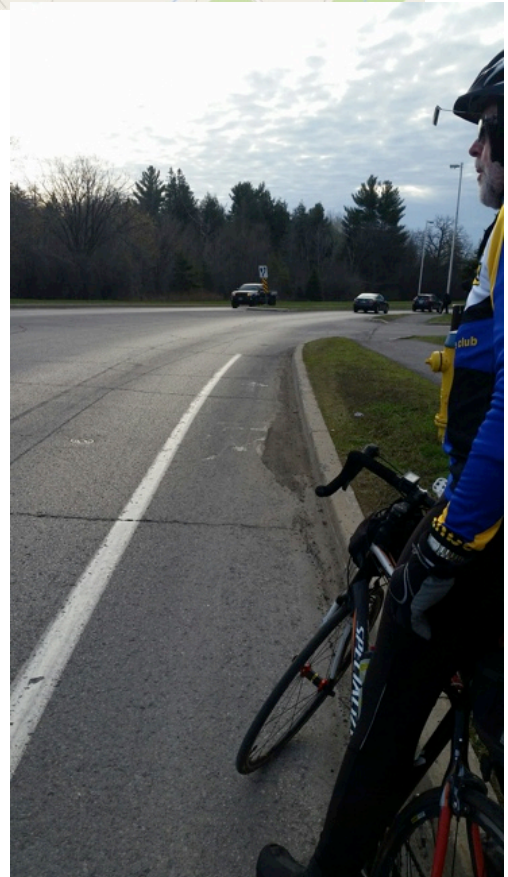
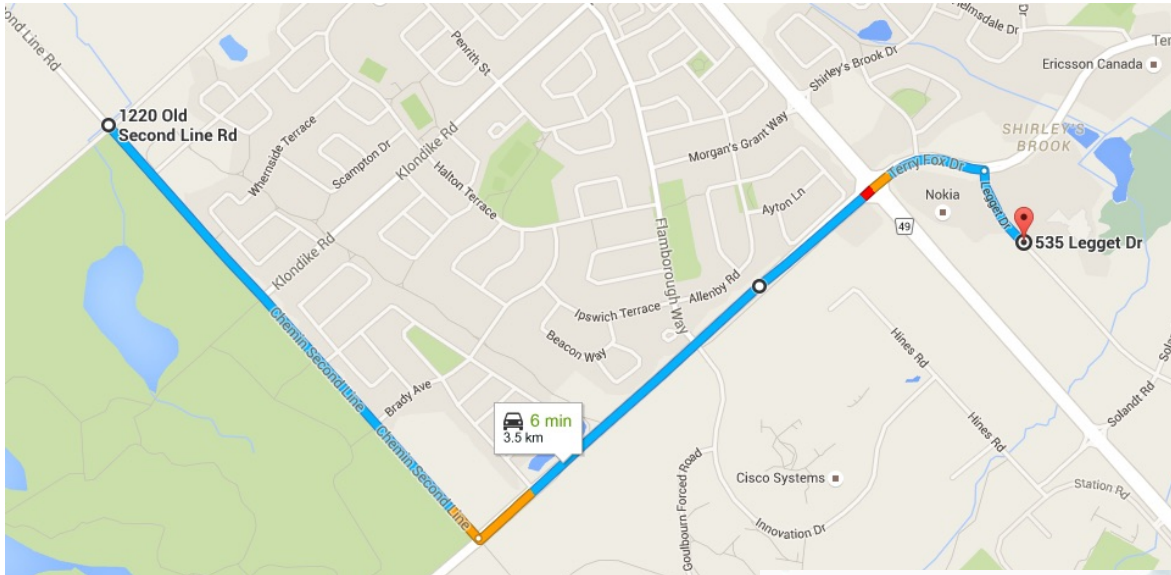
The southeast route or the third option confirmed that crossing the Queensway is a major obstacle for cyclists. The crossings at Iber Road, March/Eagleson Road, and Terry Fox have no cycling lanes. Cyclists are forced to contend with high-speed traffic from the Queensway on and off ramps. The neighbourhood route using the Pedestrian Cycling Bridge "suffers from meandering roads with no clear markings." Kanata North cycling routes would benefit from some way-finding signage.

For more details, please see the report "Linking Mississippi Mills to Kanata North."



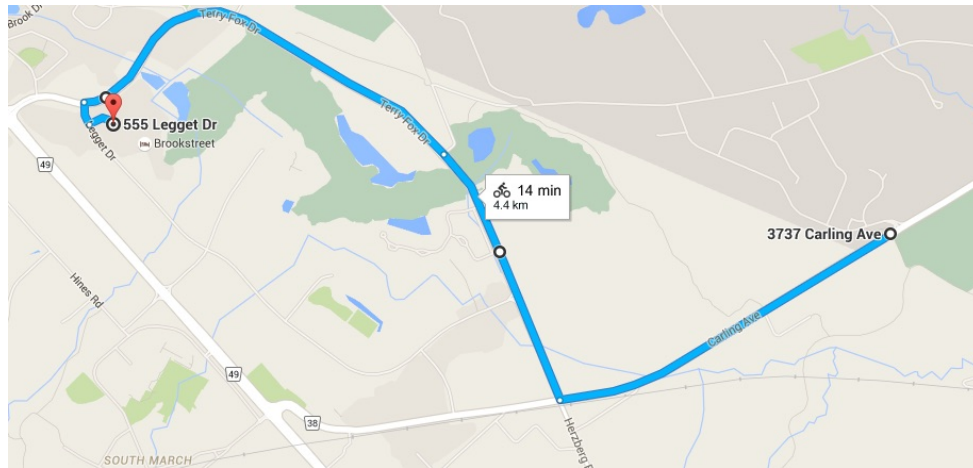
Route One: Starting at Old Carp Road and 2nd Line Road

Route description: This team of two cyclists met at Old Second Line Road and Old Carp Road and continued on Old Second Line down to Terry Fox Road. They turned left on Terry Fox, crossed March Road and continued on to Legget Drive.



Group 2: Coming from the East along Carling Avenue

This team met on the NCC Multi-Use Pathway west of the 19th Tee Driving Range. They cycled on the paved shoulders of Carling Avenue and under the train bridge. They turned right onto Herzberg and continued on Terry Fox to 555 Legget.



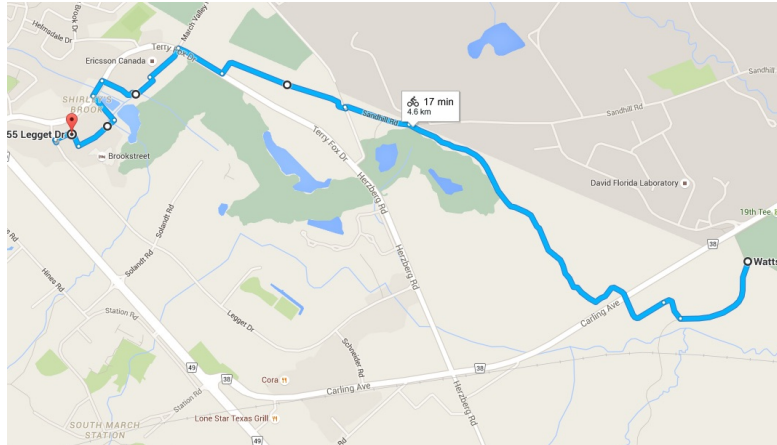
Signage that informs drivers to refrain from passing cyclists under the train bridge. Cyclists report that the signage is often ignored.



Narrow train bridge on Carling that forces cyclists to "take the lane" in 80 km/h traffic.

Route 3: Coming from the East on NCC multiuse paths

This team met on the NCC multi-use pathway to the west of 19th Tee Golf Driving Range. They cycled along the main NCC pathway, under an old train bridge, and cut north to Burke Road. They crossed Carling Avenue at Burke and continued on an unmarked dirt path to the east of the Marshes Golf Course. They cut across Terry Fox and followed private pathways to 555 Legget.



Advantages of this route

- This is a scenic and enjoyable ride separated from traffic.

Problems and recommendations

- The train bridge over the multi-use pathway has a blind corner at the entrance. Cyclists should ring their bells. Signage may be useful.
- At the endpoint of the pathway to Burke Road, there is a metal gate. Cyclists by-pass the gate on the side dirt path with gravel at a blind corner. The cyclists heading north or south sometimes need to quickly avoid each other. This area should be paved.
- Crossing Carling at Burke Road is very dangerous. There is no marking. At commuter times the traffic is very heavy and fast moving. A signalized cross-over would provide a safe crossing point.
- After crossing Carling, the cyclists have to navigate a hill (part of the road ditch) with loose gravel at the base making for a slippery start.
- About 200 m in, the path is muddy and slippery.
- The abandoned rail bed is being used by cyclists despite the loose gravel. This would make an excellent cycling route.
- At the point where the NCC unmarked pathway meets Old Sandhill Road, there are boulders which have been moved to make the pathway wider. This has helped, but the boulders are hard to see when grass is long.
- There is a broken bridge on the Old Sandhill Road at Herzberg.
- When the weather has been wet, this pathway is in poor condition and is not useable.

Additional comments from a rider who was unable to attend: "The trail opposite Burke Road is generally not usable in the season until there have been a few hot dry days as it often stays wet and waterlogged. It is narrow in parts with poor visibility due to all the turns and trees. This is risky as you can not hear oncoming bikes, need to ring bell to warn on blind corner sections."

Route 3



Waiting to cross Carling Avenue



NCC Gate at end of pathway -
gravel and blind corner hazard



Broken Bridge



Loose gravel after crossing Carling



Finding the way



Old rail bed - potential cycling link



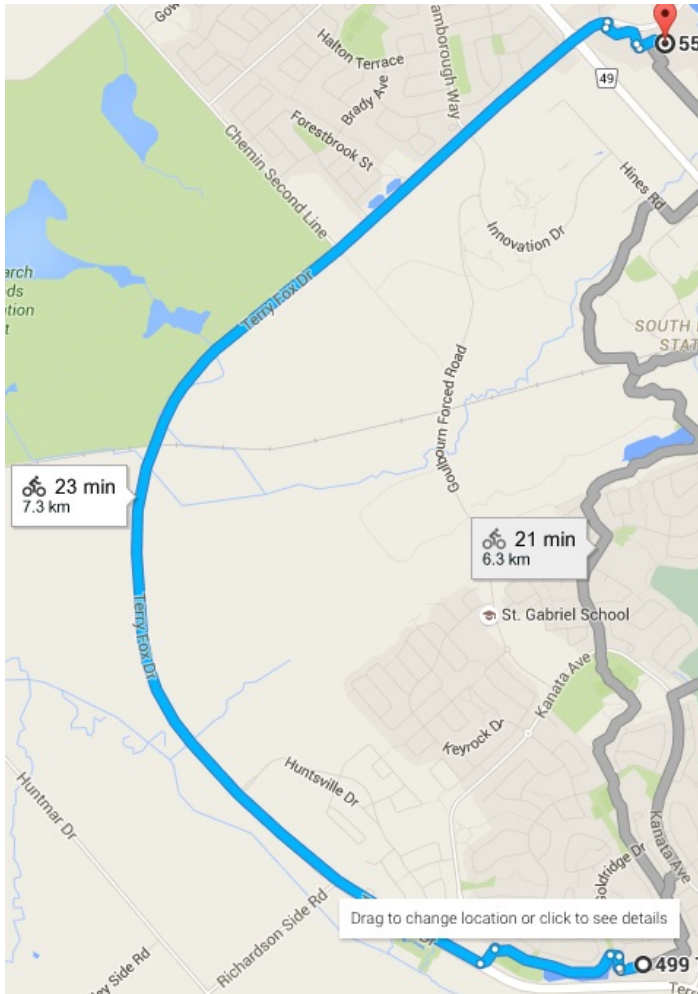
Boulders that have been moved



Loose gravel on path

Route 4: Coming from the West along Terry Fox

This team met at Farm Boy in the Signature Centre on Terry Fox Road. They travelled along the bike lanes on Terry Fox, crossed March Road, and turned into 555 Legget.



Advantages of this Route

- Great bike lanes along Terry Fox
- Well swept construction areas

Problems and Recommendations

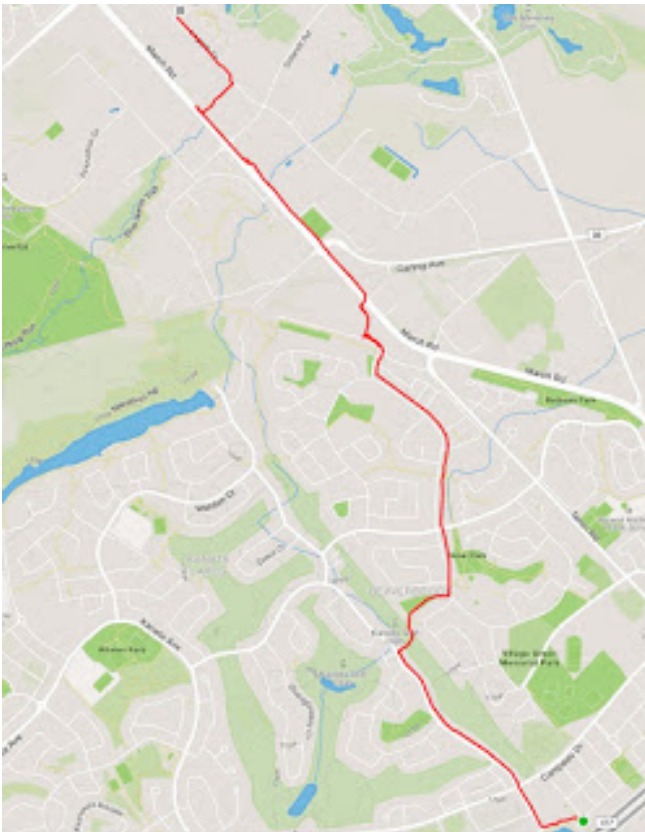
(Including comments from a cyclist who was unable to join.)

- Lack of path from Farmboy to Kanata Avenue. The group took the multi-use path and 200 m of side walk.
- The bike lane disappears at the entrance to Centrum.
- Bus drivers will stop on the bike lane with 4-way flashers going. It is not a bus stop.
- At the entrance to FarmBoy, water puddles due to rain or an irrigation system requiring cyclists to ride through or around.
- Gouges on the north bound bike lane just north of Richardson Side Road

Route 5: Travelling north from 417 Pedestrian Bridge

This group met at the 417 Pedestrian/Bike Bridge. They crossed Campeau at the lights on Knudsen and traveled along Knudsen turning right to cross the golf course on a public pathway. They followed the multi-use pathways in Gow Park, along Leacock and Varley Drives to Stacey Drive. They cut through a parking lot at 36 Stacey and crossed March Road at the Metro parking entrance to travel on the bike lane on March Road. They finished their route on the multi-use pathway that leads from March to 555 Legget Drive.

The participants found the route comfortable and scenic, however, only one of the participants uses this route on regular basis. One participant prefers to go over the highway on Eagleson and continue on March Road. Another uses Campeau/Teron corridor. A route through KNL lands that connects the Kanata Lakes to the Kanata North Business Park is occasionally used. All participants are very comfortable with multi-lane roads.



Team 5 Meeting at the
Pedestrian/Cycling Bridge

Route 5



Broken pavement on Gow
Park pathway



Broken pavement and pot
holes on Stacey Road



Broken pavement on
Legget Drive



Intersection of Station Road and March with
challenging incline



80 km/h traffic crossing bike lanes on March to
turn right on to Soldant



Hopping the curb from March to
access new multi-use pathway

Problems and Recommendations for Route 5

- A number of pot holes and area of broken pavement on Gow Park Path, Legget Drive, and Stacey Road
- The intersection of Station Road and March is on an incline causing the cyclist to enter the intersection slower than usual and putting her in conflict with oncoming traffic. A cyclist who uses this route regularly recommends that turning cyclists should make a direct line towards the marked bike lane opposite (i.e. turn 45 degrees to the left from standing) rather than enter the intersection straight and then turn left at 90 degrees as would be done in a car.
- Going north-east on March Road towards the intersection with Soldant, the bike lane ends and the cyclist has to cross the right-turning lane of traffic to continue straight. As the traffic on March Road travels in waves, the team waited until all the cars had gone before leaving the bike lane and continuing into the intersection.
- There are steep curbs at the ends of the new multi-use path that connects March Road to 555 Legget, making it difficult to climb on or off from the road

References

Economic Overview from the Kanata North BIA website

www.kanatanorthbia.ca/area/economic-overview

Kanata North Technology Ecosystem: Generating Economic Opportunities for all of Canada

www.kanatanorthbia.ca/kanata-norths-economic-impact/

Kanata North Transportation Survey 2015

available from Councillor Wilkinson's office

Linking Mississippi Mills to Kanata North by George Yaremchuk

Available on www.envirocentre.ca/sustainkanatanorth.ca

Cycle In September 2015 Ride to City Hall

www.ottawaecodistrict.org/whats-happening/initiatives/

Ottawa Cycling Plan

<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/transportation-and-parking/cycling/ottawa-cycling-plan>

