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## Active Transportation Advisory Group (ATAG)

November 23, 2022 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Hybrid

City Hall Committee Room E and Microsoft Teams

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### In Attendance

#### Community Representatives:

	Name	Representing
✘	Adam Bue	Cycling
✓v	Graham Corsar	Business Community
✓	Renata Cosic	Post-secondary
✓v	Lisa Franks	People of all abilities
✘	Derek Friesen	Walking
✓v	Jeananne Klein	People of all ages (senior)
✓v	Jasmine Liska	Resident
✓	Tyler Rittinger	Elementary or high school
✘	Berenice Romero	Public Transit user
✓	Kloey Shanay Bells	People of all ages (youth)
✓	Stephanie (Steph) Siemens	Resident
✓v	Curtis Standing	Indigenous Community

#### Organization Representatives:

	Name	Representing
✓v	Verna Gallen	Walking Saskatoon
✓v	Cora Janzen	Saskatchewan Health Authority
✓	Kelly Klassen	Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI)
✓	Alan Otterbein	Meewasin Valley Authority
✘	Darby Sutherland	Discover Saskatoon
✓	Merlin Toth	Saskatoon Cycles

#### City of Saskatoon:

	Name	Representing
✓	Nathalie Baudais	Active Transportation Program Manager (interim)
✘	Councillor Dubois	
✘	David LeBoutillier	Engineering Manager
✓	Amanda Lindgren	Public Engagement Consultant (chair)
✘	Jay Magus	Director of Transportation
✓v	Sharon Cybulski	Assistant to the Director of Transportation (recorder)
✓	Carly Grassing	Transportation Engineer
✓	Julian Petras	Transportation Engineer
✓	Mariniel Flores	Transportation Engineer

✓ = in-person attendance; ✓v = virtual attendance; ✘ = regrets

## 1. Welcome

Amanda Lindgren welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged that we are on Treaty 6 territory and homelands of the Métis. Meeting started at 6:04 p.m.

The meeting was a hybrid meeting with in-person attendance and virtual attendance through Microsoft Teams.

## 2. Review and approve September 2022 meeting minutes

The minutes were approved as circulated. The approved minutes will be posted on the City Active Transportation Advisory Group webpage.

## 3. Confidentiality and Media Policy

Briefly reviewed the confidentiality and media policy.

Moving forward, the City Administration will be very clear about what can be shared publicly. Items being considered or recommended for future reports that haven't been shared publicly are considered confidential. Specifics of who says what in meetings is not included in the minutes.

For media, members of the advisory group can speak on behalf of themselves or their organizations but not on behalf of ATAG or the City.

For today's meeting, the map prepared for traffic count locations is in draft form and should not be shared publicly.

## 4. Missing Sidewalk Inventory – Carly Grassing

Carly Grassing, Transportation Engineer, provided an overview of the missing sidewalk inventory.

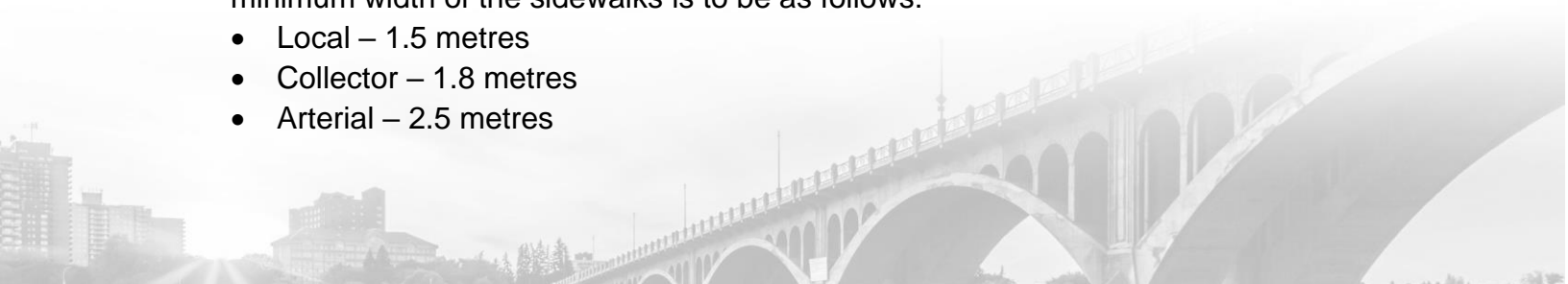
### Background

To improve process and the accuracy of missing sidewalk data, the City transitioned to tracking the missing sidewalk locations in a Geographic Information System (GIS). The [priority ranking criteria](#) is applied to the database annually to capture any potential changes in the land use or street characteristics.

There is 388 km of missing sidewalks on local, collector and arterial streets in the city. The [Map of Prioritized Missing Sidewalk](#) report was presented to Standing Policy Committee on Transportation in March 2021.

Standards have been updated to require sidewalks on both sides of the street. The minimum width of the sidewalks is to be as follows:

- Local – 1.5 metres
- Collector – 1.8 metres
- Arterial – 2.5 metres



### Sidewalk Prioritization

New prioritization criteria were developed and implemented in 2020 to determine where to focus resources for sidewalks. The [Sidewalk Infill Prioritization Criteria](#) report was presented to Standing Policy Committee on Transportation in January 2020.

Each missing sidewalk segment now receives a prioritization for two categories: pedestrian potential and risk reduction.

#### Pedestrian Potential:

- Adjacent land use
- Vulnerable user designation
- Nearby major destinations
- Nearby transit stops

The entire city has pedestrian potential. The map is a living document and can change (e.g., transit routes and stops change every year).

#### Risk Reduction:

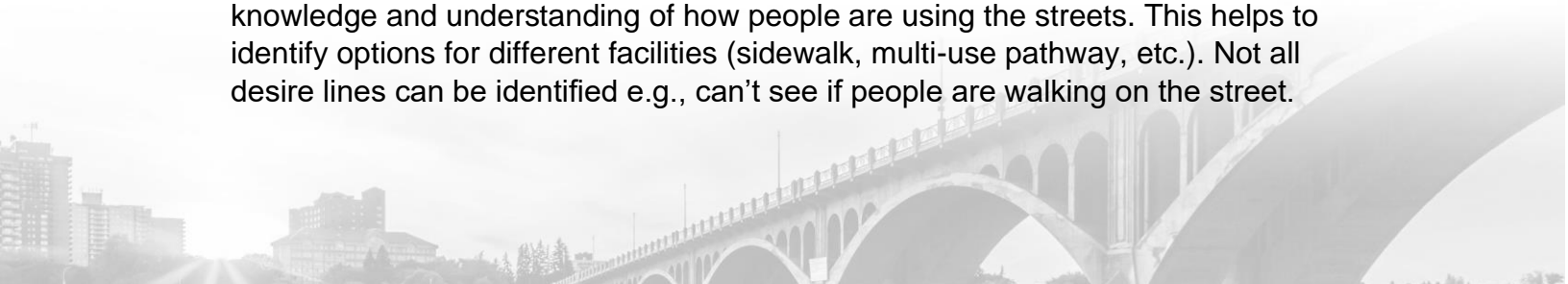
- Street classification
- Presence of sidewalk
- Pedestrian desire

Question: Is the Montgomery neighbourhood included on the map since some residents expressed a desire to not have sidewalks in that neighbourhood?

Answer: All streets in the city are included on the map. The new design standards are to provide sidewalks on both sides of every street. Feasibility of the sidewalk would be reviewed once the sidewalk comes up for review. There are some streets identified as future all ages and abilities facilities so it is possible that there would be multi-use pathways instead of sidewalks on some streets. Previous opinions from the neighbourhood may have changed over time as residents have moved in/out of the neighbourhood.

Pedestrian desire is the desire for a sidewalk, either through evidence of a beaten path or through resident requests, that indicates pedestrians are walking along this street regardless of a facility.

Examples were provided of “pedestrian desire”. Need eyes on the street to verify that footpaths and trails are captured. Important to have local neighbourhood knowledge and understanding of how people are using the streets. This helps to identify options for different facilities (sidewalk, multi-use pathway, etc.). Not all desire lines can be identified e.g., can’t see if people are walking on the street.



Pedestrian Potential and Risk Reduction are applied to each missing sidewalk.

Question: Are tracks in the snow used to determine where people are walking?

Answer: This is possible for staff to notice during their work travel but there is no staff assigned to actively look for tracks in the snow.

Question: How are desired trails determined?

Answer: Several strategies are used including aerial photography, public requests, personal travel. Information is taken from wherever it can be found.

Question: Does the City use open-source data like Strava. Strava uses individuals' activity tracker to see where people are exercising.  
(<https://www.strava.com/heatmap#12.22/-106.66365/52.13319/bluered/ride>)

Answer: Strava is not currently used. It relies on fitness trackers to populate data. Equity perspective needs to be taken into consideration for data sources.

Question: Are areas of socio-economic deprivation from health assessment data that was provided for the City's Growth Plan considered and if not, could the criteria be updated to include it? Marginalized and communities at risk should be prioritized. Important to build in more intention regarding equity.

Answer: The criteria have been approved by City Council so any updates would need to be approved by City Council.

Question: What type of engagement is undertaken prior to construction for streets like Melrose Avenue or McPherson Avenue where some residents may oppose sidewalks and where some people feel comfortable walking in the street due to low traffic volumes and speeds.

Answer: There is no engagement planned for sidewalk construction. Some residents may be opposed to sidewalk construction due to their responsibility for sidewalk clearing, tree removals, or other reasons. Some sidewalk construction may not be feasible due to conflicts in the boulevard space, such as trees.

A feasibility analysis would be done. The Tree/Sidewalk Assessment Process would be applied as part of the feasibility analysis, which is situational and location specific. Please see [link](#) to information report that was considered at the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation meeting held on January 11, 2021.

It was noted it is very important to consider people in wheelchairs and walkers to ensure they can get around safely. Streets in the winter are inaccessible to

people using mobility devices so sidewalks are important despite opposition from adjacent property owners.

Question: Is sidewalk prioritization is considered when there is other work taking place at a particular location?

Answer: There are two different funding mechanisms in place. The Asset Preservation Program has funding to maintain assets. Other funding is needed for new projects and that funding is limited. Asset Preservation had funding to do curb repair on Circle Drive this year. Unfortunately, there was no funding to put sidewalks in at the same time so that work will be done when funding is available.

Question: What will be done for locations with clear desire lines over the railway tracks at Warman Road and 51<sup>st</sup> Street, Marquis Drive and Warman Road and Assiniboine Drive?

Answer: The City is negotiating with CN to get approval to construct an at-grade crossing at Warman Road and Assiniboine Drive. Status update reports are presented at the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and City Council meetings.

[The Rail-Related Transportation Projects – May 2021 Update](#) was presented to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation in May 2021. The Warman and Assiniboine Crossing is discussed under the Active Transportation section.

The [Municipal Economic Enhancement Program – Reallocation Prioritization List](#) was presented to City Council in July 2020 and Council approved funding allocation of \$500,000 for the construction of this rail crossing.

In May 2018, a report was presented to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation in response to an inquiry made by Councillor Donauer about the method for pedestrian movement between River Heights and Lawson Heights to the North Industrial Area (see attached).

### Next Steps

Sidewalk infill prioritization report is tentatively scheduled to be presented at the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation in January 2023.

Feedback received by November 24 on pedestrian desire lines will be reflected in the 2023 Sidewalk Infill Prioritization report. Feedback received after November 24 will be noted for future updates.

If you have any feedback on pedestrian desire lines, please forward to Nathalie or Amanda.



## 5. Active Transportation Data Collection Program – Julian Petras

Julian Petras, Transportation Engineer, provided an overview of the Active Transportation Data Collection Program.

### Background

Counting traffic is done for a variety of reasons including:

- Estimate volumes
- Assess performance
- Identify needs
- Understanding traffic patterns
- Track long term trends
- Justify infrastructure spending

The existing Vehicle Counting Program is a well-established program with years of data. In 2019, a benchmarking program was established to collect active transportation data.

The Active Transportation Data Collection Program counts pedestrians and cyclists at key locations in the city. Permanent counters were installed in 2021 at three locations: Preston Avenue and 108<sup>th</sup> Street, bottom of the Broadway Bridge and at the top of the University Bridge.

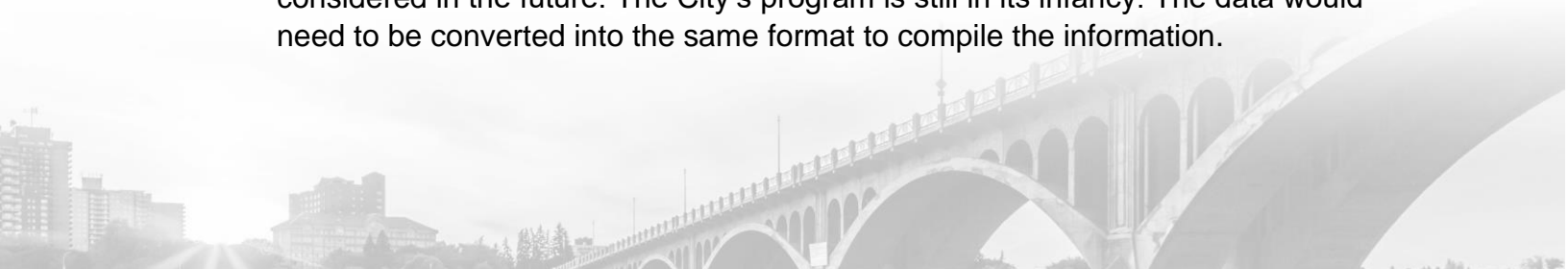
There are many methods that can be used to count pedestrian and cyclist traffic with pros and cons for each. The City is using image-based technology with the Miovision camera. The permanent counters collect data year-round with data processing done locally.

With the portable counters, data is collected on Thursday and Saturday from 6 am to 10 pm (16 hours). The data is processed by Miovision. Two distinct traffic patterns were noted on Thursdays and Saturdays. Short term counts would be done on a scheduled rotation every five years.

Question: If Meewasin and the University are still doing counts is there a way to integrate the data they collect with the data the City is collecting?

Answer: The data Meewasin is collecting is specific to the trails. Meewasin uses two different styles of counters to track pedestrian and cyclist activity on the trails. Meewasin will share the data with the City if asked.

Amalgamating Meewasin's data with the City's data is something that could be considered in the future. The City's program is still in its infancy. The data would need to be converted into the same format to compile the information.



Question: Does the Miovision camera capture data for skateboarders and e-scooters?

Answer: At this time, some are captured and categorized as pedestrians and some as cyclists. It was noted that software is always being updated. If detection improves, the intent would be to categorize these users as cyclists because of their travel speed.

Question: Does the City track the number of people using the outside lanes. If the lanes aren't being used by vehicles, they could made available for cyclists to use.

Answer: This could be a potential option that could be explored in the future.

### Next Steps

- Determine locations for the 2023 portable count program
- Data processing – Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) reports
- Tracking long term trends
- Prioritizing active transportation infrastructure

Committee members were asked to provide input on locations for short term counts and what data they would like to see publicly available for the traffic counting program.

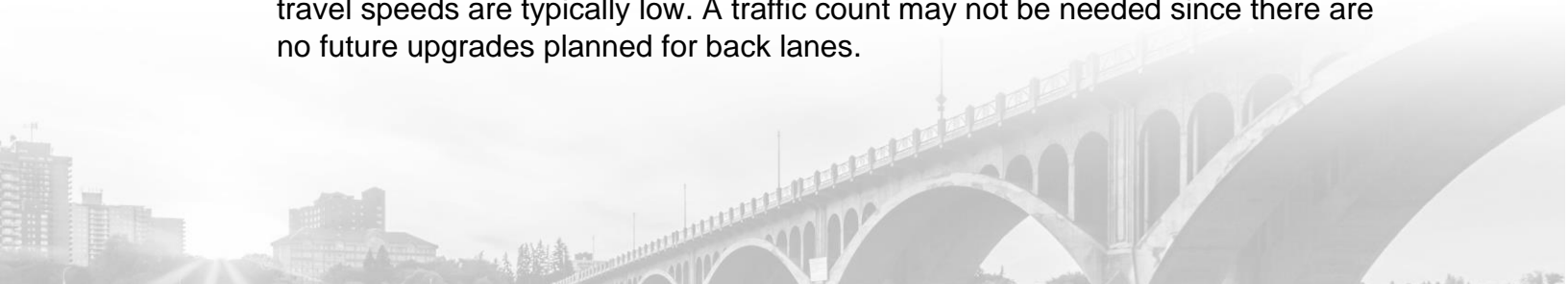
Suggestion was made to do counts on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street at the more dangerous intersections and also on 20<sup>th</sup> Street. Another suggestion to count less busy streets like Main Street or 19<sup>th</sup> Street because some cyclists will use these as they are less busy routes.

Another suggestion was made to look at the north/south side of Preston Avenue (future location of Sask Polytech).

It was noted the benchmark study that was done in 2019 was done with limited resources and focused on Circle Drive over/underpasses to improve the baseline understanding to determine how many people are using the infrastructure.

Question Would counts be done for parks and back alleys?

Answer: It is unlikely that back lanes would be counted unless they were brought to our attention as a preferred route for pedestrians and/or cyclists. Back lanes can be an appropriate choice for some people because the traffic volumes and travel speeds are typically low. A traffic count may not be needed since there are no future upgrades planned for back lanes.



There are different ways to get to pedestrian overpasses and underpasses. The benchmark study focussed on the overpassed and underpasses where all the AT users would be travelling, rather than counting all of the paths that they could use to get to the overpasses and underpasses.

Question: Could temporary counters be set up at the same day/time to gauge cross traffic (e.g., all crossings of Clarence Avenue between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and College Drive)?

Answer: This could be a potential option that could be explored in the future.

## **6. 2023 Cycling Guide – Mariniel Flores**

Deferred to next meeting due to time constraints. The guide is printed in March. Suggestion was made to have an optional meeting before the end of January to discuss this item.

## **7. Next Steps and Closing**

It was noted that the missing sidewalk inventory, active pedestrian data collection and cycling initiatives all work together to improve active transportation in the City.

Please provide feedback on topics discussed at the meeting. The PowerPoint slide deck will be shared with the group.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

## **8. Adjournment**

Amanda thanked everyone for their participation. Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

