



# 2012 OTTAWA REPORT ON BICYCLING

CITIZENS FOR  
SAFE CYCLING



[SafeCycling.ca](http://SafeCycling.ca)





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# INTRODUCTION

This is the second edition of our annual overview of cycling in Ottawa. We started this project last year as a way to present a consolidated review of cycling initiatives in the city. There is often confusion about the total distance of bike path / lane infrastructure, about the amount of money invested in cycling, and about which projects are on the go as we have both the City of Ottawa and the National Capital Commission implementing facilities.

There are also projects that are not about asphalt, but are equally important such as Can-Bike courses and Bike to Work Month. In this 2012 overview, we highlight a number of awkward or dangerous situations for cycling that should be resolved. Some are fairly easy and just need a bit of care and attention, while other projects are major overhauls that we know cannot happen overnight.

In 2012, the City started the long awaited O-train path. The first phase of the path is finished, including very attractive landscaping. The finishing touches are now being completed and it will open in 2013. The pedestrian / bike bridge over the Airport Parkway is well on its way. There has been progress in the cross-town bike connector known as the East-West Bikeway, although we haven't seen much actual physical evidence yet. We anticipate further implementation before the 2014 municipal elections. The NCC filled an important missing link in Rockcliffe along the Parkway, which should make it easier and safer for cyclists coming from the east end of Ottawa. Other major projects are approved — some with a budget (Hickory bridge) and others without a budget yet (bridge over the Rideau canal). Traffic on the Laurier Segregated Bike Lane Pilot Project entered it's second year of operation, and approached 600,000 bike ride counts.

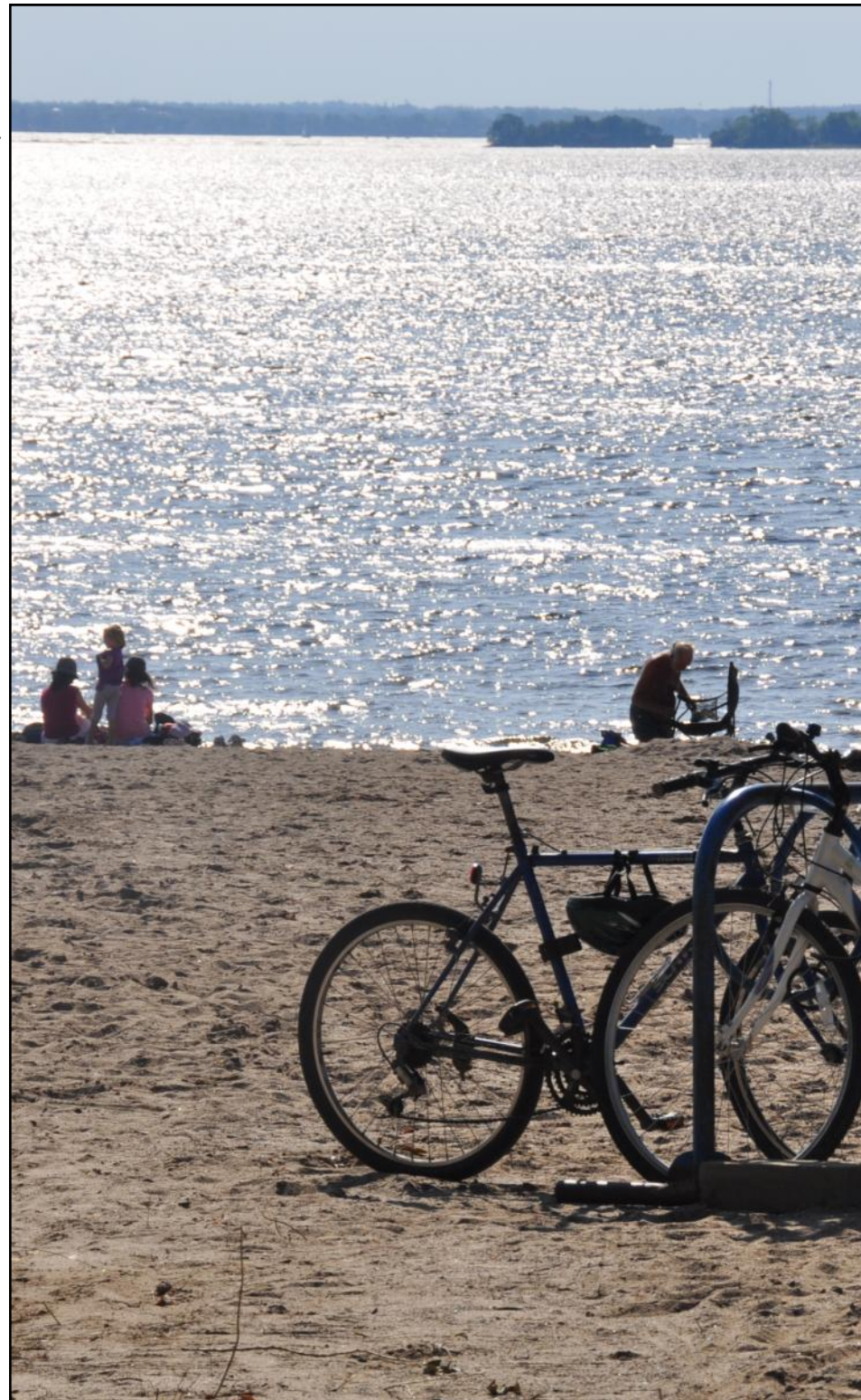
Citizens for Safe Cycling organized several new events in 2012, including the Winter Family Bike Parade, Spring.Bike.Ottawa meeting, Tulips on Two Wheels celebration, an evening on Velo-City Global 2012 Conference feedback as well as our October Annual General Meeting with Professor Ralph Buehler as keynote speaker. Other groups organised various festivals, a kid bike ride, bike maintenance workshops and a Plaid Parade.

The message we take home from 2012 is that cycling is becoming more popular than ever: more infrastructure, more events, more cyclists— and downtown bike racks are filled to capacity. We are witnessing a rapid growth of a bicycle culture in Ottawa.

Putting a report together takes a lot of work. We'd like to thank the volunteers who put in many hours to compile the data, analyze the progress made in 2012, and identify new issues. If you'd like to contribute to the report next year, contact us at [info@safecycling.ca](mailto:info@safecycling.ca). Many hands make the work a lot lighter.

Board of Citizens for Safe Cycling

Published April 30, 2013





# CYCLING FACT SHEET

## INTRODUCTION



### Cycling Stats

- **Bike Lanes:** 164 km\*
- **Segregated Bike Lanes:** 3.0 km\*\*
- **City of Ottawa Pathways:** 152 km\*
- **NCC Multi-Use Pathways (MUP):** 108 km\*
- **Paved Shoulders:** 123 km\*
- **Rack & Roll-Equipped Buses:** More than 350
- **Average Daily Modal Share in Ottawa:** 1.8%
- **Highest Daily Modal Share in Ottawa:** 4.2% - Inner Ottawa Area
- **Increase in Total Number of Bike Trips in Ottawa:** 40% (2005 to 2011 O-D Survey)
- **Highest Number of Trips on a Single Day:** 5,797 on July 1st at Ottawa River Pathway
- **Total Winter Bike Trips:** 181, 395 at 8 CTAP counters
- **Capital BIXI bicycle-sharing service:** 25 Stations, 250 Bikes, 44,000 Trips
- **RightBike bicycle-sharing service:** 3 Stations, 40 Bikes, 340 Trips

\* N.B. Lane and path lengths are taken from 2011 Cycling Network (Open Data). An update for 2012 was not available.

\*\* Segregated bike lane distance includes the lane on each side of Laurier Ave and the new one on Wellington St.

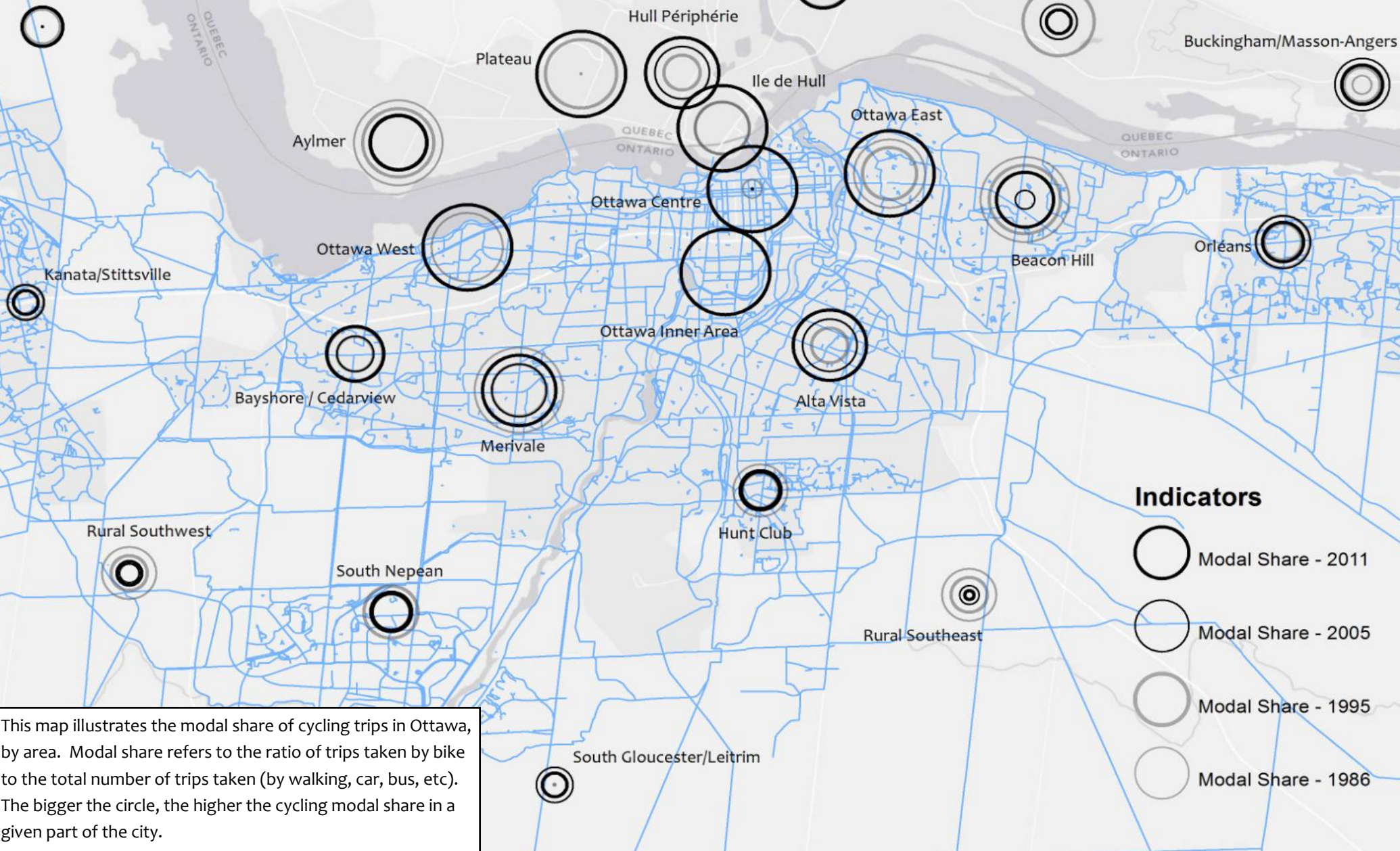




# WHERE ARE WE CYCLING?

## INTRODUCTION

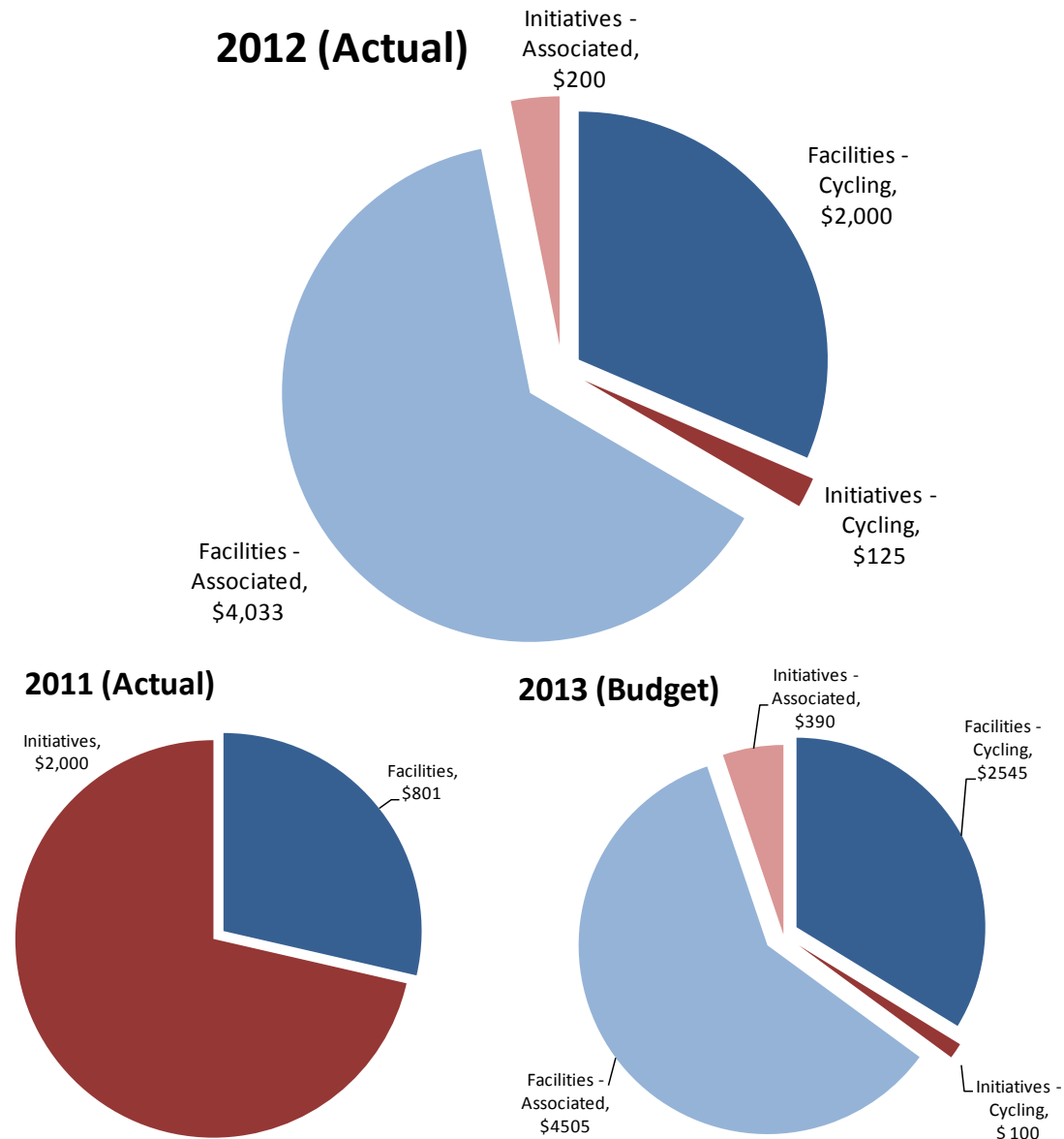
## CYCLING MODAL SHARE



# INVESTMENTS

## CYCLING IN 2012

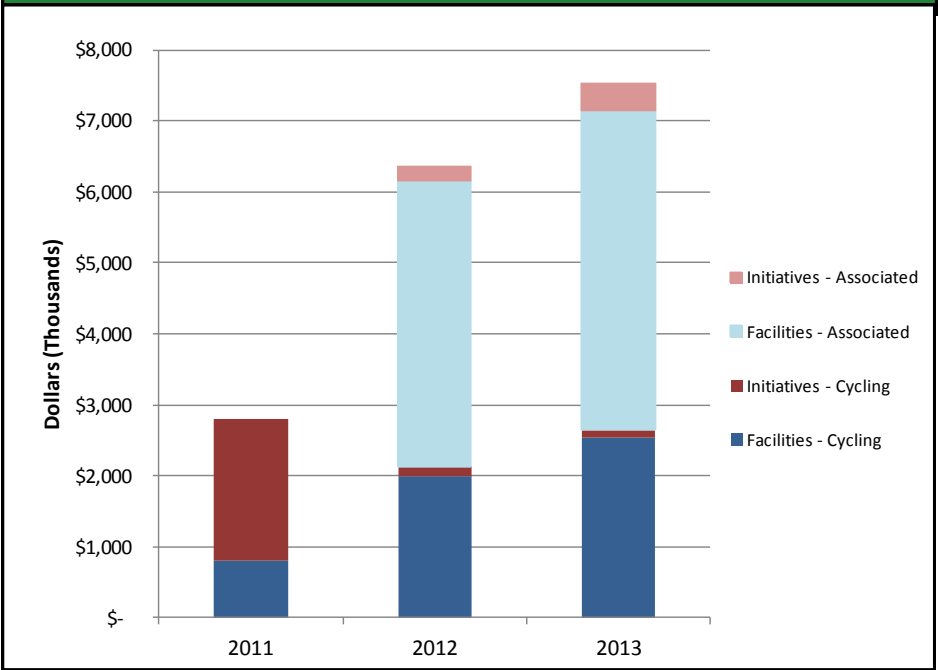
### CYCLING BUDGET TRENDS



Note—Dollar figures in above chart are in thousands (\$000).

**City of Ottawa Cycling Budget (2011-2013)**

The bar graph shows the total cycling-related funding per year, and each year is detailed in the pie graphs. The funding is broken down into two categories: facilities and initiatives. Facilities include physical infrastructure such as bike lanes, signage, etc. Initiatives include projects such as the Laurier Ave Segregated Bike Lanes (SBLs) and the Cycling Safety Programs. The funding is then broken down in to two sub-categories: cycling and cycling-associated. Cycling funding includes facilities and initiatives that are primarily cycling related such as pathways, or the Cycling Safety Program. Associated funding includes facilities and initiatives which includes a cycling aspect to them, such as the Transportation Demand Management program. Integrated Road, Sewer and Watermain Reconstructions are also counted as cycling-associated funding, where it can include such measures as sharrow markings or other relevant road-way improvements.

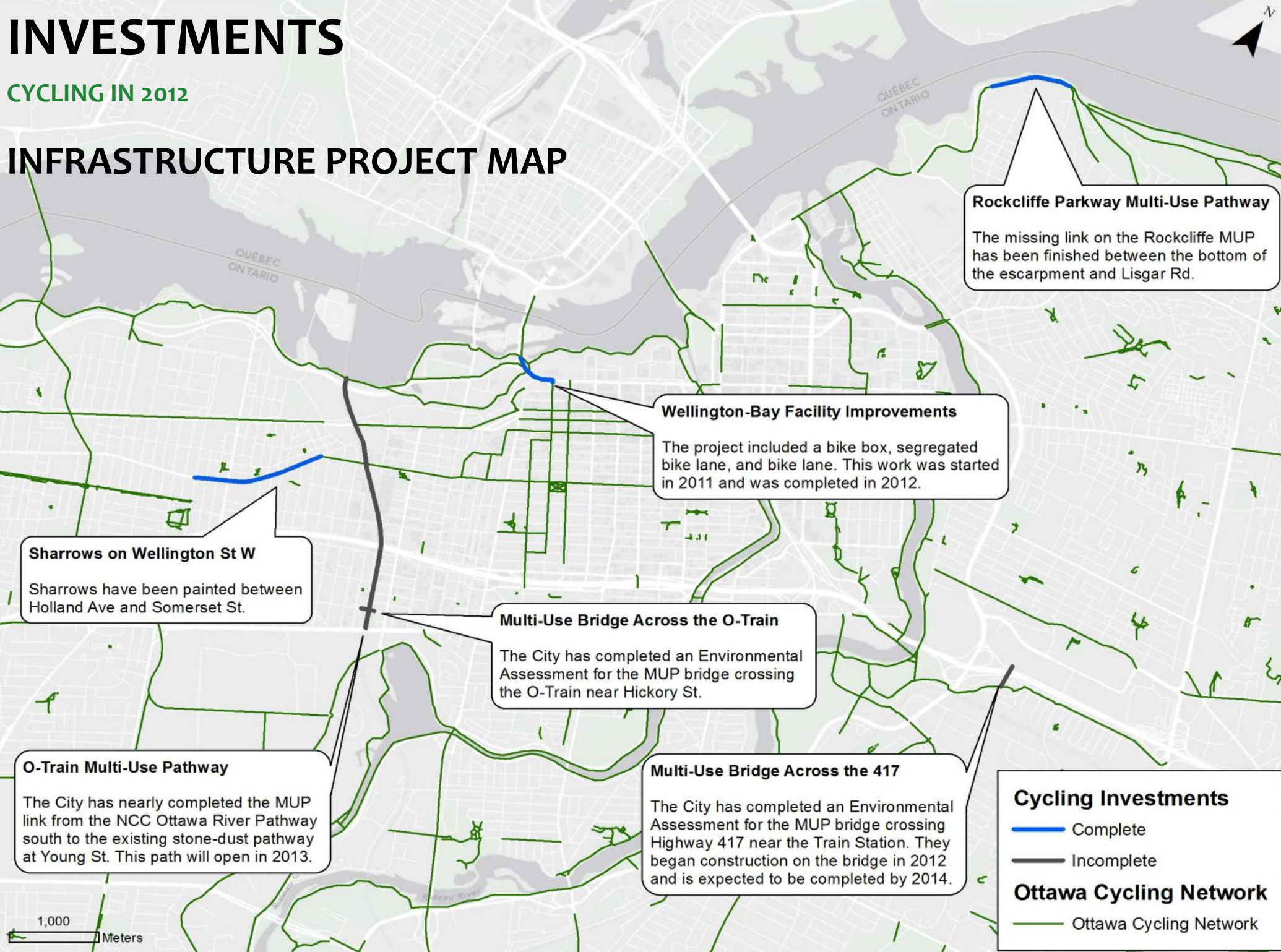




# INVESTMENTS

CYCLING IN 2012

## INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT MAP



# INVESTMENTS

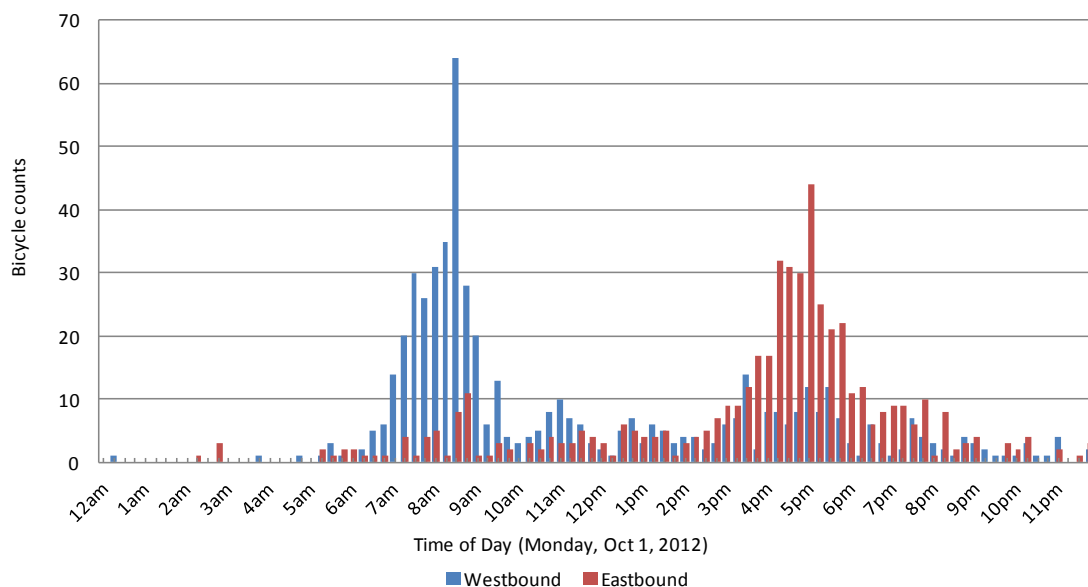
## CYCLING IN 2012

## OPEN DATA & COUNTERS

### Open Data

Governments around the world have adopted Open Data programs to allow the public access to information about their regions. The City of Ottawa has developed a program over the last few years through which members of the public can download data including: budgets, locations of recreational facilities, ward boundaries, cycling counter data, etc. In 2011 the City released GIS data for the [Cycling Network](#) which shows the existing and proposed paths, lanes, signed routes, and shared lanes. No updates to the cycling network data were released in 2012, although an update is expected in 2013. The most valuable dataset for cyclists is the raw data produced by [pavement-embedded automated counters](#) installed throughout the city. The first counters were installed in 2010; a total of eight are now in operation. Spreadsheets are released once per quarter. After three years of data, interesting patterns are emerging. Most of the counters measure total daily trips, indicating cycling activity in key areas. The Laurier SBL counters are more precise, identifying direction of travel and providing total trips in 15-minute intervals. It is recommended to adopt the Laurier SBL counters, and to provide detailed datasets whenever possible. Richer data will enable better analysis of cycling activity. The data is available for 8 counters: Alexandra Bridge, Ottawa River Pathway, Rideau Canal Eastern Pathway, Rideau Canal Western Pathway, the Somerset Bridge over the O-Train, Laurier SBL at Bay St, Laurier SBL at Lyon St, and Laurier SBL at Metcalfe St.

### Bicycle Traffic on Laurier SBL at Lyon St



### Commuting by Bike

This chart shows 15-minute bicycle counts on the Laurier bike lane at Lyon St, both eastbound and westbound directions. The peak traffic in the morning is westbound, and the eastbound traffic peaks in the afternoon. This traffic at rush hour shows that people are biking to commute to work from downtown — perhaps to connect with the Ottawa River Pathway through Bay St. It is also noticeable that morning traffic is more concentrated than evening traffic.



# INVESTMENTS

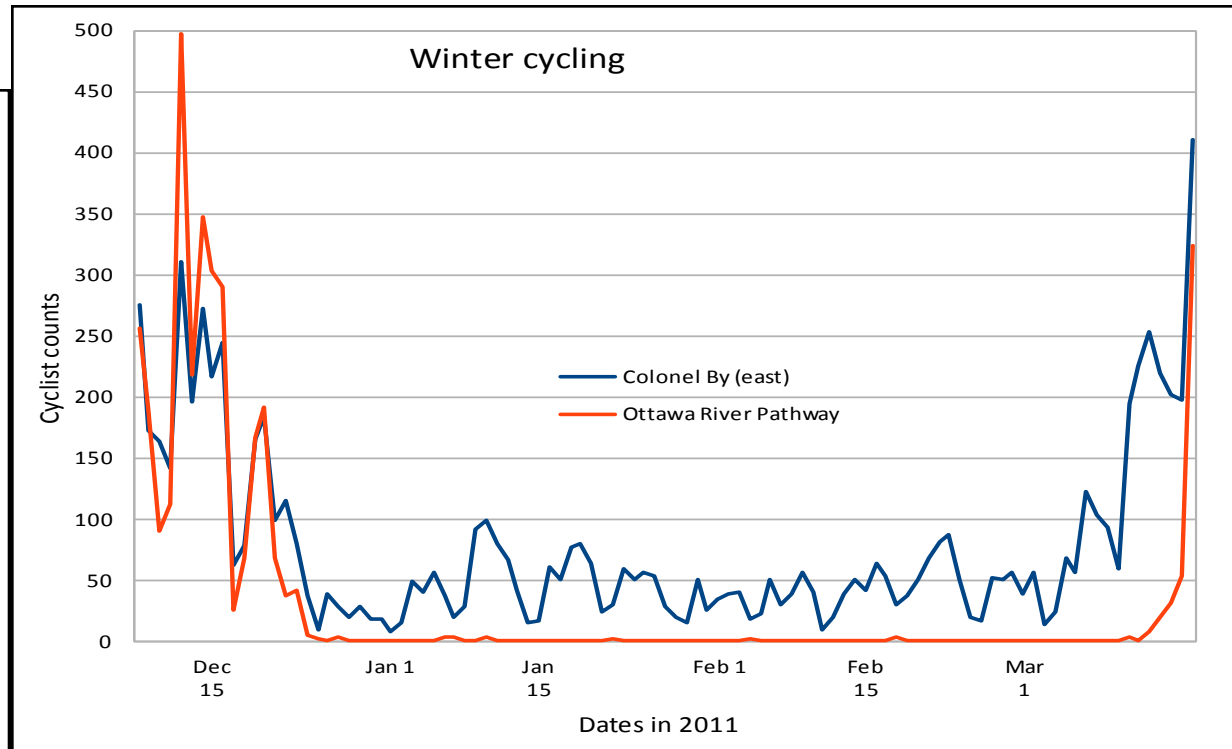
## CYCLING IN 2012

### WINTER CYCLING

#### Winter Maintenance

The City of Ottawa implemented the first bike-specific winter maintenance program with the new Laurier SBLs in 2011; this program has continued in 2012. The winter maintenance program consisted of dedicated plows, sweepers, and de-icing equipment. With this program, a tiny fraction of designated bike routes in the city were maintained at priority level during the winters of 2011 and 2012. It should be noted that the maintenance of the Laurier SBLs is necessary for drainage purposes of Laurier Avenue.

The NCC maintains some of the Rideau Canal Pathways for use during Winterlude. However, it does not have an official winter maintenance program. In 2010, the NCC conducted a survey on use of the pathways in the winter. Cycling is reportedly the fifth most common use for the pathways in the winter — and [the report](#) noted that winter cycling on the pathways could potentially double if winter maintenance was enhanced.



#### Impact of Maintenance

This chart compares cycling counts on two routes from CTAP counters. The Rideau Canal Eastern Pathway is cleared and continues to be used through the winter. The Ottawa River Pathway is not cleared, and usage drops to zero when there is snow accumulation. This graph illustrates that winter maintenance makes a big difference.

Photos—Far Left: New plow maintaining the Laurier SBL; Left: Snow accumulation forces cyclist to take the lane



# INVESTMENTS

## CYCLING IN 2012

### WINTER CYCLING

The idea that cycling is only for fair weather is becoming outdated. More than 50 cyclists participated in CfSC's first annual Family Winter Bike Parade that took place on January 22. With a temperature of  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  and a wind-chill of  $-27^{\circ}\text{C}$ , the parade traversed the length of the Laurier SBLs between Elgin and Percy three times. Bike counter data shows that usage of the MUPs drops to nearly zero when they are not maintained. However the Laurier lane saw consistent usage throughout winter 2012. It should be noted that the decrease in cyclist counts on the MUPs does not necessarily mean people are not cycling. Snow accumulation in the paths compels cyclists to ride in the road for the sake of safety. Since the roadway lacks sensors, these cyclists are not counted.

As the number of people cycling in Ottawa during winter months increases, maintenance of winter routes and paths will become increasingly important. There is a pressing need to maintain more routes for winter cycling. The maintenance program for the Laurier SBLs provides an instructive precedent, since the Laurier SBLs saw considerable traffic during 2012 winter months. With additional winter maintenance, Ottawa's cycling routes would provide greater value to residents. Cleared bike routes can be used by commuters year-round, helping address local transit and congestion concerns.

Of the 164 km of bike lanes in the City of Ottawa, only 1.4 km (the Laurier SBLs) is identified as a priority for winter maintenance. That is less than 1% of the total network of bike lanes. See p. 25 for a list of suggested winter cycling improvements.

Photos—Top: Road is narrowed on Fairmont Ave due to snow storage; Bottom: Cyclist on Wellington St W taking the lane



Reduced  
Lane  
Width






# INFRASTRUCTURE

CYCLING IN 2012

## REVIEW OF 2011 Top 10



In our [2011 Report on Bicycling in Ottawa](#), Citizens for Safe Cycling included a list of “Top 10” cycling-related problems. The Top 10 list explained infrastructure problems that needed attention for the safety and comfort of people cycling in Ottawa. This is a follow-up to show what’s changed over the past year.

We’ve indicated where significant progress has been made and where better plans or more work is needed.

### Grades

Progress made on addressing the problems described on the following pages has been graded per the following scheme:

- A — The problem has been addressed
- B — There has been some progress, and more is needed
- C — The City has committed to fixing the problem
- D — The City has committed to fixing the problem, but their solution is inadequate
- F — There has been neither progress nor a commitment to addressing the problem





# INFRASTRUCTURE

## CYCLING IN 2012

### REVIEW OF 2011 Top 10

#### Grading of Solution Progress

These projects can take years to fund, plan and implement. None of them was fully addressed in 2011 but some have been partially addressed and others are being considered for improvement.

##### Grade B

Some progress has been made on the following problems:

- **Expand and Replace Bike Parking**  
Ottawa gained bike parking in 2012. Bike racks were installed during and following the reconstruction of traditional mainstreets (e.g. Bank St in the Glebe and Centretown, Somerset St W, Wellington St W). These bike racks often reflected the unique branding of their neighbourhoods. Covered bike parking has also been added to some transit stations. There is nevertheless room for continued improvement. In some cases downtown, bike parking that appears to be public is not in fact open to the public. Private businesses are compensating for the shortage of public bike racks by providing bike parking for their customers and staff. Another problem is that some of the new bike racks were installed too close to buildings and/or are oriented so that they are not usable to their full capacity.

##### Grade C

The City has committed to fixing the following problems:

- **Laurier Connectors - East & West End**  
Currently there is no proper connections between the Laurier SBLs and the pathways continuing further east and west. On the west side, the Laurier SBLs need to connect to the Scott-Albert MUP. On the east side, the SBLs should continue past City Hall to Cumberland. Through [Ottawa On The Move](#), the City has committed \$5 million in funding for the improvement or construction of new facilities from Westboro to Vanier. The East-West Bikeway project will provide a cycling route through the core of the City.

##### Grade D

The City has committed to fixing the following problems, but their solutions are inadequate:

- **Byron-Tyndall-Gladstone Connection**  
The City has committed to fixing the Byron-Tyndall-Gladstone connection by undertaking the [Byron-Tyndall-Gladstone Cycling Corridor Improvement Study](#). Some improvements that were suggested in the report were bike lanes, bike pockets, sharrows, left turn lanes, pathway realignments, speed humps, and mini-roundabouts. The suggested modifications will greatly improve the safety of the Byron-Tyndall-Gladstone connection, however the left turn from Tyndall St to Parkdale Ave (northbound) has not been sufficiently addressed. A bike-actuated signal would improve this intersection.



Photos: Top: New bike racks installed at a Transitway station; Bottom: West end of Laurier SBL ends at Bronson Ave



# INFRASTRUCTURE

## CYCLING IN 2012

### REVIEW OF 2011 Top 10

#### Grade D (continued)

The City has committed to fixing the following problems, but their solutions are inadequate:

- **Snow Clearing**  
The City has committed to maintaining the Laurier SBLs, however no other cycling facilities have an official maintenance plan. The City is considering a winter maintenance plan, and in the Spring of 2012 conducted a winter [cycling survey](#) to help evaluate cycling routes for future winter maintenance.
- **Bank St Near Billings Bridge**  
The City has made some efforts to improve the safety of cyclists in this area. This area has a high number of bike-car collisions, probably because the lack of continuous cycling facilities makes it unclear to drivers that cyclists are nearby. The [City has committed](#) to making the outside lanes of the bridge “no passing lanes” and painting sharrows on them. However this doesn’t address the southbound area of Bank St in front of the Billings Bridge Shopping Centre where there are several intersections and turning lanes, making it a difficult area for cyclists to negotiate.

#### Grade F

The following problems have not been addressed at all:

- **O’Connor St (Southbound) at Catherine St**  
City councillor Diane Holmes [has proposed](#) a segregated bike lane on O’Connor St from Wellington St to Isabella St, which would connect with the Laurier SBLs. However the head of the City’s Transportation Committee has said that a second SBL won’t be considered until the fall of 2013. The Laurier SBL pilot project ends in 2013 and the pilot project report is expected to be released in the fall.
- **Traffic Signals**  
The signal where the NCC Experimental Farm MUP crosses Maitland Ave is slow to change. The City has not implemented any signal feedback mechanism such as a light or beep as suggested.
- **Reopen Pathway in King Edward Corridor Adjacent to Lester B. Pearson Building**  
The federal department of Public Works and Government Services has [permanently closed the path](#) for health and safety reasons. This has forced cyclists onto a shared bus-bike lane with heavy traffic. New facilities are needed to improve safety for cyclists in this area.
- **Baseline Station**  
The sections of Navaho Dr and College Ave west of Woodroffe Ave are restricted for bus use only. Cyclists must still walk their bikes on the sidewalk.



Photos: Top: Southbound on O’Connor St approaching the intersection of O’Connor St and Catherine St; Bottom: Facing west at the intersection of Woodroffe Ave and College Ave

# COMMUNITY

## CYCLING IN 2012

### OTTAWA CITY COUNCILLORS ON CYCLING

What cycling related improvement would you most like to see in your Ward?

CfSC asked all Ottawa City Councillors “What cycling related improvement would you most like to see in your Ward?” While only ten responded, their answers are impressive. Notable individuals who did not respond include Transportation Committee members Councillors Bloess, Deans (who is also Chair of the Transit Commission), Moffatt, Tierney, and Wilkinson. The Mayor was not asked for a response.



*Extend Woodroffe recreational pathway south to Stoneway, identify a dedicated east-west cycling route, pave Fallowfield Road shoulders, winter maintain pathways.*

Councillor Jan Harder, Ward 3 Barrhaven

*Consideration for a dedicated bike lane on Corkstown or signage strongly encouraging cyclists to use the Watts Creek Pathway instead. As well, consideration for enlarging the underpass at the CN rail crossing on Carling Avenue between Burke Road and Rifle Road or pursuing alternate accommodations for cyclists.*

Councillor Mark Taylor, Ward 7 Bay



*Luckily, there are a number of projects underway that will greatly enhance the cycling experience in our community. I would like to see the development of defined cycling routes throughout Vanier and better connections between the Sandy Hill and Lowertown communities.*

Councillor Mathieu Fleury, Ward 12 Rideau-Vanier

*I would like to see bike lanes on Hemlock, a pedestrian and cycling bridge on Donald and across the Queensway, and improvements at St. Patrick & Vanier Parkway for pedestrians and cyclists.*

Councillor Peter Clark, Ward 13 Rideau-Rockcliffe



*I look forward to the evaluation and decisions for a final design for Laurier, discussion of options for winter cycling routes and examining connectivity and expansion of the network. We are making great strides and we have a strong and growing cycling community to help us get there!*

Councillor Diane Holmes, Ward 14 Somerset



# COMMUNITY

## CYCLING IN 2012

### OTTAWA CITY COUNCILLORS ON CYCLING

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*Safer bridge crossings, traffic calming and cycling facility improvements on Bronson Avenue from Dunbar Bridge to the Canal Bridge, a Complete Street for Main Street through Old Ottawa East, the construction of the Fifth-Clegg footbridge, and completion of the Western Rideau River Pathway. And that's just a start!*

Councillor David Chernushenko, Ward 17 Capital

*Continuing the multipurpose pathway which starts at Walkley and ends at Smyth – around the hospital and linking to the pathway along the Rideau River which will create complete 4.5km pedestrian and cycling multipurpose pathway from Walkley/Conroy to the Rideau River.*

Councillor Peter Hume, Ward 18 Alta Vista



*Since Osgoode Ward is comprised mostly of rural areas and Villages the needs focus around wider shoulders along busy roads as well as cycling friendly streets in Villages.*

Councillor Doug Thompson, Ward 20 Osgoode

*Connectivity. I want to connect the various pathways within our community much in the way we develop roadways and have a network in place that you could travel anywhere within our community by bike or walking. Most importantly, it must be a safe and enjoyable.*

Councillor Allan Hubley, Ward 23 Kanata South and



*I would... like to see the development of better facilities that encourage cycling as a mode of transportation within Ward 9 and throughout the City.*

Councillor Keith Egli, Ward 9 Knoxdale-Merivale (Chair of Transportation Committee)

## EVENTS

### CfSC Winter Family Bike Parade

The first annual CfSC Winter Family Bike Parade was held on January 22, celebrating year-round cycling. The ride took place on the new Laurier Ave SBLs. Councillor Mathieu Fleury joined 50 other participants. The ride finished at City Hall where warm apple cider and cookies were much appreciated.



Photos—Clockwise from Bottom Left: Volunteer handing out lights; Winter Family Bike Parade group photo; Volunteer handing out lights; Winter Family Bike Parade participant; Police officer handing out lights



### Lights on Bikes

Coinciding with the autumn change of season and diminishing light for late-afternoon commuters, the Lights on Bikes event was held near Corktown Bridge. The purpose of the event was to highlight the importance of lighting to promote safety for all road users. In total, 250 sets of lights were distributed to Ottawa cyclists. Event partners included: CfSC, Safer Roads Ottawa, RightBike, Pathway Patrol, City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Police Service. Fourteen volunteers, including Councillor Wilkinson and several police officers, helped distribute and install the bike lights.





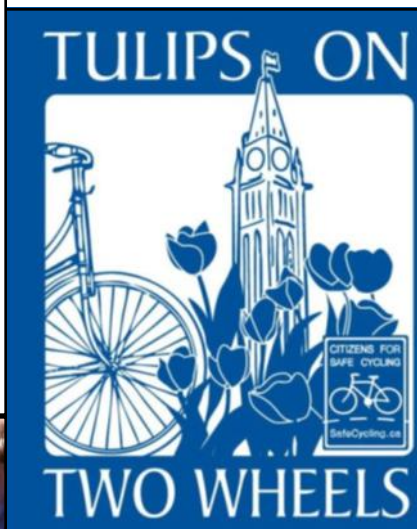
# COMMUNITY

## CYCLING IN 2012

### EVENTS

#### Tulips on Two Wheels

On May 5 CfSC inaugurated Tulips on Two Wheels, a fun event along the Rideau Canal Western Pathway. The weather was perfect and tulips were at their prime. Billed as a unique opportunity to tour the beautiful flowerbeds on bicycle, CfSC offered complimentary bike checks by the mechanics from Cycle Salvation at our base on Fifth Ave. A tour between Corktown Bridge and Dows Lake was led by knowledgeable guide and CfSC Vice President, Alex deVries.



#### Spring.Bike.Ottawa

An enthusiastic group of more than 50 people filled the cafeteria at the Causeway Work Centre on March 24 to hear the outlook for cycling in Ottawa in 2012 at the first annual Spring.Bike.Ottawa event. The morning included three short films and a brain storming session on places in town that needed the most improvement. Presentations were given by Zlatko Krstulic on the City's plans for its east-west bike way and a few north-south routes as well; Jessica Wells on EnviroCentre's plans for Bike to Work Month; Alex deVries on the parkmybike.ca website and Alayne McGregor on new developments in bike parking. Other guests included Councillor Katherine Hobbs and former mayor and current NCC board member Jacquelin Holzman.

Photos—Clockwise from Bottom Left: Cycle Salvation mechanic tuning up bikes at Tulips on Two Wheels; Tulips on Two Wheels poster; Guided bike tour at Tulips on Two Wheels





# COMMUNITY

## CYCLING IN 2012

### EVENTS

#### Capital Vélo Fest

The 2nd Annual Capital Vélo Fest was held on the weekend of June 2 in front of City Hall at the Marion Dewar Plaza. Unfortunately, the weather didn't co-operate this year and numbers were down considerably from the previous year. Some of the participants in this year's event included the MS Society, EnviroCentre, the Ottawa Bicycle Club, CfSC and a number of bike retailers. Hans Moor, President of CfSC, was awarded the Bruce Timmermans Award. The awards were followed by a Vélo Vogue fashion show and an evening *Tour La Nuit* that was co-coordinated by Vélo Fest founder Dick Louch.

Photos—Clockwise from Bottom Left: Vélo Vogue cycling fashion show at Capital Vélo Fest; Plaid Parade; MEC Bike Fest poster



#### MEC Bike Fest

Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) Bike Fest was held May 13 at LeBreton Flats. More than 1000 cyclists attended and almost 80 participated in the early morning group rides. Seventy-five people attended the various clinics offered by MEC and other vendors and organizations. Bikes from MEC and other vendors were demonstrated on-site.

#### Plaid Parade

Ottawa's First Plaid Parade was held on November 3, celebrating fall with a bike parade where participants showed off their finest and coziest plaid clothing. A scenic 6 km bike ride took approximately 200 cyclists through Hintonburg, the Arboretum and the Experimental Farm.





# COMMUNITY

## CYCLING IN 2012

### INITIATIVES

#### Sustainable Transportation Week

From September 16-22, [Sustainable Transportation Week](#) was marked through a weeklong program with various events and challenges encouraging people to commute by bus, bike, car, or on foot instead of by private automobile. Sustainable Transportation Week 2012 activities included:

- A weeklong Car-Free challenge for commuters to win sustainable transportation prizes
- A community conference on 'Creating Winning Projects for Walkable Communities' September 19
- A Bike-Bus-Car Challenge featuring local celebrities on September 20
- A bike parade in celebration of Car-Free Day on September 22



Photos—Top: Bike to Work Month launch; Bottom: Detail of Living Tapestry from 'Creating Winning Projects for Walkable Communities' conference

#### Bike to Work Month

During May 2012, EnviroCentre collaborated with businesses, the City of Ottawa, and other not-for-profit groups to present an expanded [Bike-to-Work-month program](#):

- EnviroCentre and the City of Ottawa introduced the BikeMobile, an interactive display booth on wheels that greeted employees with prize give-aways outside eight workplaces
- EnviroCentre teamed up with City Wide Sports to offer 60-minute lunch-and-learn cycling workshops at workplaces. Workshops were offered at 65 workplaces representing over 50,000 employees. Topics included an introduction to commuter cycling, a hands-on bicycle maintenance demonstration, and safe cycling practices.
- The online pledge system returned in 2012 and was expanded to track statistics such as distance travelled, reductions in emissions, calories burned, and dollars saved.

# COMMUNITY

## CYCLING IN 2012

### INITIATIVES



#### NCC Park-and-Cycle

In 2012, The NCC continued [Park and Cycle](#), a project that expands commuting choices. Commuters could once again drive part of the way to their workplace, park their vehicle in select NCC parking lots without incurring a fee, and then cycle the rest of the way. As in 2011, there were ten NCC lots exempted from the usual four-hour time limit on parking during the 2012 Park and Cycle season. There are plans to expand the number of lots involved in the project in 2013 to fifteen.



#### Public Bikes

- The [Capital Bixi](#) public bike system returned to Ottawa in May 2012 with 250 bikes at 25 stations around downtown Ottawa and Gatineau. During the 2012 operating season, the service had approximately 300 subscribers and on average 205 trips were taken daily. The NCC plans to operate with the same number of station and bikes in 2013.
- Wellington West and Westboro's community bike share service [RightBike](#) launched in May 2012 with 45 bikes at three hubs. Rightbike had 138 members who took approximately 340 trips during the 2012 season. There are plans to expand the service to 65 bikes and eight hubs in 2013.
- In May 2012, the [University of Ottawa](#) launched a bike share service for U of Ottawa students and staff. The project involved ten bikes available from two stations on campus.



#### Cycling Courses

In 2012, Ottawa's [City Wide Sports](#) developed and offered a variety of cycling safety programs designed to educate cyclists and help them feel more comfortable and confident on the road. The courses, based on CAN-Bike resources, taught assertive cycling skills, traffic analysis, general bicycle maintenance, and route planning. Courses were offered for beginners, seniors, women, commuters looking to improve their safety, and experienced cyclists interested in becoming CAN-Bike instructors. City Wide Sports also offered courses tailored for children focused specifically on urban or rural cycling, as well as private lessons and bike rodeos.



# TOP 10 FOR 2012

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In our [2011 Report on Bicycling in Ottawa](#), Citizens for Safe Cycling included a list of “Top 10” cycling-related problems. The Top 10 list explained infrastructure problems that needed attention for the safety and comfort of people cycling in Ottawa. This year, the list is categorized into several general problems and provides examples for each problem. They are listed in no particular order.

### • Highway Ramps

Overpasses are a problem at all the on-ramps and off-ramps of the 416 and 417 in Ottawa. The highways are seen as barriers to be crossed by cyclists. Examples:

1. In some locations, there is a bike lane for straight-through traffic. It rides between the lane to/from the ramp and straight-through traffic, so cyclists ride between two lanes of fast moving motor vehicles
2. Overpasses often have hills, which makes it difficult for cyclists to be seen by motorists

### • Bike Lane Ends Unexpectedly (Missing Links)

Cyclists should be able to expect consistent facilities on a bike lane. In many cases, cyclists encounter a bike lane that simply ends, often without signage. This forces cyclists to merge with motor vehicle traffic with no notice. Often bike lanes are installed when a street is rebuilt, but the limits of the construction project mean that only a small section of the road (and bike lane) is built. Rather than address the adjacent sections of road to address bicycle needs, the lane just ends. The City should minimize the missing links by filling in short gaps that exist in current bike lanes. Examples:

1. The Scott St-Albert St MUP ends at Bronson Ave. There is no connection to the western end of the Laurier SBLs
2. The Laurier SBLs end and merge awkwardly with a shared road to the east of Elgin St
3. The connection between Gladstone Ave and Byron Ave through Tyndall St is incomplete

### • Safety of Underpass Crossings

Many of the pedestrian / cyclist underpasses in Ottawa are narrow and dark. This causes several problems. The transition from outdoors to a dark area causes cyclists to be temporarily blinded, so it is difficult to see others in the tunnel. In some places, it is difficult to see around corners of the exit, presenting a safety problem. The narrowness of the tunnels makes collisions between cyclists and pedestrians or oncoming cyclists more likely. Examples:

1. Rideau Canal Eastern Pathway under Hog’s Back Rd
2. Rideau Canal Western Pathway under Pretoria Bridge

Photos—Top: Laurier SBL connection east end (at Elgin St); Bottom: MUP underpass at Hog’s Back



# TOP 10 FOR 2012

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### • Required Bicycle Dismount on Designated Routes

Many bike routes in Ottawa have segments that require walking. Some are posted, but others just end at a sidewalk or crosswalk. An example is the north end of the Rideau Canal Eastern Pathway, which dumps cyclists onto the wrong side of Colonel By Dr (if heading north) and provides no way to get across except to walk, cross as a pedestrian, and remount in an intersection with no shoulder. Examples:

1. The Scott St MUP is interrupted at bus stops and crosswalks
2. The Pretoria Bridge crossing, especially west side
3. The north end of Rideau Canal Eastern Pathway near the Ottawa Convention Centre

### • Inadequate Shoulders on Fast Roads

Many bicycle routes in rural areas are on roads with posted speed limits of 60 or 80 km/h. In good cases, the roads have wide, paved shoulders to separate motor vehicle traffic from cyclists. However, in many cases the shoulders are unsafe because they are not paved or the pavement is in poor condition. In the worst case, there is no shoulder at all, so cyclists must take the lane in fast moving traffic. This discourages commuter cycling among rural and suburban residents. Examples:

1. Hunt Club Rd between Riverside Dr and Canadair Pvt (80 km/hr, no shoulder)
2. Prince of Wales Dr between Fallowfield Rd and Crestway Dr
3. Old Richmond Rd between West Hunt Club and Seyton

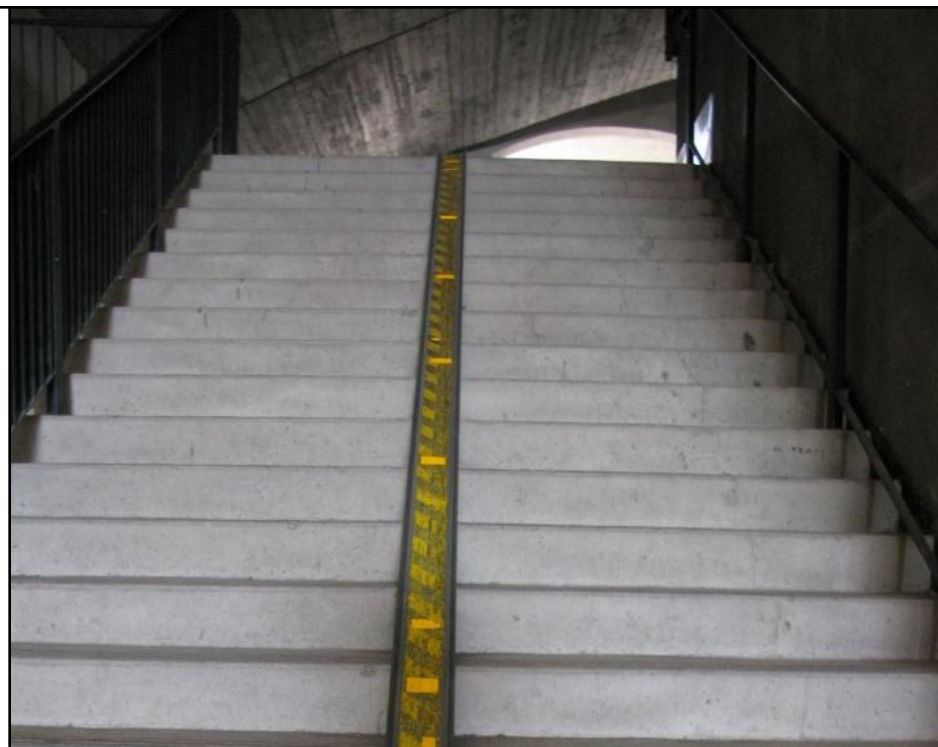
### • Lack of Bicycle Facilities (Entire Routes)

In some places, segments of bicycle routes are disconnected and don't provide continuous routes for longer trips. For example, the east end of the Laurier SBLs end at Elgin St, and cyclists are suddenly dumped in with heavy traffic. This means that there is no good bike route to get across downtown Ottawa. The City should consider all the routes and ensure that there is a completely connected network instead of individual segments.

Building connections between major destinations should be a priority. Examples:

1. A continuous East-West Corridor east of the Rideau River
2. Bike lanes connecting Algonquin College, Carleton University and the University of Ottawa to surrounding areas
3. Carleton University-Hartwell's Locks connection

Photos—Top: Stairs at Rideau Canal Western Pathway and Rideau St where cyclists have to dismount to connect to Rideau St; Bottom: No paved shoulder on Old Richmond Rd approaching Bells Corners from the south





# TOP 10 FOR 2012

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### • Snow Clearing

Participation in winter cycling is limited by the cold, but also by snow and ice accumulation. Currently, the City and NCC do far too little to ensure that bicycle lanes and paths are cleared, compelling winter cyclists to “take the lane”, which can inconvenience drivers and make cycling more difficult. In some cases, the alternative routes that cyclists take when bike lanes are full of snow force cyclists to take a long detour involving heavy traffic. While the NCC has so far been silent on this matter, the City of Ottawa has said that it would consider designating a winter cycling network for snow clearing priority. Bicycle racks should also be cleared of snow so that cyclists can park their bikes securely. Examples:

1. Percy St bike lane under the 417 (the bike path is currently used for temporary snow collection or car parking, blocking the 417 underpass to cyclists)
2. The Dows Lake pathways are plowed along the lake, but not through Commissioners Park that connects the Madawaska Blvd to Queen Elizabeth Dr. This is a busy route that connects the Glebe neighbourhood to government offices on Booth St and Carling Ave
3. City streets designated as bike routes are not subject to priority snow clearing (e.g. Fifth Ave, Fairmont Ave, Armstrong St)

### • Traffic Signals

Many multi-use pathways cross major roads, and in many cases the intersections of MUPs and roads have signals. Timing at intersections is tuned for drivers, so cyclists must sometimes wait several minutes for the light to change, even when there is no traffic. There are also only ever crosswalks at these intersections, so legally cyclists must dismount and walk their bikes across the road. Cyclists are left with an impractical system which leads some cyclists to ride across the intersection in the crosswalk against the light. Examples:

1. Maitland Ave and the Experimental Farm Pathway
2. Fisher Ave and the Experimental Farm Pathway
3. Hartwell's Locks Access Road at Prince of Wales Dr (connection to Experimental Farm Pathway)
4. RA Centre at Riverside Dr



Photos—Top: Bike lane has not been cleared; Bottom: Intersection of Booth St and NCC Pathway



# TOP 10 FOR 2012

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### • Bike Parking

As cycling increases, city streets, public buildings and private parking facilities need better bicycle parking. Too often bicycle racks are full or are placed in insecure locations. This causes cyclists to lock bicycles to sign posts or other unsuitable fixtures. Racks should be placed in a position that keeps them out of the way of pedestrians and cars. They should also have options to lock the bicycles in multiple places (frame or wheels) and be secured with a concrete footing. Buildings should also be required to provide good bicycle parking. For employees, these should be behind a locked cage (opened with a key or passcard). Ideal bicycle parking is covered, well illuminated and protected by security cameras.

### • Wayfinding

Proper signage is consistent and provides directions to roads, other bike routes, and major destinations. Cyclists should be able to read the sign without having to dismount. Few bicycle corridors in Ottawa have useful signage, which makes it difficult for cyclists to know their way around. Some NCC paths have signs, but they are inconsistent and do not point to city bicycle routes. Example:

1. There is an opportunity for a wayfinding pilot project with the opening of the O-Train multi-use pathway scheduled for 2013

Photos—Top: Bike parking at Queen St and Kent St; Bottom: An example of helpful wayfinding signage in Ottawa at the Rideau Canal Western Pathway and Bank St





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[Citizens for Safe Cycling](#) was formed as a non-profit association in Ottawa in 1984. We promote cycling as a viable means of transportation by advocating for improved education, facilities, legislation, and enforcement.

