

POLO PARK AREA INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

UPDATE - MAY 2014

A **MAJOR ROADWORKS PROJECT** is underway to address recommendations for traffic improvements and development in the Polo Park Area. Improvements will smooth out traffic flow, ease congestion and delays at intersections, encourage active transportation, and improve pedestrian accessibility.

What is the scope of the Polo Park Infrastructure Improvements Project?

The current plan for the Polo Park Infrastructure Improvements includes:

- extend/widen St. Matthews Avenue from Route 90 to St. James Street;
- widen St. Matthews Avenue from St. James Street to Empress Street;
- widen St. James Street from Maroons Road to Ellice Avenue; and
- intersection improvements at Ellice Avenue/St. James Street and St. Matthews Avenue/St. James Street.

Some land acquisition is needed to accomplish the work. If costs of acquiring the property needed to extend St. Matthews Avenue are too high, that portion of the project may be cancelled. Available funds would then be redirected to other roadway and traffic improvements in the area.

Other project components include new sidewalks, additions/improvements to existing land drainage, watermain renewals, connections to existing and future active transportation corridors, improved aesthetics, and relocation/protection of other utilities.

What is the status of the Polo Park Area Infrastructure Improvements Project?

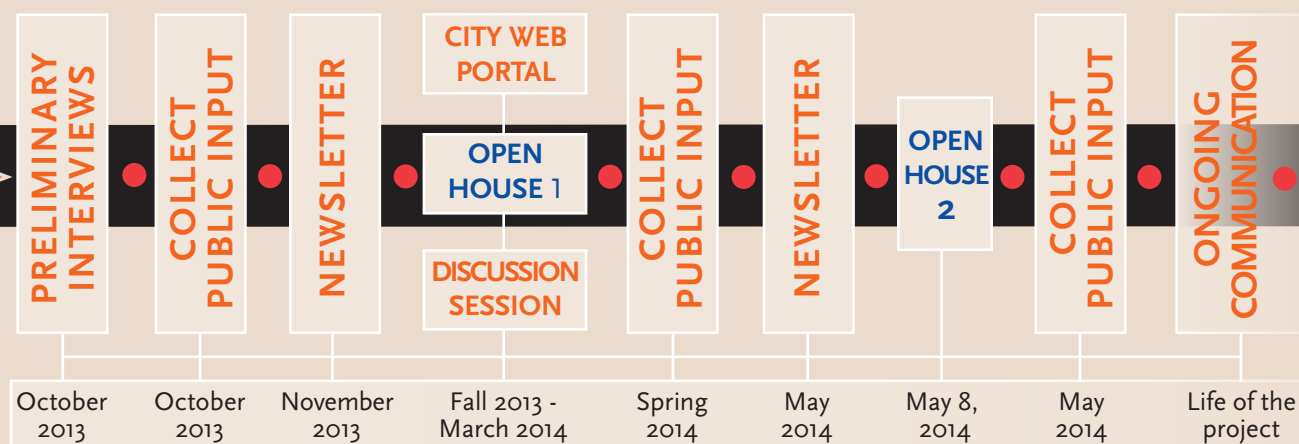
The project's detail design is complete, and we would like to invite you to an Open House to look it over, and discuss the construction plans and measures that can be taken to lessen impacts or inconvenience to area businesses, residents, and commuters.

Construction will begin in spring 2014 and will extend into the 2015 construction season.

How have stakeholders been involved in the project?

The City of Winnipeg understands businesses and people who live and work in the surrounding area are affected by this project work. A project newsletter was distributed throughout the local area, followed by an Open House in November 2013. Public communication and consultation is continuing.

The public consultation process generated input that has been taken into account in the detail design. This newsletter updates and summarizes input received from stakeholders, the project's current status, and next steps.



Public Open House, May 8th – see over for details



What input was received from Open House visitors and other interested citizens?

Open House visitors and other respondents were clear that business owners and residents, both within and outside the area, want infrastructure changes around Polo Park. Those who completed questionnaires listed top priorities as improving traffic flow and congestion, minimizing impacts during construction, and staying in close touch with the community during construction. This feedback has been valuable in completing the project design and planning for construction.

After construction is completed, the planned St. Matthews Avenue extension combined with added left turn storage lanes at the St. James Street/Ellice Avenue and St. James Street/St. Matthews Avenue intersections will provide better traffic flow throughout the area. Other identified intersections such as Ellice Avenue and Empress Street are outside the project limits and are not included.

Some participants suggested a one-way pair option on Empress and St. James Streets. These pairings were reviewed in earlier studies and not recommended, in part, due to traffic movement. In some cases, neighbouring streets don't have the capacity for additional traffic, while others don't have the land available to build required turns and lanes.

CYCLING ACCOMMODATION AND CONNECTIVITY

In accordance with the City's active transportation plan, new bike lanes in the east-west direction along St. Matthews Avenue will connect existing routes leading west to St. James and east to the West End. Intersection upgrades will also improve cycling at two locations currently identified as 'caution zones' on the City of Winnipeg Cycling Map.

The roadway along St. James Street can accommodate, at most, four lanes of vehicle traffic and medians, because of buildings, so St. James Street would not make an efficient north-south bicycle route.

MEETING PEDESTRIAN NEEDS

Rebuilt area sidewalks will provide 1.5 metre clear travel paths. There will be audio pedestrian crossing signals at all signalized intersections. New sidewalks on St. James Street, St. Matthews Avenue and Ellice Avenue will have tactile indicator surfaces for the visually impaired. Lighting will be enhanced with light

standards along all streets, on both sides, in the project area. New medians that accommodate left turning traffic will provide a small stopping space for pedestrians, particularly helpful as they cross wider streets.

TRUCK TRAFFIC

The project will not change truck routes on existing streets in the project area, where they are currently limited to St. Matthews Avenue, Ellice Avenue, Century Street, St. James Street, and Empress Street. Residential streets are not truck routes, although trucks with more than four tires may use them to conduct business, using the shortest possible route to return to designated truck routes.

Can construction impacts be minimized?

Major roadworks projects like this do require lane closures during construction. Possible mitigation measures for temporary, construction-related congestion, access to businesses, and increased vehicle traffic on residential streets, could include:

- Temporary left turn restrictions to ease construction-related congestion
- One lane of traffic in each direction to be maintained during construction
- Right direction way-in and right direction way-out when accessing businesses
- One sidewalk for pedestrians kept open during construction, where there are sidewalks on both sides of the road
- Construction staging and scheduling plan made easily available to all
- Extended work hours to speed up completion with typical hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Contractor may work on Saturday to speed up completion of work
- Monitoring of traffic before and during construction, to respond to concerns about increased cut-through traffic on residential streets
- Local approach access maintained or re-directed as much as possible for businesses' deliveries and customers
- Emergency vehicle access and service throughout construction
- Transit access maintained, with some possible temporary closing or relocating of stops
- As on-street parking will not be available, parking accommodation will be maintained near businesses wherever possible

What are the next steps for the project?

A notice of construction will be delivered to all businesses in the area after the Open House. Contact information will be provided for easier, direct communication.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Open House: Thursday, May 8th, 2014
Construction Start: Spring 2014
Construction: 2014-2015

Project Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns please call 311 or email ppii@winnipeg.ca

For more information about the project please visit: www.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/majorprojects/

The project website will continue to be updated.

You Are Invited

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Please join us for the second Open House to discuss the detailed project design, the construction schedule, construction impacts and possible mitigation measures.

THURSDAY MAY 8th, 4 - 8 p.m. POLO PARK SHOPPING CENTRE, CENTRE COURT

We look forward to seeing you!