

NEW EDINBURGH NEWS

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City's multi-use path link proposal open for comment until June 11

By Chris Straka

Until June 11, the public can review and comment on the City of Ottawa's proposed design of the paved multi-use pathway (MUP) link: ottawa.ca/stanleymup.

This design is not the one the neighbourhood Pathway Design Committee would prefer, but rather is the only option the City says could be built either this year or next using available funds.

The New Edinburgh Community Alliance (NECA) and the Crichton Community Council (CCC) agreed this proposed design might achieve the broad support of neighbourhood residents if specific issues are addressed in a more detailed revision.

One of four link options

In the December 2019 issue of the NEN, I reported on an initiative to close a gap in the paved MUP through New Edinburgh Park, south of Stanley Avenue, between Dufferin Road and the playground. A CCC-led Pathway Design Committee, including members of NECA and

the neighbourhood at large, proposed a MUP alignment and design for the City of Ottawa's consideration in late 2019.

The committee's proposed MUP alignment runs along Stanley Avenue between the street trees and road edge – past the playground, the Fieldhouse and the east ice-rink lawn – separated from motorized traffic by a curb and narrow verge.

While the committee did consider designs in which Stanley Avenue was either partially or fully closed to traffic from the Fieldhouse to River Lane (a recommendation made in NECA's 1997 Community Directed Traffic Calming Study), this approach could not be realized in the near term due to the need for additional study of a closure's spin-off effects.

At the CSST Community Construction Monitoring Committee's February 2020 meeting, the City provided neighbourhood representatives with three additional MUP link options.

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Crowvid19 lands in New Edinburgh during lockdown

By Elizabeth Gray-Smith

During the tenth week of public health interventions keeping the residents of Ottawa inside or standing two metres apart in public, a beautiful piece of art flew in to lift the spirits of New Edinburgh residents.

Crowvid19, as he is called, is an eight-foot, 200-pound metal sculpture that travels across Ottawa, spending seven days at a time perched in a prominent location in the neighbourhood that claims the highest weekly donations to the Ottawa Food Bank.

From May 19–26, New Edinburgh won fostering rights with a total of \$1,330 donated, beating out Centrepointe and other neighbourhoods in town.

This was Crowvid19's third week in flight.

The large bird – made of metal scraps including rebar, bathtubs, the edge of a plow, auto parts, and garage door springs – is the craftsmanship of Ottawa-based mechanic and metal artist Dave Harries.

"It was an idea I had with a friend: Let's see what kind of interest we can get in renting him out, but by donation to a great cause," said Dave, as he installed the piece of art on the lawn of the NECTAR Centre at 255 MacKay St.

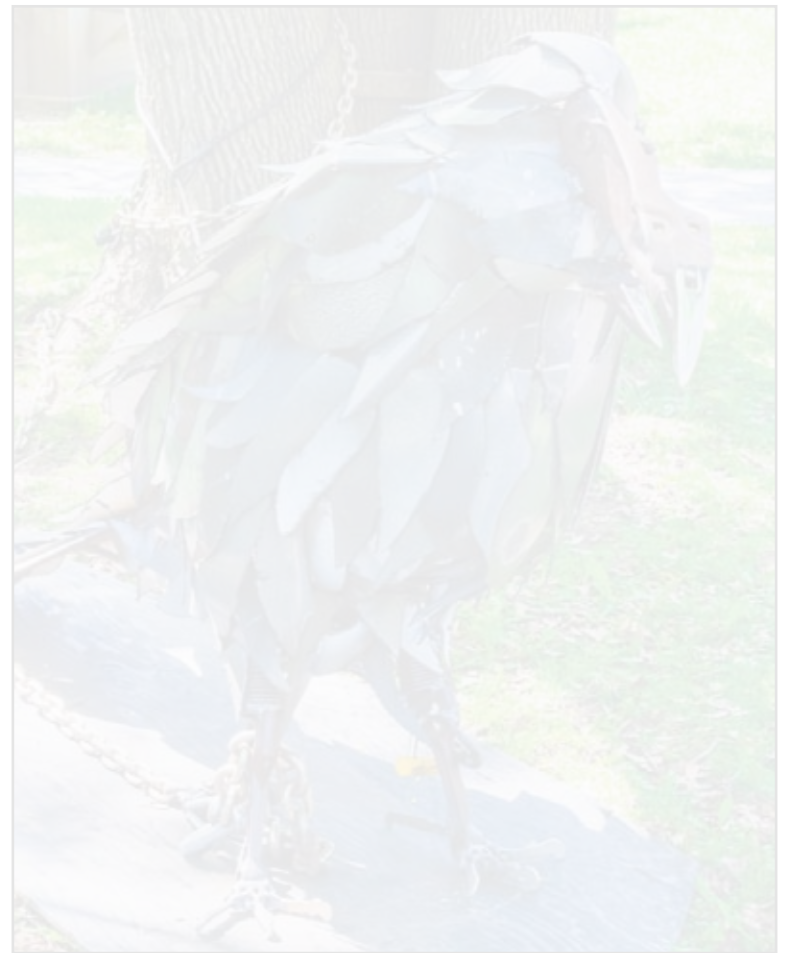


Photo by Alexander McKenzie

An eight-foot, 200-pound metal sculpture named Crowvid19 roosted on the lawn of 255 MacKay St. for a week at the end of May.

New Edinburgh keeps Crowvid19 until the next set of Ottawa neighbourhoods battle to foster him.

"It has been amazing to see the emotional response when communities adopt him, but sad when he moves away,"

said Harries.

Crowvid left his perch on MacKay Street on May 27 to roost on the front lawn of a private house in Kitchissippi Ward. Learn more about Crowvid on Facebook and Twitter.

Thinking positively about the Beechwood conundrum

By Marc d'Orgeville,
NECA Traffic and Safety
Committee

Last year, during the municipal byelection campaign, I heard as many different opinions or complaints about Beechwood Avenue as the number of doors I knocked on. I joked that whomever could "fix" Beechwood would automatically win the byelection.

Most complaints are often in conflict with others: for instance, parking versus bike lane; or pedestrian experience/slow traffic; or the loss of small local businesses versus the need for more development.

If this were a mathematical problem, it would be characterized as being "overdetermined." There is not one

solution able to satisfy every individual opinion.

That's what I call the Beechwood conundrum.

At the heart of this conundrum, there is a simple problem.

On the one hand, a majority of neighbouring residents would like Beechwood to be a pedestrian-friendly village where it feels good to spend time shopping or going out with friends and family.

On the other hand, this is an arterial road with much local and non-local commuter vehicle traffic. The two are obviously working against each other. For instance, removing lanes and reducing speed improve both pedestrian experience and safety, but reduce the vehicle flow-through. The right balance

between the two will vary widely depending on whom you ask.

The dilemma for Beechwood (as for most arterial roads) comes from the negative impact that controlling traffic throughflow has on neighbouring residents, starting with local vehicle commuters or residents of nearby streets where car traffic overflows. People who have no other choice than to drive to Beechwood are also negatively affected when decisions about parking for cars and bicycles hinders their ability to quickly shop on Beechwood. Add the reduction in the number of bus stops, the impact of slowed car traffic on bus reliability and the type of recent

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Some modifications could improve proposed path link

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The committee reviewed the four options, striving to identify one alignment that was best for the neighbourhood. The committee felt that the new link must be:

- separated from the roadway;
- located on the river side of Stanley Avenue;
- aligned to preserve existing park uses; and
- designed to reduce potential conflict between drivers, pathway users and park users.

Ultimately, the committee recommended its original pathway alignment proposal to the CCC and NECA at their respective March meetings.

At NECA's March 24 meeting, City Councillor Rawlson King's staff made it clear that the only MUP alignment option that could be built in

the short term (2020 or 2021) using available funds was an option proposed by the City that aligned the paved path on the river side of the Stanley Avenue street trees, across the Fieldhouse's east lawn, around the river side of the storage shed, then past the playground.

King's staff emphasized that the committee's preferred pathway option had little chance of being built in the next decade.

While the City's "buildable now" pathway alignment is considered inferior to the alternatives, both the NECA and CCC boards encouraged the City to continue a detailed design process for the pathway link.

Proposed link can be improved further

Members of the Pathway



Image from City of Ottawa's Twitter account

Design Committee noted some modifications that can be made to improve the City's pathway proposal.

- Align the path on the road-side of the storage shed between the existing maple tree and road edge, avoiding the busy front lawn of the

Fieldhouse;

- Install speed-control measures (e.g., textured paving, chicane posts) and signage on both sides of Fieldhouse front lawn;
- Create physical separation (e.g., boulders or a fence) between the paved MUP and gravel pedestrian path;
- Move all or parts of the pathway closer to the road edge to avoid activities taking place east of the Fieldhouse;
- Allow the pathway to compromise the root zone of existing shrubs and street trees especially where tree roots were disturbed by the installation of an underground electrical conduit for the CSST project under the road's gravel shoulder, instead of installing a new, impermeable surface closer to the river;
- Move the storage shed to create more space and improve sightlines;
- Move the utility pole from the pathway or move the pathway to the playground side of the pole;

- Reduce MUP width to the odour-control facility and the width of curb cuts at Stanley Avenue to 3.0 m;
- Plant street trees in the existing gaps along Stanley Avenue;
- Complete the line of wood posts on both sides of Stanley Avenue where no curbs exist to limit disturbance of vegetation by motor vehicles;
- Install posts to prevent motor vehicle access.

Please take this opportunity to consider the proposal and share your opinions with the City of Ottawa before the June 11, 2020 deadline. Additional information and a copy of the proposed MUP plan is available at: ottawa.ca/stanleymup.

Chris Straka has lived within sight of the Rideau River Eastern MUP for more than 10 years. He was the lead on the Pathway Design Committee, informed by his association with the CCC, a master's degree in environmental design and lots of saddle time on his steel steed.



Photo by Chris Straka

The corner of Stanley Avenue and Dufferin Road. The City has proposed a design to connect a gap in the multi-use pathway, which, though not ideal, could be improved to better serve all park users.

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