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City of Yorkton

Cycling Network Plan

December 2008



Report



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Executive Summary

An Active Transportation Vision for Yorkton was established at the Planning Active Transportation Communities Workshop held in June 2006: “To have an active transportation network that enhances the environment and health of residents and visitors in the areas there they live, learn, work and play”. The City would like to build on this vision and is planning to increase cycling to create a safe, healthy, and connected community where they live, work, learn and play. One way to increase cycling is by developing a cycling master plan that can be implemented over the next five to seven years.

Associated Engineering (AE) has been commissioned to develop this comprehensive Cycling Network Plan for the City of Yorkton. The recommended plan includes a vision and a facility plan for on-street bikeways, off-street multi-use pathways and bicycle parking as well as education and outreach components.

The development of the Cycling Network Plan included a cycling workshop organized by Yorkton in motion, a community needs assessment and a ride-along to gather input on the preferred cycling routes. A best practices review of Zoning, Traffic and Bicycle bylaws in other cities was carried out, to provide guidance for recommendations for changes to Yorkton’s Zoning and Traffic Bylaw. Options for commuter and recreational cycling routes were developed and recommended routes were presented at an open house (see Figure E-1). Based on the feedback at the open house the routes were finalized and an implementation plan was developed.

The implementation plan includes immediate, medium term and long term stages with planning level costs for each stage. Ongoing operational costs including staff and a public education program are also included in the implementation plan. The highest impact lowest cost elements were identified as the first element of the recommended to plan. On-street bikeways on Darlington Street and on Gladstone Avenue will form the foundation of the plan by providing a north-south route and an east-west route that travels through the centre of the community and extends outwards in all directions.

The involvement of the public at various stages in the development of the plan demonstrated the value of information sharing and ongoing communication. The success of the Cycling Plan will be reliant on identifying ambassadors in the community who will assist the City in implementing the plan and increasing cycling in Yorkton.

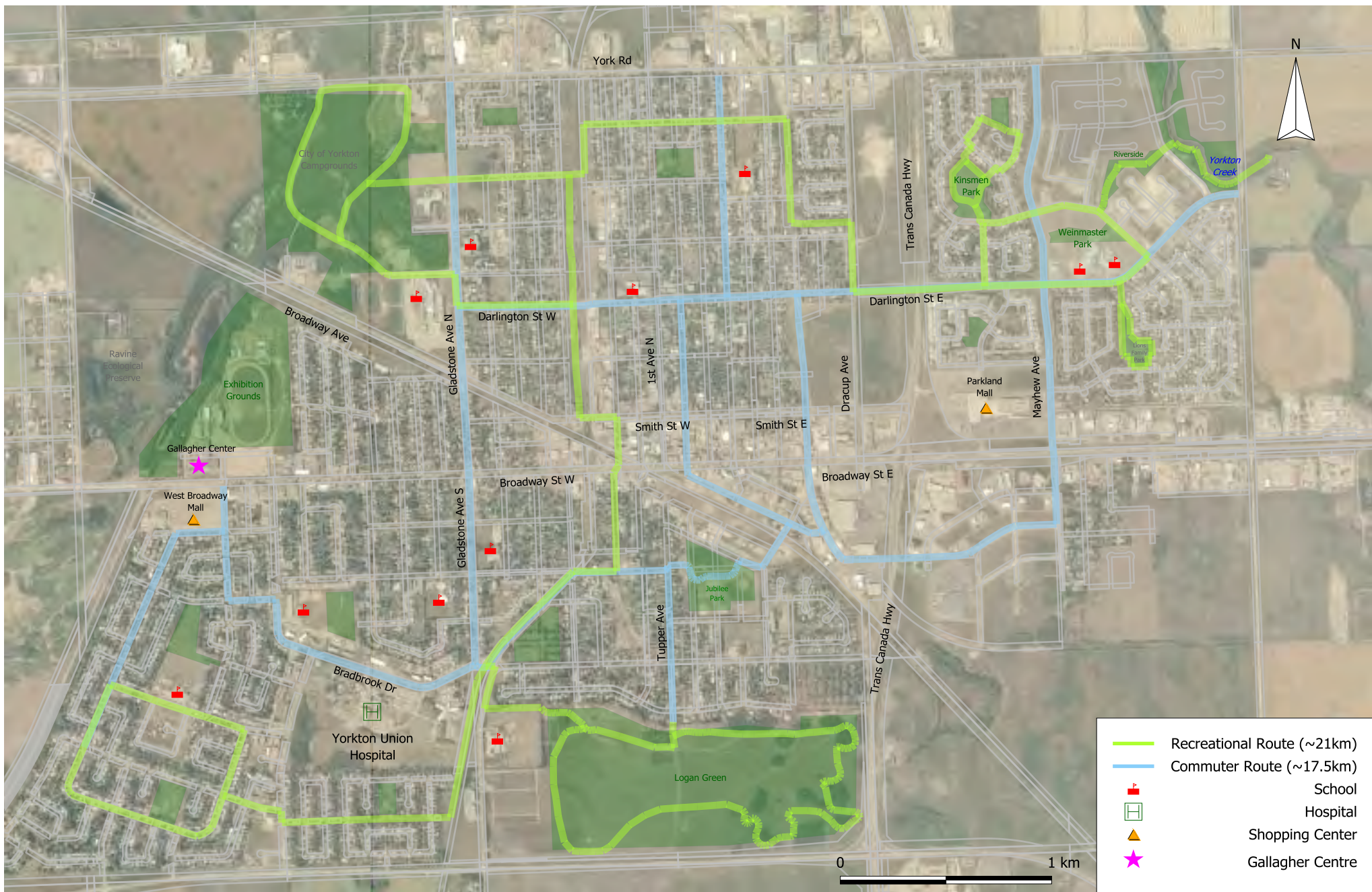


Figure E-1

City of Yorkton Cycling Network Plan
RECOMMENDED PLAN



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Introduction

1.1 STUDY BACKGROUND

The City of Yorkton is planning to increase cycling in the City to create a safe, healthy, and connected community where they live, work, learn and play. One way to increase cycling is by developing a cycling master plan that can be implemented over the next five to seven years.

As is the case for most Canadian cities, the majority of Yorktonians are automobile dependent. The layout of new suburban neighbourhoods and big box retail areas, the space provided to accommodate automobiles, the majority of vehicles on the market, and our roadway design, operations and maintenance all place a high emphasis on accommodating motor vehicles.

Despite this perception of automobile dependency, there is a demand for walking and cycling to work and other places that also needs to be accommodated. The demand has been measured in the mode of transportation to work data collected by Statistics Canada as part of the census. In May 2006, a total of 7.8% of Canadian workers used active transportation to travel to work (6.5% of workers walked to work and 1.3% workers cycled to work). The City of Yorkton fared better than the Canadian average, with 8.6% walking or cycling to work.

Yorkton has a great foundation to foster an increase in cycling for both commuter and recreational cyclists. Yorkton residents seem to embrace existing recreational facilities such as the skate park, the downtown park and the Gallagher Centre. Residents are likely to welcome a cycling network and bicycle parking facilities, particularly if the plan is respecting of residents non-cycling needs and is implemented as added-value services providing win-win solutions.

1.2 STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study methodology used several project elements that were developed using the philosophy that project ambassadors and Yorkton residents would welcome a reasonable amount of participation throughout the process, while ensuring the project schedule is well managed and the Cycling Network Plan is appropriate from a parks and engineering perspective.

Yorkton in motion held an “Increasing Cycling in Yorkton” workshop on June 18, 2008 that was used as the Cycling Network Plan project launch. AE staff participated in this workshop and were able to develop a vision and goals for the Yorkton Cycling Network plan, based on the results of the workshop.

A community needs assessment was done to determine the current active transportation travel patterns and to understand the opportunities and challenges for increasing cycling in Yorkton. The City ran a booth at the Yorkton Summer Fair from July 2 to 5, 2008 to collect information on community cycling needs and to promote active transportation in general. The project team then developed an area base map illustrating existing bikeways and shared-use pathways, roadways, parks, and key destinations for cyclists. Cycling

network alternatives were developed for a commuter network and a recreational network. The project team led a project ambassador “ride-along” on September 23rd to review the proposed networks and to identify refinements. The recommended routes were presented at a public open house on October 23rd. Attendees were able to provide feedback on the recommendations. There was overwhelming support for the bicycle network plan.

The project team carried out a best practises review of zoning, traffic and bicycle bylaws, bicycle parking and public education opportunities. Based on this review the Yorkton bylaw and bicycle parking status was assessed and some revisions were recommended. An outline for a public education program was developed. An implementation plan with specific steps for the short, medium and long term was developed, including approximate costs.

1.3 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An advisory committee was formed to provide guidance for the project. The advisory committee included the following members:

- Harry Kerr, City of Yorkton Parks;
- Sheila Hryniak, Yorkton *in motion*;
- Darren Spelay, Yorkton *in motion*;
- Louise Bellanger, Sunrise Health District;
- Michael Eger, City of Yorkton Planning; and
- Kevin Kriger, City of Yorkton Engineering.

2 Cycling Needs Assessment

2.1 INTRODUCTION

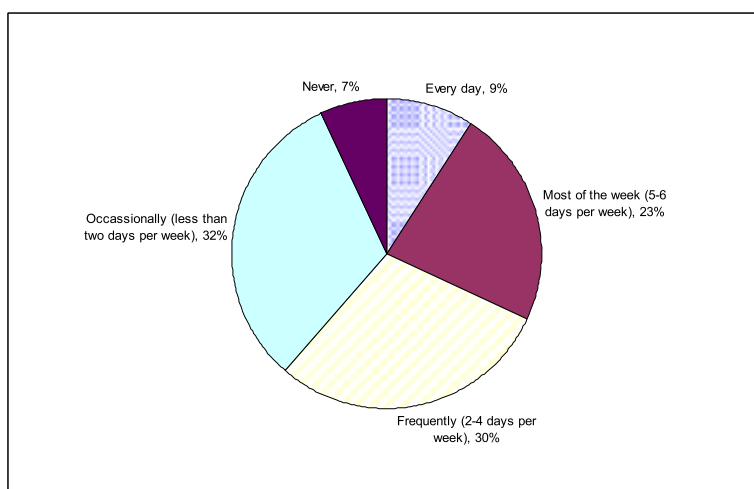
A Cycling Needs Assessment helps to understand baseline conditions that identify the community’s unique assets and needs with respect to cycling. Engaging the community lends itself to the development of alternatives which will be crafted in response to the needs identification. GIS, overlays of existing roadways and cycling facilities with community travel needs were used to create a snapshot of Yorkton’s cycling-based supply and demand. A survey was conducted at the Yorkton Fair in July 2008 to collect community needs and to promote active transportation in general. The survey, which is shown in Appendix A, was completed by 50 individuals of whom eight were not from the City of Yorkton.

2.2 CYCLING NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

A cycling needs assessment survey was distributed at a City of Yorkton trade show display booth at the Yorkton Exhibition July 2 to 5, 2008. The survey consisted of a series of ten questions. The majority were multiple choice and ranking type, two were open-ended type questions, and one was a map-based question, where the respondents mark their current and preferred cycling route in the provided City map.

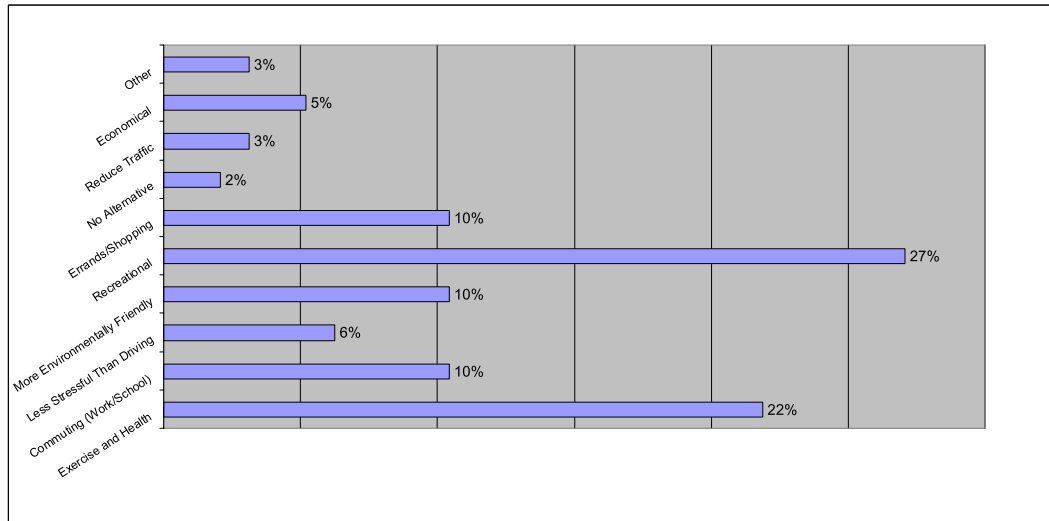
Respondents were given four choices to classify their frequency of cycling in good weather months; every day, most of the week (5-6 days per week), frequently (2-4 days per week), occasionally (less than two days per week) and never. Fifty-three % of respondents cycle 2-6 days per week followed by 32% cycling occasionally (see Figure 2-1).

Figure 2-1
How Many Days per Week do you Cycle in Good Weather Months?



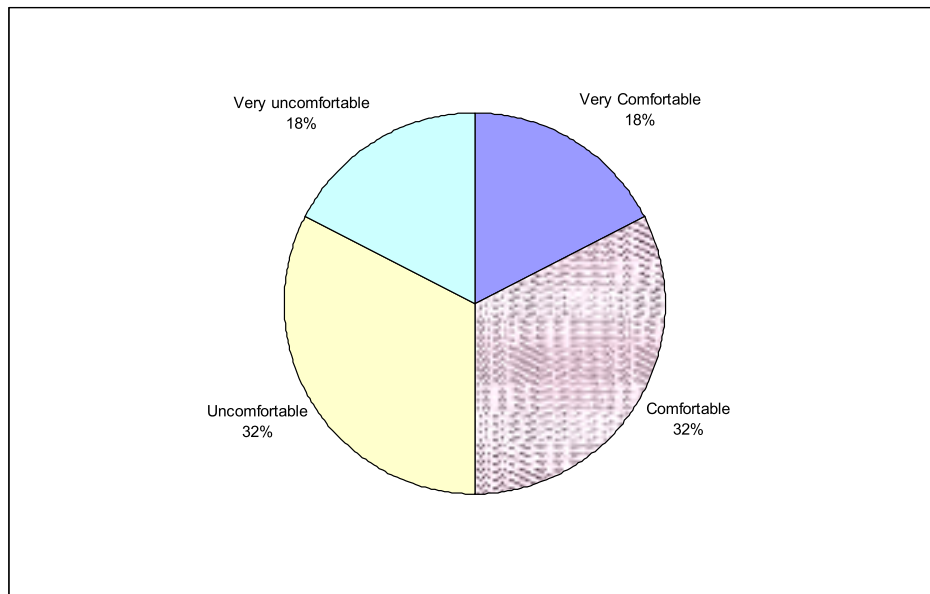
Participants were asked the question, *Why do you ride a bicycle in the City of Yorkton?* The majority of cyclists ride for recreation, and exercise and health at (49%) (see Figure 2-2).

Figure 2-2
Why do You Ride a Bicycle in the City of Yorkton?



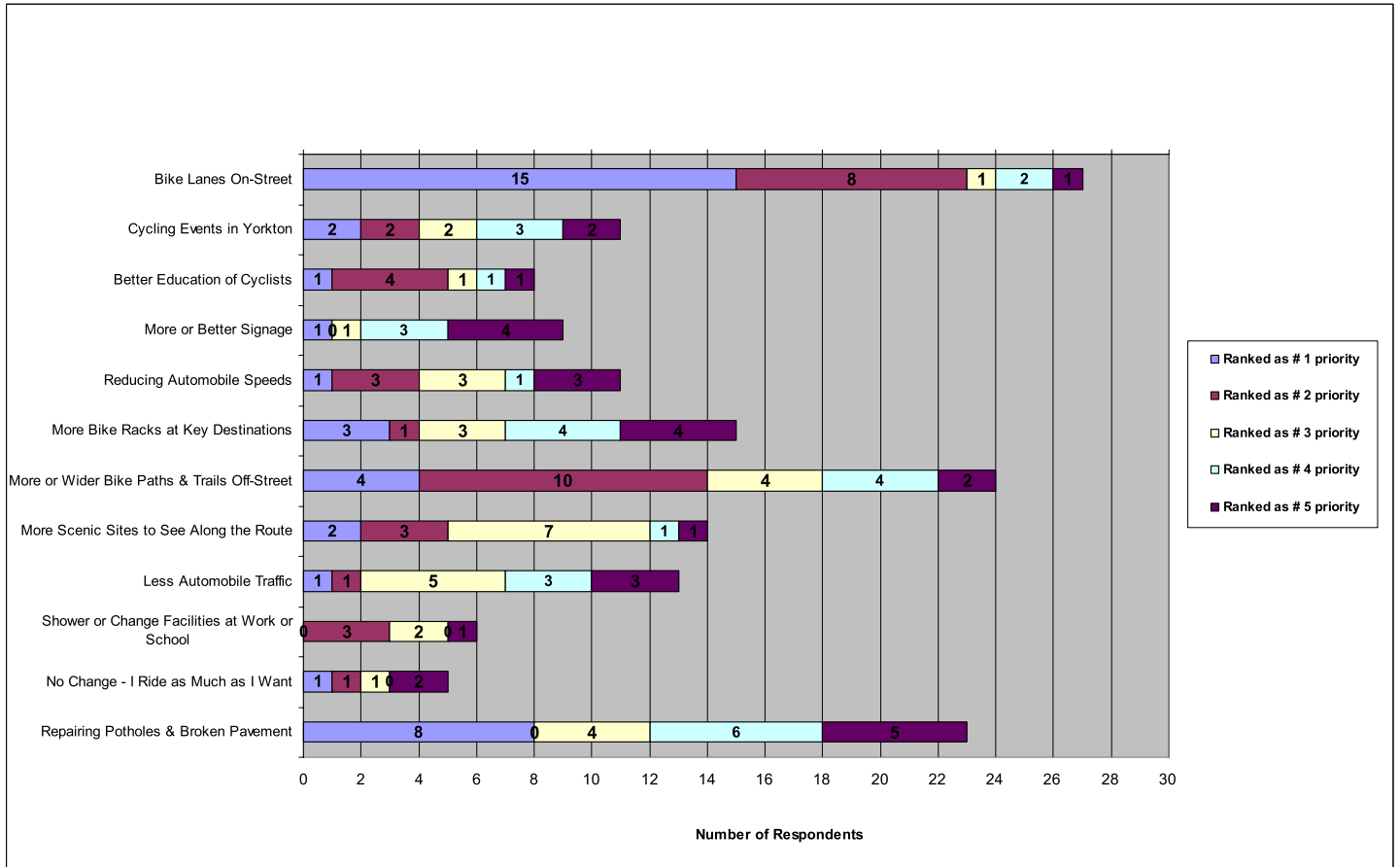
Participants were asked to evaluate their level of comfort while cycling in traffic, the results were an even split between comfortable and uncomfortable (see Figure 2-3).

Figure 2-3
How Would You Rate Your Comfort Level When Cycling in Traffic?



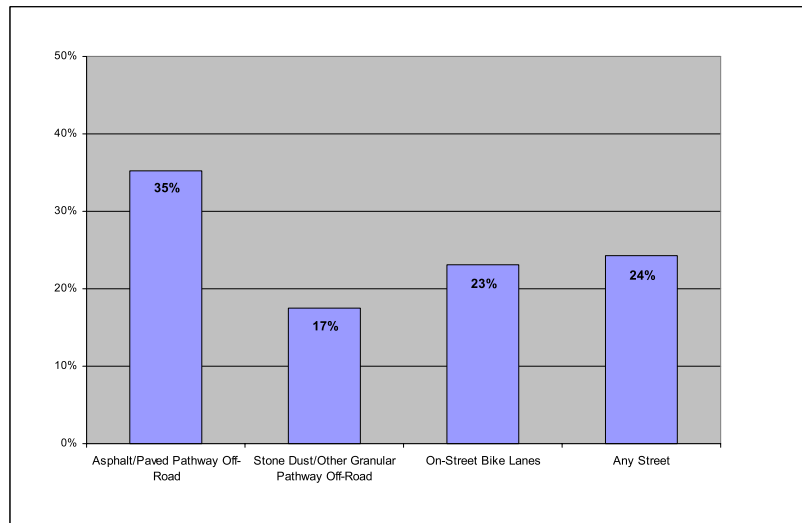
Cyclists were asked to rank the top five changes that would allow them to cycle more. The most popular changes were *bike lanes on-street*, followed by *more or wider bike paths and trails off-street* (see Figure 2-4).

Figure 2-4
Rank the Top Five Changes that Would Allow You to Cycle More



A majority of cyclists prefer to cycle on *asphalt / paved pathway off-road* followed by *on-street bike lanes* and *any street* (see Figure 2-5).

Figure 2-5
Rate the Preferred Place to Cycle in Order of Preference



The respondents were asked to suggest three improvements to help you cycle in downtown and outside of downtown. The majority of respondents in the *Suggested Improvements in Downtown* category wanted more or better bike lanes followed by bike rack improvements (see Table 2-1). In the *Suggested Improvements outside of Downtown* category, most of the respondents would like more or better bike paths followed by paved path improvements (see Table 2-2).

Table 2-1
Suggested Improvements In Downtown

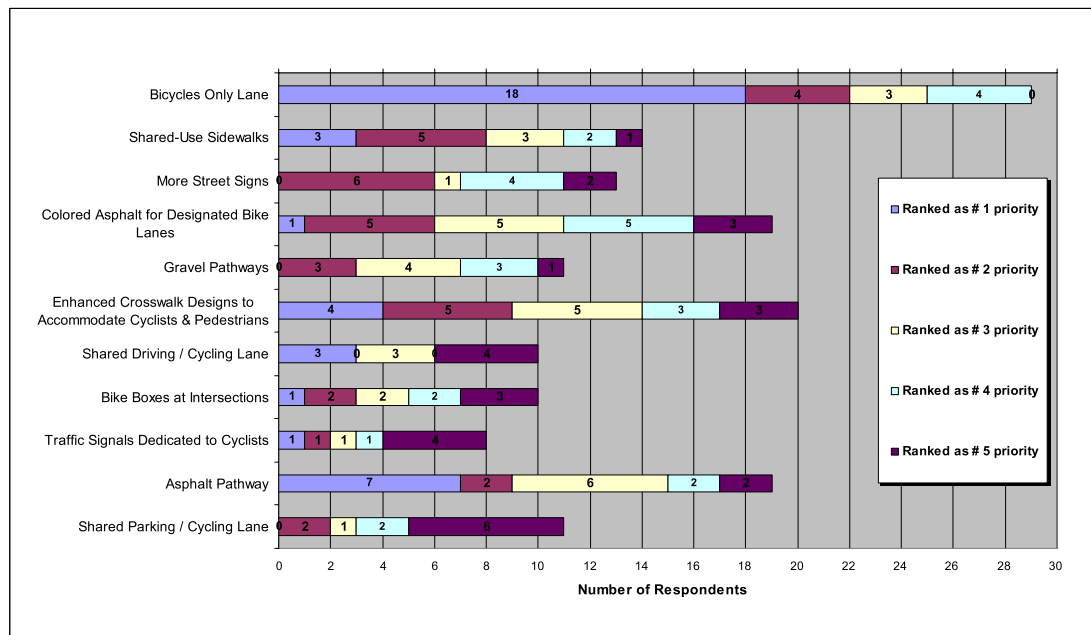
Suggested Improvements	Number of Respondents
Bike Lanes	15
Bike Racks	8
Improve Sidewalks	6
Repair Potholes	6
Improve Signage/Lighting	5
Educate Motorists	2

**Table 2-2
Suggested Improvements Outside Downtown**

Suggested Improvements	Number of Respondents
Bike Paths	10
Paved Paths	7
Scenic Routes / Parks	6
Improve Lighting / Signals	6
Bike Trails	5
Ramps	4
Education	3

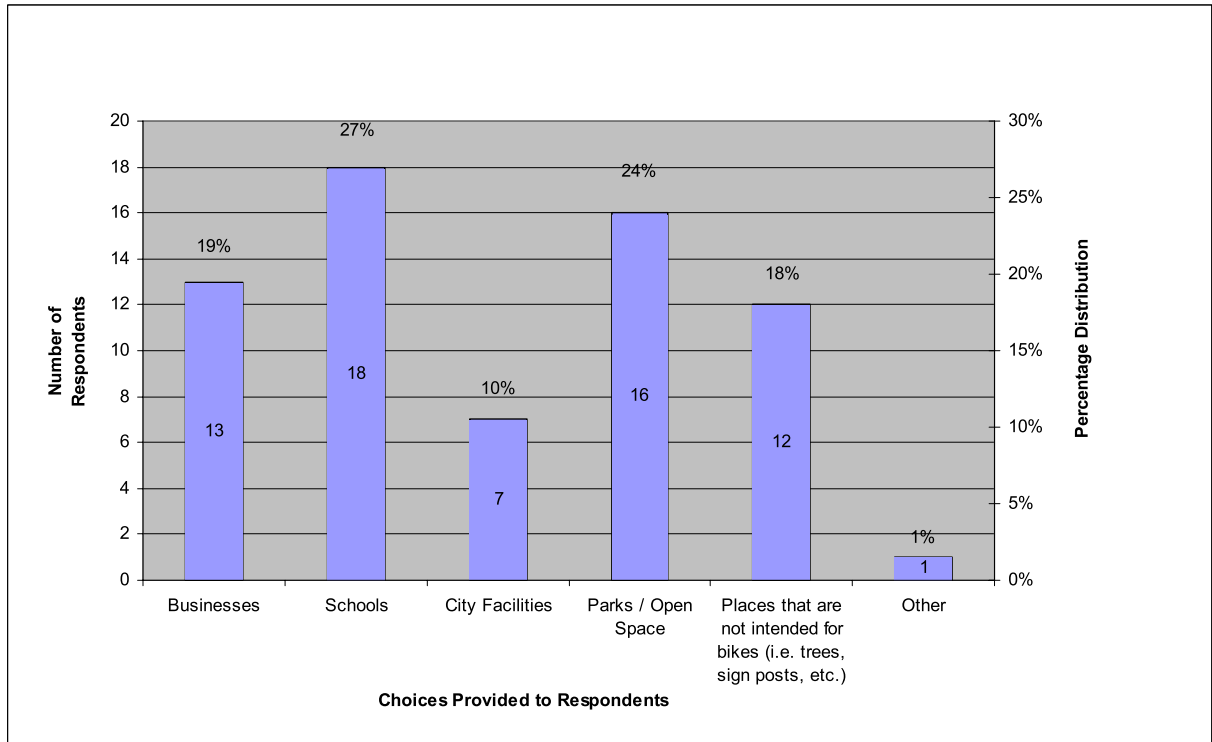
Respondents were then asked to rank *what design features would you like to see implemented*. *Bicycles only lane* ranked the highest by a significant margin followed by the *asphalt pathway* (see Figure 2-6).

**Figure 2-6
What Design Features Would You Like to See Implemented**



Cyclists were asked *where do you currently park their bicycles besides at home*; the top two locations were *at school* followed by *parks / open spaces*. It is also interesting to note that 18% of respondents selected the choice of *places that are not intended for bikes (i.e. trees, sign posts, etc.)* (see Figure 2-7).

Figure 2-7
Where do You Currently Park Your Bike (Besides Home)



The majority of respondents would like to have more bicycle racks in the shopping centres and mall areas followed by downtown and parks (see Table 2-3).

Table 2-3
Suggested Locations for Bike Racks

Suggested Locations for Bike Racks	Number of Respondents
Mall / Shopping Areas (Includes A&W, Superstore, Movie Theatre)	8
Downtown	6
Parks	6
Businesses	3
Schools / College	3
Library	2

Respondents were then asked to mark their favourite destinations (on a map), where they currently cycle, and where they would like to cycle. Figure 2-8 indicates where they currently cycle and Figure 2-9 indicates their preferred cycling routes. The results indicate the following streets are the most preferred streets to cycle on:

- Darlington Street
- Broadway Street
- Gladstone Avenue
- Smith Street

The most common destinations are Logan Green, Gallagher Centre, Exhibition Grounds, and the Regional High School.

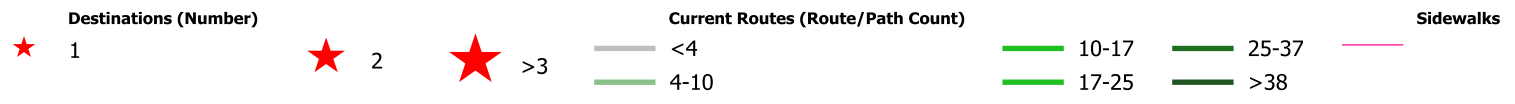
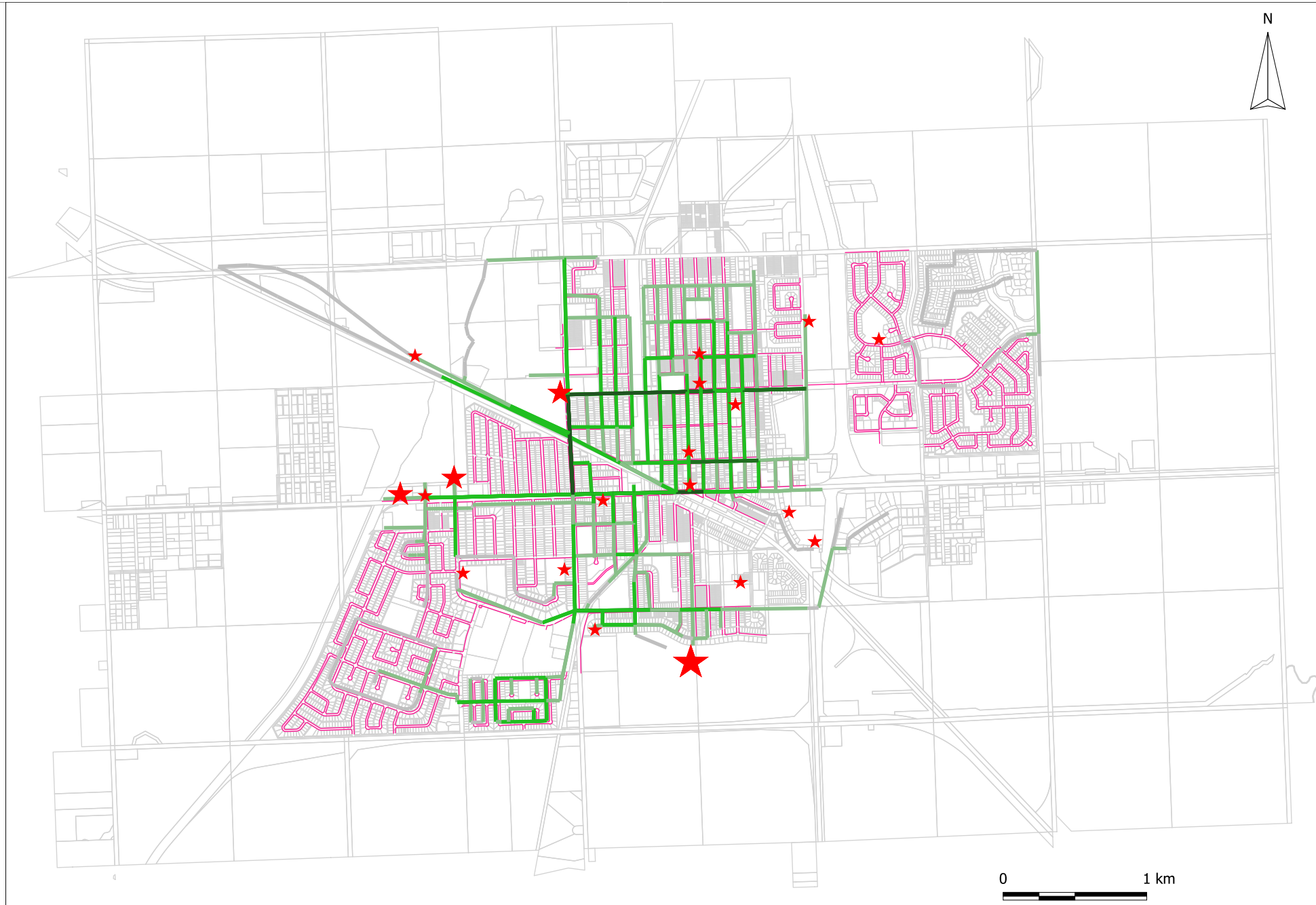


Figure 2-8

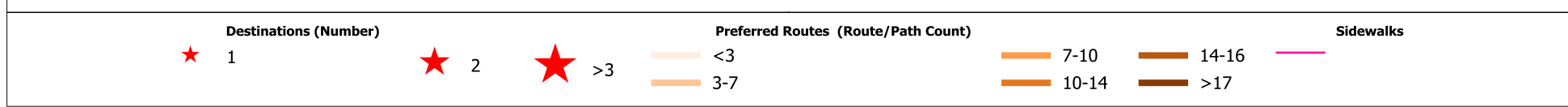
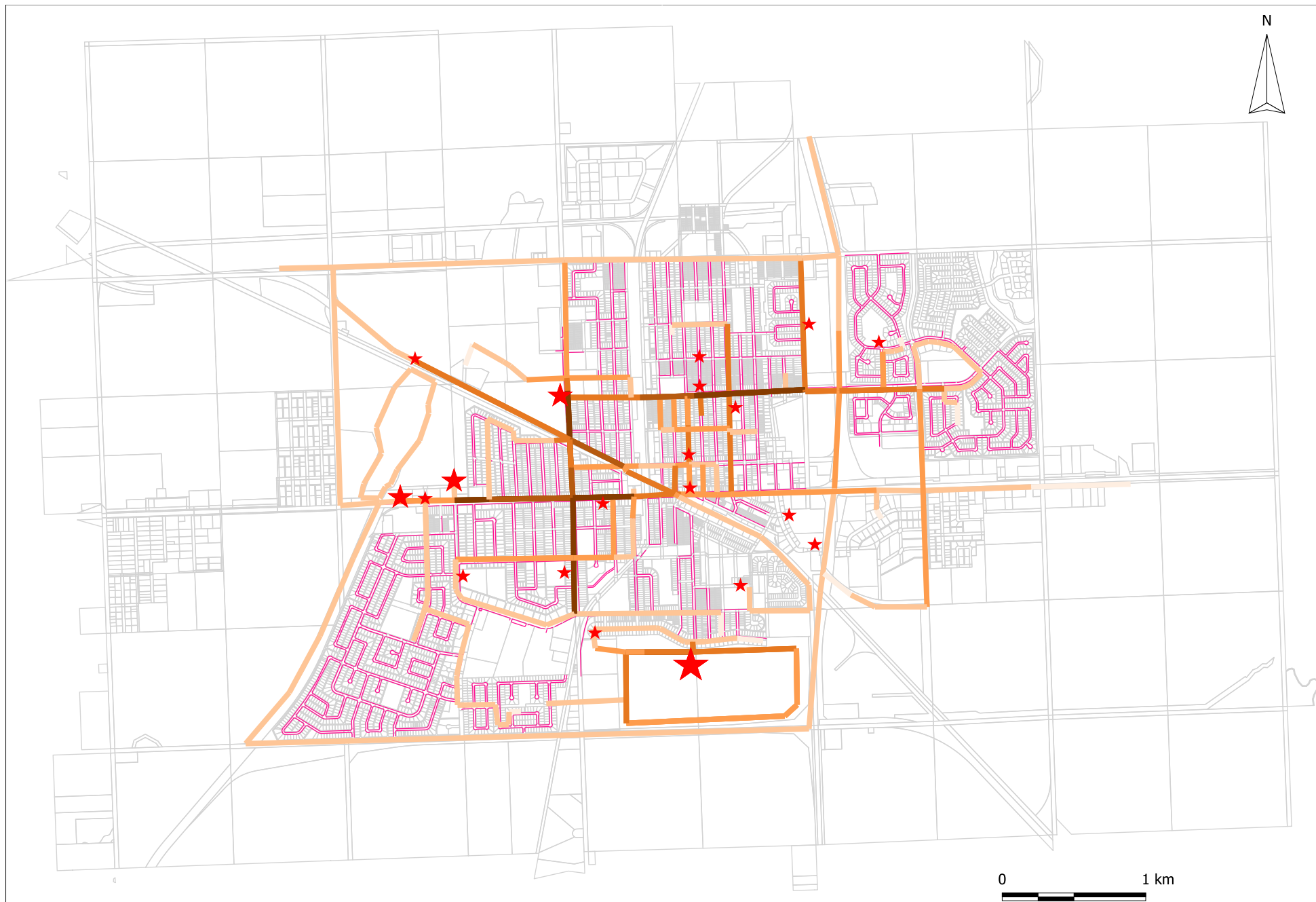


Figure 2-9

2.3 NEEDS SUMMARY

Summary of Needs Assessment Survey:

- The majority of cyclists ride for recreational, and exercise and health purposes.
- Most cyclists in Yorkton ride their bike two to four days per week.
- The number of respondents who are comfortable riding in traffic was the same as the number who are uncomfortable in traffic.
- The majority of cyclists prefer bike lanes on-street followed by more or wider bike paths and trails off-street.
- The most preferred place to cycle is asphalt/paved pathway off-road and any street.
- The top three suggestions for improvements in downtown were bike lanes, bike racks, and repair potholes.
- The three most common suggestions for improvements outside downtown were: bike paths, paved paths, and improve signals/lighting.
- Most respondents would like bicycle only lanes and asphalt pathway as design features.
- A majority of cyclists park and lock their bicycles at schools, followed by parks / open space and businesses.
- Respondents would like some or more bike racks in the shopping and mall areas followed by parks and downtown.
- The most preferred streets to cycle on are Darlington Street, Broadway Street, Gladstone Avenue, and Smith Street.
- The most common destinations are Logan Green, Gallagher Centre, Exhibition Grounds, and the Regional High School.

2.4 SITE VISIT PHOTOS

The City of Yorkton has previously identified worn foot paths and formal pathways throughout Yorkton. All of these sites, as well as key destinations, were visited to identify opportunities to develop on-street bikeways and off-street pathways. Photos from the site visit are included in Appendix B.