

MINUTES

Meeting held on Tuesday, September 15, 2020, at 4:30 p.m. (Via Skype)

Representatives present

VÉLO QUÉBEC

+ Marc Jolicoeur

ASSOCIATION DES PIÉTONS ET CYCLISTES DU PONT JACQUES-CARTIER (APCPJC)

+ François Démontagne

+ Mike Muchnik

COALITION VÉLO MONTRÉAL

+ Daniel Lambert

COLLECTIF TRANSPORT ACTIF RIVE-SUD

+ Richard Bouchard

VILLE DE LONGUEUIL

+ Jean-François Lagacé (in replacement of Normand Williams)

SOCIÉTÉ DU PARC JEAN-DRAPEAU

+ Kilian Gerlach

THE JACQUES CARTIER AND CHAMPLAIN BRIDGES INCORPORATED (JCCBI)

+ Denis Jacob, Director, Operations and Maintenance

+ Marc-André Marcoux, Assistant Project Director

+ Andy Woo, Director, Planning

+ Nathalie Lessard, Director, Communications

+ Diane Rivard, Communications Advisor

Agenda

I. Call to order

+ Introductions

+ Adoption of the meeting agenda

II. Updates on projects

+ Winter operation simulation 2019-2020

+ Winter 2020-2021

+ Communication with users

III. Question period

IV. Miscellaneous

V. Next meeting

Call to order

To start the meeting, everyone was welcomed, the panel was introduced, and the agenda was presented.

Reminder of the Committee's goals

- + Formalize and structure discussions about the Jacques Cartier Bridge bicycle path network with user groups and partners.
- + Follow up on current issues and projects based on needs.
- + Help promote active transportation with paths that are safe, accessible and user-friendly.

Winter operation simulation 2019-2020

- + In winter 2019-2020, JCCBI carried out simulated winter operations on the Jacques Cartier Bridge multipurpose path. JCCBI was able to find solutions to safely operate the Jacques Cartier Bridge multipurpose path during the winter with help from 25 test cyclists; 3 partner cyclist groups, i.e., the Association des piétons et cyclistes du pont Jacques-Cartier, Vélo Québec and the Ville de Longueuil; the advisory committee for the Jacques Cartier Bridge bicycle path; Réseau de transport de Longueuil; and the Ville de Montréal.
- + JCCBI's goal was to refine its maintenance, monitoring and communications protocols in actual conditions to determine whether an adequate and safe level of service could be provided on the sidewalk and path during the winter and at what cost.
- + The average condition of the multipurpose path during the winter of 2019-2020 indicates that the path was open 93% of the time, Monday to Friday, between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.
- + During the 2019-2020 winter simulation, 48% of trips were between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., while at the end of the day, 34% of trips were between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- + Test cyclists' evaluation of the path surface (average) vs. precipitation – winter 2019-2020 – rating of 2.83 out of 3.

2020-2021 Winter Season – JCCBI decision

- + The winter simulation project was conclusive and confirmed that the path could be safely operated with an adequate level of service to users.
- + The path will be open 7 days a week, from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- + JCCBI will perform preventive maintenance on the path and sidewalk at night to minimize closures during operating hours.
- + Weekend closures will be scheduled for more extensive snow removal operations, particularly to clear the full width of the path.
- + Meets a need expressed by users.
- + In line with JCCBI's mobility mission and vision.
- + Due to low use of the RTL shuttle, this service will not continue this year.

Winter conditions and vigilance

- + Winter cycling is already a high-risk activity AND the Jacques Cartier Bridge multipurpose path has some special characteristics:
 - o Expert path:
 - Reduced width of up to 1.8 m in winter.
 - Steep slopes with tight curves, especially section 7.
 - Two-way traffic.
 - High level of mixed use: The path is shared with pedestrians/runners.
 - Risk of splashes from traffic lanes since drainage systems are less efficient in winter.

- Risk of falling ice near metal structures.
- Reduced grip on the cycling surface in winter conditions.
- Complex and changing weather conditions over the river. It can get very windy on the bridge.

Issues for JCCBI

- + Effectively manage risks:
 - Provide a safe cycling surface despite conditions that can change throughout the path – an evolving situation that allows us to continue to learn.
 - Monitor changing weather conditions and even analyze the shape of snowflakes.
 - Possible risk of falling ice from the steel superstructure.
 - Operation and maintenance costs.
- + Ensure that pedestrians, runners and cyclists can all use the path safely in the winter. JCCBI wants to encourage best practices to ensure the safety of its users.
- + Effectively inform users about:
 - Any closure due to weather conditions or snow removal operations.
 - Conditions on the path and sidewalk.
- + Our users can also help us.

Responsibilities of users

- + Adopt good practices and safe behaviour:
 - Wear a helmet
 - Use winter tires
 - Slow down to avoid losing control on a slippery surface
 - Slow down, or even stop, when approaching other users
 - Have a good lighting system when using the path
 - Follow the Highway Safety Code
- + Adapt to the conditions of the path or sidewalk:
 - Pavement may be more slippery (black ice, freezing rain)
 - Narrow path that is even narrower in the winter
 - Risk of ice forming on the surface
 - Steep slopes (approx. 4%) and tight curves
 - Path and sidewalk exposed to high winds and humidity

Proactive communications with users – up to several times a day

- + Tools available for path and sidewalk users:
 - Active mobility page on the website (green or red dots)
 - Email alerts sent to subscribers
 - Active mobility Twitter account @mobiliteactive
 - Seasonal signage on the path and sidewalk: safety instructions in winter
 - Variable messaging signs: path and sidewalk condition (red, yellow, green)
- + Questions or comments: Users can contact JCCBI by phone at 450-651-8771 or by email at communications@pjcci.ca

Discussions on the following topics:

- + Members of the committee congratulated JCCBI and are very satisfied that the path will be open in the winter. The winter simulation project was very thorough, and the entire JCCBI team was thanked.
- + It is unfortunate that the path is not open 24/7 even when conditions are ideal, with no snow and no risks. This year, JCCBI wants to keep the 7-day schedule from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., which is 42 hours more per week compared to last year's simulation, so that it can properly maintain the path and minimize closures during peak hours: the path was used during these time periods about 96% of the time.
- + It was mentioned that the section from the ARUP report with the analysis of the opening scenarios was redacted and that the committee would like to get this information. JCCBI explained that all reports are reviewed by its legal department prior to publication and redacted in accordance with the *Access to Information Act* and that no unredacted version can be shared externally.
- + Someone asked when the winter season will begin. JCCBI explained that the weather is unpredictable and impossible to forecast exactly. In past years, JCCBI generally closed the path around December 21. This year the path will stay open in the winter, but the hours will be from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. JCCBI will announce the winter hours for the path and sidewalk to users.
- + The members said that they do not consider the multipurpose path on the Jacques Cartier Bridge to be an expert level and that the slopes are not that steep. JCCBI stated that it is the combination of slopes, turns, chicanes and the intersection at the Île-Sainte-Hélène pavilion that require a great deal of caution and vigilance on the part of all users, hence the *expert* classification, which may be reviewed.
- + It was recommended that JCCBI not overemphasize the danger of falling ice and the expert nature of the path and that it not run a fear campaign. JCCBI explained that informing users of potential risks is one of its responsibilities. However, JCCBI is very proud that it will open the path this winter and will not conduct a fear campaign but rather a promotional campaign combined with an awareness campaign to increase vigilance.
- + It was mentioned that it would be important to open the chicanes in winter as cyclists have to practically stop before reaching them, which creates black ice and increases safety problems in winter. JCCBI noted that the chicanes will be in place for year 1 of the winter operation and that no incidents related to the chicanes were reported during last year's winter simulation.
- + The committee asked if there will still be a risk of splashes toward the path. JCCBI says these will be greatly reduced since the bridge was completely repaved last summer.
- + It was noted that conditions are often worse in other places than on the bridge, although black ice is more common on bridges. It was added that snow removal on the path is more complex but carried out better compared to snow operations in an urban environment.
- + It was pointed out that lighting is part of the requirements of the *Highway Safety Code* (HSC) and is very important since it starts getting dark in winter at 4:30 p.m. The SPVM ran an awareness program in the fall to hand out 5,000 lights to cyclists, followed by a crackdown campaign. JCCBI will suggest that the Sûreté du Québec run a similar initiative for the Jacques Cartier Bridge path. The Association de piétons et cyclistes du pont Jacques-Cartier would like to participate in this initiative.
- + The Ville de Longueuil is studying a proposal for snow removal in its network; the committee members offered their support to the city.
- + The Société du Parc Jean-Drapeau will provide a winter cycling path between the Jacques Cartier Bridge and the Concorde Bridge but not to the Saint-Lambert locks.
- + Someone asked if feedback would be collected daily from cyclists about the path conditions. JCCBI said no, and that it only did so for last year's pilot project. However, as always, users can submit their suggestions through existing channels (telephone, email and website).

- + JCCBI asked the committee to spread the good news about the winter operation of the path and sidewalk to reach as many people as possible. JCCBI added that it will also be important to promote good winter cycling practices.
- + It was asked how JCCBI plans to reach out to cyclists. JCCBI stated that a subscription campaign on social networks is planned, that an announcement will be made via the media about the winter opening date, that partners will be important to help spread the news, and that a lot of communications are being planned.
- + For the next meeting, the committee suggested discussing ways to promote active mobility. The committee also wanted to discuss this with the Ville de Longueuil at the next meeting.
- + The committee talked about the feeling of safety on the Samuel De Champlain (SDC) Bridge vs. the Jacques Cartier Bridge (JCB). On the SDC Bridge, recreational users are more likely to be distracted by the views and less focused on their route. Even if the path on the SDC Bridge is wider, users still have to be very vigilant. Aware of the issues on the JCB path, JCCBI has already planned a vigilance awareness campaign before the path opens this winter.
- + It was pointed out that the committee should discuss the expansion of the multipurpose path.
- + JCCBI said that it would issue the minutes from the meeting within two weeks and thanked the participants for their attendance and comments.

Next meeting

- + To be determined.
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