

PRESIDENT'S LETTER — JOHN KNOWLTON

Constructive Construction Input

Bike Lanes! Left side, right side, green boxes and orange cones!

Bicyclists, including KBC members, have a lot to say about new cycling infrastructure in Kalamazoo. At the September KBC member meeting we had special guests from the City: Traffic Engineer Dennis Randolph and City Planner Christina Anderson. Together they shared a vision of calmer traffic, slower vehicle speeds, and a city built at human scale.

Dennis has been in the infrastructure business for more than 4 decades. He told us his training was all about moving vehicles as quickly as possible. In fact, when Kalamazoo and Michigan Avenues were converted to one-way streets downtown, average speeds went up by 11 mph! From a traffic engineer's perspective in 1964, that was a great success.

Christina and Dennis are no longer seeking to move traffic more quickly. In fact, they are reducing vehicle lanes, eliminating turn lanes (which keep traffic flowing fast) and reallocating that space to non-motorized traffic. Let me say all that a little differently: **Designers in our central city are working diligently to re-make our streets to be safer and more livable for everyone, including cyclists.** This is a 180-degree switch from a road commissioner who told me 10 years ago that, "We build roads for cars, not for bikes."

Because this approach is so different from how roads have been managed for decades, the planners are taking small steps. You might think of this as "try before you buy." Cones first. Then paint on the pavement. Live with it a while before we pour expensive, permanent concrete. I think this is absolutely the right way to go. They are trying things out. Experimenting. Iterating. Instead of assuming that the central planners know all, they are putting up temporary lanes so residents can give them feedback. This is a great way to do community projects.



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Please send stories and photos of your rides to:

editor@kalamazooBicycle
 Club.org

But I have a concern. About us cyclists. I have read and heard a LOT of negative feedback about the left-hand lanes on Westnedge and Park. Some of this feedback includes comments like, "I bet whoever designed that has never ridden a bike." And other lines that border on *ad hominem* attacks on designers' intelligence or evil intent. Frankly, I don't think that is helpful. We should certainly give constructive feedback. And we should hold public officials accountable. AND we should celebrate their spirit of experimentation and concern for safe streets. Not all the changes will make everybody happy. That's the definition of a compromise. But KBC members should be adding light to the conversation, not just smoke and heat.

The best way to give your feedback on City of Kalamazoo projects is through their survey website: www.imaginekalamazoo.com/surveys. And please honor the city's efforts by being constructive about the construction.

KBC Business

The next KBC meeting will be **Tuesday, November 8 at 7:00 p.m. at Shakespeare's Pub, 241 E Kalamazoo Ave. Up the steps, to the back and left.**

Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

October 11, 2022

ATTENDANCE

Jillian Howland	Rick Whaley	Paul Rehkopf
Jeff Newhouse	Doug Kirk	Paul Wells
John King	Michael Krischer	Paul Sotherland
Clark Bennett	Bill Surna	Paul Runnels
Gordy Vader	John Knowlton	Paul Guimond
Teri Olbrot	Charlie Grdina	Paul Selden
Jenna Marie Kovach		

President: John Knowlton

KBC is making connections with local municipalities to advocate for bicyclists. We shared input with Texas Township regarding their ordinance on ebikes; we've recently hosted speakers from the KCRC and the City of Kalamazoo at our meetings; and in February of 2023, Kathleen Hoyle of the City of Portage is invited to speak at our meeting about nonmotorized infrastructure.

We have three more weeks of group rides before the time change on November 6th, marking the end of our official ride season. The Fall Foliage Ride is coming up on October 22nd, with donuts at the end.

KBC is asked to take on the care and maintenance of local "ghost bikes," to assure that they continue to be fitting tributes to the individuals they represent. One idea is to plan an annual ride to visit these memorials for the purpose of repainting or otherwise cleaning up the area. John Knowlton will inquire as to the location and number of bikes out there, and how long these memorials should be maintained.

Nominations for Executive Committee positions are taken in October, with elections held in November. Doug Kirk nominated all four members of the current EC, including President John Knowlton, Vice President Paul Guimond, Treasurer Pam Sotherland, and Secretary Teri Olbrot. When no other nominations were made, Paul Sotherland moved that nominations be closed.

DIRECTORS REPORTS:

Communications: Jillian Howland

Jillian is asking for photographs of cyclists in our beautiful Fall weather that she can post on social media.

Membership: Rick Whaley

Nothing to report.

Pedal Press Editor: Charlie Grdina

Thanks to everyone for getting their articles in on time.

Ride Captain: Gordy Vader

Attendance has been very good at group rides this year. There may be some opportunities to get together after the Monday Night Ride when the season is over.

Kal Tour: Mike Krischer

KalTour is looking at the calendar for next June and will be considering what changes would be beneficial to make for our annual event.

Insurance Coordinator: Doug Kirk

We're having a great run, with no insurance claims for bicycle accidents this year.

Education Chair: Paul Wells

The Committee will be meeting later this week to consider the future of Bike Camp as well as consider the on-going need for educating and supporting bicyclists who are new to group riding and riding in general.

Social Director: Paul Sotherland

KBC has purchased ten copies of the book Street Fight: Handbook for an Urban Revolution by Janette Sadik-Khan to spark conversation and activism directed at improving nonmotorized infrastructure. KBC members are encouraged to read the book, share it with others, and take part in further discussion at a meeting in early 2023.

Vice President: Paul Guimond

Plans are being made to present Pace Line Clinics in the Spring of 2023, to support skill development of cyclists at our group rides.

Secretary: Teri Olbrot

No comments

Treasurer: Pam Sotherland

Paul Sotherland presented Pam's treasurer's report in her absence.

Member Input:

Paul Seldon: Oshtemo is holding a ribbon cutting at the Grange Hall for the newly dedicated cycling staging area. Paul asks that everyone complete a survey passed out at the meeting regarding the Southwest Michigan Bikeway. The public is invited to "finish the mural" on Saturday Oct 15th between 1:00-5:00 PM.

Further membership discussion commenced about various classes of ebikes and whether they are appropriate to use on bike trails and on club rides; the pros and cons of recent pop-up bicycle lanes in the City of Kalamazoo; and how KBC can best support bicyclists new to cycling with education and mentoring.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Teri Olbrot—KBC Secretary

2022 COMPLETED ROAD/STREET PROJECTS – KALAMAZOO, PORTAGE, AND KALAMAZOO COUNTY

As our road-riding season winds down, and as we contemplate several months of riding indoors and various other ways of staying fit enough to start riding more frequently on the roads again, taking a few minutes to reflect on how our roads and streets have improved this year seems prudent. Though navigating through or around the many road/street improvement projects undertaken this summer has been challenging, on a bike or in a car, looking back on the work done and looking forward to using the renovated infrastructure brings a grin to one's face. Indeed, improvements are afoot (or, perhaps, awheel...hah!). So, without further ado, here's a list of infrastructure improvements in the Kalamazoo region that can have positive effects on riding our bikes in the area. ***Kudos to the planners and implementers who accomplished these feats!***

City of Kalamazoo

- Kilgore, Stadium, Parkview, Miller, Burdick, AND Bike Lanes/Restriping Work can be found here:
 - There are many links and graphics associated with these projects; click on and explore at this overview <http://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/2022streets/>
 - NOTE: look a little bit down the page for the Bike Lanes/Restriping list of projects. We were able to add a lot of bike facilities on some roads this year! Some of the work is still to be completed in late October and November.
 - Additional Parkview: <http://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/parkviewavenue/>
 - Additional Stadium: <https://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/stadiumdrive/>
- Oakland/Winchell Neighborhood (includes Chevy Chase, Winchell, and Broadway)
 - <http://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/winchelltraffic/>
- Portage Rd
 - <http://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/portage/>
- Westnedge & Park
 - <http://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/westnedgepark/>

City of Portage

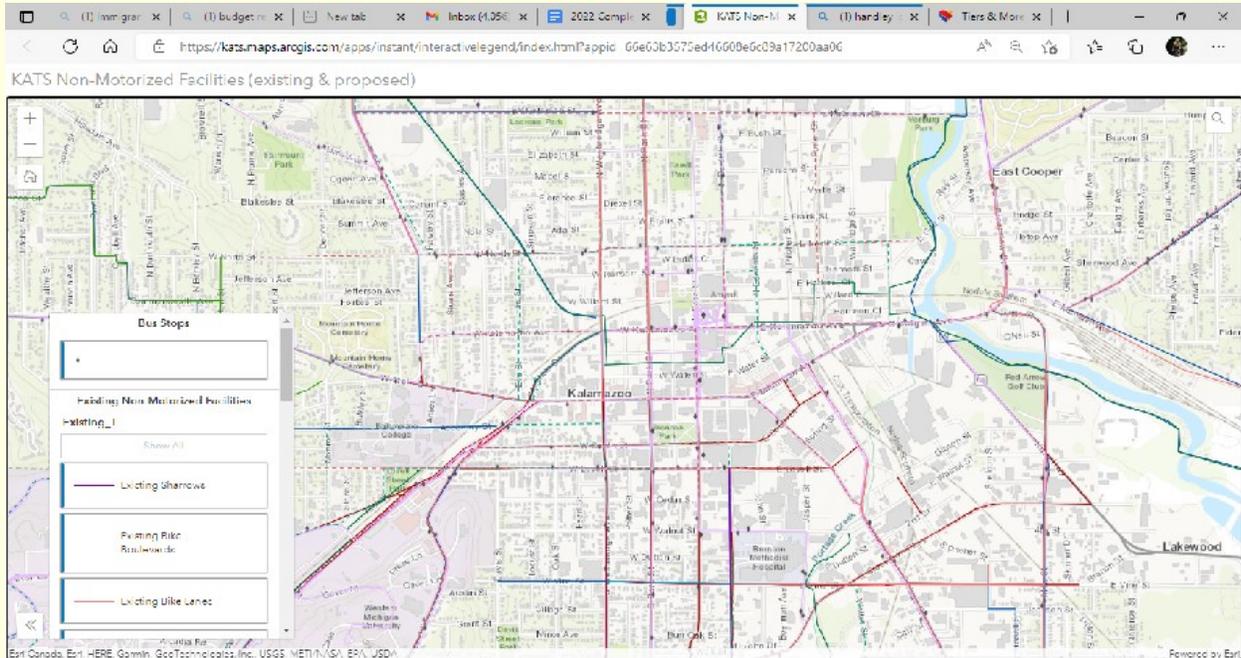
- Romence – Angling Rd to Oakland Dr (Bike Lanes)
- East Shore Dr (Austin Lake) – resurfaced and restriped from Woodhams Avenue to Cox's Drive
- Oakland Dr – resurfaced and restriped from Shaver to Portage city line
- Nash Ave – resurfaced and restriped from East Shore Dr to Sprinkle Rd
- Mandigo Ave – resurfaced and restriped from Portage Rd to Andrews St
- Woodhams – resurfaced and restriped from Andrews St to East Shore Dr
- Vanderbilt Ave – resurfaced and restriped from Oakland Dr to Shaver Rd
- Bacon Ave – resurfaced and restriped from Portage Rd to S Westnedge – Bike Lanes

Kalamazoo County – The Road Commission of Kalamazoo County

- Nichols/Solon (fog seal and restriped)
- Barney – from Douglas to Nichols
- G Ave and Mt Olivet
- West Gull Lake Dr – from CD Ave to BC Ave
- 6th St – from F Ave to H Ave
- Streets in Vicksburg

Paul Sotherland - Social Director

Map of Non-Motorized Infrastructure in the Kalamazoo Region



Here's a quick follow-up to the 2022 update on improvements to non-motorized infrastructure in the Kalamazoo region. If you want to see locations of existing and proposed non-motorized infrastructure – things like shared-use paths, bike routes, etc. – the most reliable and (pretty much) up-to-date map is the [KATS Non-motorized Facilities map](https://kats.maps.arcgis.com/apps/insight/interact/veilegend/index.html?appid=66e03b3375ed46609e6c09a17200aa06) (link to the map or click on map above) Take a look...it's pretty cool.

Paul Sotherland— KBC Social Director

November 2022 Membership

Total Memberships: 304

Total Individuals: 485

New or Renewed Members: Travis Branderhorst; Jennifer Evans; Nick & Kelley Hampton; Ray Jennings;

Johnny King; Tomme Maile & Dale Abbott; Jacinda Roedel; Joe Shorb; Beth Smigiel; Paul & Michele

Wells

November Expired Members: Adam Cefai; Renee & Don Mitchell; Robin Sides

Rick Whaley, Membership Director

California Dreaming - A Ride Down Memory Lane

This October my wife Linda and I came to spend a few days with my brother in California. We returned to Imperial Beach to rent some bikes and ride around San Diego bay. Having lived in I.B. as young sailor during the 1980s when it was rough and tumble working class beach town on the Mexico Border, one of the first things I noticed were the dedicated, green-painted bike lanes that now ring the perimeter of the town. The lanes are well utilized by locals and tourists and many new businesses



having popped up along the route. Wide pedestrian crossings were clearly marked with pedestrian right of way signage. Posted traffic speeds have slowed considerably from my days of commuting those streets to my duty station each morning.

The town has clearly changed, an infusion of new tax dollars from gentrification of neighborhoods and new small businesses catering to tourism are the cornerstone of these improvements. Sometimes when the changes are incremental over time, they are less apparent to locals and unnoticed to those who are living amongst. The **WOW** observation comes from visitors like me who are astonished by the substantial change from one's last memory of the area. I would have to believe not all of these changes were adopted without some controversy or compromise with the community – beach parking being a major one. The bottom line is changes were made and the overall pedestrian commutability and mobility has significantly improved. I am reading "Streetfight," by Janette Sadik-Khan which was recommended to KBC by Christina Anderson at the September meeting at K-College. It is an excellent read and Paul Sotherland will soon have some copies available to loan out to members. The book is rich with many lessons learned but one clear and early takeaway is to TRY new things when making road improvements, especially if only paint and signage are involved.

We should not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Change is an incremental process of trial and error. Rather than criticizing efforts to date, let's welcome/embrace the positive changes the cities of Kalamazoo and Portage are making to improve the non-motorized infrastructure. Soon someone will return to Kalamazoo after some years away and say "**WOW** - when did all this change? I need to get my bike out. !"

Charlie Grdina - Editor KBC