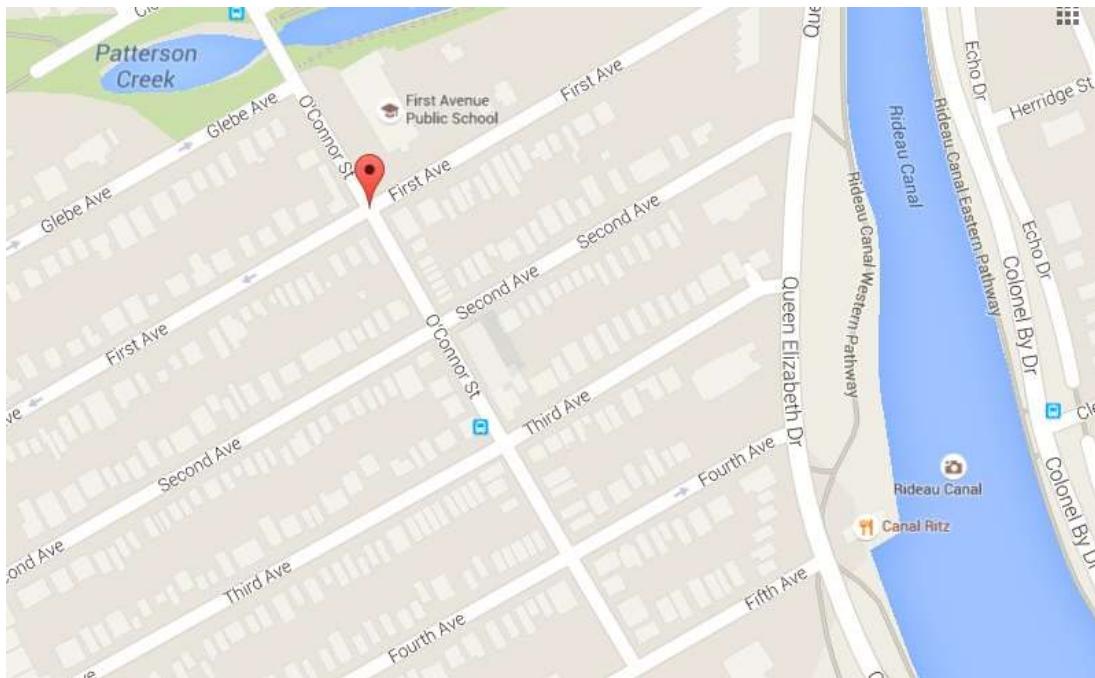


# Ottawa's new bike lane on O'Connor Street has arrived

While the bike lane has been met with acclaim from cyclists. Motorists bemoan the 'inconvenience' of the new infrastructure

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In March, *Canadian Cycling Magazine* reported on the [pending unveiling of a new bike lane in Ottawa](#) that would run along O'Connor Street, providing a bike-friendly, dedicated link between Parliament Hill and Lansdowne Park in the nation's capital.

That lane is now open. What's not surprising, of course—especially if you're a cyclist in a major Canadian city—is that controversy is also picking up momentum alongside riders.

[CBC reports paint a picture of the division between road users](#) that, somewhat typically, the O'Connor lane has triggered.

On Oct. 21, the O'Connor bike lane was officially opened. Among cyclists, that opening was met with widespread acclaim. As a long-awaited addition to the Ontario city's infrastructure, the lane, the CBC reported, was praised as a more efficient—and indeed, safer—design that will get riders moving. "It makes it much easier, safer and

comfortable for cyclists to bike downtown,” said Alex DeVries, a board member of Ottawa’s Citizens for Safe Cycling, in conversation with the CBC. “I think cyclists have always had a hard time going north [and] south into downtown,” DeVries added. “I think this makes a difference.”

Cyclists would previously have avoided taking O’Connor, citing the street’s “dangerous” conditions and the obstacle of Highway 417. But while cyclists praise the safety of the new bike lane, drivers, somewhat on the other hand, bemoan its supposed inconvenience.

Speaking with CBC reporters, Ottawa taxi driver Harcharan Singh discussed what he sees as a traffic headache-in-waiting. “I think it’s going to be a problem,” the 20-year taxi veteran said, “because I’m sure there’s going to be some mishaps. It’s going to be a problem during rush hour.” Like it is for some motorists, the flow of traffic through the downtown core, not the experience of cyclists, is the make-or-break issue when it comes to the O’Connor bike lane’s success, the way Singh sees it.

In related news, an [NDP MP’s bill](#) is aimed at defusing that kind of controversy by establishing a legal national strategy for cycling.