

Field Study 1 Recap: Schwabing-West

Friday, February 9, 2018 4:14 PM

Date	Friday, February 9th 2018
Starting Time	08:48 AM
Ending Time	10:28 AM
Total Distance	20.9 km

Weather:

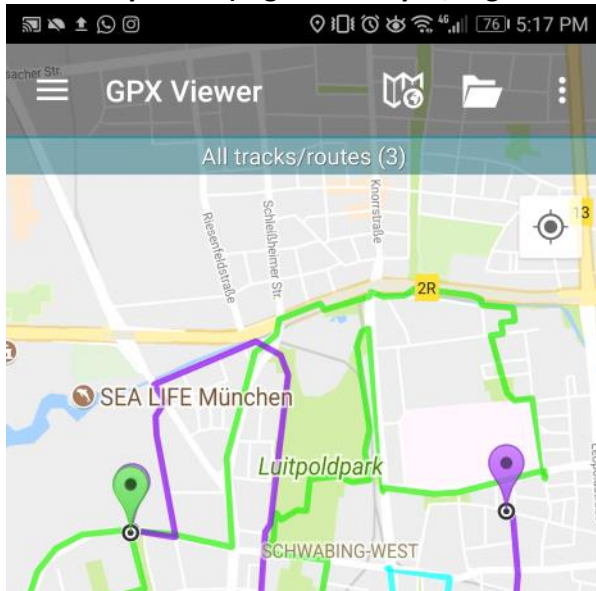
Partly Cloudy/Sunny. No precipitation, little wind. Temperatures were chilly, about -1° C.

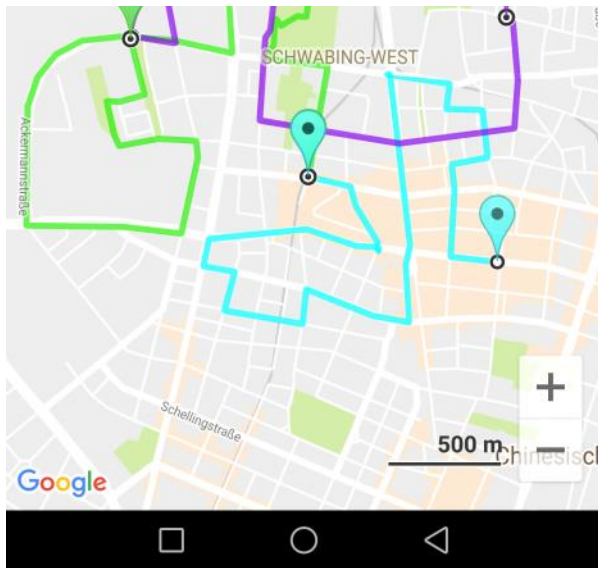
The Field Study area was reached by bike, which was about a 15 minute ride from where the observer lives. As the first Field Study conducted for this project, some ideas for small improvements to make future Field Studies easier to conduct, more comprehensive, and safer.

General Field Study Notes (for all instances)

- Waving a hand in front of the camera indicates a point of interest to the study. Examples would be especially bad or good intersections, conflicts with cars and other road users, precarious conditions on the cycleway, or other circumstances of note.
- Extra batteries for the camera were bought to ensure it does not run out of charge in the middle of the Field Study. An external battery and a charging cable were already packed for the ride, but there is no way to charge the camera while inside its waterproof case. The battery level on the camera is checked before and during the separate segments of the route (see below) as to ensure that no data is lost due to a loss of power during recording.
- The observer should bring water and food with.
- The bike's wheels should be properly pumped and the bike ready to ride to ensure a uniform experience across the Field Studies. It should be checked for proper operation before each Study.
- The phone performing the recording and navigation during the Study has a large enough battery to last for a few hours of continuous recording operation, however, a backup external battery might be needed to charge it intermittently as well.

Field Study Route (Segment 1 - cyan, Segment 2 - green, Segment 3 - purple):

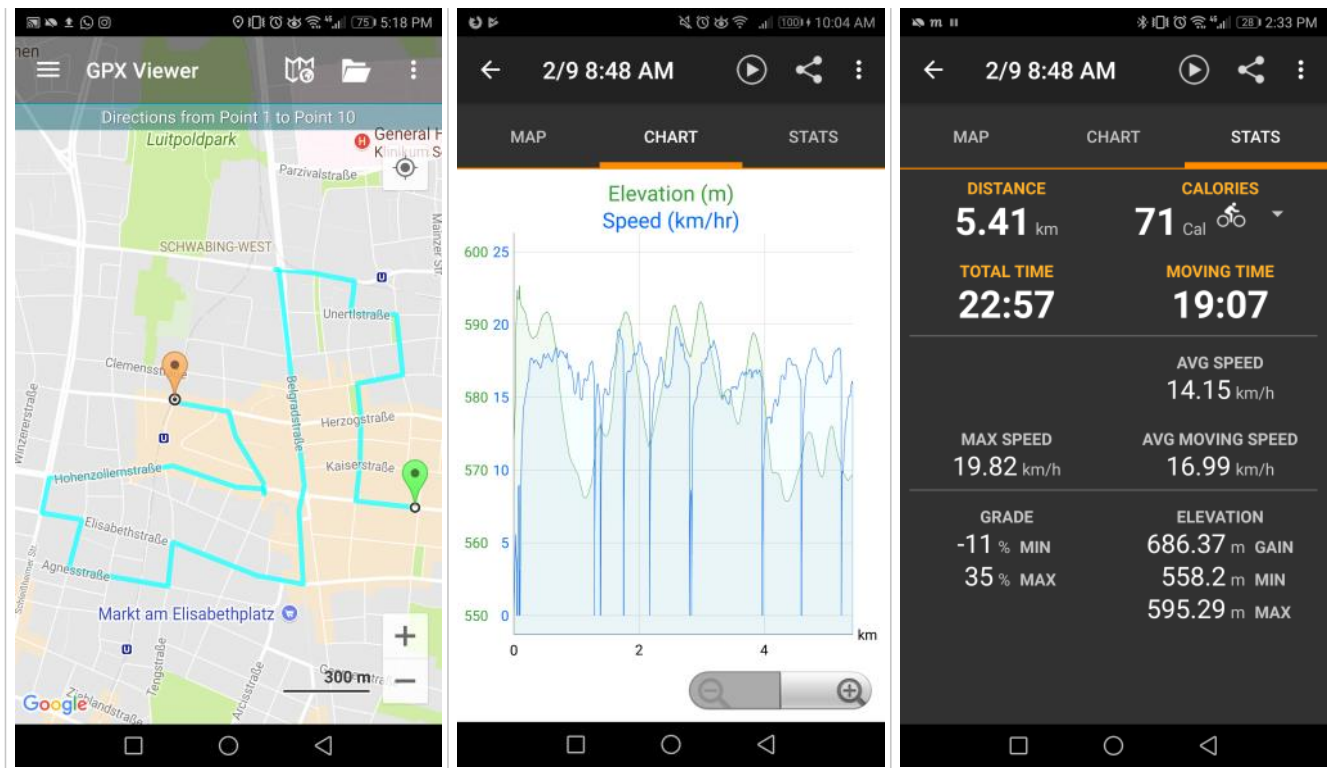




General Notes

- The Field Study was a generally pleasant ride. Schwabing-West (outside of the newly developed areas in the west of the district) is filled with quiet residential streets, many of which seemed to be (quite clearly) marked as "Fahrradstraße", or Tempo30 Zones, or Shared Zones. Main streets were mostly well-equipped with sufficient cycle lanes or paths in the sidewalk.
- Most every street felt safe. Quite often, drivers let cyclists cross a somewhat busy street, or generally drove in a way that signaled their awareness and respect for other road users.
- Central plazas, major transport hubs (Hohenzollerplatz and Scheidplatz especially) seemed to have sufficient bike storage for private bikes as well as for bikesharing (MVG Rad).
- Luitpoldpark in the north of the district was quite well-used by people. Several groups of walkers, dog walkers, and other people enjoying the green space were out and about. As a cyclist though, it was of limited use with a normal bike. Most of the trails (not all!) were not cleared of snow, but very few were icy.
- In the north along the 2R, some areas were hard to find the proper place to cycle (if there is one). Much of the area behind the residences along the stream and below the hill over the 2R tunnel was icy.

Segment 1:



Like other areas of Munich, on the busier main streets with many shops and residences, delivery trucks, garbage trucks, moving and shipping trucks, and other service vehicles often block the cycleway or one lane of the street, forcing cyclists to reroute to avoid them. This is especially dangerous on cycleways in the pedestrian sidewalk, as it would be easy for more conflicts to occur there. Having to ride into oncoming traffic when a truck blocks a lane of the road is also unnerving, if not dangerous for the cyclists.

Roads that have wide cycle lanes, AND thick white stripes (if not more or other marking) denoting BOTH the gap between the cycleway and the street AND the cycleway and the parked cars next to it are the most comfortable in-street cycling infrastructure on large streets. Having enough of a buffer on either side makes the ride feel much safer - Just like the cycle lane heading west on Karl-Theodor-Straße between Bonner Platz and Düsseldorfer Straße. Similarly, in-sidewalk cycle paths feel much safer when they are wide enough (a meter or so, many are thinner), and include a small gap between the parking area and the edge of the cycle path (around 0.3m) - just as the cycle path heading south on Belgradstraße between Karl-Theodor-Straße and Destouchesstraße.

Often, left turning vehicles (cars and trucks, which are worst) at the end of their signal cycle will turn through the intersection only to be stopped before fully clearing it by a queue of vehicles which preceded them. This often causes cyclists, pedestrians, and at worst, other vehicles to maneuver around them, increasing the risk of conflicts between road users.

Curbs on the side of the road at the corners of intersections make it easy for cyclists to stop, relax their position, and start quickly again when the signal changes. When streets change from having the cycling lane in the road (or no lane, and cyclists are sharing the road with vehicles) to a cycling path in the sidewalk, it should be marked very clearly. It can be easy to miss and cause cyclists to stay on the road when they do not have to. Another similar instance is when turning from a street with no cycling path onto a street with one, it can also be easy to miss the turn, expecting to continue on the street and not onto the sidewalk pavement - just like the intersection of Belgradstraße and Elisabethstraße, heading south and turning right to head west. These should be marked clearly as well (red paint or a Cycle Path symbol similar to the Fahrradstraße symbol).

Turning left from a small residential street onto a larger collector without a proper intersection is quite dangerous. Luckily, in Schwabing-West, the distance between proper intersections with a signal or stop signs

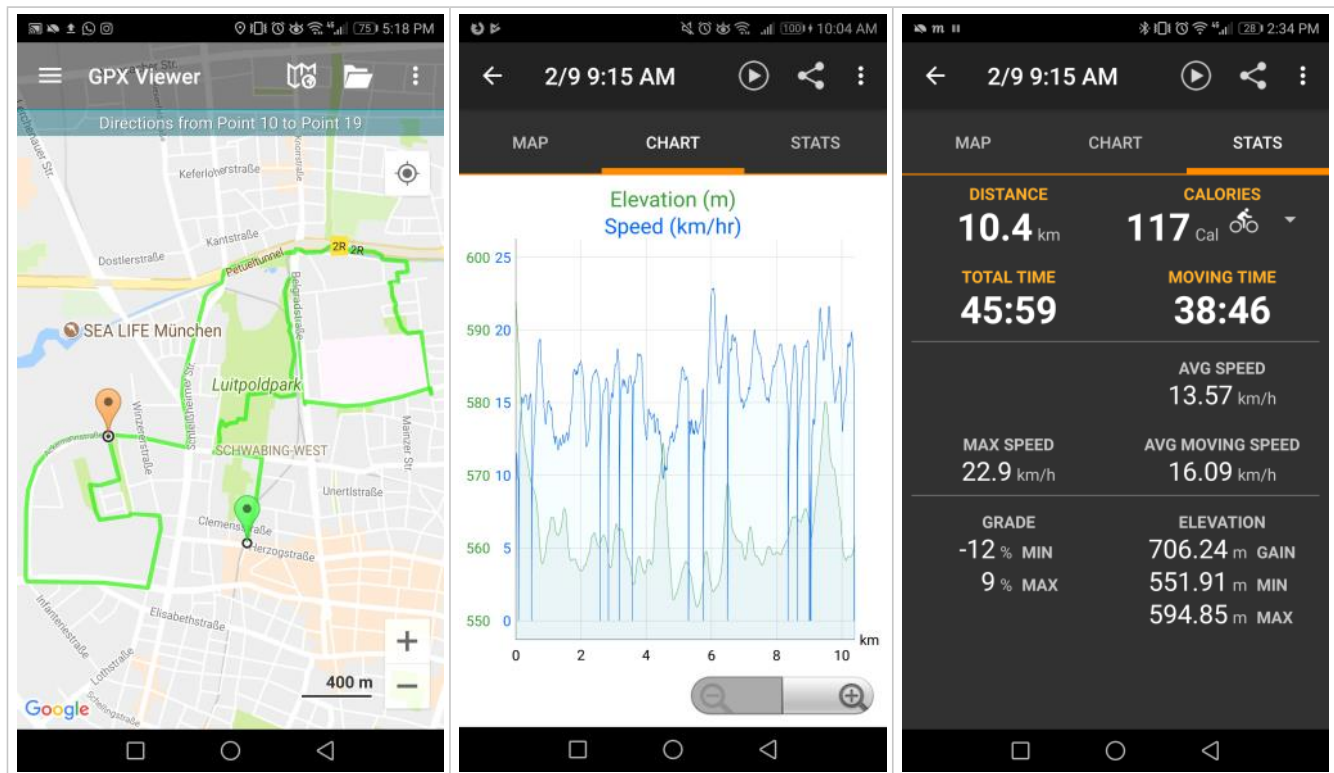
never seemed too large.

Vehicles turning left as you enter the intersection also make cyclists nervous, as it can often seem as if they do not see them, even if their speed is slow enough to allow the cyclist to pass before they would conflict.

Narrow streets with cars parked along the sides, no cycle lanes, and tram lines down the middle can feel quite constrained when busy. The distance between the parked cars and the tram tracks is quite small, making it difficult to maneuver out of the way of the tram, or of drivers and passengers opening their doors ahead of the cyclist.

Large vehicles like delivery trucks and even vans parked on the corners of intersections make it difficult for road users to see around them to check if there are any oncoming vehicles or cyclists. Compact cars should on the corners are no problem.

Segment 2:



Having to wait a long time to cross the street, or needing to press a button to cross are quite annoying to cyclists, especially if the button to change the signal is not near the cycle path or cycle way.

Snowy paths in the park which are well covered with sand or small gravel are actually quite easy to cycle on. Additionally, well-marked paths denoted by small posts, amenities such as benches and waste bins, or lines of trees and other plants in these snow-covered areas are essential for cyclists, so they can see where to turn when it is not clear.

The cycle paths around Scheidplatz are mostly okay, though the shared traffic path on the west side of the station abutting against the hill would be crowded at peak traffic times. Also, this path runs directly in front of the subway exit on the northwest side of the station, in front of the top of the escalator. When a train arrives and many passenger interchange to the bus, tram, or walk at this station, this exit would be filled with a stream of people exiting, blocking this path entirely and increasing the risk of conflict between cyclists and pedestrians.

The cycle path along the west side of Belgradstraße is quite comfortable to ride on similar to how it is further south on the street. There is enough space between the parked cars and the path, and between it and the pedestrian area of the sidewalk. The intersections are clearly marked for the cycle path as well. Two-way cycle paths at intersections are also not an issue, if they are clearly marked, as is the case at Belgradstraße and Parzivalstraße.

Along the south side of Parzivalstraße, the bike path narrows, but the area between the parked cars and the path is large and lined with trees, making the narrowness of the path unimportant. Again, delivery vehicles parked in the cycle path, or in the pedestrian area have the potential to increase conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists who cannot see each other around the vehicle. The bike path, or possibly only a pedestrian path, on the north east corner of the medical campus in the north east of Schwabing-West (Klinikum Schwabing) is hardly cleared or laid with sand/gravel for traction.

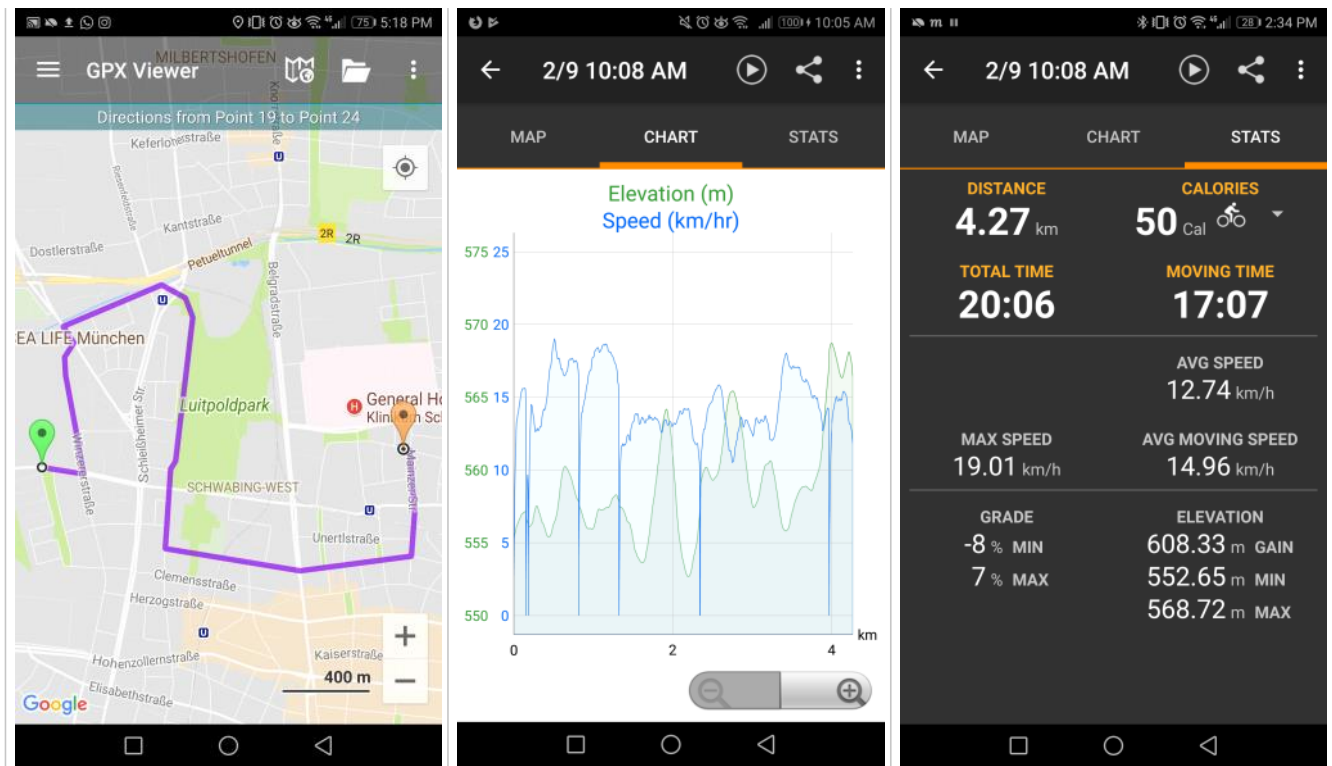
Finding access in between the residential buildings on the south side of the Petuelpark above the 2R tunnel is difficult. The proper access is probably Klopstockstraße, but my navigation did not tell me to use this route, instead to use the residential pedestrian access to the path behind the buildings between them and the park. Biking in the park itself was very pleasant, the ramps leading up to the park were gradual enough to easily climb, and the paths and the park itself are a nice reprieve from what would have been a major roadway that would have made it difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to get around in the area.

The bike path along the south side of the Petuelring west side of Belgradstraße is shared, but quite wide. Unfortunately more vehicles blocked the path in this area, but it wasn't very busy, so it didn't cause any problems. Further along, the intersection with the Petuelring and Schleißheimer Straße seemed confusing at first, but traversing through the intersection was actually not, the pavement markings made it clear where to go, and the separation between both directions of cycle path. However, having to pass two (non-synchronized) signals to fully cross the intersection as a cyclist or pedestrian is quite annoying.

Red-painted areas denoting the cycling paths seem to work very well - pedestrians and drivers seem more aware and careful of possible oncoming bikers when they see them. The entirety of Ackermannstraße pm the south side of Olympiapark is quite easy to ride along, if anything, it's boring. The trees and greenery would be nice in summer, but the large roadway with so many vehicles parked along it and cars passing makes it feel too much like a highway.

Large wide intersections without signals or signs are actually comfortable as well. Traffic levels are obviously low, but even if cars were coming, everyone would approach such an intersection carefully.

Segment 3:



The second section of this segment of the route was an easy ride - first along a residential street which changed into a path on the eastern edge of Olympiapark which was cleared and flat. Birnauerstraße which runs along the canal, seemed quite large for a Fahrradstraße but its clear markings and low traffic made me feel more confident riding along it. The intersection with Schleißheimerstraße, however, is triggered by another push to cross button, which wasn't placed very easily for cyclists, though it wasn't too far off the path. Having to push a button to cross however, is irritating by itself.

Dirt paths covered with snow and gravel, like the one running down the west side of Luitpoldpark, are actually easy to navigate on a bike. They weren't as slippery or dirty to the point of being difficult to travel across. When they have a slope of any kind however, they become quite difficult to do anything besides ride straight along, turning took more traction than the surface could give. Again, crossing streets with no proper signal is difficult and should be avoided. However if the distance between intersections is too great, the will to cycle all the way down to the intersection only to make your way back to your crossing point diminishes greatly. Crossing - or turning left onto - Karl-Theodor-Straße from Hiltenspergerstraße felt quite unsafe.

Unsignalized intersections in low-speed Tempo30 zones are not a hinderance to cycling at all. Having to slow down just a bit to see around the intersection isn't nearly as bad as having to come to a full stop at a stop sign for traffic that isn't there.