

# Active Transportation

MEETING OUR WINNIPEG 2045'S Objective to "Prioritize sustainable transportation as the mobility options of choice"<sup>1</sup> represents a major challenge for a city that has been planned and built for the benefit of cars rather than people over the last 70 years. Despite some significant investments in the walking and cycling networks over the past decade, the vast majority of trips in Winnipeg are still undertaken by vehicle.<sup>2</sup> If we have any hope of meeting our climate change goals, we need to institute a drastic shift in the way people get around.

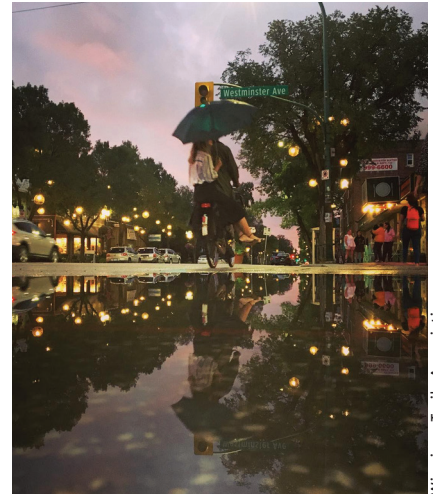
**By making the alternatives to driving more attractive, we can get many more people walking and biking.**

Fortunately, most trips being made in Winnipeg are not that long. The median commute to work in the city is just 6.6km,<sup>3</sup> and many trips stay within local communities, distances where walking and/or riding a bike are time-competitive with driving. By making the alternatives to driving more attractive, we can get many more people walking and biking.

Polling on transportation provides good evidence of the potential to change transportation habits. When asked which factors prevent people from switching to active transportation:

- 20 per cent of people polled in a 2018 CAA Manitoba/Bike Winnipeg survey indicated that they would choose to ride their bikes daily in good weather if provided with a better cycling network where they felt safe.
- 45 per cent of respondents said that they would ride daily to a few times a week under those circumstances.<sup>4</sup>

- 39 per cent of those polled in a 2020 City of Winnipeg survey indicated that they drive more often than they would like to.
  - A majority of those polled stated that bad or angry drivers, gaps in the bicycle network, a lack of safe spaces to lock their bikes, and feeling forced to ride sidewalks on busy streets were a big problem in Winnipeg.
  - “Feeling unsafe walking at night” and “Poor sidewalk surface conditions, such as cracks or lack of snow removal” ranked as top reasons people did not walk as often as they would like.<sup>5</sup>



Winnipeg Trails Association

## Completing Winnipeg’s Sidewalk and Bicycle Networks

While the city has taken strides to improve its bike network over the last 10 years, much of the city remains unconnected or poorly connected to people on bikes. Funding to build out the network has fallen far short of what is needed and must be significantly increased to provide the comfortable and connected network needed to get more people out of their cars and onto their bikes.

This budget allocates 20 per cent of roadway funding to the completion of Winnipeg’s walking and cycling networks, amounting to an annual budget of \$27.5 million for the Pedestrian and Cycling Program.

This would allow the city to:

- Add 15–20km of low stress bikeways to the city’s bike network each year by;
  - Adhering to city policy by including walk/bike improvements in all roadway rehabilitation projects that overlap the proposed bike network;
  - Dedicating \$2.5 million from the Local Street Renewals program to ensure walk/bike improvements included with roadway rehabilitations can be extended to logical end points;
  - Providing an additional \$2.23 million for the Pedestrian and Cycling Program that would be used to increase development outside of the road renewals program and increase programming for things like encouragement and community bike shops.

- Continue adding sidewalks where missing;
- Double the amount of spending for sidewalk maintenance within the Local Street Renewals program.
- Double the amount of spending for detectable warning surfaces within the Regional Street Renewals program.
- Provide traffic calming for up to eight neighbourhoods per year as a new line item within the Local Street Renewals program.

Most of this increase would be facilitated through better use of the city’s road renewals budget. Additional funding of \$1.2 million would be provided through the Federal Government’s Active Transportation Fund. A small difference of \$1.03 million would need to be sourced via other means.

We are also asking for an update to the Benefit Evaluation Procedure so that improvements to walking and cycling are no longer considered as mere enhancements to Level of Service warranting only a low weighting (7 per cent compared to 31 per cent weighting to maintain level of service) toward a project’s prioritization.

Matching the safety requirements of vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists moving amongst vehicles to best practices should not be considered an enhanced level of service, it should be considered as a requirement to meet the basic level of service

**Revenue Sources:**

- Local & regional Road Renewals Program
  - Better inclusion of walk/bike improvements: \$ 13.325 million
  - Extension of walk/bike improvements to logical end: \$ 2.500 million
  - Doubling of sidewalk maintenance: \$ 0.800 million
  - Neighbourhood Traffic Calming: \$ 0.800 million
  - Doubling of detectable warning tiles: \$ 0.100 million
- Federal funding through Active Transportation Program: \$ 1.200 million
- Other sources: \$ 1.030 million

## Ensuring Equity

The need for better walking and cycling facilities is especially acute in areas of the city identified as “Higher Needs”. Residents of these areas often have less access to private vehicles, and less income that they can (or that they would like to) dedicate to transportation.

For transportation projects, an equity lens that better addresses both the burdens and the benefits generated by transportation projects is needed. Affected communities need to be fully engaged throughout project development, measuring support for or opposition to projects, soliciting weighting for criteria, and identifying and evaluating alternatives early in the process.

Burdens that negatively affect higher needs areas should receive negative weighting in evaluation criteria. Benefits need to go beyond simple spatial measures such as proximity to a higher needs area. Equity weighting should be applied to criteria such as safety, health, access, connectivity, and/or affordability.

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## Increased Snow Clearing

Winnipeg is a winter city, so the extent and quality of snow removal along the city’s walking and cycling networks has a huge impact on the ability of people to choose walking, cycling, or transit through the winter months. If we want to encourage more people to use sustainable transportation, we need to maintain our walking and cycling networks year round.

Snow clearing and sanding in Winnipeg is managed through the city’s Snow Clearing & Ice Control Policy. The policy divides the city’s roadways, sidewalks, bikeways, and pathways into 3 levels of prioritization (P1, P2, P3), with thresholds set for how much snow must fall to initiate clearing, and standards set for the amount of time needed to clear snow when that threshold is met.

Major routes are generally designated P1, collector streets and non-regional bur-routes get designated P2, and residential streets get designated P3.

Sidewalks, bike lanes, and pathways are generally given the same priority as the adjacent street, but the policy allows for sidewalks, bike lanes, or pathways to be designated as Active Transportation Priority Routes (P1AT, P2AT, P3AT), which will be cleared and sanded to the same service level as all Priority 1 infrastructure.

**TABLE 1** Snow Clearing

Snow Clearing Priority Level	Street Clearing Threshold	Pathway Clearing Threshold	Sidewalk/ Threshold	Expected Completion Time
P1	3cm		5cm	36 hours
P2	5cm		5cm	36 hours
P3	10cm – on inspection		8cm	5 working days
Back lane	5cm		N/A	48 hours
P1AT, P2AT	N/A		5cm	36 hours
P3AT	N/A		8cm	5 working days
P3 Enhanced*	N/A		5cm	36 hours

\* P3 Enhanced – Sidewalks in the vicinity of elementary schools & active living centres

The city’s snow removal budget is based on the need to perform an averaged number of snow clearing and sanding events per year on each km of roadway, sidewalk, or pathway within each priority designation.

In this budget, we have increased funding for snow clearing to allow for 200km of P2 and P3 sidewalks to be reclassified as P1AT, and for 100km of P3 streets and pathways to be reclassified as P1AT. The improved sidewalk clearing could be used to improve access to transit by widening snow clearing to the full walkshed of the transit route instead of just the corridor that the buses run down. Both the sidewalk and bikeway improvements could be prioritized to benefit higher needs areas.

#### **New Expenditures:**

- One Time Startup Costs (signing): \$ 84,000
- Ongoing Annual Costs: \$ 619,700

## **Encouraging the Shift to Sustainable Transportation**

Having walking and cycling networks that provide comfortable connections to the places we visit throughout our daily lives is crucial in our shift to sustainable modes of transportation like walking, cycling, and transit, but having those networks in place is only part of the solution. To gain the most from our investments in sustainable transportation, we need to actively encourage people to use those networks.

Targeted marketing campaigns, or individualized marketing, provide tailored outreach to educate people about their travel choices. This customized

information allows each marketing program to focus on the unique travel needs of an individual neighbourhood, institution, or audience. It's an effective way to bridge the information gap and support a change in travel behaviour – driving less and using alternative travel options more. It's been shown to decrease the number of kilometers being traveled, especially when initiated alongside major transit service and/or infrastructure projects that make it easier to walk, bike, or bus.

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For instance, a Portland study showed that areas targeted for individualized marketing after installation of a new rapid transit line saw a near doubling in the shift to transit use compared to a similar area not targeted with individualized travel marketing.<sup>67</sup> Households near the rapid transit line that hadn't been reached by Smart Trips, Portland's individualized marketing program, cut car use by 3 per cent. Those contacted by the Smart Trips program reduced car use by 12 per cent.<sup>8</sup>

A 2009 Winnipeg based targeted/individualized marketing case study, the WinSmart Community Based Travel Marketing Pilot program, showed that this type of program could be quite successful in Winnipeg. Results from the project showed an 11.7 per cent reduction in drive-alone and an 18.2 per cent reduction in trip-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This was supported by a 54.3 per cent relative increase in cycling, 3.4 per cent increase in walking and 8 per cent increase in carpooling. There was also a 5.4 per cent reduction in vehicle kilometers traveled (VKT).<sup>9</sup>

To develop and run an individualized marketing program in Winnipeg, we are suggesting that 1 per cent of the city's road rehabilitation budget be directed to a new TravelSmart Winnipeg program.

#### **New Expenditure:**

- \$ 1.369 million

The city should look into the Federal Climate Action Incentive Fund (CAIF) **MUSH Retrofit** stream as a potential funding source for this program.

#### **Monitoring Progress**

Monitoring the development and uptake of the pedestrian and cycling networks is an important task in need of improvement. We need to go beyond the strictly quantitative measures currently being reported and

provide a more holistic set of connectivity and performance measures for the transportation system.

To measure network connectivity, the US FHWA Guidebook for Measuring Multimodal Network Connectivity recommends consideration of the following:

- Network completeness – How much of the transportation network is available to bicyclists and pedestrians?
- Network density – How dense are the available links and nodes of the bicycle and pedestrian network?
- Route directness – How far out of their way do users have to travel to find a facility they can or want to use?
- Access to destinations – What Destinations can be reached using the transportation network?
- Network quality – How does the network support users of varying levels of experience, ages, abilities, and comfort with bicycling or walking?<sup>10</sup>

These network connectivity measures should be supplemented to show connectivity measures for higher needs areas. Annual reporting of transportation model shares should be included in the annual budgeting process.

#### **Total New Expenditure:**

- \$.70 million – Increased snow clearing
- \$1.37 million – New Travel Smart Winnipeg Program
- \$.067 million – Debt financing for new active transportation infrastructure (\$1.03 million @ 2.75%/20 years)

**Total: \$2.2 million**

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## **Endnotes**

**1** City of Winnipeg/ “OurWinnipeg 2045 Development Plan”, July 2021 Draft, Available at: <https://clkapps.winnipeg.ca/DMIS/ViewDoc.asp?DocId=21098&SectionId=612079&InitUrl=>

**2** Statistics Canada 2016 Census data on trips to work, show that 78% of trips to work are made by automobile (driver and passenger)

**3** Statistics Canada, Commuting distance from place of residence to place of work, largest CMAs, 1996 and 2016, Available at” <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2019001/article/00008-eng.htm>

**4** CAA Manitoba, Bike Winnipeg.”Views on Cycling and Driving in Winnipeg”, June 2018. Available at:

- 5** City of Winnipeg. Transportation Master Plan Study Report, Appendix E, November 2020. Available at:
- 6** Brög et al. as reported in TCRP Report 95. “Chapter 16: Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.” 2009. p. 16–220
- 7** Individualized Marketing Programs, Oregon Department of Transportation
- 8** City’s ‘SmartTrips’ marketing program shifts focus, BikePortland.org, 2014
- 9** Section 7, WinSmart CBTM Project Report: WinSmart Community-Based Travel Marketing Pilot Project, Resource Conservation Manitoba, 2009
- 10** Hannah Twaddell et al (2018), “Guidebook for Measuring Multimodal Network Connectivity”, pg. 3.