



Greater Strides:

Taking Action on Active Transportation

Recommendations to the Manitoba government from
Manitoba's Active Transportation Advisory Group



June 2011

Manitoba 

Our vision for Manitoba

The Active Transportation Advisory Group

The Manitoba government, through an Order in Council, appointed the following individuals to the provincial Active Transportation Advisory Group. The group was tasked to provide recommendations on a provincial bicycle policy, development of multi-user recreational trails, ways to incorporate recreational and commuter trails into an overall network, improved signage, bicycle safety, cycling tourism and assessing the economic benefits of active transportation infrastructure.

Janice Lukes, *Chair*
Mark Cohoe
Tim Deacon
Pat Locken
Anders Swanson
Russell Wychreschuk
Terry Zdan

A strong provincial active transportation policy that:

- treats active transportation as an essential service with societal benefits, not simply a form of recreation or a luxury
- acknowledges the fundamental right of citizens to safely move from place to place under one's own power
- measures, promotes and incorporates the economic benefits of active transportation into a broad range of policy decisions
- funds, builds and designs active transportation capacity in balance with other transportation modes, knowing citizens choose active transportation often when the choice is safe and practical

▼ Bike boxes increase levels of safety for cycling.



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Family cycling in Oxford, England.



Honourable Bill Blaikie
 Minister of Conservation
 319 Legislative Building
 450 Broadway Avenue
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8

June 13, 2011

Dear Minister:



Janice Lukes, *Chair*

I am pleased to forward the recommendations of the Active Transportation Advisory Group for your consideration. It was a privilege to work with the members of this group and to have the opportunity to contribute to Manitoba's long-term vision for active transportation. Please join me in thanking the people who worked to assemble this report, Mark Cohoe, Tim Deacon, Pat Locken, Anders Swanson, Russell Wychreschuk and Terry Zdan, just as we in turn owe our thanks to many provincial officials, stakeholders and industry representatives who patiently shared their knowledge and advice.

Our province has made significant strides in raising the profile and the potential of active transportation. Each step forward has had a direct impact on the lives of Manitobans. Commuters can choose to reduce their impact on the global environment more often. New trails and bike routes have made it easier for Manitobans to stay fit, reducing health care costs and improving their quality of life. Recreational users have new opportunities to experience our province's natural beauty at its best, and even drivers benefit when active transportation projects reduce congestion on our streets.

Of course, there is more work to do. Manitoba's commitment to active transportation is visible, but we have yet to deliver on the real goal of building a true active transportation system. We believe your willingness to hear these recommendations shows that you appreciate the challenges before us.

We see our recommendations as one step in a continuous consultation designed to permanently integrate active transportation choices into Manitoba's transportation vision. People who plan highways, manage railroads and design airports think and work in grids, not in one-time projects. They plan ahead in windows of years, or even decades. We must now build active transportation capacity with the same approach to deliver fully on its potential.

The implementation of our recommendations will help more Manitobans to choose a more sustainable transportation system, with economic, social and environmental benefits for all.

Yours sincerely,

Janice Lukes, Chair
 Active Transportation Advisory Group

COMMITTEE

Tim Deacon

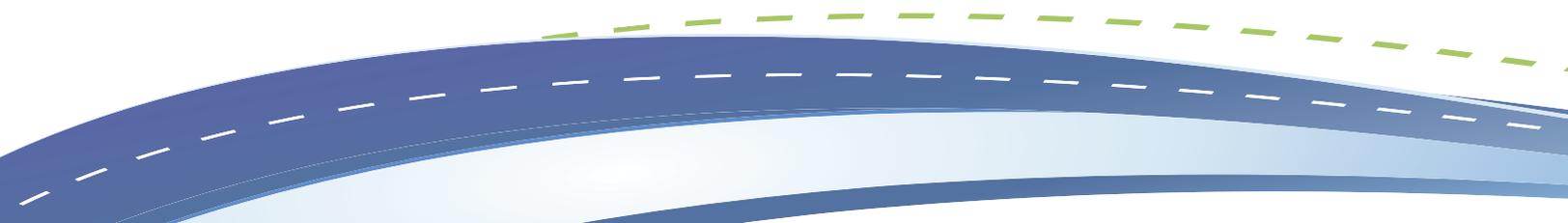
Anders Swanson

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Russell Wychreschuk



Executive summary

Manitoba has made significant strides in active transportation in the last decade.

Reflecting the low cost of active transportation infrastructure, the aggregate total of investments has been small. Also important is that the value of those investments has been limited by the lack of central co-ordination. To deliver more “paths for the buck” and accelerate realization of the benefits of active transportation investments, this report includes specific recommendations to overcome that challenge.

Manitobans want to play a role in building a system that works – from small communities to regional grids. A mother can be a significant factor in the development of local plans to help her nine-year old walk safely to school. In the same town, a reeve or mayor can help to plan a greenway connecting her village to the nearest town.

A successful active transportation system will attract users in much the same way. If a cyclist's first tentative half-hour trip on a Sunday is a positive experience, it will lead to casual journeys through unseen parks and unfamiliar neighbourhoods on future weekends. As the cumulative experience of these short trips grows, the probability of commuting to work by bike increases. Similarly, creating and nurturing walkable neighbourhoods helps encourage walking instead of driving.

First, we call for the province to adopt a provincial policy to support and encourage active transportation. A written policy on active transportation would express Manitoba's commitment to alternative transportation modes and provide direction for the development of active transportation programs. Developing a provincial policy emphasizes the benefits active transportation provides to Manitobans and sets the foundation to integrate active transportation priorities across provincial programs.

Our recommendations address existing deficiencies and advocate the need for stronger, clearer lines of leadership in the development

of active transportation resources in Manitoba. We call for the establishment of an active transportation agency with a provincial director supported by regional co-ordinators, ideally reporting to a single department (ex: Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation). These professionals would, in turn, be advised by a permanent provincial advisory group, with the support of local advisory groups to create a consistent regional consultation process.

To guide everyone engaged in active transportation, we recommend developing a provincial active transportation plan to complement existing transportation plans and stipulate clear goals and targets. It would include a public inventory of existing routes and future rights-of-way. It would specify design guidelines to include active transportation in the developments of the future. We recommend programs that target certain key demographics and communities for action. We call for cycling training in Manitoba's schools and we suggest measures to take advantage of tourism opportunities provided by active transportation.

Active transportation infrastructure is significantly cheaper to develop and maintain than the conventional alternative. Nevertheless, resources are needed. We recommend the provincial government finance active transportation grid expansion fairly by allocating funds focused on planning and infrastructure, encouraging and enabling safe active transportation facilities for all Manitobans. Finally, to significantly increase the uptake of active transportation, funding will have to reflect end goals, not just the current standing.





OBJECTIVE A

Develop a provincial policy and co-ordinated approach to active transportation in Manitoba.

1. Adopt a provincial policy to support and encourage active transportation.
2. Develop departmental policies and programs that mirror the provincial policy.
3. Establish a provincial director of active transportation.
4. Identify and train regional co-ordinators to create a local capacity for active transportation planning, consultation and implementation.
5. Develop or adopt a set of detailed design guidelines for safe active transportation infrastructure in Manitoba.
6. Develop or adopt a set of design guidelines for land use planning and site planning practices that encourage active transportation in Manitoba.
7. Update provincial legislation and regulations, including *The Highway Traffic Act*, to reflect developments in active transportation.
8. Lead by example by including active transportation policies, programs and infrastructure at provincial buildings and facilities.

OBJECTIVE B

Create a benchmark and set measurable targets to guide the development of a safe, sustainable and cohesive active transportation network for all Manitobans.

9. Create a public inventory of existing trails, infrastructure and roads suitable for active transportation.
10. Create a public inventory of existing active transportation programs offered by the province.
11. Publicly commit to measurable targets and goals on the status of active transportation in Manitoba.

OBJECTIVE C

Build safe and connected active transportation networks for Manitobans.

12. Review provincially funded road projects to include provisions for active transportation within the budget of individual projects and in the goals of multi-year plans.
13. Enact a policy that requires active transportation infrastructure to be considered in all future provincial road projects in Manitoba.

14. Provide long-term active transportation funding for municipalities to use towards the cost of active transportation planning.
15. Assign a dedicated percentage of the annual roads and bridges capital and operating budgets to fund a cost-share program with municipalities to encourage the development and maintenance of active transportation infrastructure in and between Manitoba communities.
16. Develop a paved provincial active transportation network for residents and tourists.
17. Begin to develop safe connections from facilities and residences for seniors and people with disabilities to local active transportation networks.
18. Develop plans and establish resources to increase active transportation opportunities in northern and remote Manitoba.

OBJECTIVE D

Explore opportunities to raise awareness and provide training and incentives to motivate Manitobans to choose safe active transportation options more often.

19. Provide funding to institutions and businesses to improve active transportation options at workplaces.
20. Encourage comprehensive cycling training programs in Manitoba through service organizations and through schools in collaboration with Manitoba Education and school divisions.
21. Expand the existing mandate on school travel planning to include all student travel requirements and to include active modes of transportation.
22. Work with Manitoba Public Insurance to introduce and improve adult cycling and road sharing educational opportunities across Manitoba.
23. Establish local active transportation advisory groups to become informal advisory committees to regional active transportation co-ordinators.

OBJECTIVE E

Establish a platform for building a sustainable future for active transportation in Manitoba.

24. Establish an active transportation agency with a formal advisory board.
25. Establish local active transportation advisory groups to become informal advisory committees for regional active transportation co-ordinators.

Community walkway
in Carman, Manitoba.



Introduction

Active transportation is the use of human power to move from one place to another. For centuries, walking was the dominant mode of transportation, complemented by the invention of the human-powered bicycle over one hundred and fifty years ago.

Innovators developed transportation systems that reduced the use of human power. Our ancestors used transportation resources found in nature: oxen, draught horses, river currents. More recently, we began to rely on engines powered by burning fossil fuels. Neighbouring provinces, states and countries have even harnessed nuclear power to move ships and power subways.

These inventions made society more sophisticated, mass shipment more practical and travel over long distances more popular. These changes had human and socio-environmental consequences as our transportation infrastructure was rebuilt to meet the demands of powered vehicles. Our natural ability to stay fit by moving from place to place receded into the background. Today, in response to growing public demand, governments around the world are reinvesting in active transportation and making its benefits available to the public.

Active transportation solves problems. More use of active transportation means less congestion and reduced maintenance costs on expensive roads and bridges. Using active transportation also decreases the risks of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other health conditions brought on by the lack of regular exercise.

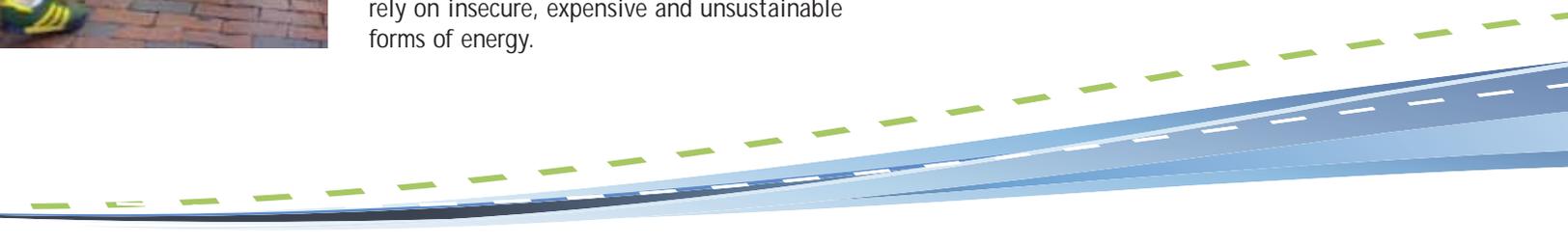
Active transportation is efficient and cost-effective. After shelter and taxes, transportation is the most costly burden in an average family's budget. An individual can save thousands of dollars a year in personal or family transportation expenses by regularly cycling or walking. These savings are then available to be spent at local merchants and manufacturers, reducing our province's dependence on imported vehicles, parts and fuels, creating local jobs in the process. The more a community can rely on active transportation, the less its residents must rely on insecure, expensive and unsustainable forms of energy.



With these benefits in mind, the Active Transportation Advisory Group (ATAG) is making recommendations to help Manitoba expand its network of active transportation alternatives. Although a great deal has been done already, we can learn more from the experiences of cities and states, towns and provinces around the world, many of which have been increasing active transportation capacity since the 1980s. Many of the best-known examples are European:

- **NETHERLANDS:** A small percentage of the transportation budget can help increase bicycle use. In the Netherlands, only six per cent of the money spent on road infrastructure is spent on bicycle facilities, yet bicycles are used for 27 per cent of journeys and nine per cent of total distance travelled.
- **UNITED KINGDOM:** The U.K. Bikeability program aims to provide cycling proficiency skills to school aged children and adults, providing them with the skills and confidence to ride on today's roads. Bikeability was developed by more than 20 professional organizations including the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and is supported by cross-government departments in the U.K. including the Department for Transport, Department of Health and Department for Children, Schools and Families. So far, more than 250,000 young cyclists have been trained and hundreds of thousands of coveted Bikeability badges have been awarded. The aim is for half a million children to be Bikeability trained by 2012 and the ultimate vision is that no child should leave primary school without the opportunity to take part in Bikeability training.¹

However, the success of active transportation is a transatlantic phenomenon. In the United States, the most car-centric country in the world, local and regional leaders have also boldly stepped forward to increase active transportation capacity.



- **MINNEAPOLIS, MN – MIDTOWN GREENWAY:** Begun in 2000, the Midtown Greenway has gradually converted an old rail line into 5.5 miles (9 km) of paved walking and cycling trails through the heart of Minneapolis, with connections to another 50 miles (80 km) of pathways. The greenway cost \$20.5 million. As of 2010, the greenway accommodates 1.5 million trips a year, including 15,000 trips a month in the winter. Construction of the greenway generated 700 construction jobs. The Freewheel Bike Center, located along the greenway, employs 25 people and serves up to 1,500 customers a day.
- **BOSTON, MA:** For three months of each average year, Boston has below-freezing temperatures. Still, over 13 per cent of commuters walked to work in 2000, nearly double the historic Manitoba average. Recent investments in new bicycle route mileage, a bike-sharing program and a **complete streets** policy are paying off: in just three years (2007-2009), Boston bicycle ridership grew by 43 per cent. This is more than three times the U.S. average for the same period.
- **CHICAGO, IL:** Neither the city's size, nor its cold winters, deterred Mayor Richard M. Daley from his quest to make Chicago into a cycling capital. The city's bike plan calls for a 500-mile grid of bike paths and lanes by 2015. As of early 2011, Chicago has built over half of the mileage needed to reach that goal and newly elected Mayor Rahm Emanuel has reaffirmed his own commitment to the program. Bike-to-work trips doubled from 2000 to 2008.

The average Canadian makes over 2,000 journeys of less than three kilometres by car every year, whether it's leaving work for a business lunch, dropping the kids off at school, going to a class at university or travelling to the local grocery store.

What if just half of those trips were human-powered trips as they may have been only a generation or two ago? How would our communities look? Would we have fewer cars on our roads? Would we have less need to fund road and bridge repairs? Would our cities have lower infrastructure deficits? Would our health-care system have less pressure from chronic diseases related to diet and poor exercise such as hypertension or Type 2 diabetes? Would we know more of our neighbours and know more about our own communities?

Canadian provinces are striving to answer these questions with investments of their own and they are beginning to reap the benefits.

- **BRITISH COLUMBIA:** Bike BC is a \$31-million, three-year initiative to build new, safe and high-quality cycling infrastructure. The program is a strategic investment to build important cycling corridors of regional and provincial significance and represents one of the largest investments B.C. has ever made in building and improving cycling infrastructure in communities across the province.
- **QUEBEC:** In 1995, the Quebec government invested \$88.5 million over 10 years to develop the Route Verte, a bikeway over 4,000 kilometres linking all parts of Quebec. In 2000, the Quebec bicycle industry generated sales over \$181 million, sustaining over 2,800 jobs (person years) and producing tax revenues of \$17.2 for the government of Quebec and \$13.6 million for the Government of Canada.

In each of these jurisdictions, there has been a public will to build practical active transportation grids, over and above investments in niche projects or smaller routes for particular communities. Transportation planners designing roads for the car economy think in terms of a road network that serves the diverse needs of drivers. In much the same way, active



▲ Whiteshell River Bridge, Manitoba.

- **55 percent of the population of Manitoba are considered overweight or obese**
- **45 per cent of Manitobans are considered inactive**

– *Making the Case for Primary Prevention: An Economic Analysis of Risk Factors in Manitoba*²

transportation planners in leading cities strive to develop bike and walking grids to accommodate regular commuters moving from different points to different destinations, be it for work, play or both.

Leaders in all of these jurisdictions also act on the principle that active transportation does not have to replace the car to be a useful or effective alternative. Promoting active transportation is about restoring balance to our streets, not about marginalizing existing car and bus traffic.

The Manitoba government can – and should – promote active transportation as one more feature of a full transportation system. In the past, our unbalanced approach meant accommodating cyclists, pedestrians and the disabled wherever possible. Making room for human-powered travel is always possible and often at a substantially lower price than similar investments for conventional transportation infrastructure. A truly balanced approach to transportation policy includes active transportation as an integral part of the transport network – an approach that U.S. planners describe as a **complete streets** policy.

In Manitoba, there has been an increase in active transportation traffic in the last 10 years. We have also seen a growing desire for more cycling and walking options. Demands for safe bike routes and walkable streets are now outpacing our existing active transportation capacity. In particular, there is a tremendous demand in smaller towns and rural communities where there is the lowest per capita investment to date.

The reasons for the increased demands are as diverse as the reasons seen abroad. Some Manitobans choose active transportation because it is greener. Others realize active transportation is a way to build health and exercise into their daily routines. Taxpayers gain directly from these choices and from the modest investments necessary to make those choices possible.

Manitoba's policymakers are working to try to meet the growing grassroots demand for an alternative. Some of the most notable provincial investments include:

- **TRANS CANADA TRAIL:** Approximately \$2.5 million was jointly invested with local municipalities into multiple sections of Manitoba's portion of the Trans Canada Trail.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE STIMULUS FUNDING:** \$7 million contributed in matching funding with the Government of Canada and City of Winnipeg towards Winnipeg's active transportation network.
- **MANITOBA FLOODWAY TRAILS:** \$8.4 million was jointly invested with the Government of Canada towards the development of a trails system as part of the floodway expansion.

In the past, the Manitoba government has also sought expert advice on active transportation and consulted with key stakeholders to produce the *Beyond Kyoto* report published in 2009, amongst others.

While Manitoba's commitment to active transportation has been supportive, it must become strategic. Individual projects reflect the commitment of individual years, departments or budgets without a coherent plan to tie new active transportation routes or assets together.



World Health Organization Warns Against the Hazards of Physical Inactivity

"Changes in activity patterns as a consequence of the rise of motorised transport, sedentary leisure time activities such as television watching will lead to physical inactivity in all but the poorest populations. Many diseases can be prevented, yet health care systems do not make the best use of their available resources to support this process."

Source: *World Health Organization*³

In Winnipeg, progress has been substantial. Smaller cities and rural municipalities could make similar gains at a fraction of the cost if there were a provincial plan to systematically include them.

With this in mind, this ATAG recommendations focus on the need to treat every active transportation resource, real or potential, as part of one transportation grid built to support one cohesive transportation strategy.

Transportation resources are not simply financial. Manitoba's most powerful assets are often human resources: volunteer organizations, entrepreneurs

and public employees. All of these groups were critical in the development of this report. With more of this energy and commitment, Manitoba can be a leader in active transportation.

The recommendations in this report provide a blueprint to help Manitoba benefit from the economic, social and environmental opportunities related to active transportation. With focused leadership and a standing meaningful commitment from the provincial government, Manitobans can experience all the advantages associated with active transportation.

Active Transportation Will Save Billions in Healthcare Costs

In 2010, a joint report from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Cancer Care Manitoba, Alliance for the Prevention of Chronic Disease and Health in Common found that preventable factors including physical inactivity and obesity would cost Manitobans \$4.7 billion in increased health care expenditures and lost productivity over the next 15 years.*

– Mark McDonald, Chair for the Alliance for the Prevention of Chronic Disease
*Making the Case for Primary Prevention: An Economic Analysis of Risk Factors in Manitoba*⁴

"This report is a wake-up call to all Manitobans that there is an urgent need for more money to be invested in primary prevention programs aimed at reducing risk factors for chronic diseases. If we do nothing, in 15 years, our health care system may not be sustainable."

– Cancer Care press release, *The Cost of Apathy: Report Reveals Manitoba Taxpayers To Pay Billions for Unhealthy Living*, September 14, 2010⁵





Safe, Walkable Neighbourhoods Promote Physical Activity

A 2010 report by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that a number of steps be taken to support urban design, land use and transportation policies because the design of communities and neighborhoods can encourage or discourage physical activity among residents. Safe, walkable neighborhoods can promote routine physical activity, regardless of an individual's fitness level. Recommended actions include the following:

- Develop and encourage the use of local bicycle and pedestrian project funding criteria to increase efforts in areas with higher concentrations of youth, elderly, low-income and ethnic minority populations.
- Adopt and support Complete Streets ordinances, which ensure that streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users.
- Collaborate with transportation planning agencies in the development of short and long-range master plans.
- Plan, build and retrofit residential and mixed-used streets to reduce speeds, accommodate bicyclists and improve the walkability of the environment.
- Plan, build and maintain a well-connected network of off-street trails and paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.

– Centers for Disease Control and Prevention⁶

Objectives

OBJECTIVE A

Develop a provincial policy and co-ordinated approach to active transportation in Manitoba.

The first step to moving forward with active transportation planning is adopting a consolidated approach led by the provincial government, starting with the development of set policies and dedicated employment positions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Adopt a provincial policy to support and encourage active transportation.

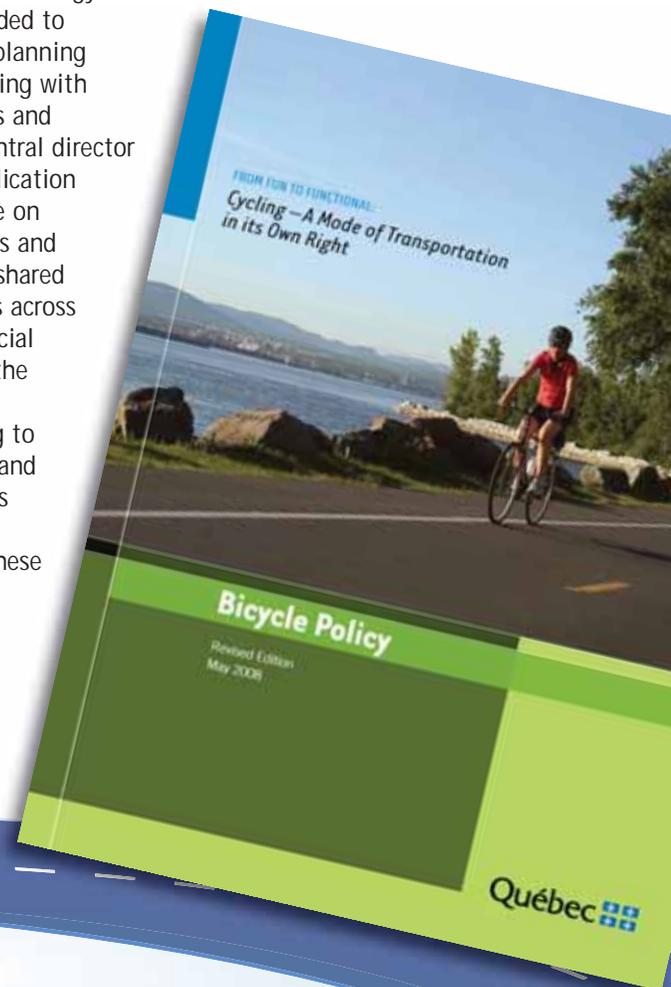
A written policy on active transportation would express Manitoba's commitment to alternative transportation modes and provide direction when administrating programs. Developing a provincial policy emphasizes the benefits active transportation provides to Manitobans and sets the foundation to integrate active transportation priorities across provincial programs. There is an opportunity to incorporate these active transportation policies into the existing companion policies and provincial transportation strategy.

2 Develop departmental policies and programs that mirror the provincial policy.

Virtually every department in government can have an impact on active transportation; yet each one is unique in the way it delivers programs and services. Creating policy tailored to the needs of each department will ensure broader goals of the provincial policy are achieved.

3 Establish a provincial director of active transportation.

Provincial departments should co-ordinate to make the most of the energy and investments provided to active transportation planning across Manitoba. Working with government employees and existing budgets, a central director could help reduce duplication of activities, capitalize on emerging opportunities and ensure information is shared with interested parties across the province. A provincial director would act as the key contact point for municipalities, helping to identify programming and infrastructure priorities and overseeing funds allocated to support these priorities.





▲
Grassroots organizations know their neighbourhoods and develop plans to address local needs.

A provincial director of active transportation would also develop, monitor and provide advice in the growing field of active transportation at the provincial, regional and municipal levels. As more communities around the world develop pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, there is a growing knowledge of best practices and experiential information that can be used to implement local strategies more efficiently and affordably based on the lessons learned by others.

4 Identify and train regional co-ordinators to create a local capacity for active transportation planning, consultation and implementation.

Effective active transportation planning depends on local involvement and knowledge of best practices. A trained regional co-ordinator with knowledge of local needs and strategic goals would be an excellent resource. *The Provincial Land Use Policies: Draft for Consultation* noted that through development plans, local authorities could encourage certain development patterns, land use mixes and densities that promote transit, walking and cycling. (Page 52, *Provincial Land Use Policies: Draft for Consultation*)⁷

A regional co-ordinator would provide ground level support to promote active transportation planning locally and at the earliest stages of development, which may help avoid missed opportunities and costly retrofits in the future. A regional co-ordinator would also be responsible for identifying local priorities, contributing to the provincial strategy, collecting meaningful information and sharing lessons learned. As a local champion for active transportation, they would act as the regional liaison for the provincial director of active transportation, a regional contact for stewardship groups and as a resource for professional and technical services for municipalities, planning districts and Northern Manitoba communities.

Regional offices could identify staff members with an existing interest in cycling and walking and expand their job descriptions to include the responsibilities of the regional active transportation co-ordinator. This would develop expertise at the regional level without the cost of an added position. Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs is responsible for assisting with and approving municipal development and transportation plans and is positioned to develop and provide active transportation expertise at the regional level.

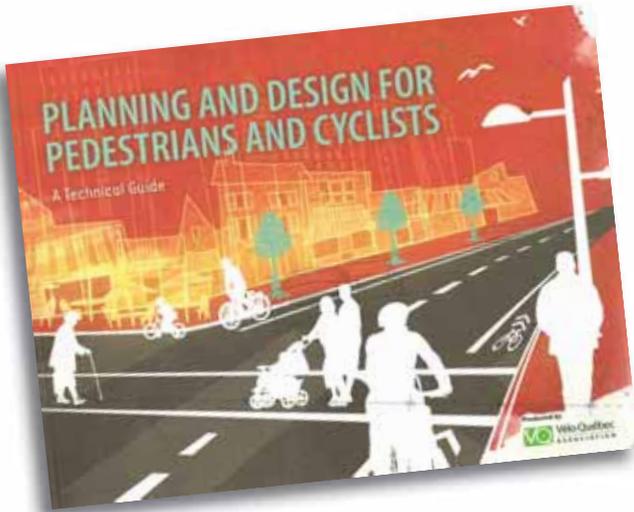
“It’s best to start with leadership – it’s cheap, powerful and renewable.”

– active transportation consultant, Geoff Noxon of Noxon Associates Limited, speaking at the Complete Streets Forum 2010, Toronto, ON

U.S. State Governments Develop Partnerships to Increase Safe Cycling and Walking

In the U.S., each state’s department of transportation must have a bicycle and pedestrian co-ordinator or program manager. The co-ordinator’s primary functions are to institutionalize non-motorized transportation within the larger state agency and to increase the number of citizens safely bicycling and walking. They work with state and local elected officials, law enforcement, public health officials, transit providers, business leaders, advocates, media and the public to build partnerships and provide leadership and vision. Typically, it is the local bicycle and pedestrian co-ordinator’s responsibility to implement or manage the development and update the programs and projects in the local bicycle and pedestrian plans. For more information about active transportation in the U.S. visit the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center at www.walkinginfo.org.

5 Develop or adopt a set of detailed design guidelines for safe active transportation infrastructure in Manitoba.



Quebec's design guidelines handbook.

This would help government departments and municipalities develop appropriate active transportation infrastructure and programs in their communities. It should also consider the specific challenges and opportunities facing Manitoba's small, rural and remote communities. The guidelines would help identify key factors to consider when building and placing active transportation facilities. The guidelines should apply to on-road and off-road treatments, street design, end of trip facilities, maintenance and operational expectations (such as snow clearing and street sweeping). These treatments should be incorporated into standard design drawings.

To ensure that the guidelines are applied, they could be presented at regional workshops on active transportation as part of ongoing professional development opportunities for provincial and municipal staff. Compliance with the guidelines should be considered as a prerequisite for provincial funding. (See recommendations 13 and 15.)

6 Develop or adopt a set of design guidelines for land use planning and site planning practices that encourage active transportation in Manitoba.

Many factors affect the decision to use or not use active transportation. For instance, the distance to retail and office space, the density, diversity and connectivity within and between neighbourhoods and the presence of barriers such as high speed/high traffic roadways (or the existence of access across barriers) have a strong influence on whether or not active transportation is seen as a viable alternative to the car. Similarly, street-front access profoundly affects the use of active transportation and public transit. For instance, a building that opens onto the street is far more attractive to pedestrians and transit users than one only accessible through a large parking lot.

By providing guidelines for active transportation at the neighbourhood and community level, the province can help developers and municipalities plan neighbourhoods that will encourage active transportation, a stated goal in the provincial land use policy. (*Provincial Land Use Policies: Draft for Consultation*)⁷

Site planning guidelines help developers ensure that individual projects incorporate active transportation elements (such as bicycle parking, street furniture and accessibility features) into their plans in ways that maximize their benefit while integrating into the overall neighbourhood design goals and aesthetics.

Smart urban design provides improvements on the most direct route - as well as alternatives.



Size of City Blocks Affect Public Walking Habits

Unlike their larger counterparts, small blocks add to the permeability of the street network, providing several options for getting from place to place and reducing the number of longer, indirect routes. A study conducted in the United States shows that people are four times more likely to walk toward a public transit stop when it is less than 800 m away, if blocks are 1.2 ha (60 m x 200 m) in size rather than 2.4 ha (60 m x 400 m).



▲ Fully paved shoulders allow for safer cycling and driving conditions.

7 Update provincial legislation and regulations, including *The Highway Traffic Act*, to reflect developments in active transportation.

The Highway Traffic Act (HTA) has historically been focussed on motorized vehicles; this legislation must be broadened to include active transportation. As legislation and regulations now stand, the implementation of active transportation facilities in Manitoba communities can and is being hampered by outdated language that conflicts with best practices recommended by the Transportation Association of Canada. A major review of the HTA, focused on its impact on active transportation and including the recognition of the bicycle as a viable mode of transportation, would allow out of date language to be amended to coincide with current best practices. Given that active transportation is an emerging field with innovations occurring regularly,

once a major update of the HTA is completed, periodic reviews should reflect innovations in active transportation. In addition, all proposed amendments to the HTA should be reviewed to ensure that they do not adversely affect active transportation.

8 Lead by example by including active transportation policies, programs and infrastructure at provincial buildings and facilities.

As the largest employer in the province, the Manitoba government can act as a role model for other provincial employers by demonstrating leadership in its adoption and implementation of active transportation initiatives and practices. Whether planning new buildings or negotiating leases for government facilities, policies should ensure employees have nearby access to public transit and active transportation routes. Secure bike parking, lockers and showers, bike maintenance/riding skills training, guaranteed ride home programs, localized maps and transit timetables all contribute to active living decisions. Including active transportation requirements in site selection and site design criteria will provide an active transportation friendly influence in the marketplace while setting an example for other employers to follow. Measures should also be taken to modify existing buildings to meet new standards.

Manitoba Hydro's secured bike storage room. ►



OBJECTIVE B

Create a benchmark and set measurable targets to guide the development of a safe, sustainable and cohesive active transportation network for all Manitobans.

It is necessary to both map and assess existing active transportation infrastructure throughout Manitoba. We need a detailed and accurate picture of where we are today and targets to guide us into the future. The moment we begin to collect and share information about current networks and their use, it becomes easier for Manitoba's residents and visitors to walk, cycle, canoe, roll or ski to their destination. Measurable targets provide a goal to aim towards and a method of gauging progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9 Create a public inventory of existing trails, infrastructure and roads suitable for active transportation.

Many existing trails and accessible highways are underused for cycling, walking and other active transportation activities because of a lack of public awareness. An audit of the conditions of trails and highways with wide, paved shoulders should include specific information such as surface type, condition and width, and should be made publicly available to promote and encourage use. For trails, it is also important to record and communicate difficulty levels and seasonal variation. Where appropriate, the audit should also include projected timelines for rehabilitation, reconstruction and maintenance considerations for mapped routes.

10 Create a public inventory of existing active transportation programs offered by the province.

For departments currently delivering active transportation programming, a documented list of what is offered would help market the opportunities. This inventory would not only benefit the public, but government staff as well. This would enable government to assess what programming is available through which departments and act as checkpoints against overlaps and gaps to assess what is needed.

Portland, Oregon's yearly measurement of bicycle traffic underscores the benefit of their infrastructure investments.



11 Publicly commit to measurable targets and goals on the status of active transportation in Manitoba.

Making a marked public commitment (ex: 20 per cent of trips completed by walking or cycling by 2020) can inspire the public, create local buy-in, focus planned projects and be used to evaluate investments. Measurable commitments require tracking to report on progress and to understand if targets are reached. Reporting on the status of active transportation across the province about every three years would help assess progress and assist with setting future priorities. Where

possible, information on relevant performance measures should be collected as regular practice in new transportation projects.

At present, little data is collected by Manitoba communities on travel by human powered means, such as cycling, rolling or walking. Tracking participant rates, collision rates, perceptions of safety, kilometres travelled, average distance to safe infrastructure, availability of end of trip facilities and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and other measures would create a working benchmark to measure progress and set goals against. Community partners should be engaged to help collect this type of information and provide input into the report.

Automated bike counter displays daily and aggregate bicycle traffic across Queen Louise's Bridge in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Denmark's Planning Tool

The Copenhagen bicycle account is a bi-annual assessment of the city's cycling conditions, reporting on new initiatives as well as on how the city's cycling facilities are perceived by Copenhagen's residents. The 2008 study was based on telephone interviews with 1,025 randomly selected Copenhagen residents, 2008 statistics, as well as data from the Technical University of Denmark's survey of transport behaviour. For residents of Copenhagen, the bicycle account is a useful source of inspiration. For the city of Copenhagen, the bicycle account is a vital planning tool in the work of making Copenhagen an ever better city for cyclists.

– *Copenhagen City of Cyclists: Bicycle Account 2008*⁸

Minnesota Makes Safety a Priority

Minnesota's Department of Transportation bicycle plan (2005) set strategic directions as a framework for its performance measures and targets. One target was to develop adequate and appropriate bicycle facilities by 2010 so that bicycle commuter rates in Minnesota communities with a population of 5,000 or greater would increase an average of four per cent over 2000 levels. Another target specified that all new construction and reconstruction projects in 20-year urban areas and pavement preservation projects, where possible, include safe and effective bicycle accommodations.

– *Minnesota Department of Transportation*⁹



OBJECTIVE C

Build safe and connected active transportation networks for Manitobans.

For many people, the greatest barrier to active transportation is a direct, safe route to their intended destination. A well-planned and well-funded network is an essential element of a more active lifestyle and a healthier province.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12 Review provincially funded road projects to include provisions for active transportation within the budget of individual projects and in the goals of multi-year plans.

Manitoba is four years into an unprecedented 10-year transportation budget intended to expand and upgrade the provincial road network. The current development of the transportation network provides an opportunity to consider active transportation in the initial planning of road construction projects and reduce costly fixes and changes later on. It is essential to capitalize on these development opportunities before they are completed.

13 Enact a policy that requires active transportation infrastructure to be considered in all future provincial road projects in Manitoba.

Such a provincial policy would serve to ensure roads within and connecting Manitoba communities are designed and built to provide safe access for all users, including people walking, cycling, rolling, using a wheelchair or using other modes of active transportation.

Budgets for new construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation road projects should automatically include active transportation infrastructure.

Provincial contributions on municipal infrastructure projects should meet a set of standards similar and complementary to the existing *Manitoba's Green Building Policy*, which states that provincially funded buildings must meet robust environmental standards. Any exceptions from this policy should be based on predefined criteria, justified in writing and open to public appeal. Where active transportation facilities are desired but for some reason cannot be included in a project, (ex: excessive expense, constrained right of way) funding should be set aside for alternative routes.

Safe infrastructure encourages walking or cycling to do errands, reducing local traffic congestion.
– Montreal, Quebec.



“Policy matters and it will matter for a long time. Everything we see as right or wrong can be traced back to a policy decision.”

– Geoff Noxon of Noxon Associates Limited, speaking at Complete Streets Forum 2010, Toronto, ON

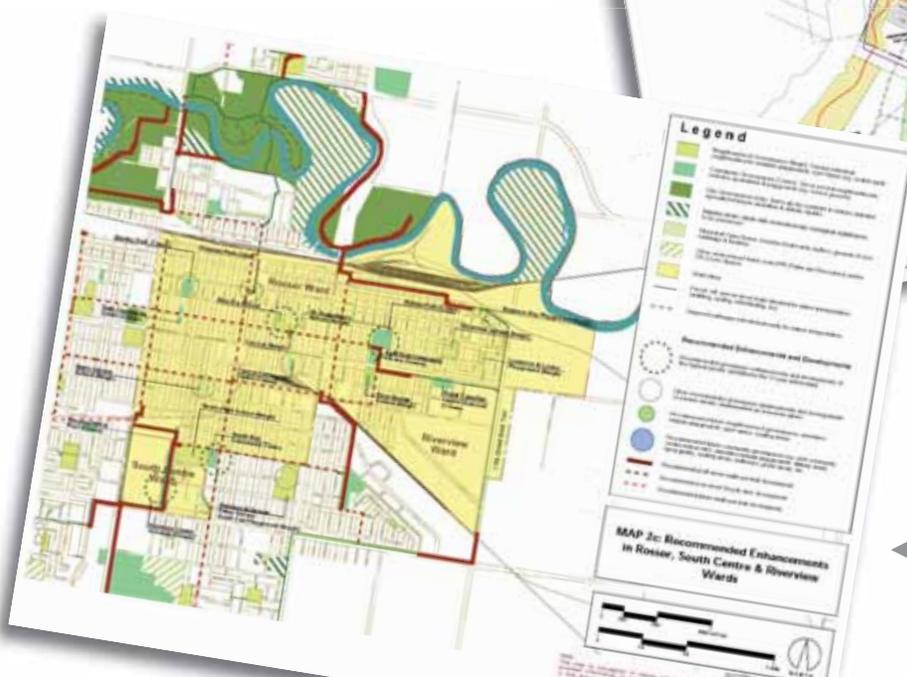
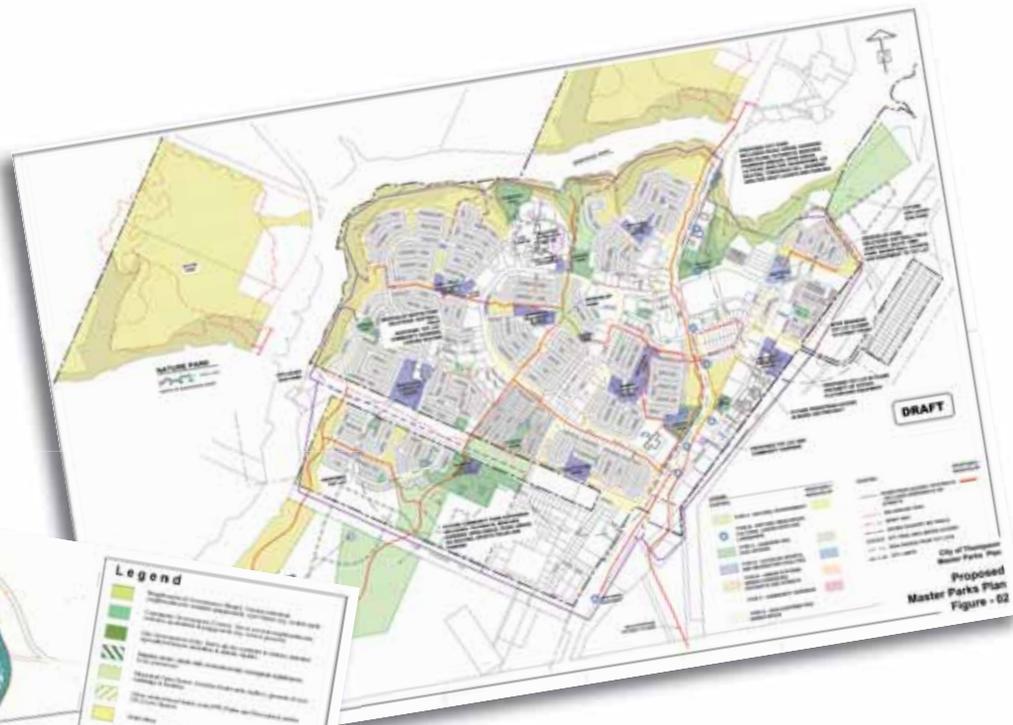
14 Provide long-term active transportation funding for municipalities to use towards the cost of active transportation planning.

An active transportation plan is the blueprint that guides the development of a community's sustainable transportation infrastructure and programming. It sets out policies, programs and design criteria to enhance the safety, comfort and accessibility of citizens actively riding, rolling and walking in their community. A good plan pinpoints the type of infrastructure needed, recommends development locations, prioritizes projects, and sets out long-term funding requirements to help budget for its realization. It serves as a reference for and should contribute to the overall transportation and development plans for the area. A provincial funding

program, such as a per capita grant, would allow municipalities the time and expertise to develop such plans. For around the cost of one city bus ticket per person, the government of Manitoba could provide the financial incentive for municipalities to develop active transportation plans.

Public input is necessary to ensure the transportation system planning reflects the type of community residents want. It would be valuable for the province to solicit input from Manitobans about their active transportation needs. Each community in Manitoba has its own requirements and a distinct culture. This also applies to their transportation needs and desires. Programs should be developed to seek community ideas at a grassroots level and allow for input by Manitobans on what they want to see happen in their communities.

Thompson, Manitoba

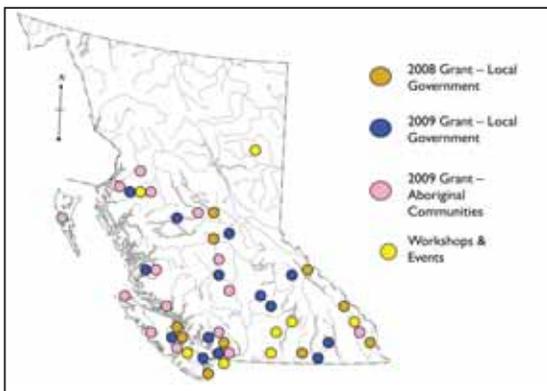


Brandon, Manitoba

Provincial Support Leads to Action in 24 B.C. Communities

In 2008-09, the British Columbia government provided over \$500,000 in community planning grants to 24 communities, most with between 1,000 and 15,000 citizens, to develop or update active transportation plans. The grant provided the opportunity for these communities to create a blueprint to guide future active transportation infrastructure improvements. As of 2010, the program has been used to leverage \$3.3 million worth of capital infrastructure investments. This is expected to grow significantly as more projects move from the early stages of development and come into fruition.

– *Built Environment & Active Transportation Community Planning Grant Program: Final Report*¹³



Active Transportation Reduces Roadway Construction And Maintenance Costs

Walking and cycling can lead to lower roadway costs. An urban roadway can carry seven to 12 times as many people per metre of lane per hour by bicycle than by automobile. Trails and pathways are even more efficient, handling 20 times the volume of users per hour than roads for automobiles. Shifts from driving to walking or cycling are estimated to provide roadway facility and traffic service cost savings of five cents per urban mile and three cents per mile for rural driving.

– *BEAT – The Path to Health, pg. 4, Fall 2008*¹² (BEAT is a joint initiative of BC Recreation and Parks Association and the Union of BC Municipalities)

Each year, the average Canadian makes 2,000 trips of less than three kilometres by car, trips that could be replaced with walking, bicycling or rolling.

– *Environmental Statement on the Benefits of Cycling in London, ON, 2009*¹⁰

“For the price of a single mile of a four-lane urban highway... hundreds of miles of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure can be built.”

– *Active Transportation for America*¹⁴

Complete Streets Legislation Coming to Ontario

The Complete Streets Act, introduced in 2009 and currently before the Committee on Environment and Public Works, requires states and metropolitan planning organizations to consider the needs of all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals and individuals with disabilities, when using federal funds to build new roads or improve existing roads. As an example, the Quebec Bicycle Policy stipulates that all provincial infrastructure projects, including roadway projects, must incorporate the needs of cyclists in their design.

– *When Ontario Bikes, Ontario Benefits, Share the Road Cycling Coalition, March 2010*¹¹



“We should be using the money we already have in current transportation budgets. Retrofit projects always cost more than doing it right the first time.”

– Barbara McCann,
Executive Director,
Complete Streets
Coalition (U.S.)
speaking at the
Complete Streets Forum
2010, Toronto, ON

15 Assign a dedicated percentage of the annual roads and bridges capital and operating budgets to fund a cost-share program with municipalities to encourage the development and maintenance of active transportation infrastructure in and between Manitoba communities.

In the past, Manitoba’s transportation system was designed specifically for motorized vehicles and without adequate consideration for other methods of transportation. This means that today, many of our roads may not be safe for walking, cycling or using a wheelchair. A set proportion of the capital budget would help to address the existing gap in active transportation infrastructure and help communities take actions to develop and retrofit facilities such as sidewalks, pedestrian and bikeway crossings, bike lanes, paved shoulders, trails, bike racks, signs, traffic signals and traffic calming measures. The maintenance fund would address repair and operating costs (including snow clearing) as needed.

Dedicated infrastructure makes long-distance cycling more appealing. ►
- pathway near Drayton Valley, Alberta

To reflect the significant health benefits participating in active transportation can provide, particularly as preventative care, the funding formula for this grant should be significantly more generous than the traditional formula for infrastructure projects. Beyond the health benefits, over time, the increased investment in active transportation will also mitigate the growing cost of road and highway infrastructure as more people use lighter-load active transportation methods of travel.



▲ A new pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian bridge across from the Birds Hill Provincial Park entrance lets people safely cross Highway 59.

16 Develop a paved provincial active transportation network for residents and tourists.

A paved network is ideal for people with disabilities and for travelling between communities by bicycle, rollerblades or other modes of active transportation. Paved networks provide the most active transportation options and the best option for longer trips between communities and in remote areas.

Manitoba's sections of the Trans Canada Trail involved residents and inspired communities to work together to highlight their areas of the province. Active transportation networks can boost tourism and improve a community's ability to attract and retain residents. A provincial network should connect all corners of Manitoba and, similar to the Route Verte in Quebec, could incorporate paved sections of the Trans Canada Trail and existing paved trails used by cyclists and pedestrians. Areas currently experiencing significant intercommunity traffic such as between Morden and Winkler and between Birds Hill Provincial Park and Winnipeg should be prioritized when developing active transportation connections. This will not only lead to higher use but also provide the greatest advantage from community resources including recreational facilities, libraries and shopping areas.

Quebec's Route Verte Attracts Significant Economic Benefits

Route Verte is Quebec's provincial cycling network. It extends more than 4,000 kilometres and includes sections of the Trans Canada Trail. Vélo Québec announced the project around the time the province adopted the 1995 Bicycle Policy, which provided for the development of cycling routes on approximately 40 per cent of the roads under the responsibility of the ministry of transportation. Work on this network involved a number of regional municipalities and organizations. It is featured prominently in the marketing of Quebec as a cycling destination.

– *Quebec ministry of transportation, Bicycle Policy (May 2008)*¹⁵

"The economic benefits associated with the Route Verte are significant:

- In 2000, Route Verte cyclists spent \$95.4 million. This corresponds to approximately 2,000 jobs (per person, per year) and revenues of \$15.1 million for the government of Quebec and \$11.9 million for the Government of Canada.
- People who live near the Route Verte spend over \$24.5 million on route-related activities."

– *Retombées économiques de la Route verte - March 2003*¹⁶





17 Begin to develop safe connections from facilities and residences for seniors and people with disabilities to local active transportation networks.

The proportion of seniors in Manitoba's population is growing faster than any other age group, accounting for 14 per cent of the province's residents. The number of seniors is expected to increase by 43 per cent over the next 20 years. Providing a range of mobility options helps seniors maintain their health and independence longer and helps to avoid social isolation. A healthier senior population has the potential to reduce or avoid health-care costs generally associated with caring for an aging population. Active transportation infrastructure central to facilities and centres for the aging or disabled should consider the needs of people with mobility issues by implementing measures such as shorter crossing distances at intersections, median refuges, curb cuts, wheelchair ramps, rest areas, audible signals, large print signage, lighting, snow/ice removal and reduced traffic speed. Safer and more accessible connections to transportation routes and local public facilities will reduce the strain on Handi-Transit systems, both in Winnipeg and rural areas. Barrier Free Manitoba (<http://www.barrierfreemb.com/>) found that, on a daily basis, 46.6 per cent of people with disabilities faced transportation barriers and 48.4 per cent encountered barriers at or within buildings. There is an opportunity to integrate this planning and development with the existing provincial approaches to aging, such as Age Friendly Manitoba and the Manitoba Accessibility Legislation currently under discussion. (*Discussion Paper for Made in Manitoba Accessibility Legislation, November 2010*)¹⁷

18 Develop plans and establish resources to increase active transportation opportunities in northern and remote Manitoba.

Manitoba has communities that are connected only by water, air or seasonal ice roads, presenting unique transportation challenges. While this may limit certain modes of transportation, hiking, walking, snowshoeing, dogsledding, skiing, canoeing and mountain biking may be the easiest and most beneficial means of travelling in these regions. Many smaller communities benefit from a compact design and relative decrease in motorized transportation. Using traditional, existing infrastructure for active transportation may be easier and safer in these communities than in more populated urban centres because of this reduction in vehicular traffic and smaller sized nature of rural communities.

Sharing resources and creating partnerships between urban and remote communities may help to promote active transportation and ecotourism opportunities across Manitoba. This collaboration should work to increasing bicycle ownership and skill sharing, including bike maintenance and mechanical workshops and education on the health benefits associated with developing active lifestyles. Provincial government departments, such as Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, are in a unique position to lead this effort together with the recommended provincial active transportation director. This combination of knowledge would help design and deliver realistic and applicable active transportation policies and programs to First Nations, Aboriginal and Metis people living in these regions.



Communities Welcome Age-friendly Activities

Portage la Prairie is a participant in the World Health Organization Global Age-Friendly Cities Project. During focus group research conducted in 2006, participating seniors commented positively on the local Crescent Lake walking path and its age-friendly features such as good lighting and benches. However, they also noted that access to the walking path was difficult, particularly for those with mobility impairments.

– *Age-Friendly Cities Project Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, Canada*¹⁸
A Report Prepared for the City of Portage la Prairie.

OBJECTIVE D

Explore opportunities to raise awareness and provide training and incentives to motivate Manitobans to choose safe active transportation options more often

Awareness is often not enough; promoting active transportation in Manitoba should extend beyond the construction of infrastructure. A successful strategy must also include cycling skills training and education programs to promote road sharing and encouragement programs to help business owners and municipal leaders develop and promote alternative commuting options.

RECOMMENDATIONS

19 Provide funding to institutions and businesses to improve active transportation options at workplaces.

Employers can influence employee decisions on how they get to and from work and can

benefit from a healthier staff because of their efforts. Secure bike parking, shower facilities and incentive programs may help address existing barriers and encourage employees to walk or cycle to work. Provincial programs and incentives that help employers develop facilities and promote a diversity of commuter options can encourage Manitobans to bike, roll or walk to work.



Employee Commuting Programs Offer Many Benefits

The *Commute Trip Reduction Law* (CTR) was introduced in Washington in 1990, requiring employers with 100 or more employees to implement employee commuting programs. The goal of the CTR is to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution and fuel consumption by encouraging employees to use alternatives to drive-alone commuting. A 2006 review by the state department of transportation determined that the employee drive-alone rate at CTR worksites decreased by about five per cent from 1993 to 2007.

— *When Ontario Bikes, Ontario Benefits, Share the Road Cycling Coalition, March 2010*¹⁹

“Fifty per cent of kids hit by cars near schools are hit by cars driven by other parents dropping their kids off because they’re afraid of them getting hit by cars.”

– Lenore Skenazy, *Free Range Kids: Giving Our Children the Freedom We Had Without Going Nuts with Worry*, 2009.

20 Encourage comprehensive cycling training programs in Manitoba through service organizations and through schools in collaboration with Manitoba Education and school divisions.

Developing safe and confident bicycle riding skills for Manitoba’s school-aged children requires comprehensive training with progressive annual instruction. Current programs tend to be short (half-day), voluntary and unable to meet demand from educators, parents and students. Programs offering practical on-road training would teach students how to safely interact with traffic and help to establish cycling as a lifelong activity. A cycling program is in keeping with the aim outlined by Manitoba’s Physical Education/Health Education curriculum: to provide students with planned and balanced programming to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes for physically active and healthy lifestyles.

Based on the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures* Task Force recommendations, Manitoba introduced mandatory grade 11 and 12 credits in 2008 that require students to demonstrate they are engaging in at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity at least five days a week. Students can achieve these credits through in-class and out-of-class activities, an initiative that is among the first of its kind in the country.



Children and youth can have different needs from adults because they are smaller, growing, developing and dependent, and generally more vulnerable... Overall, about a fifth of all local trips may be made by young people, a significant share that impels attention to their transport needs.

– *The Centre for Sustainable Transportation, Child- and Youth-Friendly Land-Use and Transport Planning Guidelines for Manitoba*²⁰

21 Expand the existing mandate on school travel planning to include all student travel requirements and to include active modes of transportation.

While the majority of students used to walk or bike to school, this is no longer the case. Sedentary travel has a direct correlation to the alarming increase in physical inactivity levels and obesity rates in Manitoba's children and youth, resulting in major health consequences and societal costs. Current school travel planning is limited to bussing students who live beyond a 1.6 kilometre radius from the school. Diversified school travel planning that includes and promotes active transportation

is an effective tool to increase the number of children walking and biking to school and encourage healthier lifestyles. Travel habits developed at a young age may influence transportation decisions in the future and may help develop lifelong habits of cycling and walking. The process of planning transportation for all students should bring together stakeholders and experts from across the community to identify and address barriers that may prevent children from walking or biking to school. Community representatives should include municipal planners and engineers, police, public health professionals, school boards and trustees, educators, parents and students. This activity requires resources and supporting policies led by the province in consultation with school divisions.

High Schools Report Cites Many Challenges

At 31 per cent, more Manitoba children are overweight and obese than the Canadian average for children at 26 per cent. What's more, four of every 10 Canadian children have a least one risk factor for heart disease due to inactive lifestyles.

– *Manitoba Healthy Schools, March, 2011*²²

Cars Are Not The Only Answer To Our Transportation Needs

"Manitoba's budgeted expenditures for 2009-2010 show that, on average, \$440 per enrolled student is spent on school bussing – yet many students do not benefit at all from this expenditure. Conversely, individual schools that wish to encourage active school travel are faced with raising funds for secure bicycle racks and storage facilities for inline skates and skateboards – which is enough of a barrier to lead to the outright discouragement of active school travel."

– *Saving Money and Time with Active School Travel, Green Action Centre, 2010*²¹



▲ Student parking, Bairdmore School in Winnipeg, Manitoba

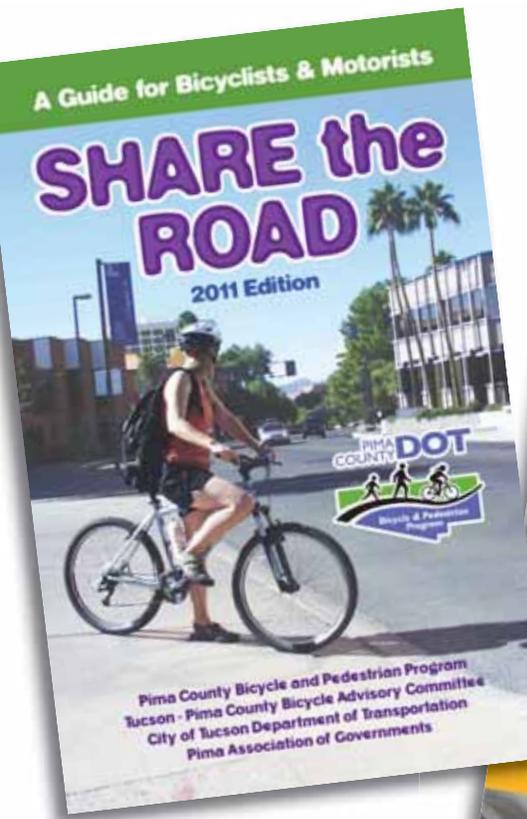
◀ Typical vehicle congestion on streets near schools during student drop off and pick up times.

22 Work with Manitoba Public Insurance to introduce and improve adult cycling and road sharing educational opportunities across Manitoba.

Education for road users should expand to include cycling skill development and road sharing safety. Developing safe and educated travellers is an important component to expanded active transportation infrastructure and use. While certain education opportunities currently exist, a more comprehensive approach and strategy are needed. Existing organizations, such as Bike to the Future, the Green Action Centre and the Manitoba Cycling Association, could help identify and train community-based instructors throughout the province, including recreation directors, public health staff, local cycling or trail stewardship advocates, to lead training programs in their areas.

Furthermore, together with Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI), safe cycling and road sharing information can be promoted using existing media such as the 60-Second Driver television spots and training instruments such as the driver handbook, driver education curriculum and additional training of instructors.

Recognizing the cycling education gap in Winnipeg, commuter cycling courses were piloted in the spring and fall of 2010 through a partnership between the City of Winnipeg Recreation Services Department and community groups. Offered through the City of Winnipeg Leisure Guide, the commuter cycling courses delivered safe cycling skills modules developed by Bike to the Future. Local course instructors were trained through the nationally recognized CAN-BIKE program, which is housed provincially by the Manitoba Cycling Association.



◀ Safe cycling handbooks for adults.



▲ Children participating in MPI Bike Rodeo learn basic cycling skills.



23 Establish a comprehensive outreach program to increase awareness of Manitoba as a province with active transportation opportunities available to everyone.

For many Manitobans, opting to drive can be more of a habit than a conscious decision. Increasing awareness of and promoting the benefits of active transportation will encourage more Manitobans to try walking and bicycling instead of driving for every trip. Programs should incorporate input from the community and be supported by the province. Manitoba's rich cultural heritage, centered on community fairs, exhibitions and festivals, presents ample opportunity to promote active transportation options and create awareness of the various options available to use across the province.

Winnipeg Pilot Project Increases Activity Levels

WinSmart, a community-based travel marketing pilot project aimed at helping households choose more sustainable modes of travel and drive less, ran in Winnipeg between 2007 and 2009. As it operated as an initial pilot project, the types of outreach available were limited in comparison to a full-scale program. However, the results among participating households were still inspiring:

- walking trips increased by 11 per cent, with a modal share increase of 3.4 per cent
- cycling trips increased by 63 per cent, with a modal share increase of 54 per cent
- trip-related CO² emissions were reduced by 18.2 per cent
- vehicle kilometres travelled were reduced by 5.4 per cent

– *WinSmart Community-Based Travel Marketing Pilot Project Final Report to Transport Canada, April, 2009*²³



◀ WinSmart, a community-based travel marketing project, was delivered by Green Action Centre.

OBJECTIVE E

Establish a platform for building a sustainable future for active transportation in Manitoba

As cycling, rolling and walking networks begin to take shape in Manitoba, sustainable planning to maintain progress and continue promoting active transportation is necessary. Uniting stakeholders from various local and provincial departments to act in collaboration with advisory committees allows for idea sharing and facilitates future learning necessary for continued progress.

Manitoba government is encouraged to show leadership with federal, provincial and territorial governments to create a national strategy for active transportation policy and program development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

24 Establish an active transportation agency with a formal advisory board.

The Province of Manitoba should create an active transportation agency to monitor the progress and development made within active transportation across the province. A similar framework has been successful in other jurisdictions, including the BEAT program in B.C. and the Vélo Quebec initiative in Quebec, where independent entities are funded by or partner with existing organizations to offer similar services with great success. For this new agency, the province could look to build from existing groups or create a new entity entirely. Regardless, the agency should have a mandate and the resources necessary to publish manuals and guidelines, to facilitate large-scale training workshops, to oversee grant programs, to collect data, co-ordinate regular accessibility audits, to develop promotional campaigns and to co-ordinate events.

Bringing together representatives from multiple provincial departments and current community representatives, such as the active transportation advisory group (ATAG), would help ground and inform discussions related to active transportation in Manitoba. This interdisciplinary membership would provide shared learning



opportunities and valuable information for members to take back to their departments. This helps to integrate bicycle and pedestrian transportation planning and programs across the system. External partners, such as MPI and the RCMP, could be invited to participate as appropriate. We also encourage the province to take leadership with federal and provincial transportation ministers to formulate federal active transportation policy and programs for Manitobans.

25 Establish local active transportation advisory groups to become informal advisory committees to regional active transportation co-ordinators.

Local input on policies, plans and programs is vital to creating successful and sustainable active transportation developments. At each step, effort and resources should be dedicated to encourage people from a broad spectrum of perspectives to be involved and participate in the planning process. This includes collaborating with health, tourism, recreation and engineering professionals and sharing information with the advisory group, regional co-ordinator and the provincial co-ordinator.

The Active Transportation Advisory Group reiterates that public and political interest in active transportation is increasing around the world and in Manitoba. Our report provides the province with a rational set of recommendations for establishing provincial active transportation policy programs and projects, including the flexibility to accomplish these goals using existing resources. We encourage the province to consult with existing provincial active transportation programs in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia, as well as the Oregon Department of Transportation Bicycle & Pedestrian Program,²⁴ while considering our report and recommendations.

▼ Brandon, Manitoba.



Appendix

Definition of Active Transportation

For the purposes of this report, the Active Transportation Advisory Group (ATAG) used the following definition of active transportation to frame these recommendations: Active transportation is defined as any mode of self-propelled transportation that relies on the use of human-generated energy. For the purposes and mandate of this report, the definition is extended to include those people where medically prescribed assisted mobility is required. Active transportation modes may make use of on-road or off-road infrastructure or any combination of these.

On-road infrastructure

On-road infrastructure is defined, according to *The Manitoba Highway Traffic Act*, as any facility that may be located within a designated road right-of-way, such as designated bicycle routes, painted sharrows, designated bike lanes or bike ways and wide curb lanes.

Off-road infrastructure

Off-road infrastructure may include any facilities that are located outside of a designated road right-of-way that may be designed or intended for active transportation uses. Off-road infrastructure is subject to the highway traffic act and specific municipal bylaws in Manitoba.

Trails with rails.
– Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Four categories of active transportation

The following categories describe how both functional and recreational active transportation are integrated. Active transportation supports both functional and recreational transportation that promote economic, social and environment sustainability.

1. **Active commuting:**
Functional transportation defined as trips made to and from places of employment, education or occupation.
2. **Active workplace travel:**
Functional transportation defined as trips made during work or employment hours required to fulfill duties, such as attending meetings, delivering goods and services, etc.
3. **Active destination-oriented trips:**
Purposeful trips made to and from places of financial, medical services, sporting and cultural activities or locations, retail outlets, after hours events and social visits, etc.
4. **Active recreation:**
This includes all examples of active transportation used for health, fitness and recreational enjoyment.



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Oregon Transportation Research and Education Consortium

<http://otrec.us/content/>

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NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide

<http://nacto.org/cities-for-cycling/design-guide/>

Dutch Fietsberaad (Bicycle Council), the expertise centre for cycling and all related subjects.

<http://www.fietsberaad.nl/index.cfm?lang=en>

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Winter cycling in
Oulu, Finland. ►



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▲ For decades, the May to September 'no car' rule in the community of Victoria Beach, Manitoba has been passionately enforced by residents.

Our vision for active transportation in Manitoba needs a strong provincial policy that:

- treats active transportation as an essential service with societal benefits, not simply a form of recreation or a luxury
- acknowledges the fundamental right of citizens to safely move from place to place under one's own power
- measures, promotes and incorporates the economic benefits of active transportation into a broad range of policy decisions
- funds, builds and designs active transportation capacity in balance with other transportation modes, knowing citizens choose active transportation often when the choice is safe and practical

We must find ways to bring active transportation back into our lives. It's time to explore people-powered transportation for improved health, a cleaner environment, less traffic congestion and more efficient use of public resources.

Active Transportation isn't just a green idea.

It's a smart and sustainable idea.

It's a necessary idea.

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