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Executive Policy Committee
City of Winnipeg

RE: Concerns with cycling bikeway connectivity and rapid transit plans to date

In 2008, Bike to the Future (BttF) made submissions in support of rapid transit to this committee on April 9 and to council on April 23. We were very pleased to attend the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project announcement on September 8. The City has committed to begin building what we hope will become an integrated BRT network that will serve the whole city. Thank you for your vision and your leadership for getting this started.

The city is making a major investment in this project and Bike to the Future wants the project to be successful. Success will be measured by the increase in transit ridership and by the number of cyclists on the bikeway.

I am here today because we are concerned for this success. Unless cycling connectivity issues are brought into the planning process immediately, we fear that the bikeway will not be a viable commuting route to downtown and it will not see significant usage. We are asking this committee to ensure that these issues are brought into the project scope.

In our submissions last year, we indicated that, besides a general support for rapid transit, BttF was excited by the prospect that the bikeway portion of the project had the potential to solve four of the major "choke point" issues in the city's cycling network: the Jubilee Underpass, Confusion Corner, the Osborne Underpass, and a way over the Assiniboine River into downtown. From what we understand of the planning at this point, none of these issues will be solved by this project.

We are doubly concerned because construction is slated to commence this summer 2009, so detailed planning at some level must be well under way. Yet, when we have brought these "choke point" issues forward to people working on the project, we were told that solutions to these issues are "out of scope" of the project. The 2005 Rapid Transit Task Force Report recommended that "active transportation commuter paths be **integrated** into dedicated busways." So far, the bikeway appears to be an afterthought, not an integrated part of the project.

We would like this committee to ensure that direct cycling connectivity to downtown and Osborne Village / Fort Rouge is integrated into this project in order for it to be the success that Winnipeggers expect it to be.

Thank you

Curt Hull
Treasurer, BttF