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AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

CHILD- AND YOUTH-FRIENDLY LAND-USE AND TRANSPORT PLANNING GUIDELINES FOR MANITOBA

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[In submissions to the Task Force] active transportation - e.g. walking, jogging, biking or skating - was promoted by a number of individuals and groups. Various levels of government were asked to support active transportation by:

- encouraging children to walk or bike to school;
- investing in bike/walking paths and trails and parks as low-cost recreational opportunities for a broad range of people; and
- encouraging the design and adaptation of communities and urban neighbourhoods to incorporate the principles of active transportation.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Futures Task Force Report (Government of Manitoba)[1†]

If we can build a successful city for children we will have a successful city for all people.

Enrique Peñalosa, former mayor of Bogotá, Colombia[2]

What is not so good for children is the complete loss of autonomy they suffer in suburbia. In this environment where all activities are segregated and distances are measured on the odometer, a child's personal mobility extends no farther than the edge of the subdivision. Even the local softball field often exists beyond the child's independent reach.

The result is a new phenomenon: the 'cul-de-sac kid' who lives as a prisoner of a totally safe and unchallenging environment. While this state of affairs may be acceptable, even desirable, through about age five, what of the next ten or twelve years? Dependent always on some adult to drive them, children are unable to practice being adults. They cannot run so simple a household errand as picking up a carton of milk. They cannot bicycle to the toy store and spend their money on their own. They cannot drop in on mother at work. Most cannot walk to school. Even pickup baseball games are a thing of the past, with parents now required to arrange car-pooling with near-military precision, to transport the children at the appointed times. Children are frozen in a form of infancy, utterly dependent on others, bereft of the ability to introduce variety into their own lives, robbed of the opportunity to make choices and exercise judgement.

Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Jeff Speck[3]

† Superscript numbers throughout this document point to 100 reference and other notes that begin on Page 59.