bikewinnipeg

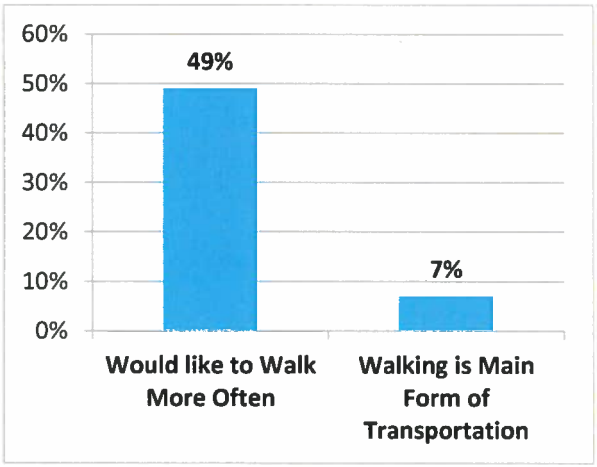
MORE PEOPLE BIKING
MORE OFTEN

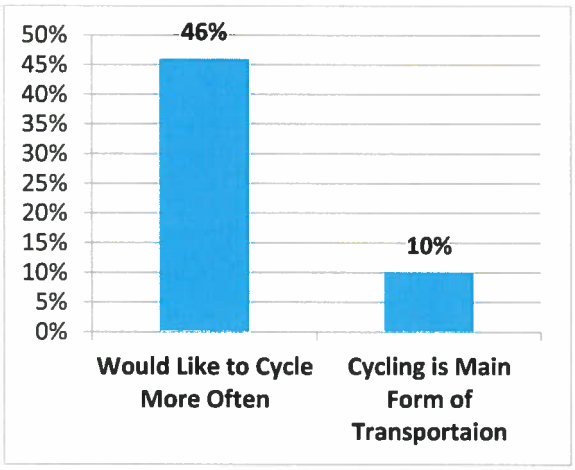
Executive Policy Committee
2015 City of Winnipeg Budget
March 17, 2015

New Funding for Active Transportation Welcomed

Bike Winnipeg is pleased to see increased funding for active transportation in the City of Winnipeg's 2015 Preliminary Capital Budget. For the 45% of Winnipeg residents who want to cycle more often and the 49% who would like to walk more often, the healthy transportation options provided by this increased investment will be a welcome addition. It is particularly pleasing to see funding for the second phase of the southwest rapid transit corridor and Pembina Underpass, which will allow for the completion of a separated active transportation route stretching from Lord Roberts/Fort Rouge into the University of Manitoba's Fort Garry Campus. We thank the mayor, councillors and administration for making this happen.

The Market for Walking and Cycling in Winnipeg





But we still have a Way to Go

Yet even with this increased investment, funding for active transportation will only reach about 1/3rd of the amount deemed necessary to complete the walking and cycling networks envisioned in the City's draft Pedestrian & Cycling Strategies released last fall. To provide the kind of safe, comfortable, connected networks that will encourage people to walk and bike much more often, a much bolder investment will be required. Worldwide, cities with the vision to make significant investments in the walkability and bikeability of their neighbourhoods are seeing rates of walking and biking skyrocket. That leads to a more livable city that attracts and retains youth and entrepreneurs, builds wealth, and creates jobs.

While we recognize that the city is in a tight financial situation, we feel strongly that the city must commit itself to full funding of the pedestrian and cycling strategies as a means to reach financial sustainability and begin to reverse the city's infrastructure deficit.

We sincerely hope that the mayor and council will consider the full range of financial options available and set in place a firm plan to include a plan to fully fund the pedestrian and cycling strategies in the 2015 budget and five year forecast.

Make Implementation of the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies Building Canada Priorities

In Our Winnipeg, the City of Winnipeg committed itself to create a transportation system that supports active, accessible and healthy transportation options for its citizens. Adoption and implementation of the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies is a necessary investment if we are to reach this important goal.

Implementation of the pedestrian and cycling strategies will require major, long term investment in dedicated pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Projected costs for implementation of the strategies have been set at $334 million dollars over 20 years. Just as the benefits from this investment (lower health care costs resulting from better health, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, ...) will be shared by all levels of government, we believe that the costs of developing the pedestrian and cycling networks should be shared, and recommend that the City of Winnipeg include implementation of the pedestrian and cycling strategies in its Building Canada Fund priorities.

$510 For every quarter mile nearer to an off-street bicycle trail, the median home value in Minneapolis-St. Paul increases by $510. [1]



The mayor has made it clear that decisions around priorities for the Building Canada Fund will be based on benefits and costs. While the overall costs of implementation for the pedestrian and cycling strategies is not small, the total cost of the proposed pedestrian and bicycle networks work are comparable to the cost of many of projects already listed as priorities. Unlike those projects, the benefits of a more walkability and bikeability city made possible by investment in the pedestrian and cycling strategies are shared throughout the city, benefitting all citizens.

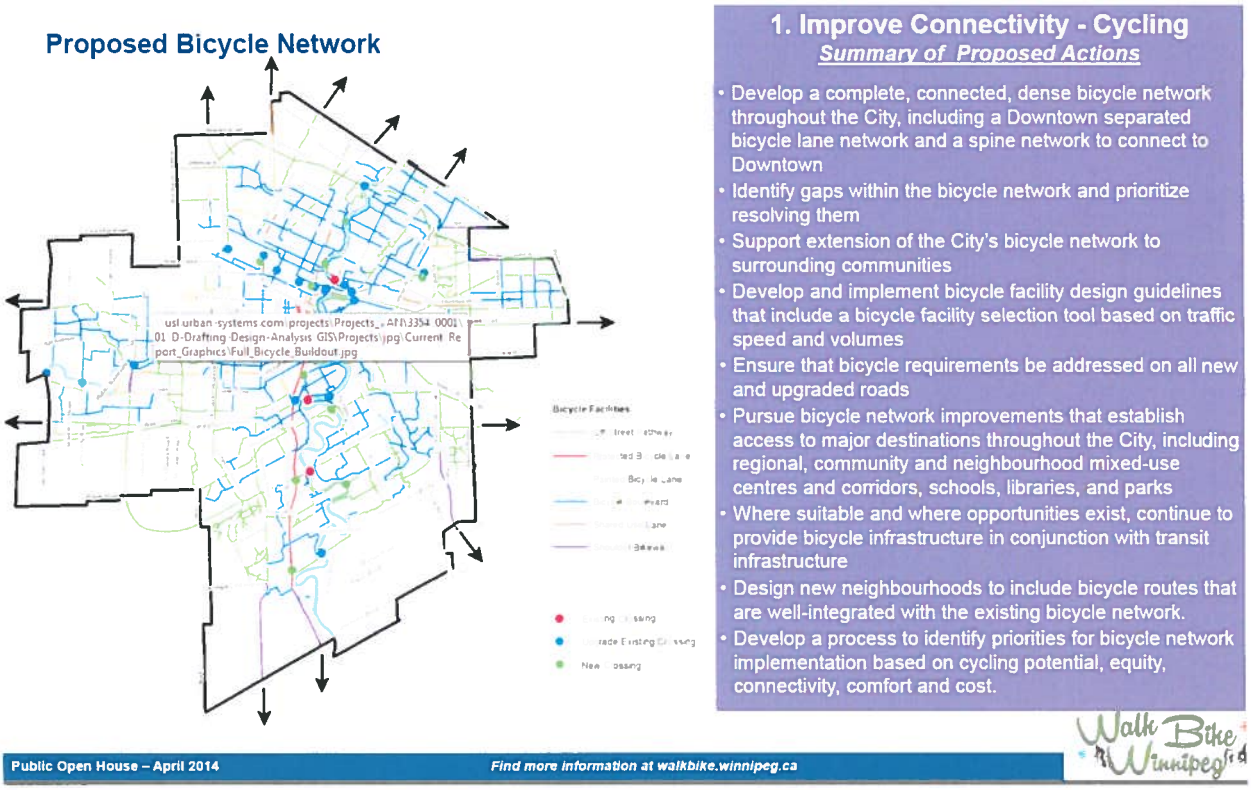
11%

Homes within a half-mile of Indiana's Monon Trail sell for an average of 11% more than similar homes farther away. [2]



Planning

It has been almost a full year since the draft pedestrian and cycling strategies were released to the public for comment, yet we have still not had a chance to see final recommendations from the city administration. As a result, timelines for passage and implementation of the strategies remain unknown, and we are faced with another budget year where we lack the ability to verify that plans for major roadway rehabilitations meet city policy to include needed improvements to accommodate people walking or cycling in accordance with proposed pedestrian and bicycle networks. Clearly, we need to be putting more resources into the planning of our pedestrian and cycling strategies. We are recommending that three new staffing positions be added over the 2015-2020 period covered by the 2015 Budget and five year forecast to ensure that implementation of the pedestrian and cycling strategies moves forward in a timely manner. Having staff in place to manage implementation of the strategies will ensure that we are not missing opportunities to include needed pedestrian or cycling infrastructure as part of ongoing street renewal projects, and that new developments are planned in a manner that extends these networks as our city grows. Savings from project integration would more than make up for new staffing.



Infrastructure Priorities

Assiniboine/Forks Connection

This summer, The Forks are planning to add a protected bike lane along Fort Gibralter that will provide a quality bicycle corridor into the Forks from Main Street. This will leave just a small gap between the existing protected bike lanes on Assiniboine Avenue and this new bikeway. We are asking the city to make closure of this gap its number one priority for spending from the Bicycle Corridors line item.

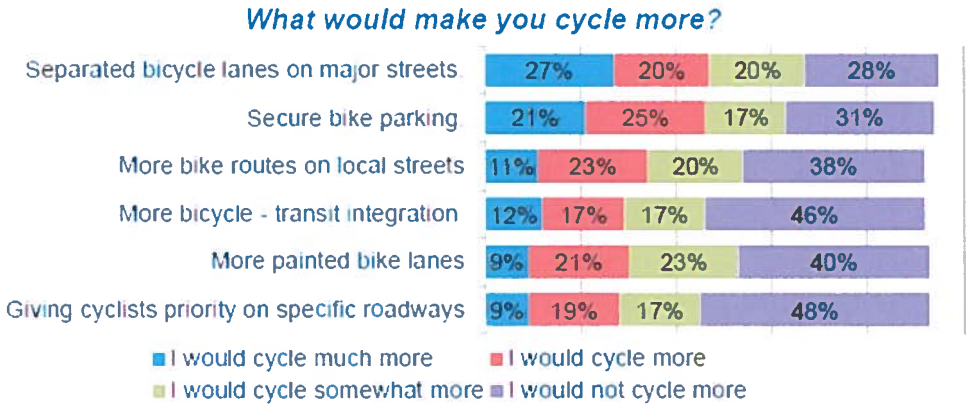
Downtown Protected Bike Lanes

The painting of bike lanes on Winnipeg's downtown streets, which started in 2009, helped start Winnipeg's slow march towards bikeability. And while this has encouraged an increasing number of people to use their bikes to reach their work, shopping, or entertainment destinations downtown, for many people the level of comfort and protection provided by a painted bike lane falls well short of the threshold that would convince them to abandon their car and ride their bikes downtown.



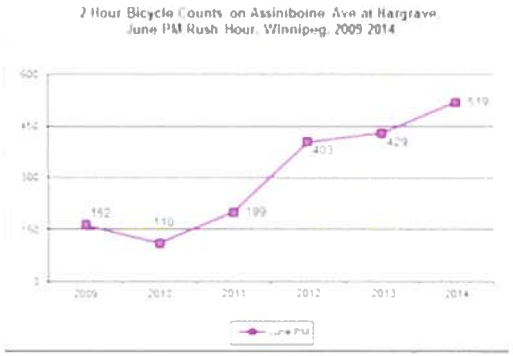
Parking protected bike lane on Sherbrook

Fully 47% of people surveyed as part of the pedestrian and cycling strategy stated that the addition of protected bike lanes on main streets would encourage the to bike more or much more often. The city's experience with the protected bike lanes on Assiniboine has shown that the pattern of seeing significant increases in the number of cyclists on roads where protected bike lanes are installed will be matched in Winnipeg.



Lack of dedicated bicycle infrastructure is one of the biggest barriers to cycling – What We Heard, Walk Bike Winnipeg Open House Boards April 2014

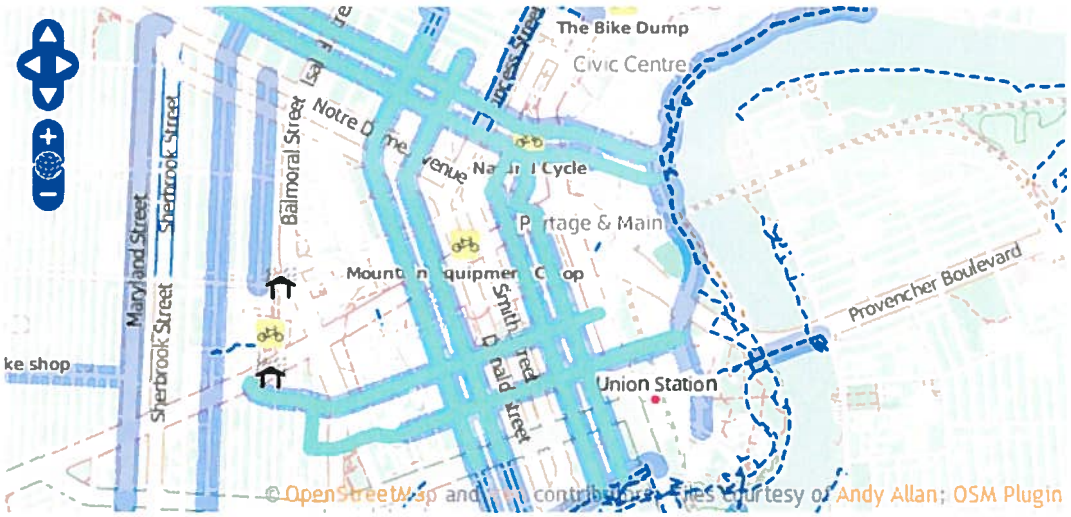
It has been widely shown that people will flock to protected bike lanes. Following the installation of a two-way protected cycle track on Assinniboine Avenue in 2010, regular counts of cycling traffic have shown that the number of cyclists traveling down Assiniboine has increased by more than 200%. Clearly, Winnipeg residents have been encouraged to switch to their bikes where protected bike lanes are provided.



Bicycle Traffic on Assiniboine Ave has increased by over 200% since a protected cycle track was installed in 2010.

Given the importance of Winnipeg's downtown as an employment, education, shopping and education destination, the downtown protected bike lanes need to be planned as the highest priority in the city's cycling networks implementation plan.

- **Highlights**
  - Build a new protected bike lane on York Avenue
  - Upgrade from painted bike lanes to protected bike lanes on
    - Fort Street
    - Garry Street
    - Hargrave Street
    - Carlton Street
    - Bannatyne Avenue
    - McDermot Avenue
    - St. Mary Avenue
  - Compliments the existing protected lanes on Assiniboine



University of Winnipeg Connectivity

The U of W Connectivity Improvements project will build a set of short bikeways and modify intersections on or around the University of Winnipeg to remove barriers and improve connectivity into and through the University of Winnipeg Campus.

The project will make use of innovative designs to connect bike routes to the west, south and northeast of the University of Winnipeg campus. With over 10,000 students (16% of whom bike to the campus), the development of quality connections into the University of Winnipeg campus will be a tremendous benefit to the city's bicycle network.



Bikes parked outside the U of W

- **Highlights**
  - Creates a connection to Spence Street & St. Mary Avenue
  - Creates a connection to Qu'Appelle via Ellice, Spence and Isabel
    - Links to the Hargrave Carlton Bike Lanes
  - Creates a Connection between St. Mathews and the U of W Campus



Components of the U of W Connectivity Improvements Project (in green)

Winter Maintenance

While the 2011 Transportation Master Plan calls for "AT networks to be planned, designed, implemented and maintained to address year-round access", implementation of this policy has been inconsistent. Bike Winnipeg calls for the following policies to be adopted to ensure that Winnipeg's snow clearing policy is aligned with the direction set out in the city's Transportation Master Plan.

- All AT routes should be moved up to priority #1 or priority #2 routes. Bike boulevards may be exceptions if they are not currently on snow routes. (See below for their treatment.)
- Where bike lanes are present, roadways should have priority #1 street clearing, and they should be cleared curb to curb, down to the pavement.
- Where bike lanes are next to parking, effort should be made to clear the boulevard so that car doors can be opened. (If car doors cannot be opened, cars will encroach on the bike lanes.) It was noted that Grosvenor Ave was a good example of where this had been done in previous years.
- Bike Boulevards: Where it is not a priority #1 or #2 roadway, we would want to see more frequent checking of the roads so that ruts could be removed and more frequent sanding. This may mean these roads are cleared outside of a city-wide clearing.
- Snow should be removed from shy lanes on bridges within 48 hours of cessation of the snow event. A benefit of this is that all users of the bridge will be safer, as snow removal protects against the ramp effect. We would also like to see the shy lanes cleared of debris on a regular basis in summer as accumulation is a problem. Bridges that were specified as highest priority were: Osborne, St. Vital, Chief Peguis, Slaw Rebchuck, Mayland/Sherbrook, Norwood, Charleswood, Fort Garry, and Louise (sidewalks) Bridges.
- There should be extra funding to conduct snow clearing of bike paths on an ad hoc basis as required between snow events in the case of ice build-up, particularly ice ridges. Ice buildup occurs on bike paths as a result of freeze/thaw events that pool melt water on the paths. Regular inspections can be used to determine when such measures are necessary.

Community Based Travel Marketing



Bike Winnipeg would like to see the city move forward on its commitments to transportation demand management made in the 2011 Transportation Master Plan. Research has shown that when coupled with individualized marketing programs such as the community based travel marketing pilot program undertaken as part of the WinSmart project, shifts to sustainable modes of transportation have been far higher than would otherwise have been realized (for instance, a Portland study showed that areas targeted for individualized marketing after installation of a new rapid transit line saw four times the reduction in driving trips compared to areas that were not targeted by individualized travel marketing

Sincerely

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