STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND PUBLIC WORKS

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 536
Councillor Browaty referred to a record amount of money, over one hundred million dollars, approved in the budget for road repairs, and noted that construction projects on Henderson Highway, Portage Avenue and Bishop Grandin Boulevard were sitting idle and asked what was being done to ensure that sufficient resources were be put in so that work continues on weekends.

Councillor Lukes advised that there were bonus and penalty clauses on major projects so the private sector contractors scheduled their work accordingly.

In reference to the Pedestrian and Cycling strategy that was now Council Policy, Councillor Browaty questioned if there would be an opportunity on areas like the Disraeli and along Gateway/Raleigh to move cyclists away from the roadways and onto the active transportation amenities and provided an example of bikes being on the Disraeli Bridge instead of being on the new $15 million pedestrian bridge.

Councillor Lukes stated that the Manitoba Highway Act stated that cyclists have legal access to use the road so it was their choice if they decided to use the road or the active transportation network. She added that the positive fact in the pedestrian and cycling strategy was the component to do more and better public communication and awareness, noting that communications on use, location and identifying facilities would be expanding.

Councillor Browaty inquired if there would be an opportunity to lobby the Provincial Government to change that (the Manitoba Highway Act) in regards to the public safety for cyclists; to which Councillor Lukes replied that Councillor Browaty was free to do that if he chose to lobby the Provincial Government.

Councillor Eadie questioned what the process would be to make a very important safety change to make a very important route change that would not affect any other routes in any other ward but would affect and help the people in his neighbourhood.

Councillor Lukes stated that the Office of Public Engagement set out a goal to develop a policy on public consultation following best practices of the International Association of Public Participation so that process will be set into motion in the near future. She added that she would like to have a session in the fall so Councillors can understand the process going forward from an active transportation perspective in how projects are selected and decided upon and the same for roads.

Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works – Question Period (continued):

Councillor Eadie stated that he was led to believe that the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategy was as open, healthy and living and could not be amended prior to any consultations and asked if they would be denied realistic motions to amend the document; to which Councillor Lukes replied no.

Councillor Browaty questioned if, in the interest of pedestrian and biking and vehicular safety, if the Chair was prepared to advocate on behalf of everyone to modify the Highway Traffic Act and champion the issue, recognizing that millions of dollars have been spent to move bikes off; to which Councillor Lukes replied not at this point in time.