bikewinnipeg

MORE PEOPLE BIKING
MORE OFTEN

March 13, 2019

Executive Policy Committee

Dear Councillors,

We are happy to see funding for winter maintenance of walking and cycling routes included in the operating budget this year, and look forward to the benefits of this additional snow clearing next winter. This funding will make a difference in people's lives, and we look forward to working with the city to refine and improve the winter pedestrian and cycling networks over the coming years.

The capital funding presented in the 2019 capital budget and five year forecast does not provide a path to the complete, dense network that our city policy calls for the development of a complete, connected, and dense bicycle network throughout the city.

While we recognize the financial strains that have been placed on the city because of the lack of predictable funding from the province, we feel that a disproportionate burden of those cuts have fallen on the budget for the Pedestrian and Cycling Program, where funding over the 6 year span of this budget has been cut by more than 50% from the previous budget.

If our major route to completion of the pedestrian and cycling networks will be through our Regional and Local Street Renewals program, then we need to make sure that our expenditures in alignment with our policy.

We need to be incorporating improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure into our regional and local street renewals as a norm, not as the exception. Its is only when all roads are safe for people to walk, bike, or make use of public transit that we will meet the city's long term vision to maximize transportation options by ensuring the accessibility, comfort, and safety of walking and cycling in Winnipeg.

Winnipegger's were clear in their desire to make spending on the pedestrian and cycling network a priority in this year's budget. When asked what the top priorities facing Winnipeg were today, 48% of respondents indicated Active Transportation as their first, second, or third priority. In fact, more people chose Active Transportation as their top priority than any other area put before them.

4.1 Services Priority Survey

The online survey results indicate that the most important issues or concerns facing Winnipeg today are **public transit, active transportation** and **roadway construction and maintenance**. Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents indicated **public transit** as either their first, second or third priority for the City, where as 48% of respondents indicated **active transportation**, and 41% of respondents indicated **roadway construction and maintenance** as either their first, second, or third priority for the City (Figure 4-1).

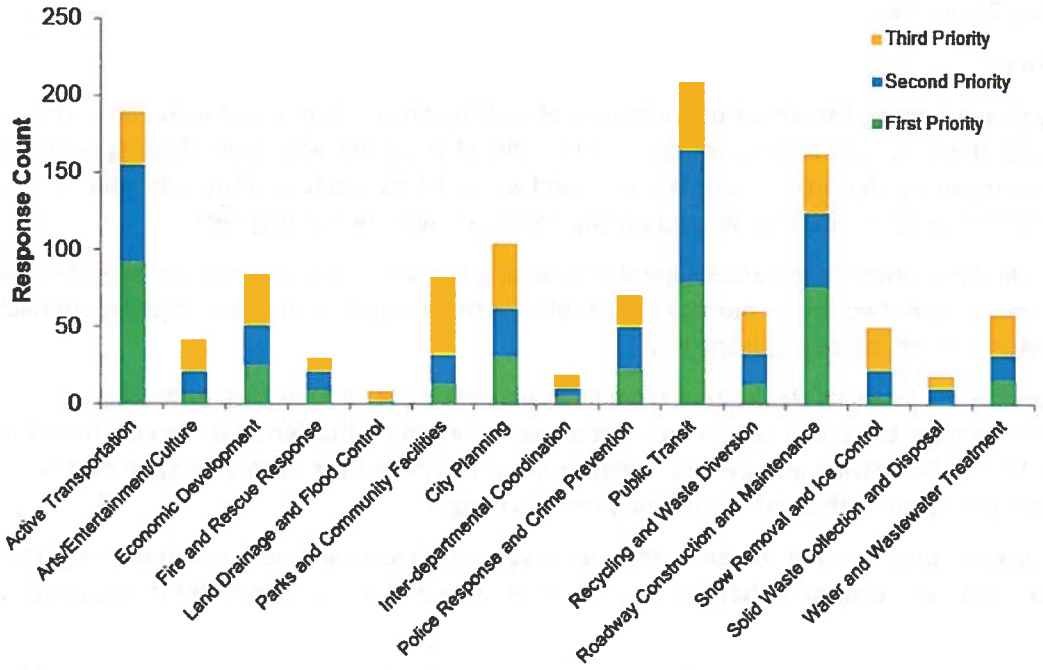
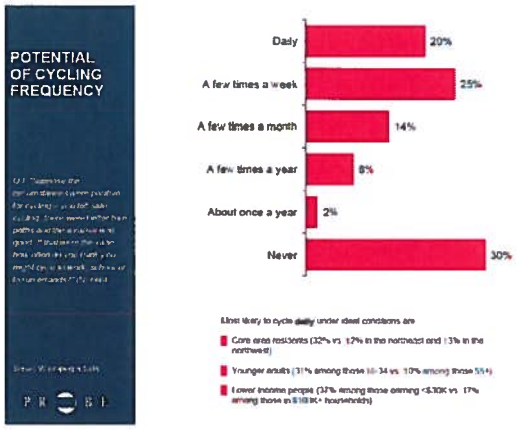
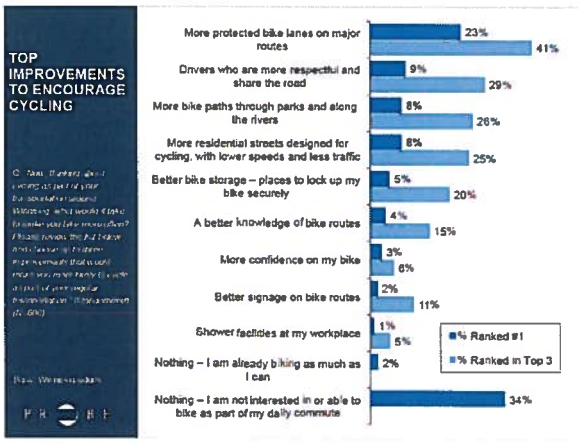


Figure 4-1 Top Priorities for the City of Winnipeg

This comes as no surprise to us, as polling conducted on behalf of Bike Winnipeg and CAA Manitoba this past summer showed a huge demand for opportunities to bike more often, and the prime motivator to achieve higher rates of cycling was through the construction of protected bike lanes..





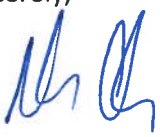
While the unexpected loss of provincial funding has created challenges for the city as it strives to complete the pedestrian and cycling networks, it should not be used as an excuse to scale back our progress in making our city a safer, more comfortable, and more convenient place to get around on foot or by bike.

- Routine Incorporation of Pedestrian and Cycling Facilities in the Local/Regional Roads Program (budgeting for study, design, and construction)
- Increasing our Public Debt
- Increasing the payment from the Fiscal Stabilization Reserve (possibly as a loan against the Impact Fees Reserve)
- Putting some kind of first call on the Impact Fee Reserve
- Extending the payback period on the Chief Peguis project to lessen the pinch in 2021
- Deferring the Business Tax Cut
- Increasing the property tax rate
- Manitoba 150 Fund if projects might be eligible
- Federal Green Infrastructure Fund
- Potential for better inclusion of Pedestrian and Cycling Facilities in Developer Agreements

It is important that we make plans for funding of the many unfunded projects listed in the 2019 Pedestrian and Cycling Program Action Plan. In particular we feel there is substantial report for the following:

- Completion of the Downtown Protected Bikeway Network
- Osborne to Downtown Walk/Bike Bridge and Connections
- Keewatin Underpass Pathway (we see a strong need to include pathways on both sides of the underpass)
- Ruby/Banning Neighbourhood Greenway
- Enfield/St. Jean Baptiste Neighbourhood Greenway
- West Broadway to University of Winnipeg Connection (and connections north and west as well)
- Wolseley to Downtown Bikeway Connection

Sincerely,



Mark Cohoe
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Bike Winnipeg