Bicycle Registry at the Time of Purchase project

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

April 2019

Background

The City of Winnipeg (the City) is exploring a registration program for bicycles at the time of purchase through research and discussions with stakeholders and bicycle retailers. The City currently maintains a voluntary bicycle registration program; however, less than 10 percent of the approximate 1,000 recovered bicycles each year are returned to their rightful owners. Improving the City's bicycle registration program will help fight bicycle theft in Winnipeg and assist the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) to identify and return stolen bicycles to owners.

Engagement

The City reached out to 26 bicycle retailers, three bicycle organizations, and the WPS to discuss opportunities to register bicycles at the time of purchase along with the benefits and challenges of such a registration. A full list of stakeholders can be found in Appendix A. Stakeholders received a letter, followed up by a phone call or email to schedule a time to meet to go through a list of questions. The questions can be found in Appendix B. When a mailing address was unknown, the City reached out to the stakeholder by phone.

A total of 25 meetings were held in-person or by telephone with stakeholders throughout March 2019. Twenty-one (21) of the 25 meetings were with bicycle retailers. Not all stakeholders responded to the request for a meeting.

Key findings

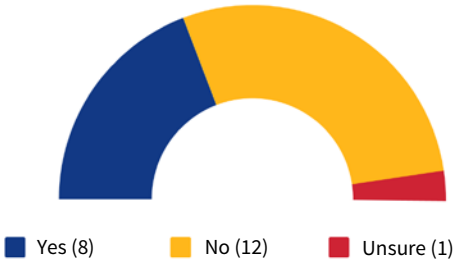
Do you currently promote the City's voluntary bicycle registry?



Total: 21 bicycle retailers

Less than half of retailers (10 of 21) indicated that they are currently promoting the City's voluntary bicycle registry to customers at the time of purchase. Methods of promotion included handing out promotional postcards (4), registration forms (3), and verbally encouraging customers to register their new bicycles (5). Retailers that are not promoting the registry indicated that they were unaware of the registry (2) or that they do not believe the registry is effective (3).

Do you support mandatory registration at the time of purchase for new bicycles?

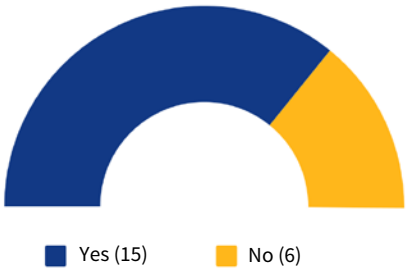


Total: 21 bicycle retailers

The majority of retailers (12 of 21) did not support mandatory registration at the time of purchase for new bicycles, with six (6) of the seven (7) national retailers interviewed opposing the registration. Retailers noted concerns about collecting information from customers, and that transmitting registration information to the City would be time-consuming and costly for their business (12). Retailers also shared their concerns about liability if there was an error while recording customer information and serial numbers (3), and felt that registration should be the customer's responsibility (10).

Retailers that supported a mandatory registration at the time of purchase for new bicycles (8 of 21) noted that the registration needs to be convenient for their business (7), as recording and transmitting customer information could be cumbersome, especially during the busy season.

Do you think bicycle owners would benefit from a bicycle registry at the time of purchase for new bikes?



Total: 21 bicycle retailers

Despite the majority of retailers not supporting a mandatory registry at the time of purchase, 15 of 21 retailers believed that customers would benefit. These retailers noted that they felt registration protects customers and leads to more bicycles being returned to their owners (8).

To learn more about the Bicycle Registry at the Time of Purchase project, please visit winnipeg.ca/bicycleretailregistry

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Retailers that saw less benefit of the registry noted that they already maintain a database of customer information and serial numbers for free (4), and that some customers may have separate bicycle insurance (3).

12 of 21

retailers could submit registrations online at the time of purchase

When asked about feasibility of collecting and submitting registration information to the City, 12 of 21 retailers indicated that they could access and enter information directly into the City's online bicycle registry platform at the time of purchase. Other retailers did not have this capacity at their stores (9) and would need to submit hard copy records for the City to manually upload into the platform.

Retailers reiterated their concern with the amount of time it would take staff to collect and submit registration information, with some retailers feeling that City should provide compensation for the additional work (5).

Retailers noted that collecting customers' personal information could be a challenge (8). They noted that customers may have privacy concerns and may not like to provide personal information and questioned who would be responsible to collect it. One (1) retailer explained that staff are regularly yelled at when asking for identification for online order pick-ups and product returns.

Three (3) retailers indicated that a bicycle registry does not address the root causes of the increase in bicycle theft, with one (1) retailer expressing concerns that a decrease in bicycle theft might lead to an increase in other property crimes.

Other meetings

The City received input from the WPS, and while supportive of a bicycle registry, they preferred that the registry be done on a voluntary basis. The WPS shared concerns that a mandatory registry at the time of purchase would add barriers to cycling and place a burden on bicycle retailers. The WPS indicated that they want to be supportive of Winnipeg businesses and provided suggestions to promote and enhance the current voluntary bicycle registry. The WPS suggested that the City reach out to international bicycle registries, which are being used in other Canadian municipalities.

The City had a discussion with an international registry over the phone to discuss the benefits of an international registry, how it could be used in Winnipeg, and their experiences working with bicycle manufacturers, police, and other municipalities across Canada.

Discussions also occurred with Bike Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Trails Association. Both organizations stressed the importance of keeping the registry affordable or even free, as to not add barriers to cycling in Winnipeg. One organization also felt that it is important for the City's registry to connect with a larger national registry that can be accessed across Canada.

How input was considered

What we heard	Response
A mandatory bicycle registry would create significant time and technological challenges for retailers.	The City will recommend to Council that a bicycle registry at the time of purchase not be implemented.
The inherent value of a bicycle registry was widely recognized.	The City will increase public education on protecting bicycles from theft, and improve promotion of the current voluntary bicycle registry.
Stakeholders were interested in helping to promote the current voluntary bicycle registry.	The City will build on existing partnerships with local retailers to explore retail-friendly posters/stickers/tags, and expand to include national retailers.
There are opportunities to improve the current registry to increase its utility to the WPS.	The City will explore enhancements to the existing bike registry system, including the ability to update and maintain information that is current.
A free or affordable bicycle registry is important to reduce barriers.	A fee is required to partly cover costs associated with maintaining the bicycle registry, and recovery and return activities.

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Next Steps

Key findings and input collected from the stakeholder meetings will be shared with Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks for consideration on May 22, 2019. City Council is expected to make a final decision on the Public Service's recommendations, including any required amendments to the *Doing Business in Winnipeg By-law No. 91/2018* in summer 2019.

Appendices

Appendix A – Stakeholder list
Appendix B – Meeting guide



To learn more about the Bicycle Registry at the Time of Purchase project, please visit winnipeg.ca/bicycleretailregistry

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Appendix A – Stakeholder list

Stakeholder list

The City reached out to the following stakeholders:

Type	Stakeholder
Retailer (national/international)	Canadian Tire – Garden City franchise Canadian Tire – Grant Park franchise Canadian Tire – Kenaston franchise Canadian Tire – Polo Park franchise Canadian Tire – Regent franchise Canadian Tire – Southdale franchise Canadian Tire – Unicity franchise Mountain Equipment Co-op Sport Chek – Corporate Walmart – Corporate
Retailer (local)	Alter Ego Bikes & Beyond Corydon Cycle Kings Skate Snow & Surf Lifesport Shops – Henderson Lifesport – Pembina More Than Bikes and E Bike Universe Winnipeg Natural Cycle Works Olympia Cycle & Ski – Portage Olympia Cycle & Ski – St. Mary's Portage Cycle & Sport Sampson's Sporting Life Spartan Sports Inc. Sprint Cycle White Pine Bicycle Co. Woodcock Cycle Works
Bicycle organization	Bike Winnipeg Project 529 Winnipeg Trails Association
Internal stakeholder	Winnipeg Police Service

Appendix B – Meeting guide

Meeting Guide

Date: March , 2019 **Time:** ☐ a.m. ☐ p.m.

Company: **Address:**

Name: **Position:**

Collection Method: ☐ In-person interview ☐ Telephone interview ☐ Written submission

1. Approximately how many bicycles does your business sell each year?

2. Do you currently promote the City's voluntary bicycle registry program?

   The online bike registry has been in place since 2018 and has since registered over 2,100 bikes.

   a. If yes, how you do promote the voluntary registry to customers?
   b. If no, what could the City do to help you promote the voluntary registry to customers?

3. Do you support mandatory registration at the time of purchase for new bicycles?
   a. If yes, why do you support mandatory registration?
   b. If no, why do you oppose mandatory registration?

4. Do you think bicycle owners would benefit from a bicycle registry at the time of purchase for new bikes?
   a. If yes, why?
   b. If no, why not?

5. What do you see as the most effective way for your business to transmit registration information to the City?
   a. Would your business have the capacity to input bicycle registries to the City's online platform?
   b. Would your business have the capacity to submit paper records on a daily or weekly basis?
   c. What challenges do you see with collecting and transmitting registration information to the City?

6. Are you interested in being a hub to register all bicycles?

   A registry hub would be a location where anyone could bring their bike to get it registered. This would allow for those who may not have access to the internet or may not know how to gather the serial number from their bike to go to a retailer to get help with this process.

   A registry hub is in the idea phase and we are trying to determine the feasibility of this approach.

7. Other comments:

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