Appendix A

March 22, 2023

Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works Committee

I am pleased to write, in a personal capacity as a resident of Winnipeg and a safety advocate, in support of the motion to better sidewalk conditions.

As a world-leading winter city and the seventh largest city in Canada, Winnipeg is growing rapidly and its population is expected to exceed one million in the next decade or sooner. Unlike all other top-ten Cities in Canada and comparator cities in north America, Winnipeg transportation options are limited as they do not include a network of expressways or a light rail transit system. Existing transportation facilities in Winnipeg, consisting of roads, streets, bridges and bus rapid transit, struggle to meet the growing traffic demand, and to permit users to share the space in a safe and sustainable manner.

For these reasons, it is imperative that, where possible, the City strategically encourage more effective use of public transit and remove barriers for non-motorized transportation modes in all seasons.

Winnipeg has a responsive and effective snow clearing and winter maintenance policy for roads which continues to serve the needs of the community at an adequate level of service. The motion aims to study alternatives for removing snow and ice from sidewalks and pathways that are presently not being maintained to the same level of service of the road network. Inaccessible or slippery sidewalks create hazardous conditions for pedestrians, and may lead some to choose to walk in traffic lanes or to lose access to transit.

Such policy changes would have budget implications and possibly unforeseen disadvantages that will need to be mitigated. However, I support this motion because there is value in placing pedestrians at an equal if not higher priority than other road users, and significant benefits in learning from best practices of other cities, and introducing and validating new technologies on a trial basis.

Respectfully submitted,

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