Primary Transit Network | Launch

Communications & Promotional Plan

Winnipeg Transit Master Plan
2024

Winnipeg

Objective

City Council approved the launch of the Primary Transit Network, which will occur on June 29, 2025.



Bringing in this new transit network is the biggest single service change to Winnipeg Transit in decades. The transit system will transform from a radial system to a spine and feeder system across the city.

"The Public Service is directed to report to Council by November 2024 on a communications plan for educating riders on how to use the new components of the system independently, developed in consultation with Councillors, drivers and stakeholders (that can also be identified by area Councillors working in consultation with Winnipeg Transit) as identified from the disability community, after multiple meetings with each group."

Minutes of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works, 2024-06-11

Communication tactics

The public service has prepared a comprehensive list of recommended communications and promotional tactics to transmit and share information with all Winnipeggers on the upcoming Primary Transit Network (PTN) launch.

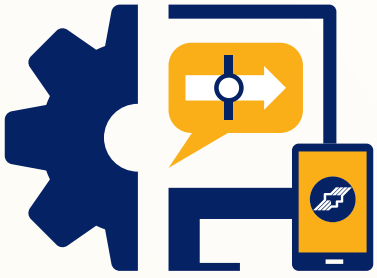
The tactics have been reviewed by external consultants with extensive experience in large scale communications programs and bespoke experience in managing significant transit network changes.

The recommended tactics are organized by the following themes:

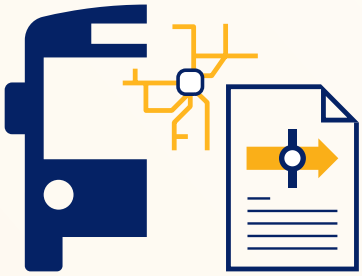
Reaching passengers



Reaching out with our own tools



Reaching targeted stakeholders



Reaching out further in the lead up to the launch



Tactics summarized by theme

Reaching passengers



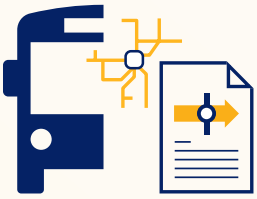
- New bus stop signs
- Paid advertisements on Transit buses, benches, and shelters
- BusWatch signs
- QR codes

Reaching out with our own tools



- Winnipeg Transit website
- Our City, Our Stories
- Winnipeg Transit app
- Social media
- Earned media
- 311 and Winnipeg Transit customer service

Reaching targeted stakeholders



- Community organization toolkit
- Newsletters
- Transit app
- Operator book of routes
- System map

Reaching out further in the lead up to the launch



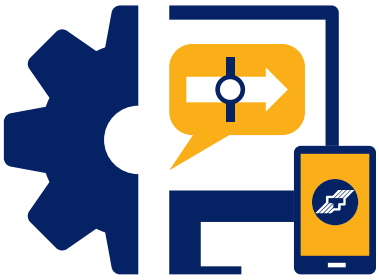
- Paid advertising
- Pop-up sessions

Tactics summarized by theme
Reaching passengers



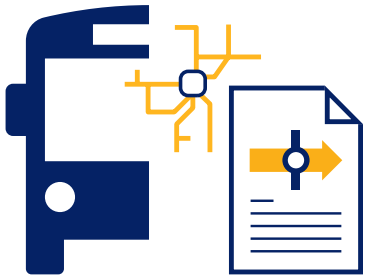
Category	Purpose	When	Target Audience
New Bus Stop Signs	Approximately 4,000 new bus stop signs will be installed with a new design informing customers of the new transit system.	Signage installation is estimated to commence in January 2025 with completion by May 2025	Transit Customers
Paid Advertisements on Transit	Placement of informational ads on transit infrastructure (buses, shelters, and benches) across the city informing customers of the upcoming PTN launch.	April to September 2025	Transit Customers & Winnipeggers
BusWatch Signs	Digital notifications on the upcoming PTN launch will be displayed on the real-time bus stop signs across the city.	April 2025 to June 2025	Transit Customers
QR Codes	To be used as a resource for Operators who are asked questions about the new network on buses.	April 2025 to June 2025	Transit Customers

Tactics summarized by theme
Reaching out with our own tools



Category	Purpose	When	Target Audience
Winnipeg Transit Website	Centralized website for ongoing project updates and trip planning for the new PTN. Printable versions of new schedules will also be available.	Ongoing with PTN schedule information available in April 2025	Transit Customers, Winnipeggers, Business Community, Community Service Partners
Our City, Our Stories	Blog posts informing audiences of key milestones in the lead up to launch.	April 2025, June 2025	Transit Customers, Winnipeggers, Business Community, Community Service Partners
Winnipeg Transit App	Splash page for PTN information and notifications will be added to the Winnipeg Transit App.	April 2025 to June 2025	Transit Customers
Social Media	Continuous messaging on the PTN launch and where to get information on the City's social media channels.	Commence in early 2025	Transit Customers, Winnipeggers
Earned Media	News releases at key milestones. Pitches will be sent at the launch of the PTN promotion period.	January 2025 to June 2025	Winnipeggers
311 & Winnipeg Transit Customer Service	Scripts will be developed for 311 and Winnipeg Transit customer service call centre staff about the PTN launch and to answer inquiries.	January 2025	Transit Customers, Winnipeggers

Tactics summarized by theme
Reaching targeted stakeholders



Category	Purpose	When	Target Audience
Community Organization Toolkit	Provide organizations such as schools, service providers, advocacy groups, Councillors' offices (and whomever requests) materials on the PTN launch in various formats.	January 2025	Existing Community Networks
Newsletters	Provide regular updates through the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan newsletter list. Provide copy for Councillor newsletters to share and distribute information about the PTN launch, particularly on milestone dates.	January, April, and June 2025	Winnipeggers
Transit App	Introduction of the Transit App as a new trip planning tool with new functionalities such as detour notifications and integrated On-Request/fixed route service trip planning.	April 2025	Transit Customers
Operator Book of Routes	Distribution of the Operator Book of Routes to all operators (information binder with individual route maps).	Fall 2024	Transit Operators
System Map	Foldable pocket system map that can be provided as take away material from pop-up information sessions.	Early 2025	Transit Customers, Transit Operators

Tactics summarized by theme

Reaching out further in the lead up to the launch



Category	Purpose	When	Target Audience
Pop-up Sessions	Pop-up info sessions at key transit locations throughout the city to provide info on the PTN and trip planning.	April 2025 to September 2025 (TBD)	Transit Customers, Winnipeggers
Paid Advertisements	Print, radio, and digital ads.	Commencing April 2025	Winnipeggers

Schedule



PTN launch

Tactic	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025
Reaching passengers			New bus stop signs installation			Paid advertisement on Transit		
						Bus Watch signs		
						QR Codes		
Reaching out with our own tools	Winnipeg Transit website							
						Our City, Our Stories		
						Winnipeg Transit app		
			Social media					
			Earned media					
			311 & Winnipeg Transit customer service					
Targeted stakeholders			Community toolkit					
			Newsletters					
						Launch Transit app		
	Operator book of routes							
			System map publishing					
Further outreach prior to launch						Paid advertisements		
						Pop-up sessions		

Key messaging



Better bus service is coming to Winnipeg on June 29, 2025

Your stops and routes will change, all across Winnipeg

Get to know the new network by taking a look at our system map

Once schedules are out in late spring 2025, you can plan your new trips online

Visit **winnipeg.ca/primarytransitnetwork** or sign up for our newsletter for updates as we get closer to launch

Who helped shape this plan?

From winter to summer 2024, we heard feedback from stakeholders on how best to educate passengers.

Disability Community Stakeholder Engagement

We met with local organizations that support and/or advocate for people with disabilities.

In meetings in February and March, we discussed current communication tools

We also took suggestions for launch

In summer, we met again to share plans and ask if we were on the right track

Consultations with Operators, Councillors

We held two come-and-go meetings with City Councillors in August 2024

We also met separately with other Councillors by request

In September, we held two come-and-go sessions for Operators at Transit garages

We also met with members of the Amalgamated Transit Union 1505 executive

During consultations, we shared tentative communication tactics and asked for feedback

How we are using this feedback?

We heard from disability community stakeholders that our campaign should launch sooner

We heard some people need more than three months to prepare for the change

As a result, we developed the Community Toolkit strategy

It will provide shareable information to organizations, community leaders, and schools in early 2025

The goal is to set the stage for more detailed information that will come with schedules in spring 2025

We can leverage existing networks within Winnipeg to help get the word out at a grassroots level

We heard that Operators need a resource to point passengers with questions to

Many Operators and ATU 1505 suggested QR codes that direct to the website

We are determining the best way to share QR codes, whether it be decals on buses, or cards that Operators can hand out

We heard from community stakeholders about what's lacking with our online schedule and trip planning tools

These deficits could create challenges when launching a new network

As a result, we are looking at partnering with a third-party app for one year

The app integrates detours and On-Request zones in trip planning and schedules

We would not be able to develop these features in our own tools in time for launch

We heard that printed information could help reach those who aren't online

As a result, we are planning to print a limited run of the full system map

We will also provide information on how to print schedules, so people without home internet can do so at places like libraries

We heard from all stakeholders that materials should be available in more than just official languages

We are aiming to have an ASL interpretation of a fact sheet as part of our toolkit

We are aiming to have the same fact sheet translated into other languages spoken by a high number of Winnipeggers, including Tagalog and Punjabi

We will explore options for advertising in local media in official and non-official languages

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