



Bike to the Future

c/o 3rd Floor – 303 Portage Ave.

Winnipeg, MB

R3B 2B4

www.biketothefuture.org

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NDP Caucus Members;

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us in June. I hope you have had a good summer, and are taking every opportunity to ride a bicycle!

At our meeting with you on June 24 we promised to provide you with some information related to some of the questions that were raised. Following are some notes and comments that we hope will be helpful. If you would like us to provide you with any of the specific documents that are mentioned we would be happy to do so.

1. Best practices and standards from other cities:

There are detailed best practice guides for building bicycle routes from the American Association of Highway Transport Officials (AASHTO), and from Sustrans, a UK bike route building charity. These manuals are based on their 30+ years of experience in building and maintaining bike routes over many years.

(See: <http://www.communitymobility.org/pdf/aashto.pdf>; and http://www.sustransconnect2.org.uk/resources/Other_Resources.php. See also the Bike to the Future web site: <http://biketothefuture.org/design-for-the-future/best-design-practices>.)

Rather than forward these technical documents to you, we propose to submit them, along with the latest information on “Complete Streets” to the Provincial and City advisory committees through our members, requesting that they be provided to the road planners and civil engineers.

2. Professional development for planners and engineers:

We have found that the US National Highways Institute offers, on a regular basis, a bicycle facilities design course, which is based on the AASHTO guide. Again, we will recommend through the advisory committees that the City and the Province send key professionals to that course, if they don't already do so.

We would also recommend the “Initiative for Bicycle and Pedestrian Innovation” out of Portland State University (<http://ibpi.usp.pdx.edu/>). They offer regular workshops ranging from single day workshops to week long workshops. We have passed on information to Kevin Nixon and others in the City of Winnipeg, but they may not have the budget to send people to these workshops at this point.

3. Accessibility for the disabled:

Experience shows that improved accessibility for bicycles provides improved accessibility for mobility impaired people. Ensuring compatibility among all users of pathways forms part of the technical guidelines which AASHTO has developed.

4. Winter cycling:

Both Calgary and Montreal clear the snow off a portion of their cycle pathways; 30 km in Montreal, 110 km in Calgary, with mixed results. Cyclists prefer well cleared paths that take them where they need to go, but if the paths and lanes are poorly cleared, then cyclists prefer to ride in the traffic. We recommend that municipalities focus on doing a good job of key bike paths, and expand the network as winter cyclists grows. Second rate service might help some of the existing users some of the time, but will not increase the number of users.

5. Barriers in the North End:

We intend to look at the Slaw Rebchuk bridge and the Main Street underpass, and make some recommendations to the City's active transportation committee. We hope to work co-operatively on this with city and provincial officials. One interesting document on this issue has already been prepared by Anders Swanson, titled "Crossing the Tracks," and is available though the "North Winnipeg Commuter Cyclists" site on www.OneGreenCity.com (Look on the "files" page.) We will share the results of our investigations with you.

Thank you for being supportive of active transportation. We look forward to reviewing progress with you in the 2009/2010 session.

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Hull
Bike to the Future, Provincial Policy Committee
province@biketothefuture.org

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