

BttF *Raising the profile of biking in our city*



Photo courtesy of Ian Mauro

About Bike to the Future

BttF is a voluntary, inclusive group of citizens working to improve cycling in Winnipeg. Our mandate is constructive advocacy.

BttF was incorporated in March, 2007 as a non-profit member-based organization. We believe that increased use of bicycles as everyday transportation can:

- Reduce greenhouse gases
- Improve air quality
- Enhance our urban environment
- Improve our health and fitness
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Save money for individuals and governments

What We Want for Winnipeg

BttF advocates for improved and well connected bicycle routes throughout the city, respect for cyclists on city streets, improved driver education for both cyclists and motorists, improved safety for cyclists, and consideration of cycling needs in transportation planning.

How We Advocate

We achieve our objectives by holding public forums, meeting with governing agencies, working with other groups with similar interests, writing well-researched, proactive letters/reports, and working constructively with the media.

What is Advocacy?

- Advocacy is the act of trying to persuade others to take action that is favourable to your cause.
- As advocates we try to persuade governments, businesses and individuals to enact legislation, adopt policies or take other actions that will promote cycling in Winnipeg and in Manitoba generally.
- The key ingredient is relationship building – with politicians, with city and provincial staff, with the media, with the business community, and with neighbourhood associations and with other groups that share our goals.



Photo courtesy of Nils Vik

Change doesn't happen by itself

- Improvements to cycling facilities in Winnipeg will be the result of advocacy. If we don't push for change, the best we can hope for is the status quo.
- It's exciting and rewarding to make positive change happen.
- Advocating helps attract new cyclists and cycling advocates.
- If we do it well, our advocacy will raise the credibility and profile of BttF as an organization, which will, in turn, make advocating easier for everyone.

Tips for Advocates

- Politicians listen if the public is speaking.
- Maintaining a reputation as a logical, well informed cyclist goes a long way.
- Always keep your allies informed of your actions; they can provide valuable advice and support by writing letters or calling politicians and in other ways.
- Use personal connections and informal approaches as well as formal avenues.
- Try to be the one to frame the issue, and do it in a positive way (e.g. we're pro-bike rather than anti-car).
- Listen to the concerns of opponents and provide counter-arguments (without getting caught up in someone else's agenda).
- Focus on the swing vote (don't waste your energy on those who won't be convinced).
- Know who's making what decisions when.
- Be clear about what you want and keep your focus on what's important to you.
- Avoid divisive issues if they are not important to achieving your main goals.

What You Can Do

- Join one of our discussion groups to find out what's going on and share your own insights and experiences. (www.biketothefuture.org)
- Attend our monthly meetings every second Tuesday of the month on the third floor, 303 Portage Avenue. (MEC Building). Open to all interested.
- Support the work of BttF by becoming a member.
- Get in touch with your City Councillor, Provincial MLA, Federal MP, local businesses or others to advocate for what you think needs to happen. And don't forget to share your views and ideas with others at BttF so that we can take collective action when needed.



Bike to the Future

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Cycling Advocacy for Winnipeg Citizens

