

December 15, 2016



Hon. Kelvin Goertzen  
Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living  
Manitoba Legislature

Dear Mr. Goertzen;

In response to your call for public input on the sustainability of our health-care system, Bike Winnipeg urges the government to follow the lead of jurisdictions which manage the sustainability of their health maintenance systems by reviewing the health impact of all policies and expenditures.

This will allow the government to invest in programs and infrastructure that nudge Manitobans toward healthy outcomes, and refrain from investing in those which do the opposite. In particular, the Government should review the health impact of investments in transportation systems, plans and infrastructure that encourage the use of personal automobiles – which increase sitting time, stress and intake of pollution -- over modes such as cycling, walking and transit which increase physical activity. Economic studies show that shifting citizens from motor vehicles to active transportation for short trips offers one of the highest pay-backs among preventative health measures available to government.

A few jurisdictions have learned a great deal about the practicalities of managing investments on the basis of health impact reviews. I have attached information on a small sample of the available studies that show the link between health costs and lack of physical activity, sitting too much, and breathing polluted air, as well as links to tools used to assess the health impact of government expenditures.

Given the Premier's interest in controlling health care costs, it is the opportune time to institute procedures within Treasury Board to require all government departments to produce health impact assessments for all policies and programs, to estimate their impact on health costs in Manitoba.

If we can help in any way to promote this concept, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

Charles Feaver

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## Studies of Health Impacts of Active Transportation:

[Costs and Benefits of Bicycling Investments in Portland, Oregon](#), Thomas Gotschi, *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 2011, 8(Suppl 1), S49-S58

The objective of this study is to assess how costs of Portland's past and planned investments in bicycling relate to health and other benefits. Methods: Costs of investment plans are compared with 2 types of monetized health benefits, health care cost savings and value of statistical life savings... Results: By 2040, investments in the range of \$138 to \$605 million will result in health care cost savings of \$388 to \$594 million, fuel savings of \$143 to \$218 million, and savings in value of statistical lives of \$7 to \$12 billion. The benefit-cost ratios for health care and fuel savings are between 3.8 and 1.2 to 1, and an order of magnitude larger when value of statistical lives is used. Conclusions: This first of its kind cost-benefit analysis of investments in bicycling in a US city shows that such efforts are cost-effective, even when only a limited selection of benefits is considered.

Identifies many related studies in the footnotes.

### [WHO Fact Sheet #385; Physical activity](#)

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs385/en/>

- Insufficient physical activity is 1 of the 10 leading risk factors for death worldwide.
- Insufficient physical activity is a key risk factor for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer and diabetes.
- Physical activity has significant health benefits and contributes to prevent NCDs.
- Globally, 1 in 4 adults is not active enough.
- More than 80% of the world's adolescent population is insufficiently physically active. ...

Policies to increase physical activity aim to ensure that:

- in cooperation with relevant sectors physical activity is promoted through activities of daily living;
- walking, cycling and other forms of active transportation are accessible and safe for all;
- labour and workplace policies encourage physical activity;
- schools have safe spaces and facilities for students to spend their free time actively; ...

### [CDC Recommendations for Improving Health through Transportation Policy](#)

<https://www.cdc.gov/transportation/docs/final-cdc-transportation-recommendations-4-28-2010.pdf>

The CDC Recommendations for Improving Health through Transportation Policy gives specific recommendations for including the consideration of public health within transportation issues. Key high-level areas include:

- Reduce injuries associated with motor vehicle crashes
- Improve air quality
- Expand public transportation
- Promote active transportation
- Encourage healthy community design
- Design to minimize adverse health and safety consequences
- Require research and surveillance
- Support professional development and job creation

## Higher Direct Medical Costs Associated with Physical Inactivity

Pratt, M, Macera, CA and Wang, G. (2000). Higher Direct Medical Costs Associated with Physical Inactivity. *The Physician and Sportsmedicine*. 28(10).

The data suggest that increasing participation in moderate physical activity among sedentary adults may reduce direct medical expenditures - between \$300 and £1,053 per person per annum

## Greater Strides

Recommendations to the Manitoba government from  
Manitoba's Active Transportation Advisory Group, June 2011  
[http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pdf/atag\\_report6.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/pdf/atag_report6.pdf)

In 2010, a joint report from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Cancer Care Manitoba, Alliance for the Prevention of Chronic Disease and Health in Common found that preventable factors including physical inactivity and obesity would cost Manitobans \$4.7 billion in increased health care expenditures and lost productivity over the next 15 years.\*

– Mark McDonald, Chair for the Alliance for the Prevention of Chronic Disease Making the Case for Primary Prevention: An Economic Analysis of Risk Factors in Manitoba<sup>4</sup>

“This report is a wake-up call to all Manitobans that there is an urgent need for more money to be invested in primary prevention programs aimed at reducing risk factors for chronic diseases. If we do nothing, in 15 years, our health care system may not be sustainable.”

– Cancer Care press release, The Cost of Apathy: Report Reveals Manitoba Taxpayers To Pay Billions for Unhealthy Living, September 14, 2010<sup>5</sup>

Step It Up! The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities  
<https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/walking-and-walkable-communities/exec-summary.html>

Chronic diseases are the leading causes of death in the United States and major contributors to disability.<sup>3</sup> In 2012, almost 50% of U.S. adults, or 117 million people, were living with a chronic disease, and of this group, about 60 million were living with two or more chronic diseases. Chronic diseases also ranked as four of the top five most costly medical conditions.

Physical activity can reduce illness from chronic diseases and premature death. Regular physical activity helps prevent risk factors for disease (such as high blood pressure and weight gain) and protects against multiple chronic diseases (such as heart disease, stroke, some cancers, type 2 diabetes, and depression). In children and adolescents, physical activity can improve bone health, cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, and body composition.

People living with chronic disease also benefit from being physically active. For example, physical activity can lessen the severity of their condition, as well as prevent disease progression and premature death, help manage or reduce symptoms, and improve mobility....

Ultimately, individuals make the decision to walk. However, the decision to walk can be made easier by programs and policies that provide opportunities and encouragement for walking and by improvements to community walkability. Improving walkability means that communities are created or enhanced to make it safe and easy to walk and that pedestrian activity is encouraged for people of all ages and abilities....

Community and street design policies are recommended approaches for increasing physical activity, including walking. ... Transportation and travel policies and practices that create or enhance pedestrian and bicycle networks and expand or subsidize public transit systems can be another approach to encourage walking for transportation.

### Individual and social costs of car travel more than six times those of cycling

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/transport\\_transitions\\_in\\_copenhagen\\_418na1\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/transport_transitions_in_copenhagen_418na1_en.pdf)

For this study, researchers compared travel by car and cycle using the cost benefit analysis that has been developed for Copenhagen by the Danish Ministry of Transport. This method includes air pollution, climate change, noise, congestion, road deterioration, time cost, accident cost, health, vehicle operating costs, and tourism. For several of these factors, cycling incurs no cost at all. Cycling does not produce air pollution, for example, but exhaust contains several toxic gases which all have health costs that are estimated at 0.004 €/km. ...

In terms of general health, cycling provides active benefits such as increased life expectancy and fewer sick days which were estimated to be worth 0.741 €/km. Car travel, on the other hand, was assumed to be neutral for health, although the sedentary nature of this type of travel could incur costs, the researchers say. Once these costs and benefits are summed the researchers found an overwhelming case for investment in infrastructure to encourage a cycling culture. The combined individual and societal costs of driving a car were 0.50 €/km in comparison to 0.08 €/km for cycling. Notably, when only considering the costs and benefits for society, rather than the individual, one kilometre by car costs €0.15, whereas society earns €0.16 for every kilometre cycled

## Analytical Tools

### Health economic assessment tool (HEAT) for cycling and walking

To facilitate evidence-based decision-making, WHO has developed, in collaboration with experts, an online tool to estimate the value of reduced mortality that results from regular walking or cycling.

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/Transport-and-health/activities/guidance-and-tools/health-economic-assessment-tool-heat-for-cycling-and-walking>

- is intended to be part of comprehensive cost–benefit analyses of transport interventions or infrastructure projects;
- complements existing tools for economic valuations of transport interventions, for example on emissions or congestion...
- can provide input into more comprehensive cost–benefit analyses, or prospective health impact assessments: for instance, to estimate the mortality benefits from achieving national targets to increase cycling or walking, or to illustrate potential cost consequences of a decline in current levels of cycling or walking...

### Transportation Health Impact Assessment Toolkit

The CDC (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention) Transportation HIA Toolkit provides a framework for public health departments, city planners, project managers, and other stakeholders to conduct HIAs on proposed transportation projects, plans, and policies

[https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/transportation/hia\\_toolkit.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/transportation/hia_toolkit.htm)

### General HIA resources

Sectors from education to housing to community design use HIAs to identify opportunities to improve public health. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) Healthy Places Health Impact Assessment page for an HIA overview and the steps involved in any HIA process. You can also find links to online HIA courses and other resources.

### HIA Background Information and HIA Indicators

To conduct an HIA, practitioners will need to research background information on the project area and affected population. The HIA Background Information and HIA Indicators section links to national databases and provides guidance on relevant indicators that assess the health impact of transportation projects. This section also directs practitioners to local sources for data specific to an area.

### Strategies for Health-Oriented Transportation Projects and Policies

HIAs make evidence-based recommendations to promote positive health outcomes and minimize negative consequences. The Strategies for Health-Oriented Transportation Projects and Policies section identifies transportation design and infrastructure strategies recognized in published HIAs. It also provides resources to inform recommendations. The strategies and evidence are divided into six categories:

- Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- Expand Public Transportation

- Promote Active Transportation
- Incorporate Healthy Community Design Features
- Improve Safety for All Users
- Ensure Equitable Access to Transportation Networks

### UCLA Health Impact Assessment (UCLA-HIA) Project

<http://www.hiaguide.org/>

...transportation agencies are recognizing the role that transportation systems play in people's health and well-being. While the auto-centric culture continues to predominate, transportation policy is evolving to focus more on moving people not just vehicles. ...

...You'll find information here on the methods used in HIA, links to other websites on HIA, and sources of training and technical assistance for HIA.