



**MORE PEOPLE BIKING
MORE OFTEN**

March 18, 2020

Executive Policy Committee

Re:2020-2023 Multi-Year Budget

Dear Councillors,

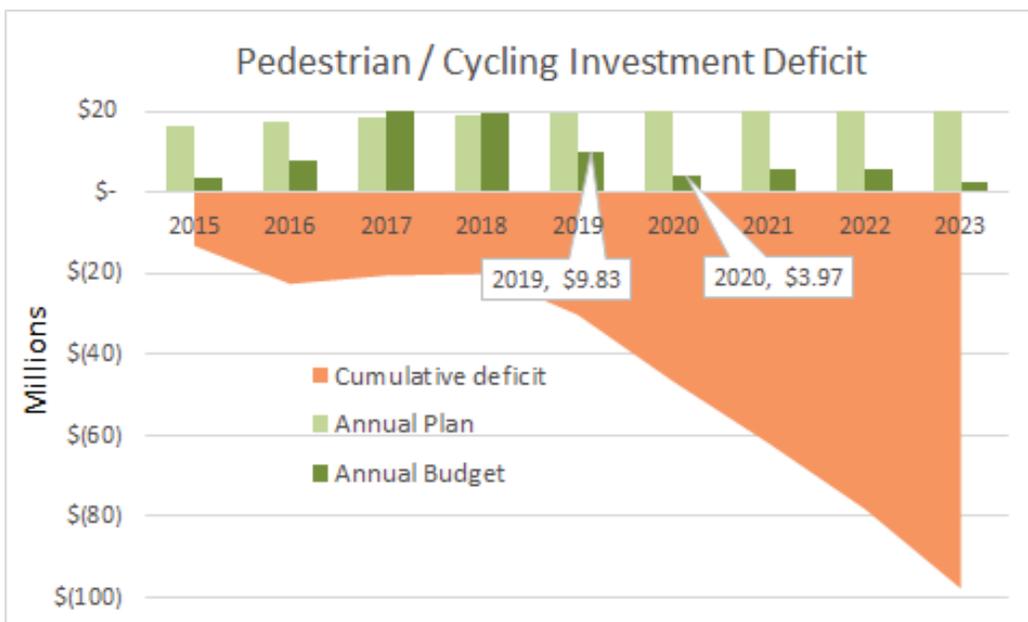
On September 20, 2018, [Winnipeg's Climate Action Plan: Planning for Climate Change, Acting for People](#) received unanimous support from Council and was approved for implementation. That plan calls for:

- 20 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 relative to 2011 levels.
 - 17 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from transportation
- 80 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 relative to 2011 levels.

Short term actions included within the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan include:

- Establish a dedicated Climate Action Reserve Fund (CARF) to support implementation of this Action Plan.
- Create an annual capital program for departmental sustainability and climate initiatives. Applications should be accepted by all departments.
- Accelerate the implementation of the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies (i.e., through increased funding, staffing levels).

Your budget needs to reflect this, yet many of the proposals that have been put forward in this budget process take us further away from those already modest goals. In fact, funding levels for the Pedestrian and Cycling Program and for the mandated incorporation of pedestrian and cycling facilities in road reconstruction and rehabilitation projects will leave an accumulated shortfall of more than \$97 million dollars by the final year of this budget.



While it may take bold action, we fully expect council to review the proposed budget through the climate lens it recently adopted and act appropriately to ensure that the budget that comes forward through this review process takes us closer, not further from those goals.

Of particular concern to Bike Winnipeg are the proposed cuts to the Pedestrian and Cycling Program beyond 2020, which would come sharp on the heels of significant cuts to this program in the 2019 budget. If we want to meet the goals set out in Our Winnipeg, in the Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies, and in our Climate Action Plan, we need to be restoring and actually increasing our Pedestrian and Cycling Program budget, not cutting it.

Only 45% of Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Projects that Overlap the Bicycle Network include Cycling Improvements

Furthermore, we need to be ensuring that Pedestrian and Cycling projects are prioritized and included within the Local and Regional Street Renewals Program, and that rehabilitation projects to our regional streets move forward only if they include improvements to walking and cycling facilities. This is not happening now, as only 14/31 (45%) of reconstruction/rehabilitation projects that overlap the proposed bicycle network include improvements to cycling facilities. That drops to a mere 14/43 (33%) if multi-modal corridors are included.

Likewise, our bridge rehabilitation projects need to be scoped and budgeted to include planned improvements to walking and cycling facilities. For instance, scope and budget for the Lagimodiere Twin Bridges Rehabilitation project needs to include a grade separated walk/bike crossing of Lagimodiere south of the CPR Keewatin line in the vicinity of Ravelston/Callsbeck. This is part of the proposed cycling network, and provides connections between Transcona and areas north and south of Concordia on the west side of Lagimodiere.

Finally, we are very concerned that a number of critical walk/bike projects have not been prioritized for funding:

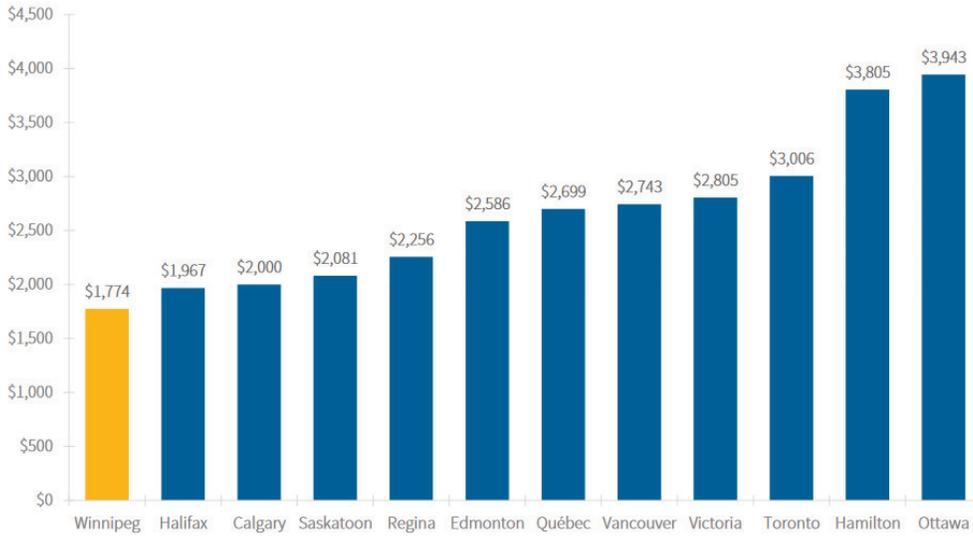
- Arlington Bridge Replacement
- Osborne Village to Downtown Walk/Bike Bridge and Connections
- Keewatin Underpass Pathway
- Ruby/Banning Neighbourhood Greenway
- Enfield/St. Jean Baptiste Neighbourhood Greenway
- Downtown Protected Bike Lanes
- Etc.

Recommendations

We feel that the restrictive tax increase of 2.33% does not reflect the needs of the city, nor does it reflect the city's ability to generate revenue. We urge the city to:

- Eliminate the proposed cut to the Business Tax
- Raise property taxes beyond the proposed 2.33%, which acts as a de facto tax freeze given the dedicated nature of the proposed tax increase. Implement with a property tax credit to reduce impact on lower value homes.
- End the practice of dedicating 1% property tax increases to the Local Streets Renewal Reserve and the Regional Street Renewals Reserve in 2020 and 2022 respectively, as outlined in the 2013 and 2014 budgets that created these reserves.
- Ensure that all Reconstruction and Rehabilitation projects in the Regional Road Street Renewals program incorporate planned improvements to walking and cycling facilities.
- Ensure that all Waterway Crossing and Grade Separation projects incorporate planned improvements to walking and cycling facilities.
- Pass a residential streets speed of 30km to improve conditions on residential streets.

2019 Municipal Property Tax Comparison for Average Home



Source: Cities Assessment and Taxation Websites and various other media sources

We would also like to see the city consider charging a commuter fare on exurban commuter traffic. As pointed out in a recent report from the Centre for Policy Alternatives (The High Cost of Free Riding and How We Fix It), more than 25,000 people currently drive into the city for work on a daily basis yet pay no city property taxes. A commuter fee would have the potential to keep more of those people in the city by removing what is currently a free resource, encourage others onto transit, and generate needed revenue for the city.

Be bold. Let's ensure that the 2020-2023 Multi-Year Budget sets the agenda to build a city that we can all be proud to call home.

Sincerely,

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